

OPINION 8
PASSIVITY AND
ITS CAUSES

WORLD 11
22 PEOPLE KILLED IN
NEPAL LANDSLIDES

SPORT 14
HENDERSON'S SEASON
IS OVER: KLOPP

LUCKNOW, SATURDAY JULY 11, 2020; PAGES 14 ₹3



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2020 HAS BEEN
DISTURBING:
TAAPSEE
12 VIVACITY

Dubey shot in startling encounter

Gangster Vikas killed while fleeing, cops' version questioned

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Notorious gangster Vikas Dubey was killed in an encounter by the Uttar Pradesh Police on Friday morning after the vehicle carrying him from Ujjain to Kanpur — almost 700 km — met with an accident and he tried to escape from the spot in Bhauti area, a senior police official said.

The Madhya Pradesh Police had arrested Dubey outside the Mahakal temple in Ujjain on Thursday morning. He was handed over to an UP Police team late in the evening.

The Uttar Pradesh STF on Friday said the official vehicle in which gangster Vikas Dubey was being brought to Kanpur overturned when a herd of cattle suddenly came in front of it. According to a statement released by the STF, Dubey was being brought to Kanpur from Ujjain for appearance in a local court when the vehicle in which he was coming overturned after a herd of cattle suddenly came in front of it.

Police said the gangster snatched a pistol from one of the policemen injured in the accident and was shot when he opened fire while trying to flee, an account being questioned by Opposition parties. Six policemen, including two from the STF, were hurt in the accident and the exchange of fire around 6 am, an official said.

Dubey was the sixth man to die in a police encounter after the ambush he masterminded in Kanpur's Bikru village past midnight on July 2, killing eight policemen who had come to arrest him.

Questions were being raised over the police version, challenging the account of the attempted escape of a gangster who had made no attempt to flee when nabbed near Ujjain's Mahakal temple a day earlier.

There were also some scepticism over the possibility of someone managing to snatch a policeman's weapon and then extricating himself from an overturned vehicle.

There were allegations that the media trailing the police convoy was stopped for a few minutes before the encounter. Unverified video clips show Dubey sitting in a different car when the convoy set out from

Ujjain. Police said the media was stopped for checking. However, the encounter killing of Dubey drew divergent reactions from retired and serving personnel, with a former Uttar Pradesh Police chief saying the STF should have ensured his safety as his interrogation would have exposed several names who colluded with him and protected him.

Some said the encounter is reminiscent of a similar incident in which four people, accused of rape and murder of a veterinary doctor, had met a similar fate in Hyderabad in December 2019.

Kanpur Range Inspector General Mohit Agarwal said Dubey fled from the car with an injured policeman's pistol.

He was chased and surrounded by policemen and was asked to surrender. When he started firing with an "intention to kill", police opened fire in self-defence, Kanpur police said.

A Press release said he was immediately taken to a hospital, where he died during treatment. Ganesh Shankar Vidhyarthi Medical College principal Dr R B Kamal said he was brought dead to the hospital. "Dubey sustained four bullet injuries, three in the chest and one in the hand," he told reporters. Two policemen also suffered wounds, one in the arm and the other in the hand.

Hours before the encounter, an advocate had filed a petition in the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the Uttar Pradesh Government and police to ensure that he is not killed.

Uttar Pradesh's Inspector General (Civil Defence) Amitabh Thakur had also apprehended the possibility of Dubey's death, a day before it happened.

"Dubey has surrendered. It is possible he might try to escape from the custody of the UP police tomorrow and get killed. With this, the Vikas Dubey chapter will end," he had tweeted in Hindi.

Eight policemen, including Deputy Superintendent of Police Devendra Mishra, had died in a hail of bullets from the rooftops in Dubey's Bikru village in Chaubeypur area of Kanpur on July 3.

new positive cases, 11 were reported from Rakabganj; nine each from Reserve Police Lines and LDA Colony; eight from Azadnagar; seven from Alambagh; five each from Indiranagar, Kalyanpur and Omare Residency; four each from Jankipuram, IG Office and Sharanaganj; three each from Mohanlalganj, Ashiyana, Vrindavan, Chowk; two each from Bakshi Ka Talab, Rajajipuram, Pathakpuram and Harinagar; and each in from Health Directorate, Malihabad,



Police and media at the encounter site where gangster Vikas Dubey was killed when he allegedly tried to escape from the spot following an accident near Kanpur in the early hours of Friday

Martyred cops' family members rejoice

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The families of the policemen martyred in the Bikru village ambush on July 3 and brother of slain minister Santosh Shukla, who was killed inside a police station, rejoiced at the news of the encounter of Kanpur gangster Vikas Dubey, saying "justice has been done".

"I am happy to know that Vikas Dubey has been killed in an encounter. This was to happen. He has paid the price for his sins," said Manoj Shukla, brother of Santosh Shukla, a minister in the then Rajnath Singh-led UP government who was killed in full public view by Dubey.

Narrating what went wrong, Manoj Shukla said that Lallan Bajpai, who was head of Shivli nagar panchayat, and Vikas Dubey were friends but in 1996 they developed differences. "In the next assembly election, Lallan Bajpai supported my brother Santosh Shukla while Vikas Dubey supported BSP candidate Hari Kishan Srivastava. Shukla lost that election widening the

divide further," he said. "In 2001, Dubey tried to acquire land near Shivli Inter College where he wanted to develop a market. When the manager (Siddheshwar Pandey) opposed, Dubey killed him. Then he attacked Lallan Bajpai, killing three people but Bajpai survived. Later, the same year, he killed my brother," he said. Shukla said that the police were giving him protection and his diktat used to run in Shivli and Chaubeypur police stations. "He has paid the price for the sins he committed. He used to enjoy patronage from local police and politicians. He was an extortionist. The killing of eight policemen proved his nemesis. Uske paap ka ghada bhar gaya tha," Manoj Shukla said.

Urmila Verma, wife of constable Sultan Singh who lost his life in Bikru village on July 3, said that she was satisfied with the development, "But now how will we know who was behind him, His interrogation could have exposed many faces," she said.

patient stepping out of the isolation ward in KGMU. The CMO said 685 samples were collected on Friday through contact tracing and sent to the KGMU for testing. There were 27 COVID-19 deaths in the state on Friday — seven in Kanpur, two each in Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Gonda and Jhansi, and one each in Meerut, Saharanpur, Prayagraj, Azamgarh, Mathura, Sultanpur, Hardoi, Hathras, Rae Bareilly, Jalaun, Mirzapur — taking the death toll to 889.

intentions clear to join the exercise in 2017 and requested to be included as an observer. However, the decision is pending since then given the strategic ramifications, sources said. India did not include Australia in the exercises in 2018 and 2019. A spokesperson for Australia's defense department has been quoted as saying, "Australia sees value in participating in quadrilateral defense activities in order to increase interoperability and advance our collective interests in a free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific region."

Hours before Dubey's encounter, plea in SC claims possibility of his shooting by cops

New Delhi: Hours before gangster Vikas Dubey was killed in an encounter near Kanpur on Friday, a petition was filed in the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the Uttar Pradesh Government and police to safeguard his life and ensure that he is not killed by the cops. The plea has also sought registration of an FIR and an apex court monitored probe by the CBI into the encounter of five co-accused, who were alleged to be associated with Dubey in the killing of 8 policemen last week.

DUBEY'S KILLING RAISES HANDCUFFING ISSUE VIS-A-VIS SC GUIDELINES ON 'INHUMAN' PRACTICE

New Delhi: The issue of dreaded gangster Vikas Dubey not being apparently handcuffed has kicked up dust after his alleged encounter killing since the Supreme Court has provided for exceptions while disapproving of the "inhuman" practice. The apex court in its previous orders in multiple cases has described handcuffing of undertrials and convicts as "inhuman, unreasonable, over harsh and arbitrary". It also had categorically stated that handcuffing of prisoners without judicial consent was illegal.

Over 1 lakh new Covid cases in 4 days

26,651 cases in India; Maha 7,862 on Friday; Kerala sees its highest spike

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking just four days to add over one lakh cases, India's coronavirus count went past 8 lakh on Friday as the virus aggressively spread into areas that were relatively better off so far. India had 7.20 lakh cases on Monday. With the addition of 26,651 new cases and 520 deaths, India overall count of cases stood at 8,21,493 and death tally 22,144 at the end of Friday. This is the fifth day when India recorded 25,000 plus cases in a row.

Maharashtra surpassed the earlier daily highest tally of 7,074 and recorded an all-time high of 7,862 Covid-19 cases, even as 226 more people died of coronavirus in various parts of the State.

With fresh infections, the total number of positive cases in the State climbed to 2,38,461. Similarly, with 226 fresh deaths, the total number of deaths inched closer to 10,000 marks by going up to 9,893.

Of the total 226 deaths, Mumbai accounted for 73 deaths, taking the total number of deaths in the metropolis to 5,205 now, while the total number of positive patients climbed up by 1,337 cases to touch 90,461.

In addition to 73 deaths in Mumbai, there were 53 deaths in Thane, 37 deaths in Pune, 10 deaths in Palghar, nine each in Raigad and



Aurangabad, seven in Jalgaon, five each in Nashik and Solapur, four in Dhule, three in Buldhana, two in Amravati, one each in Ratnagiri, Sangli, Kolhapur, Jalna, Hingoli, Parbhani, Latur, and Washim.

Delhi reported 2,089 positive cases and 42 deaths, taking the total number of positive cases in the national capital to 1,09,140 including 84,694 recovered/discharged/migrated and 3,300 deaths. The national capital carried out 10,129 RT-PCR tests and 12,832 rapid antigen tests on Friday. Total tests done so far stands at 7,47,109 in Delhi.

Karnataka recorded 2313 cases and 67 deaths, while West Bengal saw 1198 cases and 28 deaths. Andhra Pradesh reported 1608 cases and 16 deaths, while Gujarat logged 875 cases and 14 deaths.

In Tamil Nadu, there was

Rajnath reviews LAC situation as Armies pull back

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

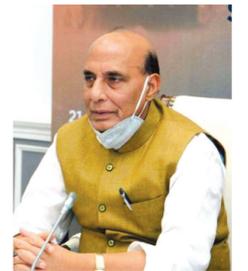
As the pullback by both the Armies on the tense Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh continued for the fifth day, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday took stock of the situation on the border with military top brass. India and China also reaffirmed their commitment to disengage and de-escalate as per bilateral pacts and agreed to keep all lines of communication open to restore peace and tranquillity along the border.

These assurances to resolve all issues came about during the 16th meeting of Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination (WMCC) on India-China border affairs. The Indian delegation was led by Joint Secretary (East Asia) while Director General of Boundary & Oceanic Dept of Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs led Chinese delegation, the External Affairs Ministry said later.

Meanwhile, against the backdrop of ongoing situation at the LAC, Rajnath also held telephonic talks with his US counterpart Marke Esper on Friday. They have spoken several times on bilateral defence ties and issues of mutual interest and Friday's conversation was in continuation of this exchange, sources said.

Chinese Ambassador to

Def Min also spoke to US counterpart Marke Esper over border issue



India Sun Weidong in a statement stressed on peace and said "the boundary question left over by history is sensitive and complicated. We need to find a fair & reasonable solution mutually acceptable through equal consultation & peaceful negotiation."

Giving details about the joint secretary-level talks, sources said the two sides also agreed to maintain the ongoing communication both at the diplomatic and military level to ensure early resolution of the situation. They agreed to hold another meeting of the WMCC in the near future.

Continued on Page 10

In highest spike so far, 140 test positive in city

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In the highest single-day spike in Lucknow, 140 persons tested positive for coronavirus infection in the state capital on Friday even as one COVID-19 death was reported from KG Medical University hospital.

Across the state, 1,347 more people tested positive taking the tally of cases to 34,028.

Lucknow's Chief Medical Officer Dr Narendra Agarwal said on Friday that among the

CAPSULE

LJP RAISES CONCERN OVER HOLDING POLLS IN BIHAR
New Delhi: BJP ally LJP on Friday joined the Opposition RJD in expressing concern over holding the Bihar Assembly polls amid a spread of Covid-19 cases, with its president Chirag Paswan saying it will put people at risk and may result in a very low voter turnout.

CISCE DECLARES CLASS X, XII RESULTS
New Delhi: The Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) on Friday announced results for class 10 and 12 exams even as it decided against bringing out a merit list this year in view of "exceptional circumstances".

India mulls calling Oz for Malabar exercise much to China's chagrin

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is expected to take a call on inviting Australia to join the naval Malabar series of exercises next week as China has been bitterly opposed to the inclusion of Australia in this annual exercise, which includes India, US and Japan.

Beijing opposes any move to include Australia in this prestigious exercise as it may signal militarisation of Quadrilateral (Quad) coalition. The Malabar exercises began in 1992 bilaterally between India and the US.

Japan was included in 2015 and since then there were talks to include Australia as an observer in the exercise.

Incidentally, Japan and the US are keen on Australia's inclusion in the Malabar series of exercises and if India assents, the two countries will be duly informed as per laid-down procedures, officials said. The exercise in the Indian Ocean region this year was delayed due to coronavirus pandemic and will now be held towards the end of this year, they added. Australia had made its

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL CASES: 8,21,493
DEATHS: 22,144
RECOVERED: 5,16,206
ACTIVE: 2,82,765

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	2,38,461	9,893	1,32,625
Tamil Nadu	1,30,261	1,829	82,324
Delhi	1,09,140	3,300	84,694
Gujarat	40,155	2,023	28,183
Uttar Pradesh	33,700	889	21,787
Karnataka	33,418	545	13,838
Telangana	32,224	339	19,205
West Bengal	27,109	880	17,348
Andhra Pradesh	25,422	292	13,194
Rajasthan	23,174	497	17,620
Haryana	19,934	290	14,904
Madhya Pradesh	16,657	638	12,481
Assam	14,601	35	9,849
Bihar	14,330	111	10,251
Odisha	11,956	73	7,972
Jammu & Kashmir	9,888	159	5,786

CONDUCT RAPID ANTIGEN TESTS IN EVERY HOUSEHOLD: YOGI TO OFFICIALS

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has asked officials to carry out rapid antigen tests in every household during the three-day special cleanliness campaign initiated from Friday. A special cleanliness campaign has been initiated from July 10-13 to create awareness about Covid-19, vector-borne diseases and other ailments.

Make 55-hours restrictions a success: CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed officials to make the 55-hour restrictions that commenced from Friday night a success to prevent the spread of coronavirus and contagious diseases.



The chief minister said that guidelines should be enforced in totality and offenders should be taken to task.

Senior IAS officials have been rushed to all the 75 districts to monitor the 55-hour restrictions and cleanliness drive while all state ministers have been asked to be present in the districts of which they are in-charge to monitor the drive.

On the other hand, the state government on Friday notified the fine of Rs 500 for not wearing a face mask in public every time. Earlier the fine was Rs 100 for first two offences and then Rs 500.

Yogi Adityanath also asked the police to be strict with people not wearing face masks.

Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Awasthi said here on Friday that all markets, offices, mandis and other business establishments along with village haats would be closed for next 55 hours starting 10 pm on Friday.

“However emergency services like hospitals, medicine shops, home delivery of essential goods would function nor-

mally and employees engaged in the duty will be allowed to travel showing their identity cards,” he said, adding that all religious places would remain open on Saturday and Sunday.

Inter-city buses would not ply along with other public transport but domestic flights and trains would function normally. State buses would be engaged for the passengers coming by train to reach their destinations.

Awasthi said during the restriction period, special cleanliness drive would be launched in the villages and urban areas and it would be monitored by the officials.

Fogging and door-to-door surveillance for COVID-19 and contagious diseases would be done during this two-day period.

Oppn demands probe by sitting SC judge

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The state government may have some reasons to defend the encounter ‘most wanted criminal’ Vikas Dubey, but the development gave ammunition to the opposition parties to target the UP Adityanath and demand a judicial probe headed by a sitting judge of Supreme Court.



They alleged that the UP government was hiding “a deep secret” about the killing of Kanpur ambush main accused Vikas Dubey on Friday.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Friday took a swipe at the UP government over the Dubey’s encounter, saying “while the criminal has gone, what about those protecting him?” She also demanded a probe into the entire sequence of events since killing of eight policemen and alleged encounter of six criminals including Vikas Dubey, by a sitting Supreme Court judge.

Congress leader Jitin Prasada also wrote on the microblogging site that “With the end of Vikas Dubey in custody the government has ensured that the trial which would have exposed his nexus with people in positions of power who allowed criminals like him to flourish, has ended too.”

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav took a jibe at the government’s encounter theory, saying in a tweet that Dubey’s killing helped the Uttar Pradesh government protect secrets that would have come out on the politi-

cian-criminal nexus. “Basically the car did not overturn, but the government has been saved from being overturned,” he tweeted.

Reacting to alleged ‘encounter, Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati demanded a Supreme Court-monitored probe into the encounter of gangster Vikas Dubey. She wanted the inquiry to cover the killing of eight policemen last week in an ambush planned and executed by Dubey.

“There should be an unbiased probe under the supervision of the Supreme Court into the killing of policemen in Kanpur and the encounter of main accused Vikas Dubey while he was trying to flee when the vehicle overturned,” Mayawati said in a tweet in Hindi.

Meanwhile, Rashtriya Lok Dal leader Jayant Chaudhary in a tweet said there was no need of courts in BJP’s ‘thok raj’ (gun down rule) in Uttar Pradesh while terming the encounter in Kanpur in which fugitive gangster Vikas Dubey was gunned down early Friday morning.

Jayant said the encounter was a drama enacted to save the skin of those who helped the mafia who killed eight

Parents disown Vikas, not to attend last rites

Lucknow (PNS): After he was gunned down in a police encounter on the fringes of Kanpur, parents of slain gangster Vikas Dubey refused to attend his cremation saying they did not have any relations with him.

Dubey’s ailing father vindicated the police action against his son and praised Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath saying that Vikas deserved what he was handed out. Talking to media persons in Kanpur a bed-ridden Ram Kumar Dubey (75) justified the police action against his son

and said, “Vikas had committed a heinous crime and he should meet such fate.”

The senior Dubey said that he had tried his best to stop Vikas from indulging in criminal acts but he entered politics which provided immunity to his criminal activities.

Blaming Vikas for the misery of his family, Ram Kumar said that he was never good to him nor did he obey him. “Due to him my house was demolished. I am facing all the miseries due to his criminal acts and his encounter

was the right thing to be done. The act of CM Yogi Adityanath is justified,” he said. Ram Kumar was present at Bikru village when Dubey and his henchmen snuffed out eight police personnel during an early morning surprise attack on July 3.

In Lucknow, Vikas Dubey’s mother Sarla Dubey said that she would not go to Kanpur to attend the cremation. “I have no relations with my son. Police asked me if I wanted to travel to Kanpur to see my deceased son, I refused,” she said.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS
(DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING)

Applications are invited for filling up of post of the Chief Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission, located at New Delhi

The details of eligibility conditions and the proforma for sending particulars for consideration for the post of the Chief Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission may be downloaded from the Department of Personnel and Training website: www.persmin.nic.in. The last date for receipt of the completed applications in the Department is 31st July, 2020.

DAVP - 32201/11/0001/2021

CLASSIFIEDS
NOTICE

I Anjali Gupta W/o Anupam Gupta R/o 1/205 Vinamra Khand Gombi Nagar Lucknow-226010. To be inform that my daughter name changed from Adya Gupta to Aadya Gupta. In future she will be known as Aadya Gupta.

NOTICE

In High School Marksheets, my name is Jai Pal and father's name is Ambika Prasad but in other documents my name is Jai Pal Verma and my father's name is Ambika Prasad Verma. It is proclaimed by me that both's right names are Jai Pal Verma and Ambika Prasad Verma.

NOTICE

Be it known to all that Mantavya Kumar Singh's S/o Mahesh Kumar DOB in school record entered as 01.10.2011 by mistake in place of 10.01.2013 According Adhaar & Birth Certificate Munciple corporation record in future it known as. Awadh Vihar colony Sarojni Nagar, Manasnagar, Lucknow.

NOTICE

It is informed that the name of my wife Mrs. Chandra Kiran Upadhyaya has been wrongly inscribed in my department records as Mrs. Chandra Kiran. She should be known, recognized and understood in correct form as Mrs. Chandra Kiran Upadhyay. Ashta Bhujia Prasad Upadhyay Son Shri Chandra Shekhar Upadhyay AE-115, NTPC Colony Unchahar-Rae Bareilly

NOTICE

NOTICE

SALE DEED

Notice is here by given that a sale deed dated 23-01-2009 executed by Smt. Dhanu alias Dhanoo Devi w/o Dharmath D/o Jagesari and Smt. Manu alias Manni Devi W/o Heera D/o Jagesari in favour of Smt. Soni Bhardwaj w/o Dharmraj regarding the sale of S.M. Plot No. 233, Area 1360 sqft, situated at Mauza Singhpur, Ward-Sarnath, Pargana-Shivpur, Tehsil & Distt.-Varanasi duly registered with Sub Registrar Office, Varanasi in Book No. 1, Vol. No. 2077 pages 311/340 as document No. 319 has been lost away. If any person have any information or objection regarding this sale deed please inform on Mobile No. 9451525826 & contact at Address given below within 15 days. Harischandra Rai, Adv., Chamber No. 110, Banaras Bar New Building, Civil Court, Varanasi.

'Dubey's death morale booster for cops, martyrs' kin'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chairman of National Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Commission and MP Ram Shankar Katheria said that the encounter of most wanted criminal Vikas Dubey had boosted the morale of police and lessened the grief of martyred cops' families.

After paying tributes to martyred constable Rahul and expressing condolences to his kin in Rurukan village of Auraiya, Katheria said that Vikas Dubey was actually a terrorist who had lived the life of a criminal since childhood.

“Dubey committed the biggest mistake of his life by attacking the police team which led to the martyrdom of eight policemen in the early hours of July 3,” he said.

The MP said that the notorious gangster was arrested by the police in Ujjain (MP) on Thursday but he was gunned down in an encounter while trying to escape by looting a pistol after a car carrying them met with an accident near Kanpur on Thursday morning.

The Bharatiya Janata Party leader said that both UP and Madhya Pradesh police should be congratulated since the encounter pumped up police morale and the grief of families of martyred policemen was lessened.

“This has also sent out a message to the criminals that death is the punishment for crime.

Hopefully such incidents will not happen in the future,” Katheria said.

'VIKAS KILLED TO HIDE GOVT'S INCOMPETENCE'

Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP) chief Om Prakash Rajbhar on Friday said that gangster Vikas Dubey should have been punished after a trial in court and alleged that he had been killed so that the government could hide its incompetence.

“He (Vikas Dubey) has been killed so that the government can hide its incompetence. He was a criminal and should have been punished. He should have been punished under the rule of law after a court trial,” Rajbhar said on Friday. The SBSP is a former ally of the BJP and the alliance was snapped soon after the May 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

E-TENDER NOTICE
 E-Tender No. PRYJ-Sig-09-2020-21 Date: 09.07.2020
 Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer / Coordination / North Central Railway / Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite E-TENDER on prescribed form for the following works up to 12:00 hrs. on 31.07.2020. The details of the Tender is as under:-

S. No.	Tender No.	Name of Work	Approx Cost of work (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)
1a	PRYJ-Sig-09-2020-21	Telecom work in connection with construction of 4 nos. Type v quarters at Allahabad.	10,81,498/-	₹ 2,600/-

Cost of Tender Form: ₹ 2,000/-. Completion Period: 06 months, Date of Closing of tender: 31.07.2020. 2. Availability of tender form: Tender forms are available on www.ireps.gov.in 21 days prior to date of opening of the tender. 3. Time date & place of opening of tender: Tender will be opened through E-tender at office of Divisional Railway Manager, Prayagraj or after pre determined date at 12:30 hours. In case tender opening date happens to be holiday, Tenders will be opened on the next working day. 758/20 (SP)

North central railways @CPONCR

INDIRA GANDHI RASHTRIYA URAN AKADEMI

Fursatganj Airfield, Dist. AMETHI. U.P.
JOB NOTIFICATION
 Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA) is an autonomous body under Ministry of Civil Aviation, Govt. of India and is engaged in training of commercial pilots. IGRUA invites application for the various posts of:

S/N	Name of the Post	No. of Vacancies
1	Flight Instructor	2
2	Drone instructor (Approved by DGCA as Master Trainer)	1
3	English Language Teacher for English Language Proficiency Training of Pilots	1
4	Training Manager for AME School	1
5	Quality Manager for AME School	1
6	Senior Simulator instructor	1
7	Accounts Officer	1
8	Battery Shop Incharge	1

For detailed notification regarding eligibility qualifications etc. please visit IGRUA website www.igrua.gov.in.
 DAVP - 03104 / 11 / 0001 / 2021

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

(Regd. Office PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001)
 Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB2010SGC033813
 Website: www.pspcl.in

Tender Enquiry No. 262 Dt. 08-07-2020

Scope description: DESIGN, MANUFACTURE, TESTING, SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF GOVERNOR MIV O.P.U.'S & FOR SYNCHRONOUS CONDENSER MODE OPERATION AIR COMPRESSORS AT RSD POWER PLANT PSPCL, SHAHPURKANDI AND GOVERNOR O.P.U. AIR COMPRESSORS AND SERVICE AIR COMPRESSORS AT MHP, PSPCL, TALWARA.

Start date for downloading of specification: 15-07-2020
 Date and time upto which tender can be downloaded : 14-08-2020 (11:00 AM)
 Date and time upto which tender shall be received: 14-08-2020 (11:00 AM)
 Date and time of opening of tender: 21-08-2020 (11:30 AM)
 EMD: @ 2% of Tender value rounded off to a multiple of Rs. 10/- on the higher side subject to a min of Rs. 10,000/- and max. of Rs. 20 Lac.

It is informed that in case tender process is not completed due to any reason, no corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on e-tendering website <https://tproc.punjab.gov.in>. All the prospective bidders are requested to get their digital signatures, register themselves on the website <https://tproc.punjab.gov.in> and get conversant with the process of on-line submission of tenders well in time so as to submit the tender by the due deadline. No request for extension in due date of tender opening on the above grounds shall be entertained. The prospective bidders are requested to get clarification at e-tendering website: <https://tproc.punjab.gov.in> or contact at nos. 0120-4001002/0120-4200462/0120-4001005/0120-6277787.

C-224/2020 RO 48045 Dt. 10-07-2020 SE/ Hydell Projects, PSPCL, Patiala.

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Subdued celebrations for toppers

ISC, ICSE RESULTS

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Excitement prevailed among students after results of ICSE and ISC were declared on Friday. While the students assembled at some of the schools, most preferred to enjoy with their families. The meritorious students of City Montessori School performed excellently in both ISC (Class XII) and ICSE (Class X) examinations. This year, 25 CMS students secured marks between 99 and 99.75 per cent in ISC and ICSE examinations. Sumit Kumar Tripathi of CMS, Gomti Nagar Campus I, secured 99.75 per cent marks in ISC, topping the inter-campus merit list, while Astha of Rajajipuram Campus I scored 99.40 per cent marks in ICSE, securing top position in the inter-campus merit list.

In Gurukul Academy, the high scorers were Abhishek Goenka (98.5%), Akanksha Sharma (98.25%), Alankrita (97.5%) and Devrat Pandey (98%). In Lucknow Public Collegiate, the top positions in ICSE were grabbed by Rumaysa with 96.2%, Raghav Nigam 94.8%, Aditya Chandra 94% and Shubh Agarwal 94%

among others. The toppers in ISC included Rohan Sahu 98.75%, Anushree Mukerjee 98.25%, Divya Tewari 95%, Mohd Shavez 93.75% and Sadiya Imran 90.75%.

Adarsh Goel of CMS Mahanagar, who scored 99 per cent in Class 12, was on cloud nine. Though he admitted that he was missing out on celebrations with his friends, Adarsh said he utilised the lockdown for IIT-JEE preparations.

"I want to join one of the IITs and take up Computers. I am keen on artificial intelligence and believe it can play a great role in times of pandemic," he said. About his success mantra, he said it was hard work and revision. Sakshi Singh of CMS Mahanagar, who scored 97.5 per cent in Class 12 with a background in Commerce and Mathematics, said her success mantra was consistency and persistence. Sakshi is keen on cracking the CAT and then pursuing MBA from one of the IIMs to secure a decent placement. She said the lockdown helped her relax and strengthen the bond with family. Regarding her ambitions for the country, she said she would like to boost



Sumit Kumar Tripathi (99.75%) of Class XII with his father after results were declared on Friday

the economy.

Jeevesh Saxena of Seth MR Jaipuria School, who scored 99 per cent marks in Class 12, said he felt that the lockdown helped him explore a lot of things on the internet. "In the absence of lockdown, I would have rushed into things because it would have been time for college and admissions after the results. We do not get time even to figure out and explore what we want to do or experiment. During

lockdown, I was able to explore what was interesting and what was not," he said. He added that he was planning to take up start-ups in future. Akshay Rastogi (Class 12), who scored 98.5 per cent marks with the Commerce stream, said he relied on hard work. He said he wanted to become a chartered accountant but due to the coronavirus pandemic, coaching classes were delayed even as exams were scheduled for November.

"However, I utilised the lockdown for doing all kinds of creative things such as playing guitar and learning tennis," he said.

Pranav Gupta of Class 10, who scored 97.2 per cent marks, said his success mantra was revision. "Whenever I was back from school, I would revise my subjects," he said.

Pranav, who wants to go for a combination of IIT and IIM, said the coronavirus pandemic helped him because he could think about his future in a more refined manner. Regarding what he wanted to do for the country, he said he wanted to come out with apps which could be of help during pandemics.

Sania Bhargav of Class 10, who scored 98.8 per cent and was happy with her result, said she was following humanities stream and wanted to become an IAS officer. "I want to bring social change in the country but my father said that for bringing any sustainable development, you need to have power in your hands and that is the reason I want to get into government services," she said.

She said the lockdown was frustrating initially because the exams were suddenly stopped, but later she pursued many courses online. "The lockdown benefitted me because I could test my skills other than academics," she added.

No CISCE merit list this year

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Council for Indian School Certificate Education did not announce toppers this year for ICSE and ISC exams, results of which were declared on Friday. Chief executive and secretary Gerry Arathoon said they did not release a merit list because of the cancellation of some papers.

"Given the exceptional circumstances this year, CISCE will not be releasing a merit list for either ICSE or ISC exams," he said. He added that this year has been an exceptionally difficult year for everyone due to the coronavirus pandemic and multiple lockdowns, coupled with many other related problems. "Despite all odds, CISCE successfully completed the evaluation of ICSE & ISC

exams. I would like to commend our candidates who have shown exemplary resilience and fortitude during this crisis, faced with the agony of a long wait for a possible delayed examination in the remaining papers, the subsequent prolonged wait for the results while simultaneously continuing their studies of the next classes or preparing for the entrance exams," he said.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING)

Applications are invited for filling up the posts of Information Commissioners, not exceeding six, as may be deemed necessary, in the Central Information Commission, located at New Delhi.

The details of eligibility conditions and the proforma for sending particulars for consideration for the posts of Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission may be downloaded from the Department of Personnel and Training website: www.persmin.nic.in. The last date for receipt of the completed applications in the Department is 31st July, 2020.

DAVP - 32201/11/0002/2021

Rigorous drive to make people aware of Covid guidelines

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

For the next three days, the district administration will be carrying out a rigorous drive to make people aware of guidelines to be followed and precautions which they need to observe to help prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Divisional Commissioner Mukesh Meshram said people have started moving freely in the city without following the guidelines issued by the Health Ministry and district administration in view of the pandemic. "The restrictions for the next two days will make everyone aware that they have to take the responsibility because government and administration cannot fight the pandemic without people's support," Meshram said. Unnecessary movement of people has to be minimised, he added.

"All of a sudden, people started moving on the roads, visiting their relatives & friends and moving to crowded places without any fear. It should not happen and the curbs will make them understand that they have to be alert and cautious because anybody around may be a coronavirus carrier. It was important to break the chain and those infected have to be isolated," he said.

For this purpose, a door-to-door surveillance is being carried out and those with SARI (severe acute respiratory illness) and ILI (influenza-like illness) will be shifted to hospital if they test positive. People will be made to wear masks and the fine for not wearing masks while stepping out has been increased to Rs 500 from Rs 100.

District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash has formed 80 teams of police, LMC and health officials to ensure people follow guidelines. The teams will ensure that the people in shops, private offices and government offices are monitored for the use of sanitisers and maintaining social distancing. The DM said the teams will ensure that malls, shops and departmental stores remain open only between 8 am and 9 pm. He added that they will also make sure that the products within the shops were covered with transparent polythene sheets and the staff wear gloves, masks, face shields and head covers.

He said the teams will also talk to trade organisations and ensure that there are public announcement systems for announcement of precautions at regular intervals.

Meanwhile, Additional CMO MK Singh said on the fifth day of door-to-door surveillance, the total number of houses covered was 1,21,654 and the population covered 5,05,459. "As many as 4,045 people were found to be suffering from diabetes, 1,421 from hypertension, 82 from cancer, 240 from heart disease, 58 from kidney ailment, 119 from fever, 101 from cough and 73 from breathlessness," he said.

A senior official from the CMO office said the number of Covid-19 patients has increased to such an extent that 7-8 persons are testing positive in one family. He said things were under control during lockdown but once the restrictions were eased and people started moving out freely, the cases have spiralled. "A woman had tested positive in Vrindavan Yojana but now her entire family consisting of seven members has contracted the infection. Similarly, a family of seven also tested positive for coronavirus in Rakabganj," he pointed out.

e-rickshaw driver hangs self

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

An e-rickshaw driver was found hanging at his house in Thakurganj on Friday morning. Reports said Daudin (28) of Musahibganj was found hanging by his family members on Friday morning and was rushed to a doctor who declared him dead. Brother Saifuddin said Daudin was found hanging from the ceiling with a bedsheet tied around his neck.

Meanwhile, mystery shrouded the death of a 30-year-old labourer, who was missing since 8 am on Thursday. His body was recovered from a drain in Mohanlalganj on Friday. Reports said Ramkishan aka Bablu of Kesari Khera in the area left his house without informing any of his family members and did not return. His family started searching for him and later sought police help. They were asked to wait till Friday morning. However, on Friday morning, some villagers spotted Ramkishan lying in a drain. Brother Ramswaroop told the police that Ramkishan had no enmity with anyone. Police sent the body for autopsy.

जनसंख्या स्थिरता पखवाड़ा

11 से 24 जुलाई, 2020 का

शुभारम्भ

एव

कोविड-19 की जांच हेतु नवसृजित मंडलीय प्रयोगशालाओं का लोकार्पण

योगी आदित्यनाथ

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश द्वारा

दिनांक : 11 जुलाई, 2020 | समय : पूर्वाह्न 10:00 बजे

स्थान : 5, कालिदास मार्ग, लखनऊ

आपदा में भी परिवार नियोजन की तैयारी सक्षम राष्ट्र और परिवार की पूरी जिम्मेदारी

डीडी उत्तर प्रदेश टी.वी. चैनल एवं YouTube चैनल
<https://www.youtube.com/dduttarpradesh>

पर कार्यक्रम का लाइव टेलीकास्ट/प्रसारण पूर्वाह्न 10:00 बजे से देखा जा सकता है।

परिवार नियोजन

गर्भ निरोध के आसान और सुरक्षित उपाय

कॉपर-टी आई.यू.सी.डी. 380ए

कॉपर-टी आई.यू.सी.डी. 375

जोड़ी जिम्मेदार जो प्लान करे परिवार

गर्भनिरोधक गोलियाँ

इंजेक्शन डी.एम.पी.ए.

आपातकालीन गर्भनिरोधक गोली

कण्डोम

महिला नसबन्दी

पुरुष नसबन्दी

चिकित्सा, स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश - टोल फ्री नं०: 1800-180-5145

राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन, उत्तर प्रदेश - टोल फ्री नं०: 1800-180-1900

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Mockery of social distancing in markets before 55-hr lockdown

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

It was just a mockery of all the social distancing norms that was seen in the local markets here on Friday before the imposition of 55-hour lockdown in the state. As the weather condition started changing right from the morning hours and there was good rain in the afternoon hours, a huge number of residents thronged various markets to purchase daily articles without showing any fear that the recent days saw a sharp spike in COVID-19 cases. Whether it was a fear or panic among the people that the lockdown duration may be extended, they have violated all the norms of social distancing and even several customers were seen purchasing without wearing masks. If the recent trend of corona positive cases is seen, it clearly indicates that during the last one week, a large number of traders and housewives with no contact history were found affected by the pandemic.



Rush of customers at Dashaswamedh Ghat Sabzi Mandi in Varanasi on Friday

Pioneer

Whether it was Visheshwarganj foodgrain market or Dashaswamedh vegetable market, everywhere in the morning hours, the heavy rush of customers just made a joke of all the COVID-19 norms. There is no denying the fact that in the last few days, the corona cases have increased sharply not only in Varanasi, but in the entire belt of Purvanchal (eastern UP) comprising 10 districts of three divisions. Thursday saw the biggest spike not only in Varanasi where 38 patients were detected but also in the region where a record number of 161 positive patients were

found. During the last 15-16 days, all the efforts being made to fight against corona have appeared gone in vain as virtually no restrictions were seen in the markets. The biggest foodgrain market of Purvanchal, Visheshwarganj, which recently saw the death of a trader due to COVID-19, remained careless when the traders were not seen making any effort to check the rush. The absence of police personnel was also shocking. Due to the sharp rise in the number of active hotspots, the local police are also in the pressure. By Thursday, there were 219 active hotspots including 179 in red zones and 40 in orange and

out of total 356 hotspots, 137 have become green zones. The increasing number of active patients has caused gradual decline in recovery rate. Just two weeks ago (on June 24), the recovery rate in this region was 70.64 per cent which has fallen down to 63.73 per cent on July 7 and it has further declined on Thursday when out of total 3,330 patients, 2,031 have been discharged from the hospitals which is just 60.99 per cent. Within two days, from July 7 to 9, the number of cases jumped up from 3,022 to 3,330, showing that 308 new patients were found during the period. The recovery rate has declined from 63.73 per cent to 60.99 per cent, while active patients

have increased from 34.18 per cent (1,033) to 36.99 per cent (1,237) whereas on June 24, it was 27.26 per cent (523). This changed picture shows that the sharp increase in number of corona patients has mounted further pressures on the Health department in almost all the districts because by Thursday, in Varanasi, 723 patients were found while in Jaunpur 640, Ghazipur 386, Azamgarh 337, Ballia 315, Chandauli 242, Mirzapur 214, Bhadohi 205, Mau 195 and Sonbhadra 73. Out of total 3,330 patients in three divisions, 2,064 are in Varanasi division which shows that in this most affected division, there are 61.98 per cent cases.

37 new COVID-19 patients found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

For the second continuous day, the district has seen a big spike in the number of COVID-19 patients as 37 patients have been detected here on Friday. It was just one less than the patients found a day ago. With this, the total number of patients has increased to 760. Besides, 10 patients have been discharged from the hospitals and with this, the total number of patients who have been recovered has increased to 432. With one more death, the death toll has increased to 26. The number of active patients is 302.



Security at hotspot Ganesh Mahal, Jangambadi (Dashaswamedh) in Varanasi

According to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr

VB Singh, on Thursday night one 80 years old male from Ashok Puram Colony, Daffi (Lanka) died during his treat-

ment at Sir Sunderlal Hospital (SSH) at Banaras Hindu University (BHU). He was admitted to the hospital on

June 7 last as he was suffering from hyponatremia and heart attack. With this, the death toll in the district has increased to 26.

With the finding of new patients, the number of hotspots has increased to 371. Out of them, 142 have become green zones. There are 229 active hotspots including 43 in orange zones and 186 in red zones. As many as 228 samples have been collected during the day and sent to the BHU for testing. Till date, 15,037 samples have been collected and results of 13,338 have been received, while 1,699 are awaited. Out of all received reports, 12,578 were negative and 760 positive.

Incessant rain paralyses normal life

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Incessant rains not only paralysed the normal life in the city badly but also disappointed many who wanted to purchase various articles before the imposition of short lockdown in the state on Friday. The continuous rain in the afternoon hours forced the people to stay indoors and as the intensity of rain at some brief intervals was high, it left many areas waterlogged. As per the prediction of the Met department that Purvanchal (eastern UP) would receive isolated extreme heavy rains from Friday to July 12,

there was good rain throughout the day. Many areas including Godowlia, Dashaswamedh, Nai Sarak, Luxa, Andhrapul, Teliabagh, Maidagin, Mehmoorganj, Sagra, Khojwa, Nagwa and others saw the water-logging in which dozens of two-wheelers and three-wheelers were seen stranded. Rain not only disrupted construction work started during Unlocked 1.0 at many places, but also incurred losses to the construction agencies. Meanwhile, as per the reports of Middle Ganga Division-III of Central Water

Commission (CWC), though the river Ganga continued to remain steady for the last couple of days, the water level continued rising slightly from 61.22 to 61.57 metres during the last two days. During the last 24 hours, the water level has increased by 16 centimetres and the water has already entered several low-lying temples located at Dashaswamedh, Panchganga and many other ghats. LIGHTNING CLAIMS A LIFE: The lightning claimed one life and injured three in Lahiya Bhatsar village, under the Jansa police station on

Friday. The injured were admitted to nearby health centre in critical condition where their condition was said to be stable. According to information, some women were transplanting the paddy in a field on Friday morning and in the meantime, it started raining with thunderstorm. They took shelter in a nearby hut. Suddenly the lightning fell upon four women identified as Pramila Patel (37), Heerawati Patel (55), Phulpati Patel (42) and Tara Devi (35) and they sustained serious burn injuries.

ACS checks Covid control steps

VARANASI (PNS): Additional Chief Secretary (Agriculture) Devesh Chaturvedi saw the ground realities during his inspection here on Friday when he found that the teachers of a school were not wearing masks and an auxiliary nursing midwifery (ANM) of the investigation team did not know about the use of thermal scanner and pulse oximeter. Chaturvedi also held a meeting, along with District Magistrate (DM) Kaushal Raj Sharma and other officers at Circuit House to review the progress being done in connection with COVID-19 and control of communicable diseases. He instructed the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh to conduct training to the staff by the community health officers (CHOs) for ongoing door-to-door special surveillance campaign under

COVID-19. He said that in the campaign, the people should be examined seriously apart from making them aware of the coronavirus pandemic. Apart from COVID-19, he also sought the reports about the Filaria and Kala-azar in the district and asked about the condition of treatment. He also said that the families of serious corona patients should be informed about their progress and proper cleanliness be ensured in the hospitals and its kitchens apart from maintaining quality of food. Chaturvedi also inquired about the details of L-1, L-2 and L-3 hospitals and the number of patients admitted there. The health officers apprised the ACS about the arrangement made for L-1 patients on their demand on the basis of payment in Sanjay Motels located near the airport.

According to him, for prevention of communicable diseases, the Dastak Abhiyan will be started from July 15 in which door-to-door investigation and fogging in urban and rural areas will be done. When he was informed that last year 522 dengue patients were found in the district, he instructed the Health department to make the people aware about anti-larvae spray and fogging systems. Municipal Commissioner informed that the sanitary inspectors take action to evacuate the water collected in the empty plots and kill the mosquitoes by putting chemicals in the water in the city areas. On the occasion, DM directed the Nagar Nigam officers and SDMs to start cleaning garbage lying in various places and de-silting of drains immediately. Chaturvedi directed the

Municipal Commissioner to make provisions in the bylaw so that action can be taken against the people in case of laxity shown by the residents by leaving water in the coolers or other things in their houses causing increase in breeding mosquitoes that spread diseases like dengue, malaria etc. He also emphasised on ensuring strict compliance of the Supreme Court and High Court instructions on the use of polythene. While reviewing the works of the Agriculture department, he directed the Chief Development Officer (CDO) that under his supervision, the farmers of the district should get involved in the formation of a group of WhatsApp within 15 days, so that they can get the information of the grasshopper movement immediately.

Record 52 COVID-19 patients found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Over 200 patients infected with coronavirus were found in Prayagraj in just eight days. Late on Thursday night, Prayagraj district saw a single-day highest spike with a record 52 patients of coronavirus. All these patients were from the urban area. Those found positive included a junior doctor of SRNH, a policeman living at the Police Lines campus and some railway employees as well. In only eight days, a total of 200 people infected with corona were found in the district which is not a good sign and neither good news for the city.



COVID-19 Dr Rishi Sahai said that a sudden spike in figures put the denizens as well as the Health department in a state of panic. If one does not take precautions, then there are chances of the people being infected. Therefore, to prevent the infection of coronavirus, we should follow the guidelines issued by the government. One should wash hands continuously and apply a face mask. Along with this, it is important to follow physical distancing. And only by doing so, one can be safe from the clutches of this epidemic.

According to the report of the Health department, till 12 o'clock on Thursday night, all the total 52 patients who were found infected included two people each from Chaka, Phulpur, Neem Sarai, Karanpur, Mirganj, Kalyani Devi, SRN Campus and Handia. Three people each from Kydganj, Manda, Naini and Shivkuti have been infected, while four each from Jhansi. While one each was found in Ranimandi, Teliarganj, Beniganj, Nawab Yusuf Road, Parade, Kalindipuram, Daraganj, Police Lines Campus, Nayapura, Dilkusha Park, Rani Phulpur, Mutthaganj, Darbhanga Colony, Lukarganj, Attarsuiya, Damdama and Mahutar.

It may be pointed out here that the coronavirus infection was significantly less during lockdown in Prayagraj district. After the lockdown ended, there was relief in Unlocked 0.5, so people became careless about this epidemic. The situation is that the number of infected patients has started increasing in each passing day. In such a situation, preventing infection is nothing short of a challenge. Negligence towards Corona in Unlocked 0.5 has overshadowed people. People are getting infected on a large-scale every day. In such a situation, District Magistrate Bhanuchandra Goswami called a meeting of district level officials as soon as the guidelines of the state government announced the closure for two days on Saturday and Sunday. He said that it is mandatory to follow the guidelines of the state government. All offices will remain closed during this period. People can get out only for necessary work. Apart from this, action will also be taken against those found loitering

needlessly. Prominent personalities of the city have suggested some important points to shun the epidemic. If one wants to avoid corona, one has to maintain physical distance. Do not leave anywhere unnecessarily. - Dr. Indu Singh, Principal, GGIC. Do not be part of the crowd anywhere. If one wants to keep oneself and family healthy, stay at home. - Jyoti Shukla, Block Education Officer (City). To avoid infection, use a mask. Keep the hands washed from time to time. Do not go out of the house without work, said Amita Saxena, Principal, KP Girls Inter College. Most people ignored ways to avoid Corona. This is an increasing infection. - Dr Murar G. Tripathi, Principal Sarvag Inter College. Stay indoors for oneself and family. Infection can occur anywhere on exit. - Devendra Singh, Principal GIC. The government has taken the right step in view of the growing case of corona. Careless people should become aware. - Sandeep Kumar. The increasing infection of the corona is becoming troublesome for all. People should be careful themselves, only then can they escape from corona. - Nankau. Diseases like corona have become a problem for people. One should be aware of this. Any kind of negligence can be harrowing. - Rashid.

HC directs state counsel to verify criminal history of Dhananjay

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The Allahabad High Court, while hearing a bail application filed by mafia-turned-politician and ex-MP Dhananjay Singh, has directed the state counsel to verify whether the explanation given in respect of criminal history of the applicant is correct or not. Hearing a bail application filed by Dhananjay Singh, Justice Dinesh Kumar Singh-1 has fixed July 15, 2020 as the next date of hearing.

Former Bahujan Samaj Party MP Dhananjay Singh was arrested on May 11, 2020 in connection with alleged kidnapping of an Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam project manager with the intent to grab a contract of material supply in construction of sewage treatment plant in Jaunpur. Earlier, his bail application was rejected by the sessions judge, Jaunpur on May 20, 2020. Hence, he filed the present bail application before the High Court. UP Jal Nigam project manager, Abhinav Singhal had registered a case against ex-MP at Line Bazaar police station on May, 10, 2020. As per FIR registered at police station - Line Bazar of Jaunpur district, the informant - Abhinav Singhal was given some type of threat and abuses were hurled on him by the accused applicant - Dhananjay Singh. It is alleged that some projects for the purpose of construction of Special Treatment Plant (STP) was going on in which complaints were received of supplying of sub-standard material. The informant was allegedly threatened by the accused applicant due to supply of sub-standard material, as per court's order. The ex-MP's counsel has stated that the statement of the informant, which has been recorded, the informant has not supported the prosecution version as he has clearly stated that no pressure was exerted upon him nor was he abducted when he had approached the accused and had talked to him. He had given assurance that he would do quality work and he was dropped at the same place from where he was picked up. Further it is argued that accused has criminal history of 38 cases and out of these 38 cases, in 24 cases, he has been acquitted, in one case, he has been discharged, in four cases,

final report has been submitted and three cases against him have been withdrawn. At present, five cases are going on in which he has been granted bail except in the present case. But no bail orders/acquittal order/discharge orders in support thereof were annexed by him in his petition, the order stated. During the course of hearing, the state counsel opposed the prayer of grant of bail and stated that applicant is an ex-MP. The state counsel has expressed that these cases may be verified by the state. Accepting the submissions made by state counsel, the court directed him to verify by the next date as to whether the explanation given in respect of criminal history mentioned in applicant's application is correct or not.

NCR to use vacant land for solar energy generation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

With installed capacity of 11 MWp rooftop solar energy plant, North Central Railway is leading the way in 'Go green initiative'. NCR is all set to use vacant Railway land for quantum jump in solar energy generation.

Under the 'Go Green initiative' NCR has expanded use of renewable energy through installing solar power plants at rooftops of service buildings, platform sheds, workshops and other buildings. More than 11 megawatt solar power plant over rooftop of office and other buildings have already been commissioned all over NCR and 85.55 lakh units of electricity worth ₹ 5 crore was generated in 2019-20. Use of solar energy helped reduced CO2 emission by 7011 tonnes annually. Of total installed capacity 3.845 MWp solar panels are installed in Prayagraj, 1.2 MWp

in Jhansi and 1.5 MWp in Agra division, while 4.1 MWp and 0.5 MWp capacity solar plants are installed in Jhansi workshop and Rail Spring Karkhana Sithauli, Gwalior respectively. Rooftop solar plant of 1.86 MWp capacity are under process of installation at different buildings of North Central Railway. Taking a major leap in generation of solar energy, North Central Railway is going for installation of solar power

plants on vacant railway land which will add to solar energy generation capacity substantially. 185 acres vacant land near various stations of NCR has already been identified and approved for this purpose and another 201 acres land near traction sub-stations of Railway is under process. With thumb rule of 1MWp electricity generation per 4 acres of land, NCR will be able to add approximately 100 MWp solar energy in future.

AU to hold final year exams from Aug 17

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Allahabad University authorities have decided to conduct the final year exams after August 17 this year. The decision follows the nod from the Home Ministry to the University Grants Commission (UGC) to allow all universities hold their final year exams in September. This was decided by university authorities in a meeting of the examination committee held on June 15. AU will now be able to finish final year exams within September, preparation of question papers and moderation process for which continue. Controller of examination, AU, Prof RK Singh said for the final year exams, we have completed around 30 per cent of the process and have begun preparing for the rest 70 per cent since June 15. As there are around 20,000 final year students of undergraduate and postgraduate courses, both at AU and other constituent colleges, the

danger of contracting the virus. Former vice-president of AUSU, Adil Hamza, said as there is no cure for COVID-19, the university authorities should refrain from taking such decisions. Likewise, NSUI (National Student Union of India) also registered their reservations against UGC guidelines. Akhilesh Yadav, former vice-president of AUSU, said who will be held responsible if any student gets infected with coronavirus. When all schools and colleges across the country are shut, the hurry to issue such guidelines is ridiculous. KV TO PROMOTE IX & XI STUDENTS: Kendriya Vidyalayas (KV) across the country would promote class IX and XI students who failed to pass their final examinations. The failed students would not have to appear for a re-exam, but will have to submit a project in the subject in which they couldn't score the passing marks. As per a letter signed by

Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) Joint Commissioner Piya Thakur, if a class IX or XI student fails even in all five subjects, he or she would be assessed on the basis of a project submitted by the student and promoted to the next class. However, this would be a one-time measure taken by KVs in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. Earlier, class IX and XI students who have failed one or two subjects used to appear for a supplementary exam. They would have to clear it to get promoted to class X or XII. If the student failed to score passing marks in more than two subjects, he/she would have to repeat a year. According to rough estimates, around 30 per cent students in class IX and 20 per cent in class XI fail to score passing marks and be promoted to the next class in KVs every year. This year, KVs had earlier announced that those who failed even in more than two subjects would be allowed to appear for a re-test.

Kanpur DM urges people to follow restrictions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

62 more test positive

District Magistrate BR Tiwari has appealed to the people of Kanpur to strictly follow the lockdown imposed up to 5 am of July 13. He said in view of the rapid rise of COVID-19 cases and the number of deaths, it had been decided to impose a three-day lockdown and carry out a comprehensive sanitisation and screening drive in the city. He warned the people that violators would be punished as per law.

Dr Tiwari said there was no restriction on shops selling milk, bread and vegetables.

He said all the public transport were banned but industrial areas, both in rural and industrial, would function normally.

KANPUR (PNS): Sixty-two more persons tested positive for coronavirus infection in Kanpur Nagar in the last 24 hours, taking the total count of cases in the city to 1,627.

Chief Medical Officer Dr AK Shukla said on Friday that 12 COVID-19 patients were discharged from hospitals in the last 24 hours. He said 1,051 coronavirus infected persons had been cured in the city. He said 494 active coronavirus cases were undergoing treatment in the city.

The CMO said with six more deaths reported in the city, the death toll stood at 82 on Friday evening.

He said 535 samples were taken in the district on Friday.

tion normally.

Dr Tiwari said people travelling to Delhi by flight would be allowed to go to airports or come from there by their personal vehicles and similarly all those travelling by trains could head to their destinations.

Those working in offices related to essential services and industrial units would be allowed to move with their ID cards.

He said private vehicles on highway were allowed and

there was no restriction and petrol pumps on highways would remain open.

He said all construction work related to public and private would continue as normal.

He said shops would open as per roster but bullion market and wholesale medicine market would remain completely shut for three days.

He said shops and other establishment opening after three days would have to sanitise the premises.

He said mask had been made mandatory and those not wearing mask will be fined Rs 500. He said doorstep delivery would be allowed.

He said barriers would be put up at all prominent crossings and movement would not be allowed.

Involve AYUSH doctors in fight against corona

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Principal Secretary (Sports and Rural Engineering) Kalpana Awasthi while addressing a special meeting with district officials at Circuit House on Friday said AYUSH doctors should be included in the fight against coronavirus and all COVID-19 patients undergoing treatment should be given Aushadhi Kadha (medicinal decoction) with immediate effect.

She said the moment a COVID-19 patient was brought to the hospital, the time record should be maintained along with the record of the treatment. She said that senior doctors should also monitor the treatment.

The principal secretary said there was waterlogging at several places in Kanpur and thus during the three-day lockdown period this problem should be attended to on priority. She said solid waste management in rural and urban areas should be disposed of timely. Awasthi said all the biomedical waste should be disposed of as per the prescribed norms and monitoring should also be carried out.

She directed the Irrigation department officials to ensure that all the waste in the canals was collected and recycled.

Awasthi said under the special drive, surveillance teams were visiting each and every home for screening and the team should maintain record as per the format.

Suspecting wife's fidelity, driver kills her

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

On the suspicion that his wife had illicit relations, a loader driver battered her to death in Kidwai Nagar police station area on Friday morning. Police have arrested the driver.

The driver, Ashok Vishwakarma of Mahavir Ka Hata at Indira Gandhi Malin Basti in Kidwai Nagar, repeatedly hit his wife, Priyanka (29), with an iron rod, killing her on the spot. Ashok was living there with his wife, a daughter and two sons.

Local residents said Ashok suspected that Priyanka had illicit relations with a local youth and often had heated arguments with her on this issue.

On Friday morning also, the couple had a heated exchange and in a fit of rage Ashok attacked her with the iron rod. As Priyanka rushed out of the house to save herself, she collapsed due to serious head injury.

Hearing screams, the local residents rushed to the spot and on seeing them, Ashok escaped.

On being informed by the local residents, police reached the spot.

Station Officer Dhanesh Kumar said due to domestic conflicts, the husband killed his wife with an iron rod and he had been taken into custody and investigations were on.

DM inspects works, issues directives

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

District Magistrate Sushil Kumar Patel on Thursday asked the working agency engaged for carrying out the works under AMRUT scheme to complete them within the deadline and by ensuring quality in them. Such directives were given by him during the inspection of the works which were in progress in the different parts of the city. During the inspection of overhead tank under construction at Avs Vikas Colony he was apprised by the working agency that it was carrying out the works worth ₹12677.93 lakh. Under it along with overhead tanks the construction of water treatment plant too was underway, the DM was told. The agency representative apprised him that a separate power station was also to be set up behind Jahnvi Hotel to ensure unhindered potable water supply throughout the Nagar Palika area.



DM Sushil Kumar Patel inspecting the works under AMRUT scheme

Executive engineer Jal Nigam said that another working agency was also engaged for Vindhya chhal town and the work was also in progress. The DM directed the EO Nagar Palika Parishad (NPP) to supervise the works, keep himself updated with the progress and coordinate with the working agencies.

NABBED: Jigna police

nabbed a criminal on Thursday. The police team led by SHO Jigna Chhotak Yadav had launched the vehicle checking drive at Dubaha Tiraha when Pankaj Jaiswal, whose name figured in the top-10 criminals of the district, and belonging to Biharsara village under the Jivan police station, was arrested along with a country-made gun and a cartridge. He was involved in around a dozen cases.

YOUTH HANGS SELF: A youth Sandeep Vishwakarma (22), son of Om Prakash Vishwakarma, a resident of Patehra village under the Halia police station hanged himself with the help of a rope on Thursday night. His family members saw his body on Friday morning.

On getting information the police team belonging to Dramondganj outpost reached the spot and took the body into custody for completing the legal formalities.

KDA launches drive against encroachments

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Development Authority has launched a massive drive against encroachments and unauthorised constructions.

To make the drive successful, the KDA has set up a special team comprising officials of KDA raid and demolition squad, property and operations department.

The KDA has given a free hand to the team, which will take help from the police as and when the need arises.

The KDA has directed the team to ensure it carries out the drive in the most transparent manner.

The team carried out a massive drive at Jawaharpuram Yojana and freed 40 big land worth of Rs 1.50 crore from encroachers.

The demolition was carried out successfully with the assis-



KDA bulldozers demolishing illegal constructions and encroachments at Jawaharpuram

Pioneer

tance of the police.

Besides, the KDA has issued directive for taking legal action against those who have encroached on the development authority's land and those carrying out unauthorised constructions there. The KDA said the drive would be carried out regularly.

The KDA spokesperson said that notices had been served on the identified per-

sons who had encroached on lands and owners of the encroached premises and those who were carrying out unauthorised construction in violation of Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act, 1973.

The demolition drive was also to be carried out at premises number 111/481 in Brahm Nagar that had already been approved for demolition

in the past but on account of the case being sub judice, it was delayed.

The KDA has asked the incharge of the drive, Executive Engineer Atul Mishra, to ensure that the lawyer nominated by the KDA pursues the case and gets the stay vacated.

The KDA has also issued notice to premises 111/478, Brahm Nagar for illegal construction.

Sharpshooter held in BSP leader's murder case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The police arrested sharpshooter Ehsan Qureshi of Meerpur Cantonment late Thursday evening in connection with the murder of Bahujan Samaj Party leader Narendra Singh alias Pintu Senger.

Pintu Senger was killed near the house of Samajwadi Party leader Chandresh Singh by the hired killers on June 20.

A day before the murder, Qureshi had studied the movement of Pintu Senger along with contract killer Haider Saifi. The next day, he along with three other shooters — Salman Beg, Faisal of Lalkuan (Rail Bazaar) and Rashid Kaliya — killed Pintu Senger.

Police are trying to track down three absconding shooters and two persons — Saud Akhtar and Shubhan Allah — who had given supari (con-

tract) for killing Pintu Senger. Police have already arrested six persons — history-sheeter Mohd Asim alias Pappu Smart, his brother Tausif alias Kakku, property dealer Manoj Gupta, Sushil Misra, Virendra Pal and Tanvir — and sent them to jail on July 3.

Talking to mediapersons, Superintendent of Police (East) Raj Kumar Agarwal said Pintu Senger had a dispute with Manoj Gupta of Kazikheda in Chakeri, Sushil Misra of Shyam Nagar, Virendra Pal of JK Colony in Jajmau, Saud Akhtar of Jajmau Dargah Sharif and Shubhan Allah alias Pappu Smart over property business. All of them had decided to eliminate Pintu Senger.

Pappu Smart gave the supari for Rs 40 lakh to notorious criminals Tanvir Badshah and Haider of Defence Colony and paid Rs 8 lakh as advance to them.

On Thursday, police arrested from Ehsan Qureshi and recovered the motorcycle, country-made pistol and live cartridges used in committing the murder.

During interrogation, Qureshi revealed that he had met Haider in a gym and the latter had offered to pay Rs 2 lakh to each sharpshooter for eliminating Senger but later he gave only Rs 25,000, a Pulsar motorcycle and firearms.

The SP (East) said Ehsan Qureshi, who had studied only up to class V, was engaged in meat and property business. After lockdown, to improve his financial condition, he had taken the supari to kill the BSP leader.

The SP (East) said the key accused and contract killer Haider was still absconding.

Haider is a firearms mechanic in a gun house on Meston Road. Due to his

expertise in firearms, he is known among the criminals of Kanpur and adjoining districts. In a bid to make a fast buck, he had taken the supari to kill Pintu Senger from Pappu Smart at Rs 40 lakh.

On the fateful day, when Pintu Senger left his house on a Scorpio SUV, Ehsan Qureshi, and Rashid Kaliya followed him on a motorcycle, and Faisal and Salman on another. As Senger reached near the SP leader's house, Faisal and Rashid fired at him, killing the BSP leader on the spot.

Pintu Senger had earlier visited the clinic of Dr Vishwas for getting his driver injected with the killers trailing him. But due to heavy crowd and presence of Dial-112 vehicle, the assailants had changed their plan and they got a chance to kill Senger near the house of SP leader Chandresh Singh.

'Population boom a global concern'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Head of sociology department of RP Singh Memorial Degree College, Dr Krishna Rathore, on the eve of World Population Day said that the theme for this year laid emphasis on applying brakes on COVID-19 and safeguarding the health rights of women and girls, especially in India.

She said population boom was a global concern and for retarding the pace of multiplying population it was necessary to create awareness in public. She said this year he thrust was being laid on making the women and girls understand the needs for sexual and reproductive health and vulnerabilities during COVID-19 pandemic.

She said 30 experts from various state would be participating in webinar on 'Population and its impact on India' on Saturday.

Dr Rathore said the COVID-19 crisis had impacted individuals, cultures and economies all over the world.

She said in view of coronavirus pandemic, women who made up the largest share of health care staff in the frontline, were disproportionately exposed to the virus.

She said supply chains across the globe were being disrupted, affecting contraceptive supply and increasing risk of unintended pregnancy. She added that sexual and reproductive health services were being sidelined as countries were in lockdown and health systems were struggling to cope, and gender-based violence was on the rise.

Dr Rathore said people were means as well as ends of economic development and they were an asset if they were in adequate strength and proved to be a liability if excess in strength. She added that the population had crossed the optimum limit in India and had become a liability.

She said the problem of population explosion in India had proved to be a big hindrance in the success of economic planning and develop-

ment. She said Uttar Pradesh had the highest population in the country totalling 23.13 crore and it was high time something was done in this direction.

Dr Rathore said the population of India was growing at the pace of 1.8 per cent per annum. She said population hindered the increase in capital formation. She said high birth rate and low expectancy of life meant large number of dependants in the total population. She said in India 35 percent of the population comprised persons less than 14 years of age and most of these people depended on others for subsistence and they were unproductive consumers and the burden of dependants reduced the capacity of the people to save and thus the rate of capital formation fell.

Dr Rathore said the rapid rate of growth of population had been the root cause of food problem. She said the shortage of foodgrains hampered economic development in two ways, firstly, people did not get

sufficient quantity of food due to low availability, affecting their health and productivity. She said low productivity caused low per capita income and thus poverty.

She said secondly, shortage of foodgrains forced the underdeveloped countries to import foodgrains so a large part of foreign exchange was spent on it and as a result the development work suffered thus as a result the rise in population caused food problem.

She said the large size of population resulted in large army of labour force, but due to shortage of capital resources it became difficult to provide gainful employment to the entire working population.

Dr Rathore added that rising population increased poverty in India and people had to spend a large portion of their resources for bringing up of their wards. She said it resulted in less saving and low rate of capital formation. She said in India, a large number of children were dependent. She said old persons above the

age of 60 and many more in the age group of 15-59 did not find employment.

Dr Rathore said population explosion gave rise to migration of people from rural areas to the urban areas causing the growth of slum areas and people live in most unhygienic and insanitary conditions. She said unemployment and poverty led to frustration and anger among the educated youth resulting in robbery, beggary, prostitution and murder etc.

She said population boom also meant more pressure on land. She said on the one hand, per capita availability of land was diminishing and on the other, the problem of subdivision and fragmentation of holdings was increasing and adversely affecting the economic development of the country.

She said it also impacted maternity welfare as high birth rate reduced health and welfare of women. She said it also led to environmental degradation.

Missing woman's body found

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

The body of a missing woman was found lying on the railway track in Sumatiya village under Jigna police station. She was identified as Manju Shukla (48), wife of Vinod Shukla, a resident of Chehra village. Her husband said that was mentally retarded and was missing from the house. The police took her body for legal proceedings.

WOMAN KILLED IN MISHAP: A young woman lost her life in a mishap in an area under the Jigna police station. As per the reports, Suresh Yadav, a resident of Kamhari village under Padari police station, was going on a motorcycle to Harghar Bazar along his wife, Pushpa (20), for medical treatment. On the way at Saai Pooranath village under the Jigna police station their motorbike collided with a tractor as a result of which Pushpa died on the spot. The police reached the spot for completing the legal formalities.

Meanwhile a woman, Kiran Devi (23), wife of Sajjan, a resident of Amoi village under the Madihan police station slipped in a well when she had gone to draw potable water from there. Her relatives rushed

her to the community health centre (CHC) situated in Madihan but the doctor on duty declared her as brought dead. On getting information about it the personnel deployed at Patehra outpost reached the spot and took the body for completing the necessary legal formalities.

THREE KIDS HURT: Three kids were injured when the house of Chhotu Sunar collapsed at Dhundhi Katra locality under City Kotwali area on Friday morning. Shiva (7) and Ganesh (6) had been referred for Varanasi in view of their serious condition while Piyush (5) was admitted to district hospital where his condition was stated to be out of danger.

CASE REGISTERED: A young woman has lodged a case against two persons of her village at the Adalhat police station alleging that they had molested and abused her on Thursday. The police have registered a case under the Sections of 354, 504 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Initiative to protect ecosystem

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL), a mini-Ratna company of the Government of India, has started work on an innovative plan to protect the natural ecosystem of the earth from the harm caused due to removal of soil and vegetation. In the first phase using the gravity drip irrigation system the original flora and fauna has been restored in the Nigahi (Singrauli) region with the planting of local species on the slope of the overburden dump removed due to coal mining and so far the results are pleasant and in the second phase, testing of this system is going to start soon in the other nearby NCL mine. As earlier experiences show roots of trees planted on dump

slopes during monsoon take at least three to five years to grow well due to loose soil and soil erosion and in the mean-



while many trees dry up. Due to lack of nutrients and irrigation in prescribed quantities of plants on time, their growth is also adversely affected. Keeping this in mind, the gravity drip irrigation-based system of bio-redevelopment

has been planned by NCL in a planned manner so that the plants take root within a year, before the next monsoon arrives and in case of heavy rain plants can also bind the soil properly. In the Nigahi area this work has been done on a two-three hectare area as a pilot project. For this such plant species have been planted which are compatible with the environmental conditions of the region so that local flora and fauna remained unchanged and they can also help in increasing the fertility of the soil. As the test results of this technique are pleasant in comparison to traditional tree planting systems the NCL's initiatives will prove to be a milestone in protecting the ecosystem and environment in the region.

Medical college principal felicitated

CORRESPONDENT ■ JALAUIN

Principal, Government Medical College, Jalauin, Dr Dwijendra Nath, was felicitated by RSS zila pracharak Deepak for his outstanding contribution during the corona phase on Thursday. Zila pracharak Deepak praised the principal and said that 165 people had recovered from



GMC principal Dr Dwijendra Nath being felicitated by RSS zila pracharak Deepak in Orai on Thursday

Covid-19 and there were only 32 active cases in the district.

Zila pracharak Deepak also appreciated the staff of medical college for their dedication. Prominent among those present were Dr Ravindra Rajpoot, Dr Manoj, Dr Jeetendra Mishra, matrons Suman and Anita, Gyanendra Tiwari and Anshul Gupta.

Rlys' attempt to boost freight traffic

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

In order to increase freight traffic the Railway Board has drawn new policy initiatives for the convenience of consumers, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh said.

MINI RAKE (COVERED WAGON): Under it train load freight can be availed on loading of minimum 20 wagons of all goods except coal, ore, RMP.

TWO-POINT RAKE (COVERED WAGON): Under it train load rate can be availed if rakes are loaded for any two destinations.

MULTI-POINT RAKE (COVERED WAGON): Under it train loading rate can be availed even if rakes are loaded for more than two destinations.

RAKE FROM TWO ORIGINATING TERMINALS

(covered wagons): - Under it train load freight rate facility can be availed on loading of rakes from the combination of any two stations notified on the zonal Railways.

Meanwhile under short distance (short lead) except coal, coke, iron ore, military traffic, railway material and container traffic on loading of all other materials up to a distance of 50 kilometre concession up to 50 per cent can be obtained, in case of loading up to a distance up to 51-75 km, up to 25 per cent and in case of loading up to 75-90 km distance concession of up to 10 per cent can be obtained.

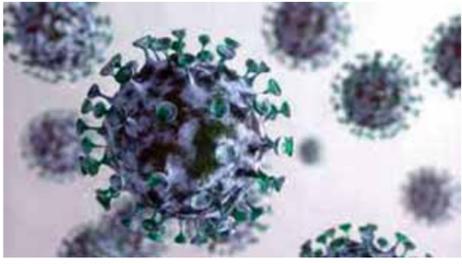
On the other hand in case of long distance (long lead) on loading of coal and coke on a distance of more than 1,400 km a concession of 20 per cent can be obtained, on loading of iron and steel on a distance of more than 1,600 km a conces-

sion of 20 per cent can be obtained and in case of loading of iron ore for a distance of 700-1,500 kilometre a concession of 15 per cent can be obtained and on loading beyond this distance one can get a concession of 20 per cent.

ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION OF WAGONS (e-RD): Under it regular consumers of the Railways after the registration could get the wagons registered on the FOIS link given to them while sitting at home.

For detailed information in this connection senior divisional commercial manager (SrDCM) in Izzatnagar, Lucknow and Varanasi divisions and chief commercial manager/FM and deputy chief commercial manager/GM at the headquarters, Gorakhpur, could be contacted personally in order to avail the facilities being provided.

Airborne transmission possible in crowded indoors: WHO



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The World Health Organization (WHO) has admitted that coronavirus may linger in the air in crowded indoor spaces suggesting the possibility of aerosol transmission in crowded and inadequately ventilated spaces over a prolonged period of time. But it has stressed that more evidence in terms of research was required in that direction.

"We have been talking about the possibility of airborne transmission and aerosol transmission as one of the modes of transmission of COVID-19," Maria Van Kerkhove, technical lead on the COVID-19 pandemic at the WHO, told a news briefing.

In the 10-page brief that explored all possible modes of transmission for SARS-CoV-2, the global health agency admitted that aerosol transmission cannot be ruled out, especially in crowded and

poorly ventilated areas. It said that airborne spread "particularly in specific indoor locations, such as crowded and inadequately ventilated spaces over a prolonged period of time with infected persons cannot be ruled out".

The WHO further stated that understanding how, when and in what types of settings the SARS-CoV-2 virus spreads between people is critical for developing effective public health and infection prevention measures to break chains of transmission. It noted that studies evaluating Covid-19 outbreaks in restaurants, choir practices and fitness classes suggested the virus might have been spread in the air.

The WHO said current evidence suggests that COVID-19 transmission occurs primarily through direct, indirect, or close contact with infected individuals through their saliva and respi-

MCI warns med colleges of derecognising them if they fail to set up bio-safety labs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Medical Council of India (MCI) has warned the medical colleges in the country that if they fail to set up bio-safety level (BSL) laboratories with RT-PCR Facility before its inspections, it may withdraw their recognition.

The council noted that despite medical colleges being reminded time and again, various colleges are yet to set up the BSL-2 labs with RT-PCR facility.

"The MCI may at any time carry out assessment to verify the availability of such facility in your college. Such assessment may be carried out by the mentor institutes such as AIIMS; Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh; and Armed Forces of Medical Sciences (AFMC) and Nizam Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS), Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of

India's COVID-19 case fatality rate declines to 2.72%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

From 2.82 per cent a month earlier, India's COVID-19 case fatality rate has declined to 2.72 per cent which is lower than that of many other countries, the Union Health Ministry said on Friday. It also noted that 30 States and

Union Territories have a fatality rate lower than the national average.

Also, there is an upward trend in the recovery rate which was recorded at 62.42% on Friday. In 18 States and UTs the recovery rates are higher than the national average, the Ministry said.

Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST)," the MCI said in a letter to them

Feeling lonely in pandemic! It's 'broken-heart' syndrome

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

If you are reeling under economic and emotional issues, societal problems and feeling lonely and isolated because of the Covid-19 pandemic, then beware! Chances are you might suffer from a 'broken-heart' syndrome!

In a study published in the recent journal of JAMA Network Open, Cleveland Clinic researchers said that they have found a significant increase in patients experiencing broken-heart syndrome also known as stress cardiomyopathy during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Stress cardiomyopathy occurs in response to physical or emotional distress and causes dysfunction or failure in the heart muscle.

Patients typically experience symptoms similar to a heart attack, such as chest pain and shortness of breath, but usually do not have acutely blocked coronary arteries. The left ventricle of the heart, how-



ever, may show enlargement, said the health experts.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about multiple levels of stress in people's lives across the country and world. People are not only worried about themselves or their families becoming ill, they are dealing with economic and emotional issues, societal problems and potential loneliness and isolation," explained Dr Ankur Kalra, Cleveland Clinic cardiologist, who led the study.

For the study, cardiologists looked at 258 patients coming into Cleveland Clinic and Cleveland Clinic Akron General with heart symptoms known as acute coronary syndrome (ACS) between March 1 and April 30th and compared them with four control groups of ACS patients prior to the

pandemic.

They found a significant increase in patients diagnosed with stress cardiomyopathy, reaching 7.8 per cent compared with pre-pandemic incidence of 1.7 per cent.

Patients with stress cardiomyopathy during the Covid-19 pandemic had a longer length of hospital stay compared with those hospitalized in the pre-pandemic period; however, thankfully there was no significant difference in mortality between the groups. All of the patients diagnosed with stress cardiomyopathy tested negative for Covid-19.

When asked to comment about the study in the Indian context, Dr Tarun Kumar, Interventional Cardiologist and associate professor at RML Hospital, Delhi said that multiple stressful reasons during difficult periods of lives, for instance in the present case Covid-19, can definitely have adverse impact on the health.

them to update their information on the coronavirus. The group of scientists argue that

VIKAS DUBEY ENCOUNTER

Cong seeks judicial probe to bring out truth



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday demanded a judicial probe by a sitting Supreme Court judge into the entire episode involving gangster Vikas Dubey's killing to bring out the truth about those who had granted protection to him and the alleged political-criminal nexus in Uttar Pradesh. While party general secretary and in-charge of UP, Priyanka Gandhi, demanded a CBI probe to ascertain the facts about the "grant of protection" to Dubey.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said at a press conference that the killing of the gangster in an encounter raises several questions and sought answers on who were the people sitting in echelons of power who were granting protection to criminals like him.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadera took a swipe at the UP government in a tweet in Hindi, saying, "The criminal has gone, but what about the crime and those protecting him."

"The Congress general secretary also accused the Yogi government of 'complete failure' in handling the Kanpur ambush case in which eight policemen were killed. She

Hours before Vikas Dubey's encounter, plea in SC claimed possibility of his killing by cops



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hours before gangster Vikas Dubey was killed in an encounter near Kanpur on Friday, a petition was filed in the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the Uttar Pradesh Government and the police to

safeguard his life and ensure that he is not killed by the cops. The plea has also sought registration of an FIR and an apex court-monitored probe by the CBI into the encounter of five co-accused, who were alleged to be associated with Dubey in the killing of eight policemen last week.

Supreme Court judge," Surjewala said at a press conference.

Priyanka too later in the day demanded a judicial probe by a sitting SC judge into the entire Kanpur episode in which eight policemen were killed by Dubey.

"The truth about those

Issue of handcuffing raises its head again

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The alleged encounter killing of dreaded gangster Vikas Dubey on Friday has kicked up dust over his not being apparently handcuffed by the police, against the backdrop of the Supreme Court's disapproving the practice in various orders,

calling it "inhuman, unreasonable, over harsh and arbitrary".

The police, on the other hand, has all along been supporting handcuffing at various judicial forums on the ground that the practice has been quite helpful in ensuring that a dreaded accused or convict does not flee the custody.

The plea, filed in the apex court by advocate Ghanshyam Upadhyay, has referred to media reports and claimed that encounter of these five co-accused by the police is "not only extremely illegal, inhuman, but also it is shocking to the

conscience of the court and is nothing but Talibanisation of the country, which cannot be countenanced at all." I had done e-filing of the petition at 2 AM and provisional number was also allotted," Upadhyay told PTI over phone.

encounter and the suspicion around it and the manner in which a criminal like Dubey was allowed to "roam around" freely, itself raises questions on the commitment of the Yogi Adityanath-led BJP Government in UP towards law and order.

Vaccine for Covid-19 not possible till at least next year, Parl panel told

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

amid a controversy over the ICMR's August 15, 2020, deadline to researchers for developing a Covid-19 vaccine, Government officials on Friday reportedly told a Parliamentary panel that it was not possible till at least next year. While the ICMR's move evoked strong criticism from several quarters, the country's top clinical research agency sought to clarify that the purpose of the letter was "meant to cut unnecessary red tape, without bypassing any necessary process, and speed up recruitment of participants."

Sources said senior officials from the departments of biotechnology, scientific and industrial research and the CISR besides the principal scientific advisor to the Government were among those called to brief the committee.

This was the first time since the lockdown on March 25 that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Climate Change met for the first time

and held a detailed discussion over the government's preparedness and handling of COVID-19. But panel chairman and Congress leader Jairam Ramesh called for the need to hold virtual meetings.

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu, however, expressed happiness over the development. The Parliament was adjourned on March 23, ahead of its scheduled time.

"I am glad that Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees have resumed functioning, three and half months since the last sitting of Parliament on March 23rd," he wrote on Twitter.

He said everyone was keen on resumption of work by these committees, "but the delay was forced by circumstances beyond our control". "Corona pandemic did cast a shadow on the working of these committees, which function on behalf of the Parliament," the vice president said.

"I am hopeful these committees would now go about examining important issues concerning respective

domains," he said.

However, urging Naidu for the holding of virtual meetings, Ramesh, in a tweet, said, "I would still request you Sir to allow virtual meetings given that Parliament is unlikely to meet for the next month at least."

While six members attended the meeting, presentations were given by the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Biotechnology and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), besides the principal scientific adviser to the government, on the Centre's COVID-19 preparedness, sources said. They said the members present at the meet also sought virtual deliberations. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs is scheduled to meet on July 15.

While the members of the panels are demanding virtual meetings, the presiding officers of both Houses of Parliament have said this requires a change of rules and endorsement by the Rules Committee of Parliament as also a nod from Parliament.

SC disposes plea seeking release of Noida's former chief engineer Yadav

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Friday disposed of a plea seeking release of Noida's former chief engineer Yadav Singh from alleged illegal custody of the CBI in a corruption case after being informed that the Allahabad High Court has already granted him bail on Thursday.

A bench of Justices R F Nariman, Navin Sinha and B R Gavai recorded the statement of Singh's lawyers on the high court bail order and said the petition has now become infructuous and disposed of the matter.

A division bench of the high court had granted the bail while hearing a habeas corpus (produce the detained person before court) petition seeking Singh's release from the alleged illegal CBI custody.

SC seeks response from Centre, 13 other States against barbaric practice to ward off animals

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday sought response from Centre, Kerala and 13 other States on a plea challenging the barbaric practices to ward off wild animals termed them as illegal and unconstitutional and violating Article 14 and 21 of the Constitution.

The plea filed by an advocate has also sought issuance of guidelines for creation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to tackle such incidents and filling up of vacancies in forest forces across the country.

A bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices R Subhash Reddy and A S



Bopanna issued notice to Centre and 13 states including Kerala and sought their responses.

The petition sought declaration of the practice of using barbaric means/snares/shaved sticks/explosives to ward off wild animals as illegal, unconstitutional, and violative of Articles 14, and 21 of the Constitution.

HC asks Centre to treat as representation plea for disaster management agency in NCR

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court Friday asked the Centre to treat as representation a plea seeking creation of a nodal agency to carry out disaster management tasks in the national capital region (NCR) so that there is uniformity in the response to any calamity, like the COVID-19 outbreak or an earthquake.

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan declined to entertain the petition, saying it was a policy decision and the petitioner ought to have first made a representation to the central government.

The court directed the Centre to treat the plea, by law student

accordance with the law, rules, regulations and government policy applicable to the facts of the case.

The bench asked the Centre to take a decision on the representation as early as possible and practicable and disposed of the plea filed through advocate Shantanu Singh.

The petition had contended that Delhi-NCR has been battling with executive problem on account of numerous discrepancies between the guidelines issued by the NCR governments - of Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh - in relation to the response mechanisms to the outbreak.

The plea had said the discrepancies were mostly in relation to inter-state travel, patient admissions and treatment, testing, dealing with containment zones.

CISCE Classes 10 and 12 results out sans merit list

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) on Friday announced the results for class 10 and 12 exams even as it decided against bringing out a merit list this year in view of "exceptional circumstances". The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), which too cancelled the pending class 10th and 12th board examinations, is likely to announce the results by next Wednesday paving the way for students to take admission in the next sessions which has been delayed due to the lockdown. While ICSE announced that it has not shared a merit list of the annual board examinations this year, sources said CBSE too would do the similar thing and announce the results without merits.

While the ICSE board recorded a pass percentage of 99.34 per cent for class 10 exams, up by 0.8 per cent since last year, the pass percentage for the class 12 exams stood at 96.84 per cent, recording a marginal increase. The board had to cancel its pending exams in view of the spike in COVID-19 cases and the result has been calculated on the basis of an alternative assessment scheme decided by it.

"Given the exceptional circumstances, this year CISCE will not be publishing a merit list for either the ICSE or ISC year 2020 examinations," CISCE Chief Executive and Secretary Gerry Arathoon said. "This year

Rahul seeks cancellation of university exams

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday demanded cancellation of university exams and urged the UGC to promote students on the basis of past performance during the coronavirus pandemic. Accusing the UGC of creating confusion, Rahul said it is unfair to conduct examinations during the COVID-19 pandemic and the UGC should listen to the voice of students. "COVID has harmed many people.

Students in schools, colleges and universities are being made to suffer. While the IITs and colleges have cancelled exams and have promoted students, the UGC is creating confusion.

UGC should also cancel the exams and promote students on the basis of past performance," he said in a video message. Congress has launched a campaign in favour of students, demanding cancellation of exams during the pandemic and urging their promotion.

The ICSE examination is conducted in 61 written subjects of which 22 are Indian languages, nine are foreign languages and two classical languages.

A total of 2,341 schools had presented their candidates in the exam. The ISC examination is conducted in 51 written subjects of which 15 are Indian languages, six are foreign languages and one is a classical language. A total of 1,125 schools had presented their candidates in the exam.

The board had last week announced an alternate assessment scheme for the two classes after the pending exams were cancelled in view of a spike in COVID-19 cases.

Encounter the truth

The UP police theory on why it killed Vikas Dubey doesn't stand to reason. The politico-criminal nexus will never be exposed



UP gangster Vikas Dubey may not have anyone mourning his death in a stage-managed accident cum encounter, responsible as he was for many killings, the last being of eight policemen. But does this sit easy on the conscience of the police, which has put out the most outrageous and improbable theory of his attempt to escape, one that triggered it to open fire? Is it not its job to deliver the culprit for courts to decide? Does it not indicate that the political patrons of Dubey and their protector policemen had too much to lose had the don spilled details of the unholy politician-criminal nexus that has entrenched itself in the State in a mutually self-serving manner? Does this not damage Chief

Minister Yogi Adityanath's image of a no-nonsense leader with zero tolerance for corruption and mafia, for good, considering he was personally supervising Dubey's case? Or is it that his individual will stands no chance in front of systemic imperatives, which his party, too, has endorsed? Dubey himself was sensing that he would be eliminated, what with the police announcing a bounty on his head and five of his aides killed in orchestrated scenarios. So he surrendered, to negotiate a longish jail term for the right to live. But his protectors and creators were scared that with all the media attention on his arrest, he could have just spilled the beans or leaked prized information. So they got rid of him. This haste is troublesome for the simple reason that had the police followed processes and built a solid case on his killing of their colleagues in Kanpur, they could have anyway got the death sentence for him. Even assuming that some among the forces had tipped Dubey about an impending raid, which he used as a trap to ambush the cops, the UP police could have used his past crimes to justify the severest penalty. Why did it feel so disadvantaged and compromised as to ignore the provisions of the law and shoot to kill? Unless the men in uniform were told to play executioner. The sad part is that the focus has now shifted from Dubey, the criminal, to Dubey, the victim of police excesses. And nobody is even discussing the heinous nature of his crimes. This, too, is then an equal travesty of justice.

According to the UP police, while Dubey was being transported back to the State, one of the cars in the convoy overturned. Taking advantage of the situation, he allegedly attempted to snatch a weapon and flee the scene, following which the police opened fire and shot him. If the narrative sounds familiar, that is because it is. Most of Dubey's aides died in such "encounters" after "attacking" the police and trying to "escape." It matters little why the policemen "conveniently" forgot to secure their weapons as per rules, did not handcuff Dubey or how he managed to escape from an overturned car with all doors shut. The police theorists also forgot to factor how a car that skids on a smooth tarmac doesn't leave tyre marks. In the end, many questions will be left hanging like aerosols that disintegrate beyond a certain point in time. Who were the political leaders who promoted the mobster's criminal empire and his clout? Which all policemen in the force are in cahoots with criminals? The fact that deputy SP Devendra Mishra, who was among the eight policemen killed, had warned his seniors of Dubey's hold over the justice system but was ignored speaks a lot about the don's clout. Which *netas* are involved with criminals in the State? Dubey, who has been patronised by the ruling BJP and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) at various times, had of late tried to curry favour back with the BJP. Apart from intensifying caste wars for votebank consolidation, he was also a quick facilitator of land and business deals that political parties, their sponsors and bureaucrats found attractive. So, who is the UP Government trying to protect? India is a democracy after all and even criminals with such intimidating rap sheets like Dubey's have a right to justice, representation and being heard in a court of law. Besides the Supreme Court has declared encounter killings as unlawful. But it is very obvious that the Adityanath administration and senior Ministers have given their tacit approval to this "encounter culture" which abounds in the State as does police impunity. And with the killing of Dubey, one wonders if Adityanath is indeed serious about flushing out criminals and cleaning up the police at the same time. If we do not break the politico-police-criminal axis, cleansing is not possible. In a society governed by the rule of law, the death of a policeman cannot be avenged by encounters of criminals. Considering the scale of Dubey's crimes and the involvement of Government officials and politicians, the State Government should have entrusted the probe to an independent and impartial agency immediately after the arrest of the don and his henchmen. But it seems the Government, too, is trying to protect someone, somewhere and has given the police a carte blanche. Will we ever know?

New film locales

The Tourism Ministry has allowed the film industry to shoot at ASI sites and monuments. A good move to promote domestic travel



Like every other sector, the film industry, too, has started adapting itself to the new normal of a post-pandemic world. So though it sells dreams, fantasy and larger than life experiences on the big screen, filmmakers have now decided to restrict their cast and crew to local talent and shoot projects within the country in small, contained sets. And since Bollywood has so far thrived on the grandeur of locales and the panoramic outdoors — Yash Chopra's romance with Switzerland being almost legendary — it is now going "vocal about local" as well, choosing unique backdrops at home. It is here that the Ministry of Tourism and Culture is chipping in to do its bit to help the industry that has used

its soft power to promote destinations and cultures. It has allowed filmmakers to shoot at more than 3,000 Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)-approved historical monuments. It has also put in place a mechanism to fast-track requisite clearances from various Ministries and departments. To cite an example, locations involving archaeological sites in metro cities required clearances from the ASI, the Home Ministry, Ministry of Environment and Forests and several other departments in the metropolis as also the police and its traffic wing. In addition to this, scripts and locations had to be vetted in advance along with the specifications on the number of shooting days. Perhaps this has been one of the biggest reasons why our monuments and museums have never featured in films to the extent that story-tellers wanted them to. In comparison, foreign locales seemed attractive because of the local tourism boards' incentives such as tax credits, cash rebates, refunds, fee-free location scouting *et al.* It took a pandemic for the Tourism Ministry to be rational about earning revenues. So it is now allowing single-window clearances, including facilitating some from various departments and States. Applications will be online and approvals may come within 15-20 days.

In the end, the locale is just a prop and packaging, what sells is content. While popular cinema in India has largely been aspirational, many of our contemporary hits have actually celebrated the local milieu. Be it *Ladakh for 3 Idiots*, *Kashmir for Lakshya*, *Delhi for Rang De Basanti* or *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* and the slew of small town stories around Lucknow, Allahabad, Kanpur and Jaipur, each city and town has emerged as a distinct character and layered the stories with heartfelt warmth. Qutub Minar, Taj Mahal and the fort palaces of Rajasthan have all featured prominently. But Shah Rukh Khan's *Paheli* will be remembered for that scene at a stepwell in Rajasthan. If some unknown wonders and sites could be filmed, it would be the best campaign for domestic tourism. Not many of us will be travelling abroad anyway. As for Switzerland, there's always our Northeast.

Passivity and its causes

It is the defining quest of consumer culture that makes for passivity as it is mainly externally-driven by advertising. How then do we overcome the feeling of insecurity?



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

After the publication of my last column on June 27, several readers have requested me to elaborate further as to how television breeds passivity. Hence this piece. Before proceeding further, one needs to be clear as to what is meant by passivity. At the visible level, it is reflected in the lack of active response leading to the absence of intervention to ensure follow-up action even in cases where one is deeply moved — such as the arrest of the culprit who prepared the explosives-packed coconut that so savagely killed the pregnant elephant in Kerala on May 27. Even if, however, there had been such intervention, it might not necessarily have indicated the absence of passivity.

The entire issue has to be seen in the context of Erich Fromm's differentiation in his book, *To Have or to Be?*, between passive and active states of mind and activity related respectively to "having" and "being" modes of existence. According to him, the "having" mode of existence, marked by alienated activity, makes for passivity. "In alienated activity," he writes, "I do not really act; I am acted upon by external or internal forces." An important manifestation as well as an ingredient of the "having" mode of existence is a situation in which "my relationship with the entire world is one of possessing and owning, one in which I want to make everybody and everything, including myself, my property. This tendency becomes so pronounced that it extends even to people, and one talks of "My doctor", "My employer", "My boss" and so on.

Fromm makes it clear that passivity does not mean the absence of activity but activity prompted by external forces in contrast to that arising from the autonomous dynamics of the perpetrator's inner self. One, therefore, can be in a passive state even when engaged in hectic exertion if the latter is prompted by a force outside one. Similarly, physical inaction does not mean passivity if it goes with autonomous inner activity. Fromm associates the active, as opposed to the passive state, with the "being" mode of existence. The latter has as its "prerequisites independence, freedom and the presence of critical reason. Its fundamental character is that of being active, not in the sense of outward activity, of busyness, but of inner activity, the pro-



ductive use of human powers. To be active means to give expression to one's faculties, talent, to the wealth of human gifts through which — though in varying degrees — every human being is endowed. It means to renew oneself, to grow, to flow out, to love, to transcend the prison of one's isolated ego, to be interested, to list, to give."

The "being" mode of existence is characterised by non-alienated activity. "I experience myself," says Fromm, "as the subject of my activity. Non-alienated activity is a process of giving birth to something, of producing something and remaining related to what I produce. This also means that my activity is a manifestation of my powers, that I and my activity are one. I call this activity productive activity."

The question is: How does television promote the "having" mode of existence? It is a technological device for transmitting images and sound over ether. Its evolution as a cultural medium has been largely determined by its symbiotic relationship with the consumer culture, which is marked by self-indulgence and compulsive, competitive and conspicuous consumption, fanned by unbridled advertising, association of personal worth and social status with a high level of consumption and the spread and intensification of the competitive spirit, a critical factor in capitalism. It is the result of a new phase in the evolution of capitalism in which the market plays a dominant role in the system, and which, in turn accounts for an unprecedented emphasis on ensuring higher turnover and surplus. Marketing has emerged as a specialised field and advertising as its cutting edge. Television, which has given advertising a reach and impact

it never had before, has become the principal vehicle of the consumer culture.

The consumer culture, which determines the content of television, including advertising, spawns passivity because it undermines an individual's autonomy. Advertising plays a critical role. In many cases, one would not even have known of a product's existence but for it being advertised. Nor would one have bought a product if advertising had not promoted it in glowing terms. The act of buying it is thus an externally-induced passive exercise.

It is not just one act of buying. Advertising not only projects commodities as irresistible objects themselves but also their possession as an indication of one's worth and status — for example by projecting that only a person of a certain class can own a certain brand of suit or a stratospherically-priced car. Given the ubiquity and the audio-visual appeal of advertisements, other criteria of status and worth such as scholarship and superior creativity in the arts, for example, writing and painting, get relegated. An increasing ability to buy things and enjoy services becomes the principal goal of a progressively large mass of people and, as a consequence, the defining quest of the consumer culture.

This defining quest of the consumer culture makes for passivity as it is mainly externally-driven by advertising. The process is reinforced by a compulsion internal to the psyche of people which reinforces the compulsive, competitive and conspicuous consumption that is a hallmark of the consumer culture. In *The Fear of Freedom*, Fromm shows how a feeling of insecurity comes inexorably

upon a person with his/her growing awareness of himself/herself separate from the surrounding nature and people.

According to him, this awareness "remained very dim over long periods of history," and the process of its growth, which he calls "individuation," "seems to have reached its peak in modern history in the centuries between the Reformation and the present." Stating that the same process is found in the life history of the individual, he says that despite biological separation, the child "remains functionally at one with the mother for a considerable period." It is linked to her by what he calls "primary ties," an expression he also uses to signify the ties connecting "the member of a primitive community with his clan or nature, or the medieval man with his clan or social caste." Their existence implies a "lack of individuality but they also give security and orientation to the individual."

In the case of the child, he/she slowly becomes aware of his/her separateness from his/her mother and others, with physical, mental and emotional development. This leads to the emergence of an "organised structure guided by the individual's will and reason." He adds, "If we call this organised and integrated whole of the personality as the self, we can also say that the one side of the growing process of individuation is the growth of self-strength." The other side is a growing feeling of aloneness which leads to a growing feeling of insecurity given the many dangers that beset a person in every society. This feeling of insecurity is ever-present in market capitalism which is the matrix of the consumer culture

and in which the market dominates the system and competition is war with no holds barred. Thus, corporations are stalked by the fear of being taken over or run to the ground by other corporations and individuals by that of losing their jobs or of uncertain futures in their own corporations taken over by new masters.

The way to overcome a feeling of loneliness and insecurity is, Fromm states, to "relate spontaneously to the world in love and work," in the genuine expression of "one's emotional, sensuous and intellectual capacities," becoming one with man, nature and himself "without giving up the independence and integrity of one's individual self." Unfortunately, conditions under market capitalism hinder the adoption of such a course. The several ways — including resort to sadistic and masochistic relationships — in which people seek to overcome their feeling of insecurity, include compulsive acquisition of possessions and conformism.

According to Fromm, "Incorporating a thing, for example by eating or drinking, is an archaic form of possessing it." An infant's form of taking possession is by swallowing a thing. Referring to many forms of swallowing, including symbolic incorporation, Fromm says, "The attitude inherent in consumption is that of swallowing." And swallowing under the influence of televised advertising is yet another example of how the idiot box and the consumer culture promote passivity.

(The writer is Consultant Editor, *The Pioneer*, and author)

SOUNDBITE

Both (India and China) are powerful nations yet neither one can destroy the other one. So both will have to live side by side.



Tibetan spiritual leader —Dalai Lama

I don't think there is anything called an outsider or an insider. It is about favouritism, that's the word that should be used. And this exists everywhere.



Actor —Divya Dutta

The magnitude of this pandemic, which has touched virtually everyone in the world, clearly deserves a commensurate evaluation, an honest evaluation.



WHO chief —Tedros A Ghebreyesus

It is the job of the courts to deliver justice. It is the job of the police to deliver the accused. The only thing killed in Yogi's encounter raj is justice.



Senior TMC leader —Mahua Moitra

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rough ride

Sir — Private companies, which solely pursue profit, cannot be expected to have a charitable approach towards society or the country. So it will not come as a surprise if the private owners, approved by the Government, come up with arrangements that will serve only the privileged classes and exclude the common people with their revised fare structures. Class barriers exist in every sphere of life, be it hospitals, schools or higher educational institutions, residential apartments and hotels among others. Thus, one could expect the tradition of exclusion to continue with the privatisation of the Indian Railways.

Having already made the decision to privatise 109 pairs of routes, the least the Government should do is to make sure that the number of existing trains or routes is not reduced. The enjoyment of the elite should not come at the cost of the lower and middle classes for whom railways are often the lifeline for travel. Adequate alternatives should be available so that people, who cannot afford the prices set by the

A new education paradigm is needed

This refers to the editorial, "No lessons to be learnt" (July 10). The ostensible reason for the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)'s removal of topics such as secularism, citizenship and federalism from its syllabi for classes IX to XII is 30 per cent reduction in the study load of students during the Coronavirus pandemic. But the choice of topics for deletion from course materials raises questions about the motivation behind the move. The board's justification, that it was meant "to reduce the exam stress of students due to the prevailing health emergency situation and prevent learning gaps" begs the question as to why the topics needed to be learnt.

The CBSE has not made clear the rationale behind dropping some subjects as "dispensable" while retaining others as "indispensable." There is a strong case for every student to have exposure to India's composite culture — its heterogeneity, diversity and pluralism. It helps in the cultivation of



tolerance as a virtue. What children learn in their impressionable age moulds and colours their whole life. Nonetheless, it is some consolation that the "banishment" of key components of what we cherish as liberal education is "temporary," a one-time measure and the expunged contents have not yet been replaced by new content, propagating a constricted vision of India and the world.

G David Milton Maruthancode

private players, do not have to discard railway travel altogether. The Government of a "welfare state" like India should always remember that providing service at an affordable rate to the weaker section of the populace must be its priority. This cannot be compromised.

Kajal Chatterjee Kolkata

Overhaul education

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "No lessons to be learnt" (July 10). While the CBSE's decision to reduce the syllabus up to 30 per cent is welcome, one fails to understand the very purpose of education when students will not learn anything about secularism,

Partition and citizenship among other subjects.

Are curricula only meant to help the students pass the examinations? For the students, textbooks are just an assemblage of facts that need to be memorised, only to be forgotten later in life. Our pedagogical systems are disconnected from lived realities. It is time to evolve teaching

methods that encourage students to apply facts to real-life problems while encouraging them to seek knowledge. The sad reality is that concepts like secularism and federalism are not really practised anymore.

Bhavik Jain Via email

The race is on

Sir — With TikTok being banned in India, various social media apps have been rushing to take its place. One of the top contenders is Instagram, which has showed its intention to fill the gap with a new app called "Reels." With thousands of content creators, who had amassed millions of followers, being stranded overnight due to a ban on TikTok, it will be interesting to see if Reels will be able to capture the same market. For influencers, the challenge will be to direct their loyalists to newer platforms. They will have to regain what they have lost.

Juhi Singh Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

EIA 2020 needs more teeth

The draft notification should have brought in tougher measures but it has notable weak points that severely undermine its very purpose



KOTA SRIRAJ

The new Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Draft Notification, 2020, that seeks to replace the 2016 version, could not have come at a better time as both the environment and humans are in the throes of suffering. The abuse of the environment by the human race has led to nature striking back in the form of zoonotic diseases such as COVID-19. The writ of mankind has run large and in the process has played havoc with the delicate balance between various ecological features of our planet. In India as well, in the name of economic development, ill-conceived projects from the environmental perspective have continuously overreached into the realm of nature and compromised the ecological well-being of our nation. This has been allowed to happen due to the absence of a robust EIA mechanism that focusses on a stringent appraisal of a project before its launch and which not only assesses its environmental sensitivity but also measures the responsibility shown by the project designers towards the local/indigenous communities that stand to be impacted by it. India direly needs to have rigorous regulations which ensure that the "polluter pays" rule is applied strictly in letter and spirit. It also needs to be ensured that the environmental clearance (EC) certificate is not abused as a licence to pillage the environment in the name of development. But all said and done, such an ideal EIA still remains a pipe dream in the country.

The EIA was started in India in 1977-78 for the evaluation of river projects. Since then it has come a long way but interestingly, even today there is a high number of instances where projects have caused immense harm to the environment, humans and wildlife alike. How these projects passed the EIA and obtained an EC is a pertinent question that needs urgent answers. The recent Oil India Limited (OIL) gas well blowout at Baghjan in Assam's Tinsukia district is an apt example of how the environment is getting adversely impacted in the absence of a robust EIA mechanism. The disaster has caused huge damage in the Dibru-Saikhowa National Park situated just 900 metres from the well and to the Maguri-Motapung wetland as well, killing birds and endangered wildlife. Houses, farms, trees and water are covered with a film of oil right next to the place where three rivers join to form the transboundary Brahmaputra river. The whole area is experiencing repeated seismic tremors. Yet it has been allowed to continue operations with impunity. That such blatant violation of environmental laws is being done by a public sector undertaking is nothing short of a disgrace and a mockery of the concept of EIA. Yet another example is the LG Polymers Plant in Visakhapatnam from where the Styrene gas leak occurred on May 7, leading to disastrous consequences. It has since emerged that the plant was operating without the requisite clearances for the last two decades. Sadly, there are many more such examples which raise the question as to who is actually granting these projects permission to operate.

The EIA is essentially the bedrock of Indian environmental conservation and needs to be firmly anchored to the concept of "precautionary principle" or put simply, the creation of foresight to grasp the consequences of our actions on the environment and humanity. This "foresight" is sorely missing and needs to be urgently built into our EIA systems so that the hidden cost of economic development is not painfully paid every time an environmentally insensitive project is cleared. In conditions such as these, the EIA 2020 draft notification should have brought in tougher measures to filter projects on the basis of the threat perception to the environment, but surprisingly it has notable weak points that severely undermine the very purpose of EIA.

The draft notification allows for *post facto* clearance, which means that even if a project has come up without requisite approvals and environmental clearances, it can still continue to operate. This feature is quite unacceptable as it will create a rash of projects that will operate without critical clearances. Additionally, the draft makes a curious provision that not only undermines the environment but is also directly detrimental to the very fabric of our democracy as it neglects consultation with local communities by limiting public consultation pertaining to the impact of a proposed project. This amounts to silencing the opinion of the common man and therefore undermining his/her democratic rights. The draft has listed a series of projects which have been exempted from public interaction. These are area development projects, modernisation or irrigation projects, highway projects and, of course, projects pertaining to defence and national security.

Although the last-mentioned projects are understandably out of the ambit of public consultation due to security considerations, the rest of the projects mentioned on the list do not deserve to be exempted from public participation and debate. With loopholes such as these, the draft cannot build on the 2016 version and may even undermine some of the good work done under the earlier version of the EIA. The Government must relook at some of the worrying features of the draft 2020 so that the future of Indian environment and humanity stand a chance against the onslaught of so-called economic development that is parallely eroding the environment.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)

IT'S THE JOB OF COURTS TO DELIVER JUSTICE. IT'S THE JOB OF THE POLICE TO DELIVER THE ACCUSED. INDIA UNDER THE BJP HAS CONFUSED THE TWO.

—TMC MP MAHUA MOITRA

POINT COUNTERPOINT



THERE IS NO NEED TO SHED TEARS OVER THE KILLING OF DUBEY IN AN ENCOUNTER. WHY IS THE POLICE ACTION BEING QUESTIONED?

—SHIV SENA MP SANJAY RAUT

Stop population explosion

With the global population estimated to touch nine billion by 2050, the huge surge is identified to be the causal factor of developmental concerns in several countries



BALWANT MEHTA SIMI MEHTA ARJUN KUMAR

When the world's population reached five billion on July 11, 1987, it was observed as the "Five Billion Day" by the United Nations (UN). Taking inspiration from this, the then Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the first time in 1989 launched an initiative to observe July 11 as the World Population Day to draw attention towards the urgency and importance of related issues. As population explosion began to take centre stage as a cause of serious concern, the themes of the World Population Day focussed on the health problems faced by childbearing women and the importance of family planning, gender equality, poverty, maternal health and human rights. With the current global population at 7.8 billion and estimated to touch nine billion by 2050, the massive surge in population is identified to be the causal factor of developmental concerns in several countries. It becomes more conspicuous for developing and lesser developed countries. Therefore, World Population Day assumes paramount importance because it highlights the problems of population explosion and raises awareness about the effects of over-population on the environment and the planet. This year's theme is to raise awareness about safeguarding sexual and reproductive health needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is very timely and significant because many pregnant women succumb to poor reproductive healthcare. A study by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) revealed that 800 women die every day during the process of childbirth. The research highlighted that if the lockdown continues for six months, with continued major disruption to health services, then 47 million women in low and middle-income countries might not have access to modern contraceptives. This would, in turn, lead to seven million unintended pregnancies. This could lead to a rise in gender-based violence, female genital mutilation and child marriages and thus threaten the transformative results attained thus far in raising the health conditions of women.

India's concerns: The concerns for India on this World Population Day are clear. It has just two per cent of the world's landmass and 16 per cent of the global population. Between the Census of 2001 and 2011, the country added 18 per cent more people to its population — translating to around 181 million. It is the second-most populous country in the world with an estimated population of around 1.37 billion by 2019. According to the Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, India is expected to add nearly 273 million people in the next three decades and surpass China's population within the next seven years. In this context, the importance of sexual and reproductive health of women and planned parenthood underscores some major concerns for the country.

Birth rate and death rate: These are important factors for the population explosion in India. The death rate and birth rate was almost the same up to the mid-20th century, which meant a slow rate of growth of population. However, with gradual improvement in healthcare facilities, level of education, availability of proper nutrition and diet, people began to live longer and the death rate began to decline. This mismatch in birth and death rate resulted in faster growth of the population in the last few decades. As on 2020, India has a registered birth rate

ACCORDING TO THE POPULATION DIVISION OF THE UN DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, INDIA IS EXPECTED TO ADD NEARLY 273 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE NEXT THREE DECADES AND SURPASS CHINA'S POPULATION WITHIN THE NEXT SEVEN YEARS. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE IMPORTANCE OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH OF WOMEN AND PLANNED PARENTHOOD UNDERSCORES SOME MAJOR CONCERNS FOR THE COUNTRY



of 18.2 per 1,000 population and death rate of 7.3 per 1,000 population.

Poverty and illiteracy: These factors also contribute immensely to the population explosion. In particular, children in rural areas are considered a blessing and support for parents in their old age, while in poorer families, more children mean more wage earners. On the other hand, the level of girls' education has a direct impact on fertility, as it is evidenced that the fertility rate of illiterate women tends to be higher than that of those who are literate. Lack of education prevents women from having full knowledge about the use of contraceptives, of the consequences of frequent childbirth as well as of their reproductive rights. On the other hand, educated women understand their rights and choices of contraception, are often vocal against early marriage and choose not to have many children. In India, female (39 per cent) illiteracy was almost twice than male illiteracy in 2011.

Family planning and other social factors: Even after 69 years of the creation of the National Family Planning Programme, the pattern of family planning has not changed much in the country. The National Family Health Survey (2015-2016) revealed that the use of condoms declined by 52 per cent over eight years and vasectomies fell 73 per cent. Added to this, women still lack the power to negotiate and choose if they are willing to get pregnant or wish to give birth to a baby, whether it is a boy or a girl. Preference for male children by families is still prevalent in the overwhelming patriarchal society in the country. In this process, a woman ends up being pregnant multiple times and producing many children till a male child is born.

Total Fertility Rate: TFR is the average number of children born to women during their reproductive years. For the

population to remain stable, an overall TFR of 2.1 is needed. Hence, a TFR of 2.1 is known as the replacement rate. India has witnessed a steady decline in its TFR, which touched 2.3 in 2016. However, there is a huge variation across States and the income level of people. Poorer States like Bihar (3.2), Uttar Pradesh (3.1), Jharkhand (2.7) and Rajasthan (2.7) still have TFRs above 2.5, while the poorest household has a TFR of 3.2 children per woman compared to 1.5 children per woman from affluent families. This shows that population growth is more concentrated in economically weaker sections of society and poorer regions of the country.

High youth unemployment: India has the highest youth population in the world, i.e. around 28 per cent of the total population. This youth potential is often referred to as the "demographic dividend" which means that if the youth available in the country are equipped with quality education and skills training, then they will not only get suitable employment but can also contribute effectively towards the economic development of the country. Every year around 25 million people enter the workforce, but only seven million are able to secure jobs, resulting in huge unemployment rates. Around 18 per cent of the young labour force is unemployed in the country today and around 33 per cent of the total youth are not in employment, education and training (NEET), which is the highest in the world. This huge unemployed and NEET category of youth are turning the demographic dividend into a "demographic disaster" for India.

The way forward: Population growth constantly acts as a hurdle in effectively addressing the problem of poverty, hunger and malnutrition and in providing a better quality of health and education, with limited resources. COVID-19 has accentuated these challenges and also raised

concerns on the timely attainment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is, therefore, important to understand that in order to have a better future for all on a healthy planet, attainment of the SDGs is critical.

Family planning is an effective tool to ensure a stable rise in the population, which in turn is crucial for the achievement of some of these SDGs. The Government at all levels — Union, State and local, citizens, civil societies as well as businesses — must take the responsibility to promote awareness and advocate the sexual and reproductive rights of women and encourage the use of contraception. This would go a long way in ensuring that every child who is born would prove to be an asset for the country, as all the research shows that investing in family planning and well-being measures have significant benefits over per Rupee spent *vis-à-vis* other investments.

Additionally, the key stakeholders need to be committed to well-researched planning and implementation on how to harness the population growth for the maximum economic benefit of the society and country. Providing adequate education and training to the young population would make them productive, effective and competent, thereby making them key contributors to economic growth. The World Population Day, 2020, is an opportune time to discuss these important issues and raise awareness about safeguarding sexual and reproductive health needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls during crises like the pandemic, so that corrective measures can be taken to overcome these challenges towards the vision of New India and an Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

(Balwant is Research Director, Simi is CEO and Editorial Director and Kumar is Director, IMPRI)

China the emerging ring master of Nepal?

It is time for the people to question the Government, especially KP Oli, for turning a blind eye to Chinese high-handedness



RISHI GUPTA

The recent border issues raised by Nepal show structural deficiencies in building trust and willingness to keep relations with India healthy. The self-centred politicisation of centuries-old peaceful ties exposes the darker side of Nepalese Prime Minister KP Oli. He has not only derailed the prospects of peace and cooperation between Nepal and India, but his hollow projection of nationalism, solely based on anti-India manoeuvring, exhibits his short-sightedness to serve vested interests in the political and diplomatic space of Nepal. This includes his growing closeness and frequent interactions with China.

On the other hand, Nepal's ruling

Communist Party (NCP) has intensified its demand for Oli's resignation for failing to contain COVID-19, derailed the economy, endangering the right to freedom, including that of the Press, and accusing India of conspiring against him politically. Amid all this, Oli can be seen misusing his power to influence the office of the President in unilaterally issuing ordinances to ease the process of splitting a party to protect his position as Prime Minister in case his party splits.

Although the Standing Committee of the NCP has lashed out at Oli for misusing his power and accusing India, Oli has turned a deaf ear to such calls and is openly entertaining Chinese assertiveness in the domestic and foreign affairs of Nepal. If reports in the Nepalese media are to be believed, it is Oli's arrogance that has driven his pro-China campaign, at the cost of destroying friendly ties with India. While Oli's new-found love for China is a challenge to India, a proactive and meddling Beijing is a bigger concern for Nepal itself.

Even though China has penetrated the Nepalese political space, Oli is

not paying heed since recent moves by the Chinese Ambassador in Nepal are aimed to protect his interests.

Ambassador Hou Yanqi has been meeting with the members of the NCP to keep Oli in office. Her direct meetings with the Prime Minister are cherry on the cake for China. However, Yanqi attracted criticism after she held a one-on-one meeting with the President of Nepal on June 5, a day before the Standing Committee of the NCP was to decide on Oli's fate. While the agenda of the meeting was not revealed, it is clear that China wishes Oli to continue as the Prime Minister.

On his part, Oli is hell-bent on bringing a Chinese-style one-party rule in Nepal. Members of the Communist Party of China were invited to provide training to the Central Committee members of the NCP before its second convention was to begin in Kathmandu on February 15. At the convention, NCP allegedly passed a resolution to amend the Constitution to make Nepal a "People's Democracy" from the existing "People's multi-party Democracy." In case, the NCP pushes to remove the word "multi-

party" from the Constitution, it will further lead the country towards a one-party rule.

This pro-China inclination may be considered an independent sovereign act of a country. But allowing Chinese intervention in the political affairs of Nepal is dangerous. While the high-handedness of Yanqi is not a hidden fact, pumping of Chinese funds through the Madan Bhandari Foundation, named after a late Communist leader seen as a source of Oli's political aspirations, needs to be seen.

It was Yanqi who had convinced Oli and his administration to sign an extradition treaty during Xi Jinping's visit to Nepal last October. While the treaty was not signed due to internal opposition, Oli gifted a Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters on the lines of the extradition treaty to China. The treaty has not only jeopardised the fate of 13,000 Tibetans living in Nepal but Kathmandu has also risked violating the pact with the UNHCR to protect the rights of Tibetan refugees.

The frequent meetings between

the Chinese officials and officers of the Nepal Army give a clear understanding of the Chinese mindset in Nepal for two reasons. One, the army has always been looked upon as the most stable institution in Nepal. No matter the political party in power, a stable relationship with the army will prove beneficiary for Chinese interests in Nepal. Two, in the last three years, the security cooperation between China and Nepal has moved from minimal to an advanced level. To promote ties in the security sector, China and Nepal have continued to strengthen cooperation through the exchange of visits of security personnel, joint exercises and training, disaster prevention and reduction, personnel training and supply of arms and ammunition to the Nepalese army.

Also, the Chinese business community in Nepal has been defying domestic laws of the host country, but local political support has kept it safe. Thamel, a tourist spot in the heart of Kathmandu known for lavish restaurants and hostels, has a complete area allegedly owned by the Chinese. They are known to lease properties from

Nepali owners on a maximum bid and run these hotels and restaurants with all-Chinese staff, who allegedly visit Nepal on tourist visas. Similar cases of fraud have come into the public sphere where Chinese-run hotels in Nepal accept payments through the China-owned WeChat app. Meaning, the Chinese tourists do not make cash transactions in local currency or on local online payment platforms. Therefore, revenue contribution by the Chinese tourists has negative implications for the Nepalese tourism industry.

In December 2019, 122 Chinese nationals were arrested by the Nepal Police for their involvement in cyber-crimes and bank frauds. Later, these criminals were deported at the request of the Chinese Government and to provide an explanation to the media, the police claimed that it had failed to frame charges against them. China is known to have little respect for the laws of other countries but local support from the Prime Minister's office is indeed a self-off. It is believed that Oli had personally attempted to avoid embarrassing China by deporting

these criminals. In February, the editor of a leading English daily in Nepal was also forced to resign after the newspaper ran an op-ed on the Coronavirus and questioned the Chinese Government's intentions in hiding its spread.

For years, leaders in Nepal have propagated a neutral position between India and China, knowing the importance of both the neighbours in trade, transit and security. They have also understood the geographical compulsions of a landlocked Nepal, but with his hollow acts of ultra-nationalism, Oli has merely served his personal aspirations.

In reality, a Chinese-style political system in Nepal will be a curse on Nepal's long fight for democracy, where thousands had sacrificed their lives. Nepal has examples of Chinese debt-traps in Sri Lanka and Africa and brain-washing in Pakistan. Therefore, it is time for the people to question the Government, especially Oli, for turning a blind eye to Chinese high-handedness.

(The writer is ICSSR Doctoral Fellow at the CSAS, JNU)

BSY to work from home as staffers test Covid-19 +ve

Bengaluru: Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa would work from his official residence for a few days as some staff at his home office have tested Covid-19 positive, an official said on Friday.

The Chief Minister, who had not come in contact with the infected staffers, took to Twitter to announce that he was healthy.

"Yediyurappa, 78, will work from his official residence 'Cauvery' for some days after some staff members at his home-office 'Krishna' tested positive for the virus," an official of the Chief Minister's Office told IANS here.

The staffers include a driver and an electrician. The Chief Minister has cancelled all official engagements till further notice and will hold video conferences with ministers and officials on Covid-19 and other issues.

In a tweet in Kannada, he said: "I am healthy. No one need for anyone to

worry about me. I will give advice and issue instructions through video conference from home."

The Chief Minister's meeting with lawmakers of the city on Friday to review the measures to contain the pandemic was cancelled.

"The home-office in upscale High Grounds was also shut on June 19 for sanitisation after the husband of a woman constable on security duty tested positive," the official said.

Yediyurappa is likely to move to his own house at Dollar's Colony in the city's northern suburb on Saturday, as government offices will be closed on second Saturday and total lockdown will be observed on Sunday to contain the virus spread.

"He will continue to work from home. Visitors will not be allowed to meet him at home to maintain physical distancing. All meetings will be through video-conference," said the official. IANS

Maha's MSEDCL delegates powers to regional offices to improve services

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Joint Managing Directors and Regional Directors would now monitor the projects for timely completion

In an effort to ensure expeditious execution of various ongoing projects and improve the quality of the services to the consumers, State Energy Minister Nitin Raut on Friday directed the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company (MSEDCL) Ltd to delegate powers to its regional offices.

During a power-point presentation held at MSEDCL office, the Minister said that the regional offices would be delegated all powers related to quantity freezing and time limit extensions under all projects including IPDS, DDUJGY, RF meter replacement and AG Solar ones. The Joint Managing Directors and Regional Directors would now monitor the projects for timely completion.

It may be recalled that in 2016 four regional offices at Nagpur, Aurangabad, Pune and Kalyan were carved out for the purpose of execution of the projects on time and also to provide quality services to the consumers. The regional offices at Kalyan and Aurangabad were to be headed by the senior IAS officers as Joint Managing Directors while regional offices at Pune and Nagpur were to be headed by non IAS officers as Regional Directors.

"However the whole thing turned out to be a futile exercise as the MSEDCL did not delegate any power to the Joint Managing Directors and Regional Directors," Dr Raut said.

"With the delegation of power to the regional offices, the projects would be completed in time and would improve the quality of the services to the consumers. The Joint Managing Directors and Regional Directors are also delegated powers to refund electricity duty to industrial consumers,"

the Minister said.

At Friday's meeting, Dr Raut directed the MSEDCL officials concerned for speedy allocation of transformers under HVDS Schemes for Agriculture pump connections.

To reduce the time for replacement of failed transformers, Dr Raut asked to invite comprehensive tenders for replacement of failed transformers including providing oil. At the same time, a new policy would be framed to provide new service connections to the agriculture pumps.

"We have decided to adopt QCBS tender system for out-sourced employees to ensure effective utilisation of out-sourced manpower with Geo mapping, KRA mapping and Geo fencing which would help to curtail expenditure on maintenance work," the minister said.

Dr Raut also appreciated the tree plantation programme initiated in Aurangabad Region and asked to undertake the same in other regions.

Soldier martyred in Nowshera Pak firing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

An Indian soldier was martyred during 'unprovoked' ceasefire violation along the line of control in Nowshera sector of Rajouri in the wee hours of Friday. During the day time, the line of control remained peaceful but intense shelling in the same area resumed again late Friday evening. Heavy shelling was reported in the forward areas till the time of filing the report.

Several civilian structures located in the forward areas were hit during the shelling from across the line of control. The Indian Army too retaliated strongly inflicting heavy damages to several Pakistani military structures in the area.

Meanwhile, Indian troops remain in a state of high alert along the line of control to foil any infiltration bid of heavily armed terrorists supported by the Pakistan army.

Defence PRO in Jammu, Lt- Col Devender Anand said, "On July 10 Pakistan Army resorted to unprovoked ceasefire violation on the line of control (LoC) in Nowshera sector of Rajouri district". He said, Indian troops responded strongly to the enemy fire. In the inci-



Havildar Sambur Gurung.

dent, Havildar Sambur Gurung was critically injured and later succumbed to his injuries. Defence PRO said, "Havildar Sambur Gurung hailed from Nepal".

According to the PRO, unprovoked firing in the Nowshera sector resumed around 6.45 p.m. He said, Pakistan army initiated unprovoked firing with small arms and shelling with mortars along the LoC. He said the Indian army retaliated befittingly. More than 2000 incidents of ceasefire violations have been reported along the loc since January this year. On Wednesday, a civilian woman was killed in Balakote sector of Poonch during intense shelling by the Pakistan Army.

Schoolteacher volunteers for vaccine trial in Bengal

Kolkata: Even as Bengal Government re-imposed a second phase of complete lockdown in over 200 extended containment zones to check further proliferation of corona cases there is good news for the citizens of Bengal.

A schoolteacher has volunteered to participate in the clinical trial of the corona vaccine being prepared jointly by the Indian Council for Medical Research and a Hyderabad-based company.

If all goes well, then Chiranjit Dhibar, a school teacher from the industrial city of Durgapur will receive the first shot of the vaccine in Odisha.

A worker of the Rashtriya Swyam Sevak Sangh, Dhibar is reported to have offered himself for clinical trial about three months ago and he was subsequently selected for the first dose of the vaccine, sources said. Dhibar could be the first human being to be subjected to clinical trial, sources said.

In response to his application he received a call from the Patna Centre of ICMR informing him that he had been selected for the trial. The State Health Department sources however refused to comment on the issue saying they have no information regarding this.

Meanwhile, the Bengal Government has vehemently objected to the central advisory asking universities to compulsorily conduct final-year examinations by September-end. The Centre and the University Grants Commission has asked the States to complete the process of holding final year exams by September 30.

The State Higher Education Department Secretary Manish Jain has written to Union HRD Ministry, requesting it to re-examine the matter in the interest of the physical and mental well-being of students at a time when the entire country was passing through severe corona situation. PNS

Holding polls in Bihar will put people at risk: Chirag Paswan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Even as Election Commission (EC) of India has not made an announcement on the poll schedule for Bihar elections, BJP's ally and Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) Chirag Paswan has questioned holding of elections under the lengthening shadows of coronavirus pandemic. Bihar polls are scheduled in October-November.

"Not only Bihar but entire country is affected by the coronavirus. It has impacted finances of the centre as well as Bihar. Holding elections amid this will financially burden the State more", said LJP head.

Paswan sought EC to take a considered view and come to a conclusion only after a "lot of deliberations."

"It should not happen that a huge population is put into danger. Polling percentage many also be very low if elections are held amid this pandemic

which is not good for democracy", tweeted LJP leader.

He, however, maintained that LJP was ready for the poll.

Over the weeks, LJP top leaders have been making varying noises over its alliance within the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance.

Paswan's comment on Bihar polls almost echoed Rashtriya Janata Dal Leader (RJD) Tejashwi Yadav who recently said that holding state in the time of coronavirus would not be good as situation was rather "scary". RJD leader had also criticised BJP for holding daily virtual rallies and interacting with party workers across the state.

LJP's comment on the timing of assembly poll has come at a time when the BJP-JDU rival RJD is constantly attacking the Nitish Kumar government on its handling of the pandemic in the State.

416 more infected in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

It turned out to be yet another Black Friday in Kerala as the State diagnosed a record number of 416 persons with Covid-19. Last Friday, 211 persons had tested positive in the State and the number has almost doubled in seven days. This is the highest number of patients to be diagnosed in the State on a single day, according to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Vijayan who briefed the media on Friday in a virtual press meet blamed the Opposition UDF for spreading canards to derail and disrupt the good work done by the Government to control the spreading of the pandemic. "We have followed the system developed by Cuba, Vietnam

and Thailand in checking and controlling the disease. In fact we have done much better than other States. Neighbouring State of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka fared worse while ours was a role model to the country," said the Chief Minister.

According to Vijayan, 123 expatriates and 51 persons who returned to the State from other parts of the country were diagnosed with coronavirus.

"What is disturbing and causing concern is the number of persons infected through social transmission. The day saw 204 persons getting afflicted through social transmission," said the Chief Minister.

The capital city of Thiruvananthapuram topped the table of districts with high-

est number of persons tested positive on Friday-129. "There are 193 hotspots in the State while 472 persons were admitted to hospitals on Friday," he said.

The day also saw 35 jawns of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police based at Alappuzha getting infected with Covid-19. "We are facing a major disaster and undergoing a serious phase. While on June 15, the number of positive cases through social transmission were 9.63 per cent, as on July 9 the rate of social transmission was 20.64 per cent," said Vijayan.

He used a major part of the press meet to blame the Congress-led Opposition for their attempts to subvert the good work being done by his Government.

Gurugram Covid-19 recovery up at 83%, says administration

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM



Around 5,507 coronavirus patients in Gurugram have been cured till Friday. With this the district recovery rate from Covid-19 has increased from 77 per cent to 83 per cent according to data shared by the district administration on Friday.

The officials also informed that after Delhi, the rate of positive patients in Gurugram in NCR has come down from 13 percent to 11 percent and they are hopeful that this rate will come down to 10 percent in the next few days.

The total number of coronavirus cases in the city on Friday rose to 6,578 including 111 new cases. The Covid-19 toll has reached 103 in the district. Gurugram now has 968 active cases and 721 of them are in home isolation, officials added. The health department said out of 103 deaths 66 died due to comorbidities and the remaining 37 without comorbidities.

"Covid testing has been increased in the district to prevent the spread of corona infection. The department is sampling 3,000 tests a day. Which includes both types- Rapid Antigen Test and RTPCR Test. Those patients have been done on propriety. Patients are being treated based on their symptoms," said Amit Khatri deputy commissioner Gurugram.

He also informed that treatment of corona patients will be started with plasma therapy in Gurugram and for this a plasma bank will be established soon.

"As soon as new guidelines in this regard will be released by the government, treatment of corona infected patients will be started with plasma therapy," Khatri said.

Dr Virender Yadav, Civil Surgeon of Gurugram, said, since June 24, around 16 thousand rapid antigen tests have been conducted to identify corona patients in the district, out of which 475 persons were found to be corona positive.

"We include the number of

tests done in RTPCR, Rapid Antigen Test and Private Labs, then this figure is more than 30 thousand. The most tests have been done in Patel Nagar, where the number of patients is much higher. Similarly, in Sohna, about one thousand samples have been tested and the rate of positive cases is about 10 percent," Yadav said.

He further informed that at present 242 corona patients are admitted in different hospitals of the district, out of which 36 patients are seriously ill. "A dedicated Covid-19 facility in Gurugram, attributed this to patient care and also will power of people to brave through this crisis," he said.

According to the order released on Friday by the administration, the district has 106 containment zones. Of these, 95 containment zones have been set up in Gurugram block, 4 in Pataudi and 7 in Sohna and Farrukhnagar have been removed from the containment zone. An area is notified as a containment zone usually when five or more cases are found and is removed from the list in 28 days.

Meanwhile, a case has been registered against the SRL lab here at Sector-18 police station for giving false reports of Corona's sample. The case has been registered on the complaint of Gurugram's civil surgeon and on the orders of Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij.

According to police spokesperson Subhash Bokan, action will be initiated against the lab as per rules.

7,862 afflicted, 226 die in Maha

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra on Friday surpassed the earlier daily highest tally of 7,074 and recorded an all-time high of 7,862 Covid-19 infected cases, even as 226 more people died of coronavirus in various parts of the State.

Six days after the state witnessed the till then daily tally of 7074 cases on July 4, the number of infected cases rose alarmingly on Friday, to touch 7,862 cases. With fresh infections, the total number of positive cases in the state climbed to 2,38,461. Similarly, with 226 fresh deaths, the total number of deaths inched closer to 10,000 mark by going up to 9,893.

Of the total 226 deaths, Mumbai accounted for 73 deaths, taking the total number

of deaths in the metropolis to 5,205 now, while the total number of positive patients climbed up by 1,337 cases to touch 90461.

In addition to 73 deaths in Mumbai, there were 53 deaths in Thane, 37 deaths in Pune, 10 deaths in Palghar, nine each in Raigad and Aurangabad, seven in Jalgaon, five each in Nashik and Solapur, four in Dhule, three in Buldhana, two in Amravati, one each in Ratnagiri, Sangli, Kolhapur, Jalna, Hingoli, Parbhani, Latur and Washim. To add to the tally, one persons from another state died of Covid-19 in the State. With 57,138 infected cases with 1,536 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 35,232 infections and 1,026 deaths till now.

In a related development, the total number of patients discharged from various hospitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year touched 1,32,625.

The recovery rate in the state stood at 55.62 per cent. The mortality rate in the state is 4.15 per cent. The state health authorities pegged the number of "active cases" in the state at 95,647.

Out of 12,53,978 samples sent to laboratories, 2,38,461 have tested positive (18.77%) for COVID-19 until Monday. Currently, 6,74,025 people are in home quarantine while 46,560 people are in institutional quarantine.

Tamil Nadu see 3,680 new cases

PNS ■ CHENNAI

There was a fall, though small, in the number of persons diagnosed with Covid-19 in Tamil Nadu on Friday. The day saw 3,680 persons testing positive for the pandemic while 64 succumbed to the disease in the last 24 hours, according to the bulletin issued by the Government of Tamil Nadu.

On Thursday, 4,231 persons had been tested positive for the pandemic and Friday's figures offered some kind of relief to the administrators. As on Friday, the number of active patients were 46,105 while the total number of persons tested positive till date breached 1.3 lakh. While 1,216 persons were diagnosed with covid-19 in Chennai, the number of persons afflicted with the

virus increased to 242 in Chengalpatti which had shown a decrease on Thursday (169).

Kancheepuram (61) and Thiruvallur (219) too tested few cases less than that of Thursday. Madurai (192) and Virudhunagar (143) also showed small falls in the number of cases. With Sellur K Raju, minister for cooperation, testing positive for coronavirus on Friday, three ministers in the Edappadi Palaniswami Government have been admitted to hospitals afflicted with the pandemic.

P.Thangamani, minister for electricity and K P Anbazhagan, minister for higher education are the other ministers undergoing treatment for covid-19. Four MLAs belonging to the AIADMK and three belonging

to the DMK too have been admitted to various hospitals after being diagnosed with corona. The lockdown ordered in Chennai during June 19 to 30 has started yielding results though in a small scale, according to an officer in the department of public health and preventive medicine. The number of persons tested positive in Chennai after July 4 was below the 2000 mark and this has enthused policy makers.

"The positivity rate in Chennai was 22 per cent on June 23. But by July 7 it has come down to 11.7 percent," said the official who did not want his name to be quoted. Positivity rate is the number of persons testing positive out of every hundred persons, explained the official.

387 test +ve on Friday in J&K

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

The total number of coronavirus positive cases are set to cross 10,000 in the next 24 hours in Jammu & Kashmir.

On Friday, the highest ever tally of 387 positive cases were detected in one single day while five more deaths due to Covid-19 were recorded, one in Jammu and four in Kashmir division.

In the last one month, Jammu & Kashmir has recorded more than 5,000 new cases of coronavirus.

The tally of positive cases stood at 4507 on June 10 and on Friday the total cases touched 9888.

According to the bulletin, "out of 9,888 positive cases, 3943 are active positive. So far, 5786 cases have recovered in Jammu & Kashmir and 159 deaths have been reported."

On ground, the situation is alarming especially in Kashmir valley which is constantly recording over 250 cases for past several days. Out of 387 new cases, 290 cases were detected from Kashmir division and 97 from Jammu division on Friday.

Srinagar is the worst affected district of Kashmir valley. So far 1545 cases have been detected in Srinagar district alone. Out of this 1012 are active positive followed by Baramulla with 1251 cases and 707 active positive.

India most attractive global market for clean energy: Modi

PTI ■ REWA

India has emerged as the most attractive global market for clean energy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday.

Launching a 750 MW solar project in Rewa in Madhya Pradesh through video-conferencing, Modi also said the state will emerge as a major hub for clean and cheap power in the country.

"Solar energy is sure, pure and secure and the country is now among the top five solar power producers in the world," he said.

The Rewa solar power plant will not only supply power to Madhya Pradesh, but

also to the Delhi Metro, Modi said.

Modi said self-reliance in electricity is integral for 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', adding solar energy will play an integral part in achieving this objective. The world is in a dilemma on whether to focus on the environment or focus on the economy, Modi said. He said solar energy is sure, pure, and secure. "It is sure because the sun would shine throughout the world; it is secure because solar energy rather than polluting environment, helps replenish it," he said.

"Today, Rewa has scripted history. Rewa is identified with the name of mother Narmada and the white tiger. Now, the

name of Asia's largest solar power project has also been added to it," he said.

Modi congratulated the people of Rewa and also Madhya Pradesh, adding the solar plant will help make the area a big centre of energy in this decade.

Madhya Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union ministers R K Singh and Dharmendra Pradhan attended the solar plant inauguration virtually.

The Rewa project comprises three solar generating units of 250 MW each located on a 500 hectare plot of land situated inside a Solar Park (total area 1500 hectare). PTI

NIA files FIR in Kerala Gold Smuggling case

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

While the Opposition Congress and the BJP staged State-wide demonstrations demanding the resignation of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in the Gold Smuggling Case through Thiruvananthapuram airport, the National

Investigating Agency probing the case filed its FIR in the Kerala High Court on Friday listing Sarith (a former UAE consulate staff) as first accused and the controversial Swapna Suresh, believed to be the kingpin, as the second accused in the case.

The NIA has listed Kochi based businessman Faizal Fareed

as the third accused while Sandeep Nair, who is absconding, has been named as the fourth accused. Swapna Suresh remained untraceable. The NIA told the court that no bail should be given to the accused as the gold smuggling syndicate is believed to be in touch with terrorist elements operating in the country.

Rajnath reviews...

From Page 1 Incidentally, these high-level diplomatic talks were held days before Corps Commanders of the two Armies are likely to meet next week at the LAC to review the pace of disengagement. The two Commanders have, so far, held three rounds of meetings in June since the face-offs began in early May. The stand-offs at all the four sites were now easing out after tension-filled eight weeks. The breakthrough came on Sunday last after National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and Foreign Minister Wang Yi talked to each other to end the impasse at the border.

Carrying forward the momentum of diplomatic level talks on Friday, sources said the two sides also agreed that for overall development of bilateral relations it was essential to maintain enduring peace and tranquility in border areas. They reviewed the situation in India-China border areas, including progress made in ongoing dis-

engagement process along the LAC in Western Sector.

As regards Rajnath's review meeting, they said Army Chief General M M Naravane briefed the Minister about the withdrawal process followed by the Chinese from all the "friction points" and the Indian response. Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat, Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh, and Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria were also present in the crucial meeting.

Naravane gave a detailed account of the implementation of the first phase of mutual disengagement of troops from Galwan Valley, Gogra, Hot Springs and Finger 4 areas in Pangong Tso, sources said.

Rajnath was also updated about the operational readiness of the Indian Army in the region to deal with any eventualities and Naravane apprised him of ground situation in all the sensitive areas along the LAC in eastern Ladakh as well as in Arunachal Pradesh,

Uttarakhand and Sikkim.

On the forthcoming talks between the two Commanders, officials said the two officials will review the modalities to withdraw additional troops now stationed in the "depth" or operational areas.

Both the sides had bolstered their troop strength besides deploying heavy weapons soon after the stand-off started in early May. Besides taking steps to hasten the process of pullback from the depth areas, the two commanders are also likely to ensure that the additional troops return to their peacetime locations within the next few weeks, sources said.

Both sides have completed the creation of a buffer zone of three kilometers in the three friction points of Galwan Valley, Gogra and Hot Springs as part of a temporary measure, they said, adding there has been thinning out of troops from Finger 4 area in Pangong Tso(lake) as well.

REPRESSION OF MINORITIES IN XINJIANG

US sanctions Chinese officials, Beijing vows to retaliate

Washington/Beijing: The US has imposed sanctions and visa restrictions on three senior Chinese officials, including the regional boss of the ruling communist party, for alleged human rights abuses targeting Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and members of other minority groups in the restive Muslim-majority Xinjiang province.

China is accused of mass detentions, religious persecution and forced sterilisation of Uyghurs and others in the resource-rich northwestern province.

Authorities there are thought to have detained about a million people in re-education camps in recent years for "vocational training" to counter radicalism and separatism in Xinjiang.

The three senior officials named by US Secretary of State

Mike Pompeo in a statement were: Chen Quanguo, the communist party secretary of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and a member of the powerful Politburo; Zhu Hailun, party secretary of the Xinjiang political and legal committee; and Wang Mingshan, party secretary of the Xinjiang public security bureau.

Chen is the highest-ranking Chinese official ever to be hit by US sanctions. He is said to be the architect of China's harsh policies against minorities, and was previously in charge in Tibet. Former security official in Xinjiang, Huo Liujun has also been named in the list.

As a result of the US move, they and their immediate family members are ineligible for entry into America. It is now a crime in the US to conduct financial transactions with all of

them, and they will have their US-based assets frozen.

"The United States is taking action today against the horrific and systematic abuses in Xinjiang and calls on all nations who share our concerns about the CCP's attacks on human rights and fundamental freedoms to join us in condemning this behaviour," Pompeo said.

In a separate statement, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the US is committed to using the full breadth of its financial powers to hold human rights abusers accountable in Xinjiang and across the world.

"The United States will not stand idly by as the CCP carries out human rights abuses targeting Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and members of other minority groups in Xinjiang, to

include forced labour, arbitrary mass detention, and forced population control, and attempts to erase their culture and Muslim faith," Pompeo said. Before ramping up the CCP's campaign of repression in Xinjiang, Chen oversaw extensive abuses in Tibetan areas, using many of the same horrific practices and policies CCP officials currently employ in Xinjiang, the top American diplomat said.

Responding to the US move, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told media briefing in Beijing that the US decision amounted to "serious interference in China's internal affairs and grave violation of basic norms guiding international relations."

"Reacting to this wrong move, China has decided to

impose reciprocal measures on US individuals and institutions with egregious behaviours on Xinjiang," he said.

Asked when the sanctions would come into effect, he said, "you will find soon enough." This is the third time this week US and China slapped sanctions and visa restrictions. China on Monday imposed visa restrictions on US individuals with "egregious conduct" on Hong Kong-related issues as a counter to American sanctions against unnamed Chinese officials deemed responsible for curbing freedoms in the city.

The US action came after China went ahead with the implementation of its new national security law for Hong Kong disregarding international condemnation to quell mass protests opposing grow-

ing Chinese interference, marginalising "one country two systems" formula governing Hong Kong.

On Wednesday, Beijing said it would retaliate the US action to impose visa restrictions on Chinese officials involved in restricting access to foreigners to Tibet with visa bans on Americans with "egregious conducts".

In recent months, the Trump administration has stepped up its actions towards China on all fronts, including clamping down on Chinese media entities, going after Chinese pharmaceutical and research cybertheft. Tensions between the US and China are already high over the coronavirus pandemic with Washington accusing Beijing of covering up the outbreak last year.

22 people killed in Nepal landslides

Kathmandu: The death toll in the multiple landslides triggered by incessant rains across Nepal in the past 24 hours has risen to 22, the home ministry said on Friday.

Seven people, including three children, lost their lives due to landslides in Kaski district. Five of them were killed after a landslide swept away a house in Sarangkot area in Pokhara in the district in the wee hours of Friday, police said.

Around 10 people were injured in the same incident and are undergoing treatment at different hospitals, they said.

In two separate incidents of landslides on Thursday night, three members of a family were killed in Besishahar of Lamjung district and two others lost their lives in Aathbiskot area of Rukum district.

Three people lost their lives in landslides in Myagdi district.

In Jajarkot district, among the 12 people who had gone missing during the landslides, dead bodies of seven, including a 10-year-old child, have been recovered, the officials said.

Seven people were untraceable after their house was wiped out by a landslide in Myagdi district. Meanwhile, a landslide that occurred in Jogimara area has obstructed the Prithi Highway in western Nepal. Narayani and other major rivers in the country have swollen due to the continuous downpour for the last 48 hours.

Meteorological Department has forecast that the monsoon rains will last for another three days. **PTI**

INT'L STUDENTS' STAY IN US

136 Congressmen, 30 Senators seek reversal of Trump decision

Washington: A group of 136 US Democratic congressmen and 30 senators, including Indian-origin Kamala Harris, has urged the Trump administration to reverse its "cruel" order that bars international students from staying in the country if they do not have in-person classes to attend.

The lawmakers, in separate letters to Acting Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, Chad Wolf and Acting Secretary, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Matthew Albence on Thursday, expressed concern over the ICE's recently announced modifications to the Student Exchange and Visitor Program (SEVP).

The new guidelines have created panic among international students, a majority

of whom come from China and India.

In its July 6 order, the ICE declared that nonimmigrant F-1 and M-1 students attending schools operating entirely online or taking only online courses will not be permitted to take a full course load and remain in the United States.

The modifications also limited many students at normally operating schools from taking more than one class or three credit hours online in order to remain in the country.

The letter, signed by senators Robert Menendez, Cory Booker and Harris, the Indian-origin senator from California among others, expressed concern that the ICE's guidance is motivated not by the public health con-

siderations, but rather by animus towards non-citizens and immigrants.

It said that the move is a flagrant attempt to hold international students hostage in order to force schools to reopen even as COVID-19 cases are rising.

"The ICE's announcement of their plans to force out or deport international students who remain at US colleges and universities and who are taking a full online course load is cruel and unconscionable.

"These students are already in the United States, are established members of educational communities, and have been determined through the visa screening process to pose no danger to the United States," the senators wrote. **PTI**

China rejects prospect of joining arms control talks with US

Beijing: China on Friday rejected any prospect of joining in nuclear arms limitation talks with the US, calling reports from Washington that it would do so a distortion of its stated position.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian told reporters the US was "neither serious nor sincere" in the proposed negotiations and should instead respond to Russia's call for an extension to the existing New START treaty limiting the number of nuclear warheads.

"China's objection to the so-called trilateral arms control negotiations is very clear, and the US knows it very well. However, the U.S. is persistent on the issue and even distorted China's position," Zhao said at a daily news briefing.

China, with the world's biggest nuclear arsenal after the US and Russia, has maintained it will not join in talks with Washington and Moscow on reducing its number of warheads.

However, Zhao appeared to hold open the door to some form of discussions saying Washington needed to "create conditions for other nuclear-weapon states to participate in nuclear disarmament negotiations." The US.

Pointedly noted the Chinese absence at talks with Russia in Vienna two weeks ago on extending or replacing New Start, a 2010 arms reduction treaty that expires in February.

The pact is between the US and Russia, long the world's major nuclear powers. The Trump administration wants China, as a rising military power, to join.

Fu Cong, the director general of the Foreign Ministry's arms control department, on Wednesday called that demand unrealistic because China has a much smaller nuclear arsenal than the other two. By inviting China to join, the US is creating a pretext to walk away from the talks without replacing the treaty, he said. **AP**

Russia skeptical about nuke pact extension prospects

Moscow: Russia's top diplomat said Friday he's not very optimistic about prospects for an extension of the last remaining U.S.-Russia arms control agreement because of Washington's focus on making China sign up to the pact.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned that Russia only wants to keep the New START treaty as much as the U.S. Does and will protect its security regardless of the pact's fate.

"We only need the extension as much as the Americans do," Lavrov said during a conference call with foreign policy experts.

"If they categorically refuse, we will not try to persuade them." The New START treaty was signed in 2010 by U.S. President Barack Obama and then Russian President Dmitry Medvedev.

The pact limits each country to no more than 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads and 700 deployed missiles and bombers and envisages sweep-

ing on-site inspections to verify compliance.

After both Moscow and Washington withdrew from the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty last year, the New START is the only remaining nuclear arms control deal between the two countries. It's set to expire in February 2021 unless the parties agree to extend it for another five years.

Russia has offered its extension without any conditions, while the Trump administration has pushed for a new arms control agreement that would also include China. Moscow has described that idea as unfeasible, pointing at Beijing's refusal to negotiate any deal that would reduce its much smaller nuclear arsenal.

Lavrov dismissed the U.S. Suggestions that Russia help convince Beijing to join nuclear arms cuts, saying that Moscow respects the Chinese position and considers it "undiplomatic" to push it on the issue. **AP**

French accused of molesting 305 Indonesian minors



Jakarta: Indonesian authorities have arrested a French man for alleged sexual abuse of minors after finding videos on his laptop computer showing him molesting over 300 children, police said Friday.

Jakarta police spokesman Yusri Yunus said Francois Camille Abello was arrested late last month in a hotel room where he was found with two naked girls.

He said police had received a tip-off from nearby residents who suspected a foreigner at the hotel was exploiting children. Abello could face death by firing squad if found guilty under child protection laws, Yunus said. **AP**

Banks sanctions about ₹1.20L cr loans to MSMEs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry on Friday said banks have sanctioned loans of about ₹1,20,099 crore under the ₹3-lakh crore Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) for the MSME sector reeling under economic slowdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, disbursements against this stood at ₹61,987.90 crore till Thursday (July 9) under the 100 per cent ECLGS for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The scheme is the biggest fiscal component of

the ₹20-lakh crore Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in May. The latest numbers on ECLGS, as released by the finance ministry, comprise disbursements by all 12 public sector banks (PSBs), 22 private sector banks and 21 non-banking financial companies (NBFCs). "As of 9 July 2020, the total amount sanctioned under the 100 per cent Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme by #PSBs and private banks stands at ₹1,20,099.37 crore, of which ₹61,987.90 crore has already

been disbursed," the finance minister said in a tweet. Under the ECLGS, the loan amounts sanctioned by PSBs increased to ₹68,145.40 crore, of which ₹38,372.88 crore has been disbursed as of July 9, she said. At the same time, private sector banks have sanctioned ₹51,953.97 crore and disbursed ₹23,615.02 cr. "Compared to 4 July 2020, there is an increase of ₹5,596.79 crore in the cumulative amount of loans sanctioned and an increase of ₹5,896.72 cr in the cumulative amount of loans disbursed, by both #PSBs and private sector banks com-

bined as on 9 July 2020," Sitharaman said.

Market leader SBI has sanctioned ₹20,788 crore of loans and disbursed ₹13,893 crore. It is followed by Punjab National Bank, which has sanctioned ₹8,977 crore. However, its disbursements stood at ₹2,975 crore as of July 9.

State-wise, business units of Maharashtra have got the highest cumulative sanction of ₹7,035 crore from public sector banks, while disbursement was to the tune of ₹3,897 crore as of July 9. It is followed by Tamil Nadu, with a total sanction of ₹6,955

crore loans and disbursements of ₹4,153 crore. On May 21, the Cabinet approved an additional funding of up to ₹3 lakh crore at a concessional rate of 9.25 per cent through ECLGS for the MSME sector. Under the scheme, 100 per cent guarantee coverage will be provided by the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company for additional funding of up to ₹3 lakh crore to eligible MSMEs and interested Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) borrowers in the form of a guaranteed emergency credit line (GECL) facility.

Room for more fiscal support in India in near term given severity of economic situation: IMF

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

A top IMF official has said that there is room for more fiscal support in India in the near term, particularly for vulnerable households and SMEs, given the severity of the country's economic situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Vitor Gaspar, Director of the International Monetary Fund's Fiscal Affairs Department, told PTI that a complete and successful implementation of the existing support measures (in particular, food provision to households) is of paramount importance. "Given the severity of the economic situation, in the near-term there is room for more fiscal support, particularly for vulnerable households and SMEs (Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises)," he said.

Over the medium-term, India will continue to have a

very limited fiscal space, and a credible and well-communicated consolidation plan will be urgently needed once the coronavirus pandemic subsides, Gaspar said.

The economic impact of the COVID-19 in India has been substantial and broad-based, he said, adding that high frequency indicators point to a sharp decline in economic activity, as reflected in the industrial production, business sentiment (in the purchasing managers index), vehicle sales and trade. In the June World Economic Outlook (WEO), growth in fiscal year 20/21 was revised down to -4.5 per cent, he said. The downward revision compared with the April WEO was driven primarily by the continued rise in the number of COVID-19 cases in India.

"This led the International Monetary Fund to make spe-

cific two adjustments. First, the assumed length of the partial lockdown was extended somewhat. Second, and more important, we made more conservative assumptions about the speed of recovery given that the health crisis has not yet been contained," Gaspar said in response to a question.

He said that the near-term growth outlook in India continues to be clouded by the global and domestic slowdown and uncertainties relating to the evolution of the coronavirus pandemic. According to the senior IMF official, India's general Government fiscal deficit is projected to reach 12.1 per cent of the GDP in fiscal year 20/21, primarily due to weak tax revenues, as well as a denominator effect associated with the negative projected nominal GDP growth -- as with all other macro variables, estimates are highly uncertain.

Govt holds back full industrial output data for 2nd month in May

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has held back the release of complete industrial production data for the second straight month in May in view of the impact of the coronavirus-induced lockdown.

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on Friday released quick estimates of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) which showed the index value at 88.4 in May against 53.6 in April, indicating a graded pickup in industrial activity. The index stood at 135.4 in May 2019.

The Ministry did not provide any comparable percentage data while noting that it is not appropriate to compare the IIP data with earlier months due to COVID-19 lockdown. The IIP data comes with a lag of six weeks.

"In view of preventive measures and announcement of nation-wide lockdown by

the Government to contain spread of COVID-19 pandemic, majority of the industrial sector establishments were not operating from the end of March, 2020 onwards. This has had an impact on the items being produced by the establishments during the period of lockdown and the subsequent periods of conditional relaxations in restrictions," the Ministry said in a release.

The IIP for the month of May 2020 stands at 88.4 against 53.6 for April 2020.

The factory output index was at 135.4 in May 2019, which indicates a contraction of 34.71 per cent in industrial activity in May 2020. Last year, the IIP had recorded a growth of 4.5 per cent.

The Ministry said, "As mentioned in the Press Release for the IIP for April, 2020, it may not be appropriate to compare the IIP for May 2020 with those of months preceding the COVID 2019 pandemic."

Benchmarks wobble on weak global cues; log weekly gains

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Sensex and Nifty closed in the red on Friday, pressured by heavy selling in financial and banking stocks amid negative cues from Asian peers.

The 30-share BSE Sensex ended 143.36 points, or 0.39 per cent, lower at 36,594.33. The broader NSE Nifty shed 45.40 points, or 0.42 per cent, to close at 10,768.05. According to traders, domestic benchmarks followed the negative trend in other Asian equities as concerns over a fresh spike in COVID-19 cases and its impact on economic recovery weighed on investor sentiment. Axis Bank was the top loser in the Sensex pack, skidding 3.14 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, Titan, HDFC, ICICI Bank, ONGC and HDFC Bank. On the other hand, Reliance Industries, Sun Pharma, HUL and Bharti Airtel were among the gainers, rising up to 2.95 per cent.

India moves up a rank to become second-largest source of FDI for UK

PTI ■ LONDON

India invested in 120 projects and created 5,429 new jobs in the UK to become the second-largest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) after the US in 2019, according to new UK Government figures released on Friday.

The Department for International Trade (DIT) inward investment statistics for 2019-2020 found India moving up from its previous third-largest spot, representing an overall 4 per cent FDI increase for the UK on 2018-2019 with 1,852 new inward investment projects in the 2019/2020 financial year. The US remains the number one source of FDI for the UK, delivering 462 projects and 20,131 jobs, followed by India, Germany, France and China and Hong Kong. Australia and New Zealand were responsible for 72 projects and the Nordic and Baltic region 134, an increase for both regions.

The number of Indian projects at 106, resulting in a job

creation figure of 4,858 last year contrasts with 120 projects and 5,429 jobs for this year.

"During the COVID-19 crisis, we have been working with India to keep supply chains open and keeping trading routes alive and as we emerge from COVID, it is vitally important we don't move to protectionism," said UK International Trade Secretary Liz Truss, addressing the annual India Global Week 2020 virtual summit on Friday.

"On the trade side, we are not letting the grass grow under our feet and the UK and India are carrying on negotiations virtually given the current crisis," she said, in reference to a planned virtual India-UK Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) summit this year.

The latest UK FDI figures show that while the number of new jobs as a direct result of foreign investment has declined -- a global trend as seen in other FDI reports this year -- the number of jobs safeguarded by FDI increased by 29 per cent.

SHORT CIRCUITS



TAAPSEE PANNU

2020 has been very disturbing. For many reasons but the fact remains that time waits for none. Or a better way to look at it is, this too shall pass. I have seen countless ups and downs in everything I tried to attempt in life but trust me that success tastes sweetest after you have had a taste of failure.



RANDEEP HOODA

Extraction was a huge success worldwide with a phenomenal reach. I really enjoyed working on it and got to learn so many new things from the amazing cast and crew. As every artist wants to reach out to as many people as possible, I'm very grateful and excited for these new horizons in international cinema opening up.



BHUVAN BAM

The feeling of helplessness and being stuck at home has been instrumental in the creation of my forthcoming single, *Heer-Ranjha*, to be honest. A lot of people are away from home and loved ones, unable to go visit them because of the COVID-19 outbreak and that's where the idea came to write this song.



MANOJ BAJPAYEE

I have been hearing that a lot of people are discussing me in the role of gangster Vikas Dubey. If the character and script are nice, then playing any real life character would be fun. The said person's life has been very theatrical and it would be very interesting to bring his life to the big screen. Let's see what happens. I am excited to play this character.

PAUL RUDD

My default is comedy but it's in my life that any kind of trauma, any kind of thing I'm doing, I tend to veer toward the humorous side of it. I have always enjoyed humour to tell a dramatic story.



CONVERSATION 45 MINUTES

Mixologist PANKAJ BALACHANDRAN tells AYUSHI SHARMA that the secret of a good cocktail is in the art of balancing.

Even if it's just a whisky soda, the right dilution, the crisp bubbles of soda water and the ice that goes into it elevate the experience

The mix that matters



It isn't a time of social meetings. It is a time to work remotely and stay indoors as much as we can. Maintaining this norm of the year, Airbnb India has launched 'At Home With Airbnb', a unique set of online experiences that brings together celebrities, artists and influencers. Each experience has been curated keeping in mind the diverse and engaging ways in which guests can connect with people across cultures and hone their skills through the platform. The experience allows guests to visit the hosts' personal space to learn their craft in small groups that allow for personal connections and conversations.

We speak to Monkey Shoulder India's brand ambassador, Pankaj Balachandran, one of the hosts, about how the audience can make the best of their time and come together for a fun and nurturing session where they not only engage

with others but master the art of making cocktails at home. Excerpts:

♦What fascinated you to host a web session?

The profession I am in, I feel like I am always the happiest when I am behind the bar and interacting with guests. This session will help me reach out to people of a whole new demographic, who I probably would have never met in person otherwise. It will be interesting to meet new people in a different setting while being able to teach

them. It's a fantastic idea with an interactive platform that brings together people from across interests and geographies, and helps build a cocktail community.

♦What has been your mantra of mixology?

Learn the basics and rules so that you can break them. Mixing drinks is a science, too, as much as it is an art.

♦How important is the presentation of a drink?

Presentation of a drink is as impor-

tant as making the drink itself. A person's first sip is with their eyes! In today's day and age, where everything is put on social media, as barkeeps, making a good-looking drink is a must. I am not a big fan of smoke and mirrors. I prefer my drinks to be clean. The focus is more on glassware, garnish or even something as simple as a block of ice. I feel the choice of the right glass makes a lot of difference. It has become important for all drinks to be presented well for them to be #InstaWorthy, essentially that is how you get conversation

started around a drink on social media.

♦It's much easier to get inspired while travelling and meeting new people. Since that is not on the cards for now, where do you find inspiration for new cocktails?

This is probably the longest that I have stayed at home in my adult life. Thanks to all the cooking that I have been up to, most of my current inspiration comes from the kitchen. Ingredients that I have never used before are slowly starting to find their way into my glass.

♦What are some of the ingredients that people can use? Since everybody is spending more time at home, how will you convince the audience that even usual, everyday ingredients can be used in different and innovative ways? My session focusses on using simple ingredients which you can find in your kitchen. Sugar, honey, coriander, mint leaves and lime, if mixed well and thoughtfully, can make some phenomenal drinks. Once you understand the principle of making drinks, balancing the sweetness and sourness or bitterness — the world (read: kitchen) is your playground!

♦How do Indians like their cocktails?

People in India are now well travelled and slowly they are looking out for quality drinks and cocktails. Things have changed over the last few years. Our consumer trends have moved quite far from drinking sweeter cocktails to well-constructed spirit-forward drinks, which focus more on delicate flavours. The change is at a slower pace, but we are moving forward and in the right direction.

♦Some tips and tricks to make a good drink...

Making a good cocktail is in the art of balancing. Even if it is just a whisky soda, the right dilution, the crisp bubbles of soda water and the ice that goes into the drink will elevate the experience. The complexity comes in when you are balancing sweet and sour ingredients or bitter and sweet ingredients. Playing with umami is opening another dimension. As long as you stay within these boundaries, you can experiment and make fantastic cocktails. (The next online session will be on July 24.)

STUDIO CHAT 30 MINUTES



♦Were you a fan of the *Alex Rider* books before you got the part?

Yes! Every single boy in my class read *Alex Rider* at some point and pretty much everyone's favourite was *Point Blanc*, which this series is based on. It was the second book and the one where things started to get a little more detailed. I loved it. It's one of my favourites in the series. I remember when I was nine, in my English class in primary school, I drew the front cover of *Stormbreaker* in my English textbook for a book review. So, to be cast in one of my favourite childhood books is an absolute dream.

♦What is it about the series of books that really spoke to you?

I think the best thing about *Alex Rider* as a character is that he's flawed. Yes, he's a highly trained super-spy but he doesn't know it. He doesn't know he's been trained to do that; he can just do things. And sometimes he doesn't do them well. He usually ends up battered, beaten, and barely alive. But he still manages to do the job that needs to be done. That was the thing that I really related to as a kid. I thought, "He has not done it perfectly but he did what he set out to do."

♦Did you and Otto hit it off immediately?

Absolutely! He's an absolute dream to work with. As soon as I went for the audition, I said to myself, "Well, there's the Alex. I have just got to hope that I'm the Tom to go with this Alex." And luckily, I was! Otto and I walked out of the audition together. They hadn't told us that we'd got it. We ended up going to the same train station and exchanged numbers. I actually waved him off, saying, "See you later, Alex." And he replied, "See you, Tom." He's still saved on my phone as Otto Rider — that's how much faith I had that he was going to get it. We

Living the dream

Actor BRENOCK O'CONNOR talks about how incredible playing Tom Harris has turned out for him for the *Alex Rider* series, his school-time favourite. By TEAM VIVA

promised each other that we'd text each other as soon as either of us heard that we were selected in any way. And luckily, we got the phone call at the same time on the same day.

♦And you have been firm friends ever since?

Yes. We've both just been on this incredible whirlwind of a journey. For me, what I'd got myself into didn't really sink in until Otto and I went for lunch with Anthony Horowitz. That was insane. To think that I was sat down talking as an equal to a guy whose books I'd read as a kid! The fact that he said he was happy to have us involved in playing the characters that he'd lived with for coming up to 20 years now — that was crazy! To get the respect and admiration of someone who owns those characters and made them up, for him to say, "Yes, you're right to play him," is incredible! So I think in that moment, Otto and I went, "Yes, we have got to do this right."

♦How would you characterise Tom?

Tom is just an average boy at an average school who is best friends with another average boy, who turns out as not so average. He's thrown into this world with Alex but more as a guy in the chair, a sort of nerdy sidekick who gets to stay home and worry

about him most of the time. I relate to Tom quite a bit because he's a massive film geek and he wants to be the next Quentin Tarantino. So that was really fun to research and get to watch all these classic films for the role.

♦So you took the opportunity to watch lots of classic films for the part?

I did. As soon as I was told I had got the part, Otto and I bonded instantly. I actually went around to Otto's for a sleepover — like getting back into the teenage years — and we watched *Reservoir Dogs*, which is the first Quentin Tarantino film I've ever seen. And it's insane! It's amazing! That was Tarantino's first film. I'm doing them in order! Then we went to the BFI to see *Clockwork Orange*. So I've been doing loads and bits of research into classic cinema to get into the head of Tom.

♦What other traits does Tom have?

I see Tom like a Labrador. Tom is outgoing, fun and energetic, but wears his heart on his sleeve. If someone's got to him, he'll let them know, which can make him quite vulnerable but that's teenagers for you. When you're 16, you are incredibly vulnerable to everything. But the extreme changes these boys are going through within this story make them even more susceptible to emotional trauma.

♦What is Tom like at school?

Tom is more outgoing than Alex, who is more reserved, keeps to himself, but somehow gets more attention. Tom is more desperate for attention until he gets it because he always gets it for the wrong reasons. Mainly it's from the teachers. Tom wants to be better with girls and people in general. So he dresses a little bit flashier, tries a little bit harder, wears more colours than Alex would. But as soon as anything works, Tom always shies away from being noticed. He's that guy who wants to be seen.

♦Does your character add a bit of humour in the story?

Yes. I see Tom as the light relief of the show. He's always there with a quip or a little joke here and there to make Alex feel better who goes through some rough times. Tom is there to try and help him through that.

There are so many different plot lines and twists and turns in the series that sometimes all you need is a teenager messing around and being a bit of a git — which is what Tom provides.

And I think my favourite thing about Tom is that sense of humour. In the darkest moments where Alex is beaten and broken, Tom makes a stupid joke about it. Not because he's being mean but because he knows it will make Alex feel better. Well, that's why their friendship works so well, I think.

♦Do you think the audience will identify with Tom and Alex's relationship?

Yes. The two are just usual kids going to school. They're not cool enough to be in with the cool kids gang but they're not quite nerdy and geeky enough to be on the outskirts of them. They're just in limbo. No one really pays them much attention. If they get in trouble, no one cares. If they do something good, no one cares. They're complete-

ly average in every way or so people think.

♦Tell us about the phone moment in more detail.

In the process of trying to find out where the party is going on in episode one, Tom gets his phone confiscated by a teacher. His first port-of-call is to go to Alex and say, "I need you to get it back. It's in a locked room in a school surrounded by teachers. Only you can do this." So, Alex, very casually, just scales the building, breaks into the window, opens the locked drawer and gets the phone back. Tom's very much aware that Alex isn't your normal boy. He's had a very interesting upbringing. But he's got no idea of how that potential could be used in a real-life situation. He just wants his phone back! (Laughs)

♦How do you think this is going to compare with your time on *Game of Thrones*?

Game of Thrones was incredible, one of the best experiences of my life. I was very lucky to be involved in that show and work with some great names and legends of the industry. But I am thrilled to try something new on this job and work with a younger cast. I was the only child in my scenes on *Game of Thrones*, and in this I've got a lot of time at school, there's a lovely talented young cast, and there's the *Point Blanc* classmates. I don't get to meet them in the show but I've met them in real-life and they're a lovely, talented bunch of people. So working on *Alex Rider* has just been a very exciting experience.

♦How would you describe the show to your friends?

Do you remember those books that you loved as a kid? Yeah, we've made them into a brilliant TV series and I am in it! Watch it, yeah? It's just a beautiful service to the fans. (The series airs on SonyLIV.)

Now that the pandemic is here, everybody is looking at ways to incorporate healthy ingredients in their diet. Did you know tea is also one of the healthy beverages that can aid immunity? Read on to know more

HAPPINESS IS A CUP OF TEA



It's early in the morning. You have just woken up from a not so good dream. You open the curtains, look outside the window and it is raining heavily. The weather is gloomy and dark. It seems like the day is going to be a dull and somber one. Just then, your house help enters the room with your morning cup of tea. The aroma of that hot, thick-milked beverage excites all your senses and instantly, your morning, opposite to how you were imagining it to be a few minutes ago, turns out perfect. For a tea lover, happiness is certainly a cup of tea!

The beverage is known to have originated somewhere around 2700 BC in China and was initially used for medicinal purposes. Slowly but steadily, it started gaining popularity as it served medical requirements, had great taste, and also quenched one's thirst. As higher sections of the society got to know about this tasteful potion, it began to become a means to socialise. Over a period, it started spreading to the lower sections as well because consuming it has never been a very costly affair. Since then till now, tea has seen itself pass through ages. Today, it helps create memories. A few sips of hot tea after getting drenched in the rains with one's companions is a story that many can relate to and ponder upon. Now that the pandemic is here, everybody is looking at ways to incorporate healthy ingredients in their diet. Did you know tea is also one of the healthy beverages that can aid immunity? Read on to know more.

The immunity booster: Tea comes in a lot of varieties but one common thing among them is antioxidants. They not only battle free radicals which may cause heart problems but also help in repairing damaged cells in the body. A study finds that the beverage boosts the body's defense mechanism against infections and contains a substance that might turn into a drug to protect against various diseases. Coffee does not have the same effect, researchers tell. Other studies have linked tea to helping combat osteoporosis, the brittle bone disease and to relieving some allergy symptoms. It's a very common fact that our bodies cannot concentrate for long durations and hence, to get going, it is always advisable to keep taking breaks after concentrated sessions. In the late afternoon, around three and four, we are the most vulnerable. There is a dip in energy levels and the body



While picking any one of it, just make sure you go for a well-sourced product with high-quality ingredients.

Everybody is usually aware of the benefits of green tea and its extracts. But here are a few more. It is exceptionally high in flavonoids that can help boost your heart health by lowering bad cholesterol and reducing blood clotting. Many studies show that green tea extracts, that are processed from the plant, can promote weight loss, blood sugar regulation, disease prevention and exercise recovery. It can also help keep your skin and liver healthy, reduce blood fat levels, regulate blood pressure and improve brain health, all together. Imagine what wonders it can do to your body. It caters mostly to people who cannot give up their daily dose of tea filled with milk and sugar but still need to opt for a healthier option. The beverage certainly has mood-altering magic that surprisingly starts working after a couple of sips, to say the least.

Tea is India's go-to drink. The country consumes approximately 10 lakh tones of it every year. Yes, you read that right. It can be touching 40 degrees with a glaring sun over one's head but still spotting a tea stall on the roadside would give people the happiness which most things in this world can not.

(The author, Dheer Shah, is the CEO of Samaara Tea.)

feels more worn out than earlier in the day. The best way to recharge yourself is of course a nap but that is a luxury, which many cannot afford. The four o'clock tea time is therefore a popular and very common practice to regain the energy you need to power through another few hours of work. Tea contains caffeine which helps in keeping the mind alert and can keep one going for longer periods.

Both caffeinated and herbal teas may provide minerals such as potassium, phos-

phorus, magnesium, sodium, copper and zinc. Our very own masala *chai* also adds to the list of healthy drinks as it contains many Indian spices such as cloves, cardamom, cinnamon and star anise — all of which are known to benefit our overall health.

Honey, lemon and ginger are all known to be brimming with a plethora of health-promoting properties and together they form the ultimate remedy. Honey is full of antioxidants and antibacterial properties

that help boost our digestive system and immunity. It also helps soothe a sore throat. Lemon, on the other hand, is a good source of Vitamin C, which is known as an excellent immunity booster. And ginger helps slay germs and alleviate the symptoms of an upset stomach. Honey lemon and ginger tea helps in relieving menstrual cramps as well.

Herbal tea has been used for millennia because of its medicinal qualities but there is a dire need to sip on the beverage now

more than ever. It doesn't contain caffeine, which is why it is known for its calming properties. The ultra-properties of herbal tea is also known to relieve stress and in many cases, work as an anti-depressant. There are numerous types of herbal teas, all with their unique benefits such as chamomile, hibiscus, peppermint and many more. Herbal tea like fennel helps in relieving stomach ache, flatulence, colic and constipation. It also promotes better digestion of food and reduces gastric problems.

R E C I P E S

MANGO AND GRILLED TOFU SALAD WITH SWEET PAPRIKA DRESSING

WHAT YOU NEED

- Mangoes (ripe): 2
- Carrots: 2
- Cucumber: 2
- Mixed greens (arugula, mixed lettuce, mint, sweet basil, fresh coriander sprigs): 1 bowl
- Tofu: 80 gm
- Sweet paprika powder: 1 tsp
- Fresh ground pepper: 1 tsp
- Salt: ½ tsp

For dressing:

- Zest of 1 lime
- Lime juice freshly squeezed: ¼ cup
- Sweet paprika powder: 1 tsp
- Salt: 1 tsp
- Olive oil: 2 tbsp
- Honey: 1 tsp
- Freshly ground pepper



- Then cut the tofu into wedges, season it with salt and paprika.
- Grill the tofu on both sides with some olive oil on medium heat and keep it aside.
- Take out carrot and cucumber ribbons and add it to cold water so that they remain crisp.
- Tear mixed greens and add to the ice-cold water.
- Mix all the ingredients of the dressing in a jar and shake well.

- Pat dry the leaves, carrots and cucumber ribbons.
- Mix all of them and add salt, pepper, and paprika, mangoes and tofu. Then add 3/4th dressing to the mix.
- Arrange it on a plate with tofu and mangoes on the top.
- Garnish with mint leaves and paprika powder.
- Drizzle some of the remaining dressing on top.

Courtesy: Head chef Tarun Sibal at Street Storys.

COLA GLAZED TURKEY WITH GARLIC MASHED POTATOES

WHAT YOU NEED

- Turkey breast (boneless and sliced): 1
- Cola: 1 cup
- Tamarind paste: 3 tbsp
- Ginger garlic paste: 1 tbsp
- Red chilli powder: 1 tsp
- Black salt: ¼ tsp
- Oil: 2 tbsp
- Red chilli flakes: 2 tsp
- Garam masala powder: 1 tsp
- Mixed herbs: 2 tsp
- Soya sauce: 1 tsp

- Brown sugar: ½ tbsp
- Nutmeg powder: ¼ tsp
- Salt to taste

For garlic mashed potatoes:

- Potatoes: 3-4
- Garlic (chopped): 1 tbsp
- Butter: ½ tbsp
- Milk: ¼ cup
- Black pepper (crushed): ¼ tsp
- Salt to taste

METHOD

- In a bowl, add tamarind paste,

NO BAKE WALNUT COCOA CHERRY BARS

WHAT YOU NEED

- Oats: 1/2 cup
- Pitted dates: 1 cup
- Shelled walnuts: 1/2 cup
- Unsweetened dried cherries: 1/2 cup
- Unsweetened cocoa powder: 2 tbsp
- Salt to taste

CHOCOLATE CAKE

WHAT YOU NEED

- Chocolate biscuit: 2 packets
- Milk: 1 cup
- Baking powder: ¾ tsp
- Sugar (optional)

METHOD

- Crush biscuits properly. Grind them well in a mixer.
- Add ¾ tsp baking powder and mix well in one direction.
- Put one cup of milk and again mix the batter well. Add one spoon of sugar only if you have a sweet tooth.



METHOD

- In a large food processor jar, put oats, dates, walnuts, cherries, cocoa powder and salt. Process until the mixture resembles

a crumbly dough.

- Set the mixture onto wax paper and shape evenly into a half inch thick rectangle.
- Chill it for at least one hour and cut it into bars. Bars do not need to be stored in the refrigerator.

Courtesy: Chef Sabyasachi Gorai.



- Grease the cake tin with butter or oil.
- Pour the batter in the tin.
- Bake in the microwave only for five

- to six minutes.
- Garnish with choco-chips or add melted chocolate syrup on the top.

Courtesy: Socialkhor.



ginger and garlic paste, red chilli flakes, mixed herbs, red chilli powder, salt, garam masala powder, black salt, and mix well.

- Pour half the cola in the turkey slice

and rest to the marinade, mix well.

- Drain the cola from the turkey and keep it aside.
- Add the turkey slices to the marinade, mix well and keep aside for at least 20 to 30 minutes.
- Make a sauce by taking the left over cola in a pan and reduce it to half. Add soya sauce, brown sugar, nutmeg powder, red chilli flakes, and mixed herbs.
- When the sauce reduces to half, switch off the flame and keep the sauce aside.
- Heat oil in a pan, place the turkey slices on pan and grill from both the sides, pour leftover marinade on top

and cook until turkey is cooked thoroughly.

- Transfer to a serving plate, pour prepared sauce on top and serve hot with garlic mashed potatoes.

For garlic mashed potatoes:

- Bring a large pot of water to boil; add potatoes, and boil for about 20 to 25 minutes until soft.
- Drain, peel, and mash the potatoes and place in a large bowl.
- Heat butter in pan, add chopped garlic and sauté until garlic is lightly brown.
- Combine mashed potatoes, milk, salt, crushed pepper, and mix well.

Courtesy: Celebrity chef Harpal Sokhi.



CALIFORNIA WALNUTS CHOWPATTY BHEL PURI

WHAT YOU NEED

- Puffed rice: 4 cups
- Onions (finely chopped): 2
- Tomatoes (finely chopped): 2
- Green chilies: 2
- Mint chutney: 4 tbsp
- Sweet tamarind chutney: 4 tbsp
- Chaat masala powder: 1 tsp
- Chana dal: 1/4 cup
- Roasted chana: 1/4 cup
- Salt to taste
- California walnuts (chopped roughly): 1/2 cup
- Sev: 1/4 cup
- Papdi puris: 12-15

METHOD

- Keep each and every ingredient as mentioned in respective bowls.
- All you need to do is toss all ingredients in a large bowl.
- Garnish generously with sprinkling sev, chopped California walnuts and serve it along with papdi puris.

Courtesy: Chef Varun Inamdar.

VAR dominates Premier League results

Man Utd continues winning run after Bruno opens scoring from controversial penalty decision; Kane denied again in goalless draw for Spurs

AFP ■ BIRMINGHAM

Manchester United were given a controversial helping hand by VAR in their 3-0 win at Aston Villa, while Tottenham suffered fresh frustration at the hands of the review system in their 0-0 draw at Bournemouth on Thursday.

United were far too strong for lowly Villa, but their opening goal came from a dubious penalty that left the hosts fuming.

In the 27th minute, United midfielder Bruno Fernandes spun into Ezri Konsa before tumbling in the area despite little evidence of a foul by the Villa defender. The penalty stood after a VAR review and Fernandes slotted home his eighth goal since joining from Sporting Lisbon in January.

United doubled their lead in first half stoppage-time when 18-year-old Mason Greenwood scored his fourth goal in three games with a fierce finish. Paul Pogba got the third in the 58th minute, the France midfielder bagging his first goal of an injury-hit season with a low curler from 18 yards.

Fifth placed United move to within one point of fourth placed Leicester in the race to qualify for the Champions League.

United, unbeaten in their last 17 games in all competitions, are the first team in Premier League history to win four consecutive matches by a margin of three or more goals. Second bottom Villa are four points from safety and haven't won in six games since the restart.

There was more VAR controversy at Dean Court, with Tottenham left in danger of



Manchester United's Paul Pogba, centre, celebrates with teammates after scoring his team's third goal against Aston Villa

Henderson season is over: Klopp

Liverpool: Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson has been ruled out of the rest of the Premier League champions' campaign after the midfielder sustained a knee injury in their midweek win at Brighton, manager Jurgen Klopp said on Friday.

Klopp was forced to withdraw Henderson 10 minutes from fulltime after a collision with Yves Bissouma but the German said the 30-year-old does not require surgery.

"It is the best possible of the bad news. He does not



need surgery," Klopp said. "He will not play again this season."

missing out on European competition for the first time since the 2009-10 season.

Jose Mourinho's side were off-key for long periods, but could feel hard done by after

Josh King's push on Harry Kane in the penalty area went unpushed despite a VAR review in the first half. Just a week after Tottenham were the victims of a harsh VAR decision in their

loss at Sheffield United, Mourinho felt they were the victims of another bad mistake by the replay official.

"The same referee who did the VAR decision against

"In the world, everybody knows that is a penalty. And I say everybody, I mean everybody."

— JOSE MOURINHO (SPURS MANAGER)

"Anybody who has played the game knows what (Bruno) Fernandes is trying to do. He does the turn and he gets it wrong. He puts his stud on Konsa's shin. It changed the game."

— DEAN SMITH (ASTON VILLA BOSS)

"The performance of the referee was like my team, not so good."

— CARLO ANCELOTTI (EVERTON MANAGER)

BRUNO EMULATES RONALDO'S FEAT

New Delhi: Manchester United playmaker Bruno Fernandes on Friday was rewarded for his fine run in the English top-flight as he was named the Premier League's player of the month for the second time in a row.

Fernandes had earlier won the prize for June as well. In doing so Fernandes emulated compatriot Cristiano Ronaldo, who had achieved the same feat in 2006 during his trophy-laden stay at Old Trafford. **PNS**

Sheffield United, Michael Oliver. Opinions matter, it's not only mine. Everybody knows that's a penalty and when I say everybody, I mean everybody," Mourinho said.

Real-Juve, Barca-Bayern clashes in the offing

NYON: Barcelona and Bayern Munich will meet in the quarter-finals of the Champions League should both sides make it through, Friday's draw for the final eight confirmed.

Both teams still need to complete their last-16 ties, with Bayern almost there having won 3-0 away to Chelsea in the first leg, while Barcelona are due to host Napoli after a 1-1 draw in Italy.

Meanwhile, if Man City can finish the job in their last-16 tie against Real Madrid, Pep's team will go on to a quarter-final against either Juventus or Lyon. City won 2-1 in Madrid in the first leg in March, while Juventus must overturn a 1-0 deficit from the first leg of their last-16 tie against Lyon.

Postponed in March as the coronavirus pandemic took over, all remaining last 16 second legs are due to be played on August 7 and 8. The winners will advance to the *Final Eight*, which will be held as a unique straight knockout tournament in Lisbon due to the difficulties caused by the coronavirus.

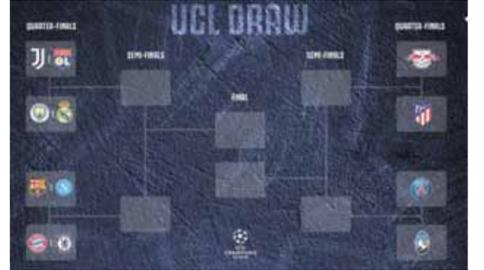
The draw threw up the possibility of a Clasico semi-final, with Barcelona and Madrid on collision course to meet in the last four should both make it that far.

The other side of the draw is clearer. First-time quarter-finalists RB Leipzig will meet Atletico Madrid, runners-up to city rivals Real the last time the Champions League final was played in Lisbon in 2014.

The winners of the Leipzig vs Atletico quarter-final will face either Paris Saint-Germain or Atalanta in the last four.

The quarter-finals will be played between August 12 and 15 in the Portuguese capital, with matches shared between Benfica's Estadio da Luz and Sporting's Estadio Jose Alvalade.

The semi-finals are scheduled for August 18 and 19, with the final on August 23 at the Estadio da Luz. **AFP**



English, German clubs on opposite ends of UEL draw

AFP ■ NYON

Manchester United could find themselves facing English rivals Wolverhampton Wanderers in the semi-finals of the Europa League in Germany in August, after Friday's draw for the latter stages of the tournament put the teams on a collision course.

While the Champions League is to be completed with a straight knockout mini-tournament in Lisbon, the Europa League will be played to a conclusion with an identical format in Germany.

The Europa League final will be played in Cologne on August 21. The quarter-finals and semi-finals will be played as one-off ties with Cologne, Duisburg, Duesseldorf and Gelsenkirchen all hosting games.

Before that, all last-16 ties must be completed. Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's United, who have been in fine form since the Premier League season resumed last month, are effectively already through to the last eight having won 5-0 away to Austrian side LASK in the first leg.

Assuming they progress, the 2017 Europa League win-

ners will take on either Istanbul Basaksehir or FC Copenhagen in the quarter-finals on August 10 or 11. The Turkish side beat Copenhagen 1-0 at home in the first leg in March.

Meanwhile, Wolves drew 1-1 away to Olympiakos in the first leg of their last-16 tie. They are due to host the recently-crowned Greek champions in the return and would then need to beat Sevilla — who have won the Europa League and its precursor, the UEFA Cup, a record five times — or Roma in the quarter-finals.

There are three German teams left in the Europa League, including Bayer Leverkusen. They won 3-1 away to Rangers in the first leg of their last-16 tie and will be confident of advancing to the last eight.

Leverkusen is barely 40 kilometres from Cologne, where the final will be played. They would play either Inter Milan or Getafe in the quarter-finals.

Only six of the eight last 16 first-leg matches were played in March. The other two ties — Inter vs Getafe and Sevilla vs Roma — will be decided as one-off matches on neutral ground.

SINGLES

WIMBLEDON TO ALLOCATE PRIZE MONEY

WIMBLEDON: Wimbledon will pay out \$12.5 million in prize money to 620 players despite the tournament's cancellation because of Covid-19 pandemic, the All England Club said on Friday. After consulting with its insurance provider, club officials said 256 players who would have competed in the main draw will each receive 25K pounds (\$31,000), while 224 players who would have competed in qualifying will each receive 12,500 pounds.

PORTO EDGE CLOSER TO PORTUGUESE TITLE

LISBON: Porto moved within touching distance of claiming the Portuguese league title as they won 3-1 at struggling Tondela on Thursday and need three points from their last three games to guarantee being crowned champions. Captain Danilo Pereira opened the scoring two minutes into the second period before Moussa Marega added a second midway through the half. Roman pulled one back for Tondela with a penalty but Porto got a spot kick of their own deep in stoppage time which Fabio Viera converted. Porto moved up to 76 points from 31 games, leaving defending champions Benfica trailing in second place with 70 points from 31.

SOCHI, MUGELLO TO HOST F1 RACES

SPIELBERG: Formula One's governing body the FIA added two new confirmed races at Mugello and Sochi to its coronavirus-truncated season on Friday. Mugello in Italy will stage a Grand Prix for the first time on September 13 with Russia's Sochi circuit following on September 27. Mugello will appropriately mark Ferrari's 1,000 Grand Prix.

SEVILLA MOVE CLOSER TO CL SPOT

SEVILLE: Sevilla rallied in the second half to beat Athletic Bilbao 2-1 in La Liga, moving closer to a Champions League berth. The come-from-behind victory in Bilbao on Thursday left Sevilla tied on points with third-place Atletico Madrid and increased its gap to fifth-place Villarreal to six points with three rounds to go. Only the top four qualify for next season's Champions League.

WTA ADDS TWO EVENTS TO 2020 CALENDAR

FLORIDA: The WTA has announced that two more additional tournaments, the Prague Open in the Czech Republic and the Top Seed Open in Lexington, have been added to the 2020 calendar, which now features 21 tournaments. The WTA Tour, which has remained suspended since March 19, will begin with the Palermo Ladies Open on August 3, followed by events in Prague and Lexington a week later.

JAMIE DOUBTFUL FOR US OPEN PARTICIPATION

LONDON: Seven-time Grand Slam doubles winner Jamie Murray became the latest player to express doubts about travelling to the United States for the US Open that starts on August 31. Murray said that the US seems to have regressed in the battle against coronavirus and the increased number of cases in the country means that he would be more comfortable staying back.

VERSTAPPEN BEST IN 2ND PRACTICE

SPIELBERG: Red Bull driver Max Verstappen posted the fastest time on Friday and Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton lacked pace in the second practice session for the Styrian Grand Prix. Verstappen was .043 seconds quicker than Valtteri Bottas - Hamilton's teammate at Mercedes and .217 ahead of Racing Point driver Sergio Perez. Hamilton was only sixth fastest, about .7 seconds slower than Verstappen. He spent a chunk of time in the garage while his team worked on his car. **Agencies**

Slow and steady Windies build their lead

AFP ■ SOUTHAMPTON

The West Indies are building a handy lead over England on the third afternoon of the first *#raissethebat* Test, moving 5-31 in hand at the Ageas Bowl.

Responding to 204 all out they were 5-235 at tea on Friday, with Roston Chase and Shane Dowrich sitting on an unbroken stand of 49.

Spinner Dom Bess took two of the four wickets to fall on the day, carrying more than his share in the most batsman-friendly conditions of the match to date.

The West Indies began on 1-57, 147 short of England's mark, with Kraigg Brathwaite and Shai Hope chipping another 42 off the deficit in the first hour of play.

Hope earned a reprieve just before the drinks break, a



1st Test, Day 4
Live from 3:30pm IST
SONY SIX NETWORK

Jofra Archer lbw chalked off after the paceman overstepped for a no-ball.

England were not made to pay for that error, with Hope aiming a big drive at Bess just a few deliveries later and sending

ing a sharp slip catch in Stokes' direction.

The arrival of Shamarh Brooks lifted the run-rate, with the new batsman helping himself as Archer and Bess offered some loose fare.

Brathwaite was looking resolute at the other end, converting his overnight 20 into the first-half century of the match from 113 balls.

It was also his first Test 50 since July 2018 but his hopes of progressing towards three figures ended when Stokes pushed him on the back foot and rapped him high on the knee roll. He was given out for 65 by Richard Kettleborough and when he called for the review the dismissal was upheld on two counts of 'umpire's call'.

While that was enough to justify the decision, the West Indies would be forgiven for harbouring frustration at the number of tight calls that have gone against them in this match — the first since the ICC relaxed its rules on the use of 'home' officials. An inside edge off Chase's

bat took the score within 50 of England by lunch.

The brakes were successfully applied at the start of the afternoon session as Anderson and Bess built up pressure with dot balls. It took nine overs to build to a head but when it did Brooks wafled at Anderson and nicked to Jos Buttler for a useful 39.

England kept the squeeze on and it did not take long to exhaust Jermaine Blackwood's notoriously small reserves of patience. The number six swung hard at Bess as he wheeled away, hacking to Anderson at mid-off to make it 186 for five.

Chase slowed to a crawl to reach 27 not out in 115 deliveries but Dowrich kept things moving, going after Bess with three boundaries down the ground, to begin the job of taking the game away.

Broad 'frustrated, angry, gutted' at being dropped

SOUTHAMPTON: Seasoned England pacer Stuart Broad on Friday said he felt "frustrated, angry and gutted" after being dropped from the opening Test, adding that he sought clarifications over his future in the team.

The hosts opted to go for James Anderson, Mark Wood and Jofra Archer alongside stand-in captain Ben Stokes and spinner Dom Bess, leaving out Broad from the first Test which started at Ageas Bowl on Wednesday.

Broad, who is England's second-highest wicket-taker of all time with 485 scalps, last missed a home Test eight years ago when he was rested against West Indies in 2012.

"I found out about 6pm the night before the game. Stokesy told me just that they're going with extra pace in these conditions," Broad said on *Sky Sports Player Zone*.

"I've been frustrated, angry and gutted — because it's quite a hard decision to understand. I've probably bowled the best I've ever bowled in the last couple of years. I felt like it was my shirt having been in the team through the Ashes and going to South Africa and winning there," he added. **PTI**

Red Bull dash Vettel's hopes of a return

Spiegelberg: Red Bull have given "a definite no" to four-times F1 world champion Sebastian Vettel's hopes of returning to them next year, team boss Christian Horner said on Friday.

The German, who is out of contract with Ferrari at the end of the season and facing an uncertain future, had said on Thursday he would say yes to a Red Bull drive if one was offered.

Vettel won his titles with Red Bull from 2010-13 and remains on good terms with the Austrian energy drink brand's senior management.

"We had a brilliant time with

Seb," Horner told Sky F1 television during practice for the Styrian Grand Prix at Austria's Red Bull Ring. "He will forever be a part of our history."

"We didn't expect him to be on the market this year and our commitment is to our existing drivers. We think we've got a great pairing in Max (Verstappen) and in Alex (Albon). We think that has great potential for the future as well."

"So unfortunately it's not something we are going to be able to accommodate. That is a definite no, I'm afraid. Sebastian I think is aware of that."

Agencies

Spinners are being taught new methods to shine ball: Mushtaq

IANS ■ WORCESTER

Former Pakistan tweeker and F team's current spin bowling coach Mushtaq Ahmed on Friday stated that players have responded well to the new regulations put forward by International Cricket Council (ICC) in the wake of coronavirus pandemic.

The Pakistan cricket team is currently in England, acclimatising themselves ahead of their much-anticipated series which includes three Tests and as many T20Is starting August.

The visitors are currently under a 14-day quarantine period, following which they will travel to Derbyshire on July 13.



They had started their preparations for the series with a two-day inter-squad scenario-based practice match played on July 5-6 at Worcester.

"Despite the Covid-19 relat-

ed challenges, the players have been exceptional so far," Mushtaq told *pcb.com.pk*. "We are trying to make them familiar with the protocols and they have responded wonderfully well. Players are cop-

ATK Mohun Bagan to sport green & maroon jersey

PTI ■ KOLKATA

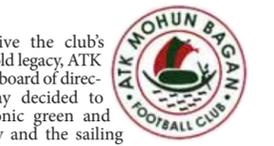
Keeping alive the club's 131-year-old legacy, ATK Mohun Bagan board of directors on Friday decided to retain the iconic green and maroon jersey and the sailing boat logo.

The new entity will be known as ATK Mohun Bagan and the Mariners' historic 'sailing boat' logo will also remain barring the addition of ATK, which has acquired an 80 per cent stake in the century old club.

"The culture and tradition which has made the brand a household name has been preserved. The logo retains its essence," the merged entity said in a statement.

"The addition of ATK within the logo ensures that the fast growing and passionate following built on a short but highly successful period is also being carried forward," he said.

The club also announced its plans to build a world class football academy in Bengal and to refurbish the existing Mohun Bagan facility so that ISL and AFC home games are held there.



Verona snatch late 2-2 draw vs Inter

Verona: Inter Milan allowed yet another game to slip from their grasp as Verona snatched a late equaliser to hold them to a 2-2 draw on Thursday.

Antonio Conte's side appeared to have done the difficult part when they came from behind to lead 2-1 early in the second half only for Miguel Veloso to level for Verona with five minutes left.

That means Inter stay fourth with 65 points, having been overtaken by Atalanta after their 2-0 win over Sampdoria on Wednesday, and

important points," said Conte. "The fact that we have lost 20 points from leading positions must give us pause for thought. We've lost so many points in a stupid way — if we hadn't, the table would look very different."

Since the Serie A restart, Inter have been held 3-3 at home by Sassuolo after conceding twice in the last 10 minutes and on Sunday they lost 2-1 to visitors Bologna after leading 1-0 and missing a penalty — a performance which left Conte fuming. **AP**

are 10 adrift of leaders Juventus with seven games to play. Verona are ninth with 43.

"It's disappointing because we deserved to win the match and instead we have lost more

PCB forced to sell logo rights for lower price

Karachi (PTI): The Pakistan Cricket Board has managed to rope in a sponsor for the national team ahead of its England tour but it had to settle for a far less amount than what it envisaged.

According to a reliable source, PCB has decided to sign a one-year contract with Transmedia, a company which has been buying various sponsorship and media rights for the last few years.

"Transmedia has offered 600 million rupees for a three-year deal for the main logo on Pakistan team's jerseys and kits. The Board after facing disappointment on several fronts has now decided to sign a one-year deal for \$200m on a pro-rata basis," the source said.

ing with the new regulations with regards to shining the ball as well. "Historically, spinners have used saliva to shine the ball now they are being taught new methods in lieu of the revised ICC rules and regulations.

"What makes me really happy is that the players and support staff are working together on team goals and objectives and I am sure in due course the players will be fully aware and ready for the new challenges as we prepare for what is expected to be a tough series against a strong English team in their own backyard.

"I am confident we have the players that can not only compete but also win the series."