

OPINION 6 LIBERAL AGENDA IN AMERICA

MONEY 9 NIFTY RECLAIMS 10K-MARK

SPORT 12 3 WINDIES PLAYERS REFUSE TO TOUR ENG

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ANUSHKA URGES STRICT HYGIENE 10 VIVACITY

Plasma therapy raises hopes

Emerging as promising, safe treatment option for Covid patients in US

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Convalescent plasma therapy is emerging as one of the most promising and safe treatment options for patients with severe Covid-19 symptoms, a new trial in the US has found.



There were no serious adverse side effects caused by the plasma transfusion.

The findings have generated hopes in the global community rattled by the virulent virus which has claimed over 3

lakh people with over 63 lakh infected cases across the world. The clinical trials to transfuse plasma from recovered Covid-19 patients into critically ill patients started on March 28, while physician-scientists

around the world scramble to test new drugs and treatments against the Covid-19 virus, convalescent serum therapy emerge as potentially one of the most promising strategies," said study researcher Eric Salazar from Houston Methodist Hospital.

Patients were treated under emergency use guidelines (eIND) from the US Food and Drug Administration and then received approval from the FDA to open up the trial to more patients as an investigational new drug (IND).

According to the researchers, the therapeutic approach dates back to at least as early as 1918 when it was used to fight the Spanish Flu.

Recently, the convalescent plasma therapy was used with some success during the 2003

SARS pandemic, the 2009 influenza H1N1 pandemic, and the 2015 Ebola outbreak in Africa.

HCO's trials to resume: WHO

Geneva: The World Health Organization on Wednesday said clinical trials of the drug hydroxychloroquine will resume, having been suspended pending a safety review in the search for coronavirus treatments. "On the basis of the available mortality data... the executive group will communicate with the principal investigators in the trial about resuming the hydroxychloroquine arm," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said.

Bamiyan 2.0! Buddhist carvings defaced in POK

Religious, cultural rights trampled with impunity, India condemns destruction of heritage, asks Pakistan to vacate POK

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing concern over recent reported acts of vandalism of 800AD Buddhist heritage in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK), India on Wednesday asked Pakistan to "immediately vacate all illegally occupied territories".



destruction of invaluable Indian Buddhist heritage located in Gilgit-Baltistan area of the Indian territory under illegal and forcible occupation of Pakistan," he said.

He said India has sought immediate access for its experts to visit the area in order to restore and preserve the invaluable archaeological heritage.

Sidhu's exit from Cong imminent, Prashant tries woo him into AAP fold

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

It's likely to be the end of road for cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu in the Congress.



Sources said Sidhu has been approached by Aam Admi Party (AAP) and poll strategist Prashant Kishor is believed to be mediating between Sidhu and AAP.

Prashant Kishor is believed to be mediating between Sidhu and AAP. AICC sources said that Sidhu has himself not been active in recent times within the party and has distanced himself from the cadre.

Sources confirmed that poll strategist Prashant Kishor has spoken to Sidhu about his future in the AAP.

Sidhu, who was twice a BJP MP, joined the Congress ahead of the Punjab election in 2017. He contested the polls and went on to become a Cabinet Minister.

For first time, over 9K cases in a day

9,238 +ve, 258 deaths take corona cases to 2,16,429, total deaths to 6,087

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Wednesday for the first time went past 9,000 new cases in a day amid a Chinese study indicating that the countries could see around 15,000 new cases from June 15 onwards.

The country recorded 9,238 new cases and 258 deaths on Wednesday, which took its overall tally of cases to 2,16,429 and total death count to 6,087.

National Capital Delhi saw a big spike with new cases rising to 1,513, the highest so far in a day, and as many as 59 people succumbing to the dreaded virus in day. So far, Delhi has 23,645 confirmed cases and 615 deaths.

A Chinese study which had rightly predicted the growth of coronavirus in many countries including the US has painted an alarming picture, saying that India will add around 15,000 new cases every day from June mid.

Maharashtra appeared to be peaking in terms of Covid-19-triggered fatalities and infections on Wednesday, as it notched the highest-ever day tally on 122 deaths and as many as 2,560 more people tested positive for the pandemic in various parts of the State.

With the fresh deaths and infections, the total number of deaths in Maharashtra jumped to 2,587 while the total number of infected cases went up to 74,860 in the State.

The worsening situation in the State can be evinced from the fact that there have been a total of 816 deaths in Maharashtra during the previous nine days.

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	74,860	2,587	32,329
Tamil Nadu	25,872	208	14,216
Delhi	23,645	615	9,542
Gujarat	18,117	1,122	12,212
Rajasthan	9,652	209	6,744
Uttar Pradesh	8,729	229	5,176
Madhya Pradesh	8,588	371	5,445
West Bengal	6,508	345	2,580
Bihar	4,326	25	2,025
Karnataka	4,063	53	1,514
Andhra Pradesh	3,971	68	2,464
Telangana	3,020	99	1,556
Haryana	2,954	23	1,089
Jammu & Kashmir	2,857	34	1,007
Odisha	2,388	9	1,416

Covid-19 IN INDIA
TOTAL CASES: 2,16,429
DEATHS: 6,087
RECOVERED: 1,03,949
ACTIVE: 1,06,382

Declare stock within six months: Govt to exotic species owners

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Inventory knowledge through voluntary disclosure to ensure CITES compliance

Inventory knowledge through voluntary disclosure to ensure CITES compliance

Government has asked animal breeders and owners of the exotic live species such as animals, fish and birds to voluntarily declare their stock's within next six months as also ensure health cards of their subjects.



The plan is to prepare an inventory and streamline the import of exotic animal/birds or fish species in the country, which is now being considered to be fraught with risk of zoonotic (animal to human) transmission. Exotic live species are animal or plant species moved from their original range (location) to a new one most often by people.

This is for the first time that the Government has taken such a move. The officials at the Union Environment Ministry have asserted that precaution is better than prevention before any coronavirus kind of pandemic spreads here. In India as in the world, much of the exotic live species is currently legal.

UP has proved experts wrong on Covid: Yogi

BISWAJEE BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

Claiming to have proved experts wrong UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that because of the effective measures taken by the Government there are only over 8,000 corona positive cases in Uttar Pradesh against experts' grim projection of over 70,000 cases by the end of May.

'Only over 8K cases in UP against their grim projection of over 70,000 cases'



He admitted that containing this disease was a financial strain and said in April there was shortage of funds to meet the Government expenses.

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Major administrative reshuffle in Punjab

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

In a major administrative reshuffle, as many four IAS, ten PCS, and eighteen IPS officers were transferred, while four 1990 batch Punjab cadre IAS officers have been promoted as the Additional Chief Secretaries.

Among those promoted include Anirush Tewari, Vijay Kumar Singh (profirma promotion), Anurag Agarwal, and R Venkat Ramani.

Those IAS officers transferred and given new postings include Tanu Kashyap, Harpreet Singh Sandhu, Ajay Arora, and Sagar Setia.

In the reorg exercise of the police administration, Inspector Generals (IGs) of four zones, and two Senior Superintendents of Police (SSPs) have been transferred.

Those IAS officers transferred and given new postings include Tanu Kashyap, Harpreet Singh Sandhu, Ajay Arora, and Sagar Setia.

8 dead, 50 hurt as boiler blast causes fire in Gujarat factory

PTI ■ BHARUCH

Eight workers were killed and 50 others were injured on Wednesday in a massive fire triggered by a blast in the boiler of a chemical factory at Dahej in Gujarat's Bharuch district, police said.

The death toll may rise further as some of the injured workers are in a serious condition, according to police.

As companies of methanol and xylene chemicals are located near the affected factory, authorities have shifted about 4,800 people from nearby Luvara and Lakhigam villages to safer places as a precautionary measure.

About 230 workers were present inside the factory. Yashwantrao Rastogi, located in Dahej Special Economic Zone-1, 42 kms from Bharuch, at the time of the incident in afternoon, they said.

Nisarga blows itself out, Mumbai relieved

Landfall in Raigad, cyclone impact not severe in Mumbai

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai and the people in the neighbouring towns and cities heaved a huge sigh of relief on Wednesday evening, as cyclone Nisarga skipped the country's commercial Capital and surrounding areas after making a landfall at Murud-Janjira town in Raigad district, triggering strong winds, heavy rainfall and raging sea surge in the coastal Konkan region.



A tree fell on a house after rain and strong winds triggered by Cyclone Nisarga, in Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra on Wednesday.

"It (cyclone) made the landfall at Latitude 18.5 N and Longitude 73.2 E, just north of the historic Murud-Janjira town.

A slight change of direction towards North Eastwards meant, the impact of the cyclone on Mumbai was less severe than originally expected," an official release said.

CAPSULE

GOOGLE REMOVES MITRON, REMOVE CHINA APPS

New Delhi: Google has removed from its app store an Indian mobile application, 'Remove China Apps' that allowed users to delete Chinese games and other software from their Android smartphones, citing violation of its policies.

KOLKATA PORT NAMED AFTER SYAMA PRASAD

New Delhi: The Government on Wednesday gave the approval to rename Kolkata Port as Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port.

TRUMP ADMIN MOVES TO BLOCK CHINESE AIRLINES

Washington: The Trump administration moved on Wednesday to block Chinese airlines from flying to the US in an escalation of trade and travel tensions between the two countries.

Haryana again reports highest single day surge of 302 new cases

34 cases in Punjab

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Yet again, Haryana on Wednesday reported highest single day surge of 302 fresh Covid-19 cases so far, raising the total of infected cases to 2,954. Of the 302 new cases reported on Wednesday, 132 are from Gurugram alone.

deaths have been reported so far in the State. With 1,089 people cured and discharged from the hospitals, there are 1,842 active Covid-19 cases in Haryana now.

Gurugram reported 132 new cases of the disease, taking the total in the district to 1195. Faridabad reported 69 new cases of the deadly disease, taking the total in the district to 487. Sonapat reported 28 cases, taking tally to 261. Nuh reported six more cases, taking total to 78.

Karnal reported 10 more cases, taking count to 66. One more case reported in Fatehabad, taking total to 25. One more case reported in Bhiwani, taking total to 45. Seven more cases have been reported in Rohtak, taking total to 97. 28 more corona

virus cases reported in Narnaul, taking total to 70. Hisar reported eight more cases, taking the tally to 61. One more case reported in Kaithal, taking total to 30. One more corona virus case reported in Kurukshetra, taking total to 37.

According to officials, a total of 20 Covid patients were discharged from various districts including four in Gurugram, 10 in Sonapat, one in Nuh, one in Panchkula, one in Yamunanagar and two in Sirsa.

By Wednesday evening, Haryana had sent as 127,895 nasivirymms on a few routes recovered from the virus, the state now has 300 active cases with total number of recovered patients standing at 2029, at a recovery rate of 85 percent.

The corona death was reported from Jalandhar on Tuesday night where a 64-year-old, already suffering from diabetes and asthma, died at Ludhiana's Dayanand Medical College and Hospital. A resident of Ludhiana, the woman who was initially admitted to private hospital in Jalandhar and later referred to DMCH - had tested positive for Covid-19 on June 1. This is the districts

positive for the deadly contagion till date.

Among those tested positive, 13 cases have their source of infection from outside Punjab, besides two health workers, a police personnel, and a pregnant.

With 12 more patients - four each from Hoshiarpur and Pathankot, three from Amritsar and one Barnala - recovering from the virus, the state now has 300 active cases with total number of recovered patients standing at 2029, at a recovery rate of 85 percent.

The corona death was reported from Jalandhar on Tuesday night where a 64-year-old, already suffering from diabetes and asthma, died at Ludhiana's Dayanand Medical College and Hospital. A resident of Ludhiana, the woman who was initially admitted to private hospital in Jalandhar and later referred to DMCH - had tested positive for Covid-19 on June 1. This is the districts

ninth death.

Punjab had recorded two corona deaths a day before - an 85-year-old ex-serviceman from Ludhiana and 60-year-old from Pathankot.

Besides, Jalandhar also reported three new cases, including one person who recently returned from abroad.

However, Jalandhar district authorities has maintained that 10 people had tested positive since Tuesday evening, including eight who are the members and contacts of a family which had come in contact with a Lajpat Nagar family, and one of their contacts at Bhargo Camp. Jalandhar administration has listed the district tally at 263.

After a gap of two days, seven cases were reported from SAS Nagar (Mohali), including three with travel histories - one of whom recently returned from Lucknow, three were categorized as ILL (influenza-like illness) and one was an auxiliary nurse midwife. With this,

the district's coronavirus count has increased to 116, with 15 active cases. Extensive sampling is on. As of now, 6030 samples have been taken in the district," said Mohali Deputy Commissioner Girish Dayalan.

Pathankot also reported seven fresh cases - of which four were contacts of already diagnosed cases, two were categorised as ILL and the last had a travel history.

In SBS Nagar (Nawanshahr), one person who recently returned from abroad tested positive. A migrant was among two people who tested positive in Patiala. Two people who recently returned from abroad were among Gurdaspur's three new cases.

In Faridkot, one auxiliary nurse midwife and one police personnel were among the third case was a person who recently returned from abroad.

Amritsar continued to lead the Covid-19 tally in the state with 390 coronavirus cases, followed by 258 in Jalandhar;

200 in Ludhiana; 157 in Tarn Taran; 144 in Gurdaspur; 133 in Hoshiarpur; 125 in Patiala; 120 in Mohali; 105 in SBS Nagar (Nawanshahr); and 102 in Sangrur.

ONE TESTS POSITIVE IN CHANDIGARH

A 25 years old male, a resident of Delhi was tested Covid-19 positive in Chandigarh on Wednesday. He works in Delhi and is a resident of Utkarshad.

"The patient returned from Delhi on May 22 to visit his mother, who is a housemaid at Sector-21 here. He developed fever and sore throat on May 1 and visited GMSH-16 on June 2 for checkup and tested positive," the Chandigarh Health Department's bulletin stated.

As per the Government bulletin at 301 on Wednesday, the bulletin added.

Meanwhile, two days after death of an elderly woman in containment zone -Sector 30 B, the residents held a protest on

Wednesday demanding that the sealing be lifted from the area. An 80 years old woman, who was tested Covid positive post-death, had allegedly died due to delay in availability of ambulance to take her to GMSH-16.

MC area councillor Devinder Singh Bala had also demanded that the Administration allowing that this was the second case in Sector 30 in which a person had died due to failure of Administration.

While an elderly woman died, the measure is the party man had died earlier. All the residents in Sector 30 B have been living in the sealing area for two months now, he had said.

Meanwhile, another protest was held at containment zone -Bapu Dham colony where residents demanded relaxations in movement. 14 out of 20 pockets in BDC are sealed to stem the spread of coronavirus.

Punjab returnees to Bihar record lowest Covid infection rate

A vindication of State's robust healthcare and testing mechanism: Capt

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Indicating the robust and accessible healthcare infrastructure in Punjab, only two percent of migrants returning to Bihar from the State have been found to have contracted the novel coronavirus as revealed by the random sampling conducted by the Bihar Government.

Only three persons, out of 157 tested, on return to Bihar from Punjab have shown positive symptoms, said the State Health Department spokesperson adding that this fact assumes greater significance in the backdrop of huge percentage of positive figures in comparison with the other states.

"Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh, from very beginning, had directed to ensure strict compliance of all health protocols making it priority to save precious lives. Punjab is among the first states to enforce strict lockdown, besides the first State with



equal focus on ensuring availability of essential commodities at the doorstep of people," the spokesperson said.

Sharing figures of other states, the spokesperson added that Delhi recorded the highest percentage with as many as 218 (26 percent) found positive out of 835 tested. In case of those returning from West Bengal total of 373 samples were collected of which 265 were tested and 33 were found positive thus making it 12 percent. In terms of Maharashtra, more than 200 samples of labourers were collected by the Bihar Government and 1283 were tested and out of these 141, that is 11 percent were found positive.

The neighbouring State of Haryana reported nine percent migrant population from Bihar being found positive. A total of 690 samples were collected out of which 390 were found tested and 36 came out negative.

Haryana resumes inter-State bus services after two months

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

After suspending inter-State public transport services for over two months in the wake of coronavirus lockdown, Haryana Government on Wednesday resumed the bus services.

As the scope of relaxations has been further widened in accordance with the Centre's guidelines, the inter-state bus service resumed on a few routes. Wednesday, an official said, adding most routes would be operational by Thursday.

Barring Delhi, which has ordered sealing of its borders for a week in the wake of the rising coronavirus cases in the city, Haryana Roadways buses will ply to other States like Uttarakhand, Punjab, Himachal, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

Haryana Roadways officials said that 400 seats will be done in each bus to adhere to social distancing norms. Haryana Roadways had resumed the bus service within the state on May 15, the first time since the lockdown was announced in the past. "He said,

The Government on Wednesday also issued Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs



regarding inter-State travel in buses of the Haryana Roadways.

Passengers intending to undertake inter-state travel must carry their identity proofs and tickets, in either electronic mode or physical form. Apart from this, the bus staff as well as passengers must have sanitiser bottles must be kept inside the buses at all times and must be used by the bus staff from time to time at regular intervals.

"Wearing of masks by everyone onboard a bus and on bus stands must be strictly adhered to by all and passengers should carry sanitisers with them," it said, adding thermal screening of passengers must be ensured by the staff during the boarding process.

"No passenger should be allowed to board if he or she is running high temperature. The staff doing thermal screening must be wearing PPE kits while doing the screening and should sanitise themselves properly and adequately," the statement added.

Flight with 153 Indians from Dubai lands at UT airport

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

A special Air India flight has brought back 153 stranded Indians from Dubai under the Centre's Vande Bharat Mission here.

This was the third flight under the mission to land here. Earlier, 244 Indians were brought back through special flights from New York and Ukraine's capital Kiev. Eighty of the passengers who landed on Tuesday here belonged to Punjab, officials said.

Thirty-seven of them belonged to Himachal Pradesh; 13 from Haryana; 11 from Chandigarh; four each from Delhi and J-K; and two each from Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. All passengers will be taken to their home districts under the supervision of officials where they will be quarantined according to the Government guidelines.

All precautionary measures related to Covid-19 were in place at the international airport. The passengers were screened by the Punjab Health Department authorities.

The Centre had recently said the mission to bring back stranded Indians will continue till June 13 and the extended phase will cover 47 countries.

As per the Government policy, Indians having 'compelling reasons' such as pregnant women, elderly people, students and those facing prospects of deportation are being brought back.

Food delivery latest by 8.30 pm in Haryana

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Restaurants and food aggregators like Zomato and Swiggy in Haryana will have to ensure home delivery of food latest by 8 pm so that no delivery boy is left out on roads after enforcement of curfew at 9 pm.

The measure is the part of an elaborate standard operating procedure issued by the Haryana Government on Wednesday, detailing the manner of functioning for hotels, restaurants, shops and other business establishments in the state.

"The delivery boys shall wear gloves and masks during home delivery. Also, no signature or thumb impression of customers shall be taken by business while delivering items. Preferably online electronic mode of payment shall be ensured to avoid contact and to maintain social distancing," said the statement, detailing SOPs. The upper time limit for opening of kitchens was set at 8 pm and home delivery, by all means, will have to be completed by 8.30 pm to ensure that no delivery boy will be out on roads beyond 9 pm," it added.

Punjab gives one-year extension to associated schools due to Covid-19

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Providing a major relief to the students, staff and managements of associated schools, Punjab Government has granted an extension to around 2,200 such schools for another academic session - 2020-21.

"After reviewing the critical situation due to spread of Covid-19 pandemic in Punjab, the Education Department has decided to give them a breather for limited period of time. Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh has approved the proposal," said Punjab School Education Minister VijayINDER Singla on Wednesday.

Singla said that during the extension period, these schools will have to strictly ensure the safety and security of students.

"Though, the extension has been given to the associat-

The Minister said that safety and security of the school going children is at the utmost priority of Punjab Government

ed schools till March 31, 2021, but the schools will have to provide undertaking to the Education Department till December 31, 2020, about improvements in their infrastructure and campus area," he said.

"If any school will fail to meet the required criteria, it will be allowed to continue educational activities only for pre-primary classes on its premises," he added.

Singla said that due to the spread of coronavirus, the issue of extension has been dealt

sympathetically by the Education Department. "The situation will be reviewed again after December 31, 2020, and the school failing to meet the criteria will be allowed to continue only for pre-primary classes for students not higher than age group of three to six years," he made it clear.

The Minister said that safety and security of the school going children is at the utmost priority of Punjab Government and it will not be compromised at any cost.

He also directed the officials of Education Department to conduct routine surprise checking of associated schools in their respective jurisdiction to ensure the safety of students.

He also asked the managements of associated schools to strictly comply with the directions of education department to avert disciplinary action.

Haryana to start schools from July 1, says Edu Min

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Education Minister Kanwar Pal Gujjar on Wednesday said that teaching work in Government schools would resume from July 1 while that in colleges and universities from the month of August.

"Gujjar said, "We will do it in a phased manner by starting teaching work for classes 10, 11 and 12 first in July, for classes 6,7,8 and 9 after 15 days and for the primary classes from August. The classes would be held in shifts so that half the students of a class come in first shift and the rest in the second shift. We are yet to decide whether it should be morning and evening shift or on alternate days."

Sources said that some of them had been subject to brutal treatment and torture inside the detention centres in the US and before being caught by police. Some of them were arrested before even reaching US.

Those who are sent abroad through illegal means often have pitiable tales to narrate as they are taken through dangerous routes and face torture along the way. Most of the deported Indian nationals had entered the US from its southern border with Mexico, after exhausting all legal options.

They were arrested by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement or ICE while trying to enter the US illegally.

Industrial-Park in Sohna for electronic goods

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana State Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC), Managing Director, Anurag Agarwal on Wednesday said the State Government has proposed to set up their industrial units in Haryana. As per the directions of the Chief Minister, the officers of HSIIDC are interacting one-to-one with the companies which are willing to invest in Haryana in order to build a Medical-Park in Haryana.

In a statement issued here, Agarwal said Haryana Government is taking several steps to invite foreign investments in the state and Chief Minister, Manohar Lal recently invited investors of the United States and Japan through video conferencing to set up their industrial units in Haryana.

Notwithstanding Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh's Statewide campaign of 'Mission Fateh' to combat the spread of coronavirus pandemic in the State, HSIIDC is throwing social distancing norms to the winds.

Punjab Medical Education Minister OP Soni on Wednesday inaugurated a virus research lab in Patiala, violating the social distancing rules to check the spread of the deadly contagion.

The incident came a day after another Cabinet Minister Sunder Sham Arora had attended the coronation ceremony of the support distric committee in Hoshiarpur. The state's Industries and Commerce Minister, Arora, was seen posing for the shutterbugs along with the party MLAs, workers and supporters while flouting the social distancing rules.

When the State Government has launched its much-hyped 'Mission Fateh', and promoting the messages of wearing masks, maintaining social distance, and other safety measures to check the spread of deadly contagion.

One of the state's Deputy Commissioner, "strictly off the record", maintained that the leaders and everyone are well aware of the rules, and they are expected to conduct themselves. "A low level officer could have asked the Minister and others to maintain distance, but that is not possible not a system like ours," said the Deputy Commissioner adding that when highlighted, the Chief Minister is the right person to take a call.

Another Deputy Commissioner maintained, "Sometimes it becomes an issue due to public getting too close for photo-op and etc... But majority, I have seen they follow the mass rule, and the use of sanitizers."

What IS THE INCIDENT? Minister OP Soni was seen surrounded by doctors, police

also written a letter to the Central Government. The official informed that Haryana Government has formulated a new policy under which any company who would like to take land on lease in Haryana to test or use its product, that company will be given land for free initially for five years and then renew it after every ten years for a maximum of 99 years.

For this, the condition will be that the concerned company should start production by setting up its unit within the stipulated time.

personnel, college staff, and other government employees, and inaugurated a Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratories in Patiala city on Wednesday. People could be seen sending shoulder-to-shoulder as the Minister addressed them during the event. Although, those attending the event wore masks, the call for "six-foot distance was totally ignored."

What is more! The rules were flouted in the presence of senior officers, including the Deputy Commissioner, Chief Surgeon, and SSP at Government Medical College, Patiala.

This is not for the first time. Earlier also, the social distancing norms went for a toss when the Deputy Commissioner, Chief Supplies Minister Bharat Bhushan Asra, accompanied by Congress' Fatehgarh Sahib MP Amkar Singh, and Khanna MLA Gurkinder Singh Kotli, along with more than two dozens men visited Khanna grain market not only to inspect the ongoing procurement process, but also to get themselves

clipped in April.

76 cases of Immigration fraud registered in Hry: Vij

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij on Wednesday said that a day after formation of a seven-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by Inspector General of Police (IGP), Karnal Range, Bharti Arora to investigate cases of immigration fraud and "kabootarbaazi" (human trafficking) in the State, three more victims on Wednesday came out at police station connected to register an FIR against the travel agent.

So far a total of 76 such cases have been registered at different Police Stations of the State. Most of those deported from the US



claimed that they were victims of 'kabootarbaazi' (human trafficking). Home Minister said that the SIT will thoroughly investigate and take action in all cases related to sending people abroad through illegal means and human trafficking.

76 Haryana residents who were deported from the US were part of a group of over 160 Indians who arrived at

Amritsar in Punjab on a special chartered flight on May 19. Vij said that there is zero tolerance to such frauds. "We will ensure culprits are brought to book. SIT will not only probe present cases of immigration fraud, but will also find out the links of cases of immigration frauds registered in the past," he said.

Experiences shared by some deportees are really touching and their families had put everything at stake. These people are almost on the road now, he said, adding that other members of the team are IPS officers Nazreen Bhasin, Rahul Sharma, Himanshu Garg, Lokendra Singh, Shashank Kumar and Mohit Handa.

Govt OK's change in Essential Commodities Act

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a move to ensure barrier-free trade by farmers and help raise their income, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved an amendment to the six-and-a-half-decade-old Essential Commodities Act 1955 to deregulate food items, including cereals, pulses, onion and potatoes. It also notified the promulgation of an Ordinance to allow farmers to engage with processors, aggregators, large retailers, exporters, to pave the way for creating "India, One Agriculture Market".



ensure barrier-free trade in agriculture produce. It will not bind farmers to sell their crop through licensed traders in the APMC (Agricultural Produce Market Committee) mandis of their respective talukas or districts.

"The proposed amendment will allay fears of private investors of excessive regulatory interference," he said adding it will also allow clamping of stock limits on agricultural commodities only under "very exceptional circumstances" like natural calamities and famines.

Besides enabling better price realisation for the country's farmers, the amendment ensures no such stock limit shall apply to processors or value chain participants, subject to their installed capacity or any other unforgone circumstances.

Addressing a media briefing later, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said the Cabinet had approved the Ordinance to

produce that happens due to lack of storage facilities.

The Ordinance, for its part, basically aims at creating additional trading opportunities outside the APMC market yards to help farmers get remunerative prices due to additional competition.

On May 17, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution had circulated a draft of the Ordinance under the EC Act. The ECA draws from the days of the Bengal famine and the Defence of India Rules of 1943.

Eye to WB polls: Centre renames Kolkata Port Trust after Syama Prasad Mookerjee

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Keeping the West Bengal Assembly polls next year in mind, the Centre on Wednesday renamed the Kolkata Port Trust after Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder leader Syama Prasad Mookerjee, who hailed from the State. The Cabinet also approved the formation of new Pharmacopoeia Commission and Empowered Group of Secretaries to enhance investments in India.

On a high note it bagged 18 seats in the Lok Sabha elections last year. Union Home Minister Amit Shah had just on Tuesday asserted that the BJP will form the next Government in the State.

The Board of Trustees of the Kolkata Port Trust met at a Meeting held on 25th February, 2020 has also passed a Resolution to re-name Kolkata Port as Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata considering his multifaceted

genius as an eminent jurist, academician, thinker and leader of the masses.

On the occasion of the inaugural ceremony of Sesquicentary Celebrations of Kolkata Port on 12th January, 2020, keeping in view the sentiments of the people of West Bengal, it was announced that Kolkata Port will be renamed after Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, one of the most deserving sons of West Bengal and a front-runner in national integration, dreamer of Bengal's development, inspiration for industrialisation and ardent votary of one law for one nation," the Government said in a statement.

Further, the Cabinet approved the setting up of "Empowered Group of Secretaries for Industrialisation and Project Development Cells (PDCs)" in Ministries/Departments for attracting investments in India. This high-level body, headed by Cabinet Secretary, will look into the proposals to enhance

investments in India. The other members in the EGOs are CEO of Niti Aayog, Secretaries in charge of Industry, Commerce, Revenue, Economic Affairs. The concerned Departments Secretary will be co-opted.

The Cabinet also approved Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine & Homoeopathy (PCIM&H) as Subordinate Office under Ministry of AYUSH by merging into it Pharmacopoeia Laboratory for Indian Medicine (PLIM) and Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory (HPL).

The merger is aimed at optimising the use of infrastructural facilities, technical manpower and financial resources for enhancing the standardisation outcomes of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs towards their effective regulation and quality control.

Indian farm produce to global markets. Farmers will get access to technology and advice for high value agriculture and get ready market for such produce.

Lt Gen Singh to hold talks with his Chinese counterpart to defuse LAC tension on June 6

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Lt Gen Singh to hold talks with his Chinese counterpart on June 6 to pave the way for the release by backing off of troops from four flashpoints on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh. The two Lieutenant General-rank officers will meet at a designated meeting point on the LAC.

Ahead of the meeting, Northern Command chief, Lt General Y K Joshi, visited Leh on Wednesday and reviewed the situation with Lt General Singh, sources said here on Wednesday.

Incidentally, Army Chief General M Naravane had visited Leh about a fortnight back to take stock of the situation in the backdrop of the four stand-offs now between the two countries, troops in Ladakh. The Chinese have intruded three kms into the Hot Springs area of the Galwan valley and pitched tents besides building bunkers and enhancing force levels.

Admitting that the Chinese had raised its troop strength in sizeable numbers, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, in an interview to a private television channel on Tuesday, had said diplomatic negotiations level talks were on to defuse tension on the LAC.

He also said the Army chief had told him that the next round of senior level talks will be held on June 6. He was hopeful of a peaceful resolution following the upcoming parleys.

The groundwork for the June 6 meeting was laid at the third meeting at the level of Major Generals held on Tuesday. This year, the Army Chief had said all issues have been resolved and the procedural aspects have been ironed out. He said the hotline would be between the DGMO from India and China's Western Theatre Command.



India is also holding strict vigil on the 250 km-long road in Eastern Ladakh near the Galwan valley as the Chinese are objecting to the construction of a bridge. The strategic road runs parallel to the LAC and the Chinese do not breach the LAC as claimed by the other side. The Galwan valley saw pitched battles between India and China during the 1962 war.

As infrastructure all along the LAC has vastly improved in both the countries, troop increase patrolling especially during the summer months. The Indian security establishment is now wary of the growing Chinese aggressiveness during the ongoing face-off.

In order to address such face-offs, India and China had agreed some years back to have a hotline between the director generals of military operations (DGMO) on both sides of an existing mechanism between India and Pakistan.

However, the proposed hotline is held up due to procedural differences. In January this year, the Army Chief had said all issues have been resolved and the procedural aspects have been ironed out. He said the hotline would be between the DGMO from India and China's Western Theatre Command.

Anti-India Bill in Nepalese Parl: R&AW's 2nd failure in 6 mths

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The introduction of the anti-India Bill in Nepalese Parliament is the second such instance in the last six months when the external Intelligence Agency (R&AW) was caught off guard.

In January, six anti-CAA resolutions were introduced in EU Parliament but the discussions were deferred only after reactive diplomacy set in motion by New Delhi to wriggle out of the embarrassing situation.

to work in a preemptive manner and gather inputs on such developments in timely manner for course correction.

While the move to bring in a Constitution amendment Bill to include Indian territories Kathmandu, Limpiyadhura and Lalapalek was afoot in Kathmandu, the Indian agencies could not get to know about the developments there and the undercurrents that are set to impact the ties between the two countries.

The slip was more so conspicuous when a foreign government and its agencies were

on overdrive to push the amendments in the Nepalese Parliament but no political party there could afford to distance from the nationalistic move. The Bill was tabled in Nepal Parliament on Sunday to endorse the amended map.

Apart from the changes in the map, Nepal has also decided to man the border with India by its army which will open the door for training to the local forces for border guarding by third country, which can exploit the situation to monitor the frontier with India.

India should propose deployment of Indian training team to border guarding to avoid landing of such teams from a third country. India is already training Bhutanese border guarding forces.

The EU move against the amendments in the citizenship law that the politicians of the RAW is more serious as about

600 lawmakers out of 751 members in the European Parliament had voted for a resolution against CAA. Not only this, even the diplomatic corps was seen advancing in the absence of any advance assessment of such an impending move.

Every Indian embassy or high commission abroad has political desk that is mandated to assess political situations and report to the ministries of home as well as external affairs. Those manning the political desks are supposed to cultivate relations with the politicians of the host countries.

Maoist funding: NIA searches

construction firm's premises in Ranchi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The NIA has conducted searches at the premises of a construction firm in Ranchi in connection with a case relating to Maoist funding.

The searches yielded cash book and several bank account details used for channelizing the "levy" for the banned CPI (Maoist).

Politburo raps Modi Govt for imposing lockdown 'abruptly'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CPI(M) Politburo meeting on Wednesday criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for declaring lockdown "abruptly" in an unplanned way. The Politburo which first time convened through video conferencing also said that the 20 lakh crore financial package is just a re-packaging of the existing schemes and essentially a loan providing facility to the Government. Modi refused to bear the consequences of the lockdown, particularly the humungous humanitarian issue of crores of migrant workers with their families moving across the country to the relief camps.

The Politburo also criticised the BJP Government for imposing harsh acts like UAPA, NSA during the lockdown period to target those who oppose them, especially people from Muslim community.

viding relief to the people who have been agonized cruelly by not getting any time to prepare to meet the consequences of the lockdown. Having unilaterally declared, without consulting the state governments, the central Government is now shifting the burden of bearing the consequences of the lockdown, particularly the humungous humanitarian issue of crores of migrant workers with their families moving across the country to the relief camps.

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority. E-TENDER NOTICE. S.No. Job No./Work Name. Amount. 1) 19(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Green Belt (R/o boundary wall & footpath) sector-119 & 120. Cost Rs. 27.84 Lacs. 2) 49(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park in sector-62 small ID tyap park, C-56 and Village Navade park with two year maintenance. Cost Rs. 52.03 Lacs. 3) 54(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Green Belt in Sector-121 Village Basal T point and Sector-123 along FNG and both side of Hindan Pusta with two year maintenance. Cost Rs. 28.11 Lacs. 4) 65(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park-A-50, A-219, A-451, A-680, B-127A, B-127B, B-300, C-624, C-block in front of Sanatan dharm Mandir and along Sanatan dharm Mandir park Sector-19 and Sector-20 All Parks with two year maintenance. Cost Rs. 67.12 Lacs. 5) 70(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park Sector-41 All Park with two year maintenance. Cost Rs. 56.47 Lacs. 6) 35(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park Sector-36 All Park with two year maintenance. Cost Rs. 41.64 Lacs. 7) 31(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park Sector-31 with two year maintenance. Cost Rs. 42.59 Lacs. 8) 32(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park Sector-130 Between Farm House with two year maintenance. Cost Rs. 27.21 Lacs. 9) 61(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park (Sh PF Open gym) Sector-127 Village Baklawanpur with Five Year Maintenance. Cost Rs. 30.84 Lacs. 10) 60(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park (Sh PF Open gym) Century Apartment MG Sector-100 with Five Year Maintenance. Cost Rs. 30.84 Lacs. 11) 85(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park & RSP LIC Flates, E, W, S, Flates sector-99 with Two Year Maintenance. Cost Rs. 39.90 Lacs. 12) 82(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Green Belt (R/o boundary wall and embankment of soil between Mtnas sweet & coast guard in sector-52) in sector-75. Cost Rs. 56.70 Lacs. 13) 84(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Green Belt (R/o boundary wall and gate) in sector-75. Cost Rs. 63.03 Lacs. 14) 83(D)(H)(DD)(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park (Repairing and raising of boundary wall in front of HIG/MIG flats. Green View sector-99) Cost Rs. 51.15 Lacs. Director (Hort) Noida. Which can be uploaded by date 17.06.2020 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened / downloaded on date 18.06.2020 at 11.00 AM.

MHA allows entry of certain sets of foreign nationals like bizmen, healthcare professionals, techies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Ministry on Wednesday allowed the entry of certain categories of foreign nationals including businessmen, healthcare, technical and managerial experts to India. These people are allowed to enter the country for professional or chartered flights and have to apply for fresh business or employment visa. "Government of India has considered the matter regarding relaxation of the visa & travel restrictions for certain categories of foreign nationals who need to come to India.

Foreign businessmen coming to India on a Business visa (other than on B-3 visa for sports) in non-scheduled commercial / chartered flights. Foreign healthcare professionals, health researchers, engineers and technicians for technical work at Indian health sector facilities, including laboratories and factories. This is subject to a letter of invitation from a recognized and registered healthcare facility, registered pharmaceutical company or accredited university in India, said MHA. "Foreign Engineering, Managerial, Design or other Specialists travelling to India on

behalf of foreign business entities located in India. This includes all manufacturing units, design units, software and IT units as well as financial sector companies (banking and non-banking financial sector firms).

Foreign Technical specialists, engineers travelling for installation, repair and maintenance of foreign-origin machinery and equipment facilities in India, on the invitation of a registered Indian business entity. These could be for equipment installation, or is under warranty for after sales servicing or repair on commercial terms," said MHA. "The above categories of foreign nationals would have to obtain a fresh Business visa or Employment visa, as applicable, from the Indian Missions / Posts abroad. Foreign nationals holding a valid long term multiple entry Business visa [other than B-3 visa for sports] issued by the Indian Missions / Posts abroad would have to get the Business visa re-validated from the Indian Mission/Post concerned. Such foreign nationals would not be permitted to travel to India on the strength of any electronic visa obtained earlier," said the MHA's circular.

Maoist funding: NIA searches

construction firm's premises in Ranchi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The NIA has conducted searches at the premises of a construction firm in Ranchi in connection with a case relating to Maoist funding.

The searches yielded cash book and several bank account details used for channelizing the "levy" for the banned CPI (Maoist).

The NIA conducted the searches on Tuesday at the office premises of Ram Kripal Singh Construction Private Limited Company at Panchwati Plaza, Kutchary area, Ranchi in connection with NIA case relating to terror funding of CPI (Maoist), Giridih registered on July 9, 2018.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER HYDRAULIC DIVISION KISHITWAR Show Cause Notice

M/S T Infra Project Ltd. Corporate Office: 44-29/14/8. Floor: Triloka Heights Behind Shopping Stop Begumpohr Hyderabad. No. HUKA/CES/2020-21/8 Dated: 26-05-2020. Whereas you have been awarded the contract for supply of 70 MLD to Kishitwar Town from Nangrah Source comprising of various components complete job on turnkey basis. Whereas you have been allowed the contract for providing water supply of 70 MLD to Kishitwar Town from Nangrah Source comprising of various components complete job on turnkey basis which was started by you during January 2018. Whereas you proposed timeline completion of the scheme as per contract signed by you was January 2018 with one year successful run of the scheme upto January 2018 but despite lapse of time various components of the scheme are yet to be taken up or are incomplete which include:- 1. Construction of 32 KM/Land Compound G/S Main line of 300mm and 250mm dia pipe line which has been laid up to RD 296000m only up to now proposed: Filtration Plant only. 2. Submains to length of 10.4 KM. Not taken up. 3. Construction of 06 No. CWT's not taken up. 4. Construction of 06 No. GSR's not taken up. 5. Construction of Filtration Plant not taken up. 6. Construction of intake Structures (Overseer Channel, Supply Channel, Sedimentation Tank etc) of required designed and Capacity not taken up. Whereas the land for Water treatment plant stands handed over to you since long and you have not submitted the drawing and design of the structures for its setting from: DDC department Jammu which clearly shows your non-seriousness. Whereas you have been served with 13 No. of Notices last being dated 13.05.2020. but you have not responded to any of the notices and you have not completed the scheme. Now, therefore you are called upon to show cause as to why the contract signed by you is not terminated, and re-terminated at your risk & cost & why should not you be black listed. If you fail to show cause, the contract shall stand cancelled and you shall be liable for 15 days penalty failing which, it will be presumed that you are not desirous to offer or you have declined to offer the same and accept the charges. Sd/- Executive Engineer Hydraulic Division, Kishitwar Dated: 01-06-2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED. General public is hereby informed that one boy named Dhruv, D/o Sarwan, R/o H.No. A-1/307, Janakpuri, New Delhi. Age: 14 Years, Height: 4'6", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Build: Medium, wearing Black Jeans Pant and Black T-Shirt and Plastic Shoes, has been missing from his house since 20.03.2020. In this regard a FIR No. 109/2020 U/S 363 IPC, dated 23.03.2020, has been registered at P.S. Janakpuri, New Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the boy but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about him, please inform undersigned. Website: www.icbci.nic.in E-mail: icbci@gov.in Fax: 011-24368639 Ph. No. 011-24368638, 24368641 DP/101/WD/2020 Ph.: 011-25551410, 25553166

SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMALE. General Public is hereby informed that one female (depicted in the photo) namely Asiya Naaz D/o Kamar Hussain R/o H.No.2647, Mangal Bhawan, Gali Badliyan, Churiwala, Delhi Aged-28 Years has been reported missing since 29.05.2020 at about 11.00 AM from her residence vide DD No.6A Dated 29.05.2020 registered at Police Station Chandni Mahal, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:- Complexion: Wheatish, Height: 4'6", Face: Round, Build: Thin, Clothing: Yellow coloured plaid, Cream coloured kurta and slipper in feet. Any person having any information/Clue about this missing female, may inform SHO, Chandni Mahal, Delhi at E-mail: icbci@gov.in or website: www.icbci.nic.in. Tel. No. 011-24368638 or 24368641 Sd/- SHO, Chandni Mahal, Delhi DP/134/CD/2020 Tel. 011-23279338, 23271751, 23263967

Appeal for Identification. General public is hereby informed that one person Name: Narayan, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 50 Years, Height: 5'6", Sex: Male, Complexion: Shallow, Build: Thin, Face: Long, Wearing: Black T-Shirt and Black Jeans, Place of Recovery: Found dead on 29.05.2020 at Patri Bada Bazar Kashmir Gate, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 04A, U/S 174 CrP, Dated 29.05.2020 has been lodged at the Police Station, Kashmir Gate, Delhi. Any clue come to notice please inform undersign. SHO Kashmir Gate, Delhi DP/248/N/2020 Ph.: 011-23967889 & 23968730

Trump's expansionism

US wants to expand G7 by including India and Russia, hoping to encircle China. How will the two hold their own?



At any other time, US President Donald Trump's call to expand the Group of Seven (G-7) would have been seen as reformatory considering it has gone past its sell-by date. Formed in the 1970s, its main objective was to ensure the supremacy of the Western democratic and liberal economic model in the Cold War era. But with emergent economies, China and Southeast Asian powers coalescing around G-20, it lost clout with only five of its members — the US, Germany, Japan, UK and France — figuring among the

top seven global economies. Italy and Canada have been upstaged by China and India. So now Trump's move to invite India, Russia, South Korea and Australia into the club is not just about correcting geo-strategic realities of the contemporary world but to stifle China for the COVID-19 outbreak by encircling it with a comity of nations and diminishing its global dominance. And though he has been attempting this for quite some time, considering that both Russia and India didn't want to upset China too much given their market dependencies, the US President wants to make a show by postponing the summit to September, when hopefully the COVID-19 crisis abates. The intent is clear, capitalise on all reports emerging that Beijing hid crucial information, play upon collective anxieties of affected nations and make them allies in the larger US design to isolate China. Already, he has gone ballistic with the World Health Organisation (WHO) for allowing itself to be taken in by China's versions of the truth, withdrawn the special status to Hong Kong in response to a new Chinese security law there and is limiting Chinese students above undergraduate level from enrolling in US institutions. It is also trying to cut off China from global supply chains, hoping to cripple it in the long run. In fact, soon after Trump's announcement, the UK Government said it wanted a group of 10 countries to develop its own 5G technology and reduce dependence on China's tech major Huawei.

For India, this is an opportunity to be a key player in the Western bloc. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has established a rapport with Trump and the recent 25-minute phone conversation between the two did dwell on Chinese incursion in Ladakh with the US administration being sympathetic to India's predicament along the Himalayan border. Modi also took up race riots, hoping that the US hypocrisy on the violence would blunt the stereotypical edge of its propaganda on India's rights situation. But India needs to walk the line carefully without appearing to be endorsing a polarising move that runs counter to its multilateral worldviews. It has, therefore, rightly refused the US offer to mediate in Ladakh and upheld bilateral mechanisms. It cannot afford to be played by both China, which is into heavy duty posturing to intimidate us against being party to any anti-China narrative, or the US, which dangles trade tariffs now and then to get things done its way. Besides, India still doesn't have the manufacturing edge to cut off China and is dependent on its factory floors for sourcing. But India can certainly negotiate better for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, considering that it has surpassed France and the UK in terms of the GDP both of which hold a permanent seat on the global panel. India has support from France, too, as its President Emanuel Macron had invited Modi to the G-7 Summit at Biarritz last August as a special invitee. The entry of Russia, though it has given an in-principle nod to the idea, is also going to be complicated considering that it has grown closer to Beijing ever since Trump's predecessor Barack Obama expelled it from the original grouping following its takeover of Crimea. But Putin and Trump have an equation going and preliminary reports indicate that Moscow has shown its interest in accepting the invitation to attend the G-7 meet but will confirm only when the agenda is decided. Besides, it stayed away from joining the global defence of human rights in Hong Kong. This is one of the reasons why existing G-7 members, particularly Canada, have reservations. But Trump is pushing Russia, without which it would be difficult to isolate or even censure Beijing. Australia, for example, features high on Trump's scale of preferences simply because it called for an impartial investigation into the Wuhan outbreak. Trump may want an expanded G-11 in this new age cold war with China but its success will depend on how the new hopefuls leverage their power.

Elephantine problem

Laws make no sense if not enforced. And people will play with animals till we realise the right to co-existence



All of humanity needs to hang its head in shame for an inhuman deed that took place on May 27 in Malappuram, Kerala. A 15-year-old pregnant tusker, looking for food, strayed into a village where the trusting and unsuspecting creature was fed a pineapple stuffed with crackers. The fruit exploded in the elephant's mouth ripping off a part of its face and tongue. The poor pachyderm, despite being in intense pain, ran through the streets without harming a soul till it came to the river. It stood in the water for hours, defeating all attempts by the forest department to help it, before dying a slow and excruciating death due to the injuries and asphyxia as water had gone into its lungs and trachea. Sadly, this is not the first incident of such unspeakable cruelty inflicted on animals in India. A similar incident had happened in Kollam with another elephant in April where the animal had eaten fruits laden with explosives and died a slow and painful death. So, the question is how is it that the perpetrators of such heinous crimes go unpunished when cruelty against animals is a cognisable offence under Section 428 and Section 429 of the Indian Penal Code and the country also has one of the strictest wildlife protection laws in the world? While some countries are now waking up to regulating trade in wildlife, India leads the prohibition on ivory trade. Some of the biggest triumphs for animal welfare here in the last decade saw the ban of dolphinariums in 2013, prohibition on animal testing for cosmetics in 2014, followed by a ban on the import of cosmetics tested on animals. India also prohibited the export of shark fins for use in soup and does not allow wild animals in circuses.

Yet we are confronted with heart-wrenching stories of depraved behaviour towards animals. For this to stop, we must make our law enforcement agencies aware about the rights of animals to be treated with kindness and dignity and about how grave an offence it is to subject an animal to cruelty. Punishment should be quick and stringent. Law enforcement agencies must not always wait for activist judges to lead the way in this regard. Plus, we, as a society must teach our children the basic truth that the world is meant to be shared by all God's creations and we must learn to live together with them. They have as much right to live on this planet as we do. In fact, animals form a vital part of the biodiversity and each creature has a role to play in the circle of life. If we disrupt that, we will have to bear the consequences of it.

Liberal agenda in America

Like the White rioters, the Democrats and their media supports are also exploiting the most disadvantaged among their fellow Americans with hopes of winning the November polls



DOMINIC GREEN

There was no rest for the wicked on the seventh day. The shooting of police officers on Monday night in St Louis, Missouri and in Los Angeles opened a new phase in the disorder that began in Minneapolis on May 26. On Monday, Terrence Floyd, the brother of George Floyd, the Minneapolis man murdered on camera by a police officer, called for calm. So did US President Donald Trump, incongruously waving a flag in front of Washington DC's St John's church, where every President since 1815 has prayed and which rioters set on fire on Sunday night. But on Monday night, America's tragedy moved closer to catastrophe.

It's not just that race is the American agony and that African Americans are disproportionately likely to be targeted by the police. A particular chain of events turned the initial protests in Minneapolis into nationwide protests, which turned into violent riots. Some filmed evidence appears to suggest that the crucial second phase of these events, the phase in which protests in poor and majority-Black neighbourhoods turned into confrontation with the police and assaults on civic symbols, was inflamed and exploited by the far Left.

This is why the violence must stop. Not just because lives and property are being lost. Not because it takes decades for an inner-city neighbourhood to recover from an assault by its own residents. Not because it shreds the tendrils of racial amity that have grown since the civil rights reforms of the 1960s. But because the course of events has at crucial moments been directed by affluent Whites. And they know that their bill will not be delivered to their suburban communities.

The Americans have a name for this: White privilege. A few weeks ago, White men protested the COVID-19 shutdown by storming the Michigan statehouse in military fatigues and carrying assault weapons. The police allowed them to rampage around the Statehouse while White protesters shoved the police lines on the statehouse steps and no one was injured. Pass a fake \$20 bill as George Floyd did, however, and you risk a rapid escalation, which may end in injury or death.

The same inequality of risk attaches to the White grad student who dons the black hoodie of Antifa and throws fireworks and bottles at the police and the Black women and children, who standing on the porch of their home in Minneapolis, were shot at by the national guard as one of the guardsmen fired "Live with it".

It is inaccurate to say that all of Black America is on the streets. Fifty years of deindustrialisation and drugs have created a Black underclass but 50 years of civil rights and affirmative action have accelerated the growth of the Black middle class. In Atlanta, Georgia, the capital of the Black



middle class, initial protests did not lead to open-ended rioting. The Mayor, who is White, ventured onto the streets and talked to protestors as equals. In a further instance of the civic responsibility that has been lacking in most Democratic-run States and cities, the local rapper, Killer Mike, the son of a police officer, issued an emotional plea "not to burn your house down".

This kind of plea works best if you have a house to burn down. It doesn't work on people who have no property and no prospects as in the heavily Black neighbourhoods of western Philadelphia, where helicopter footage showed the police abandoning their cars to entirely Black mobs.

Nor does this appeal work on people who have the luxury of burning down other people's homes and businesses — and those people, the White rioters, who are ones who commanded the initial protests and forced them towards violent confrontation.

Nearly half of the population of Washington, DC is Black. Yet some footage appears to show hardly any non-White

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NEARLY HALF OF THE POPULATION OF WASHINGTON, DC IS BLACK. YET, SOME FOOTAGE APPEARS TO SHOW HARDLY ANY NON-WHITE FACES AMONG THE MOB WHO ATTACKED POLICE OUTSIDE THE WHITE HOUSE AND SET FIRE TO ST JOHN'S CHURCH
 ”

faces among the mob who attacked police outside the White House and set fire to St John's church. Here in Boston, we saw an orderly march from a heavily Black neighbourhood to the city centre, led by church leaders. It was black-clad Whites who fought the police after the curfew. I observed teenagers from my suburban neighbourhood, students at Ivy League colleges and exclusive private schools, setting off in the black costume of Antifa.

"It happens most often that a people, which has supported without complaint, as if they were not felt, the most oppressive laws, violently throws them off as soon as their weight is lightened." Alexis de Tocqueville wrote of the French Revolution.

The radicalism of the American Left is rarefied and spoiled: More troubled by student loans and an absence of exciting jobs than failed schools and police violence. Antifa's revolution, like that of 1968 and most other Western revolutions, is a "revolution of rising expectations." The concerns of the young White men and

women, who are attacking the police, are not those of the young Black men who will be killed in the nights to come.

Most of the media endorse the radical Left's political costume drama. So do prominent figures on the Democratic Party's Left, like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Keith Ellison, the ex-Nation of Islam agitator who was second-in-charge of the Democratic National Committee and is now Minnesota's Attorney-General.

Like the White rioters, the Democrats and their media supports are also exploiting the most disadvantaged among their fellow Americans. They are exploiting the suffering of Black people in the hope of winning November's elections by painting Donald Trump as the second coming of George Wallace.

This strategy is unlikely to succeed. No candidate ever harmed his chances by running on a law and order ticket. Its greater failure is, however, moral.

(The writer is Life & Arts editor of The Spectator (US). (Courtesy: The Dawn)

SOUNDBITE

Some owners are looking to sell their franchises. I would be more than happy to provide financial and non-monetary support to keep the PSL alive and to thrive.



Former Pakistan pacer — Shoaib Akhtar

Boredom is the most common disease that afflicts all people. It is the root of a lot of mental, emotional and physical disorder. So I learned: To be bored or not, is a choice.



Actor — Milind Soman

China and India have a full-fledged border related mechanism and communication channel. We have capability to resolve this issue through dialogue and negotiations.



Chinese spokesperson — Zhao Lijian

There is no need to panic looking at the increasing number of COVID-19 cases. The Centre and State Governments have done the planning. We have increased testing.



MoS for Health — Ashwini Kumar Choubey

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unjust act

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Boots on the street" (June 3). Massive protests have erupted in the US following the death of George Floyd after a police officer knelt on his neck for more than eight minutes while he was handcuffed and his face pushed to the ground. The officer, Derek Chauvin, was responding to a call about an alleged counterfeit bill used at a store. He refused to relent even though Floyd cried out for help saying that he could not breathe. Chauvin was fired from his job the next day, along with three others.

It is true that racial discrimination is still prevalent all over the world. Racism has contaminated the idea of solidarity in the US, making it difficult for White people from the underprivileged sections of society to empathise with their compatriots from other races, even though they are threatened by the same social problems.

This incident is especially shocking, given the American ethos of being liberal towards African-Americans or people from diverse races. It is likely that the officer's actions were racially

The better side of humanity

His refers to the editorial, "Boots on the street" (June 3). The social media was flooded with images of protests in the US against the killing of George Floyd that has engulfed the country. Horrific images of police using brutal force against peaceful protesters, looters and rioters causing wanton property damage and toxic insults being hurled with abandon emerged. Against this backdrop, one video from Houston, Texas, stood out. Instead of violence or hate, it showcased solidarity and understanding. The video was of a "prayer test" being held in Houston where parishioners of a local church gathered to join hands and pray to bring an end to the troubling events.

The gathering was held in Houston's 3rd Ward Cuney Homes where Floyd grew up, giving it added significance. At one point during the "prayer test", the White attendees stood opposite to their Black counterparts and kneeled down to ask forgiveness for "years and years of racism" from their brothers and sisters. The visuals were powerful, signaling a way out for a just future where stereotyping is replaced by compassion. The video quickly went viral, drawing praise from across the world for it showcased the better side of humanity. This does not mean that there were no doubters. Some saw the ges-



ture at the "prayer test" as pandering and called it cringe-worthy for the way it depicted White people asking for forgiveness for crimes of their ancestors. However, those who chose to call out the video for perpetuating inequality, did not have all the information as shortly after the White parishioners took a knee, their Black counterparts joined them, going down on their knees as well and participated in joint prayer. Though its undeniable that the US has a problem with systemic racism, incidents like these light the way to a better and a more just future. **Javvadi Lakshmana Rao** Andhra Pradesh

are not maintaining social distance at market and public places. The dangers of the spread of infection from Delhi to regions in the NCR have increased significantly. Strict guidelines as issued by the Delhi Government to seal the border need to be taken by other State Governments. The Government has relaxed some rules after lockdown 4.0 but this does not mean that people should flout rules. Bypassing the rules will be harmful to all.

Yugal Kishore Sharma Faridabad

Knee-jerk reaction

Sir — There has been a growing rhetoric on social media to boycott Chinese goods and apps. But a groundswell of anti-China opinion may not be enough to take on China for it has a good hold on the Indian market. A sudden ban will badly affect several sectors. We must enhance economic competitiveness and build capacity for innovation to make the shift.

Shambhavi Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

motivated — many White Americans still believe in racial supremacy. The US Government is often found to denounce instances of discrimination in other countries but its own response to Floyd's death has been rather tepid. Is the US regressing into the dark days when African-Americans were enslaved? This is indeed an affront to Abraham Lincoln. **TK Nandan** Kochi

Flouting rules

Sir — As the country emerges from a two-month lockdown and with a gradual ease in movement, it has been seen that peo-

FIRST COLUMN

Chinese are the neo-imperialists

India should not do any appeasement of the Chinese as Chamberlain did towards Hitler but boldly confront them like Winston Churchill



MARKANDEY KATJU

The Chinese Army recently penetrated about four kilometres into Indian territory in Ladakh. Many people in India may think that this incident was only due to the small misunderstanding about the border between the two countries but that is not so. The incident is part of a much larger imperialist design of the Chinese, so let me explain. In the 1930s-1940s, Nazi German imperialism was the real danger to the world and not British or French imperialism. This was because German imperialism was rising and expanding and hence was an aggressive imperialism while British and French imperialism were only defensive. While the latter two nations only wanted to hold on to their colonies, the Nazis wanted to conquer and enslave other countries. Hence the Nazis were the real danger to the world at that time. Similarly, today the real danger to the world is not from the US but from China, because the Chinese are on the road of aggressive expansionism in the world. With their massive industry seeking markets for its goods and with their huge \$3.2 trillion foreign exchange reserve hungrily seeking avenues for profitable investment, the Chinese are today aggressive imperialists and the greatest danger to the world. It is true that they are not expanding militarily like Nazi Germany at the moment but they are aggressively expanding economically by penetrating and undermining the economies of many countries of the world.

In the last decade, Chinese overseas investment has skyrocketed. Today the Chinese are almost everywhere, Asia, Africa, Latin America and of course the US and Europe. Their Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a network of roads, railways, oil pipelines, power grids, ports and other infrastructure projects connecting China with the world. It aims at improving infrastructure and connectivity between China and the rest of Eurasia in order to dominate it. China's focus is often on vital infrastructure like ports, for instance, Gwadar in Pakistan, Piraeus in Greece and Hambantota in Sri Lanka, the aim being to get a strategic foothold in these countries.

By selling goods at less than half the price at which the American or European manufacturer can afford to sell (in view of his higher labour cost), the Chinese have destroyed many American and European industries. Now the Chinese are seeking to capture the markets and raw materials in underdeveloped countries by dumping goods at very low prices so as to make the local products uncompetitive. Pakistan, for instance, is flooded with cheap Chinese goods.

While capturing foreign markets, the Chinese were carefully protecting their own industry by putting high tariffs. It has to be said to the credit of US President Donald Trump that he called the Chinese bluff and bluntly told the Chinese that this strategy won't do. You can't have 25 per cent tariff on import of automobiles into China when the US imposes a tariff of only 2.5 per cent for import of cars into its territory. Trump has imposed tariffs on several Chinese goods and has announced more in the future. To this, the Chinese announced retaliatory tariffs but that will hurt the Americans little. It is well-known that the Chinese have no business ethics and that is why many US and European companies are reluctant to hire Chinese from mainland China as they often commit espionage and steal industrial secrets.

Let us now look at China's economic relations with India. As is well-known, India was a British colony till 1947 and the British policy was broadly to keep India unindustrialised. However, after Independence, a certain degree of industrialisation took place in India and we started manufacturing goods which we had to earlier import.

Now the Chinese have, to a certain extent, penetrated our market at the expense of our domestic industries. An article entitled *How Chinese companies are beating India in its own backyard*, published in *The Economic Times*, gives some interesting details. Indo-China trade is heavily skewed in favour of the Chinese. Indian exports to China are to the tune of \$16 billion, mainly of raw materials. But its imports from China are worth \$68 billion, mainly of value added goods like mobile phones, plastics, electrical goods, machinery and its parts. This is typical of the relation between a colony and an imperialist country. Chinese companies use aggressive pricing, State subsidies, protectionist policies and cheap financing. In certain industries, Chinese companies dominate the Indian market, for instance the telecom sector. 51 per cent of which has been captured by the Chinese. Indian homes are full of Chinese goods like fittings, lampshades, tubelights and so on. The Indian Government and the citizens of the country must seriously start opposing Chinese imperialism. To ignore this danger will be behaving like an ostrich, just like Neville Chamberlain who kept thinking that Adolf Hitler was no danger until it was almost too late. Apart from opposing the massive Chinese moves at the border, the Indian Government should ban the entry of Chinese goods into the market and get rid of Chinese firms from the country. India should not do any appeasement of the Chinese as Chamberlain did towards Hitler but boldly confront them like Winston Churchill. Appeasement only whets the appetite of the aggressor.

(The writer is a former Judge, Supreme Court of India)

YOU WON'T FIND IT (ACCUSATION THAT INDIA LOST DELIBERATELY TO ENGLAND) BECAUSE I HAVE NEVER SAID IT. IT'S TWISTING OF WORDS OR CLICK BAIT.

—ENGLAND ALL ROUNDER

BEN STOKES



THEY DID IT. I SAID IT AT THAT TIME AND EVERYONE FELT THE SAME. A PLAYER WHO CAN HIT A SIX OR A FOUR IS DEFENDING THE BALL, YOU JUST KNOW.

—FORMER PAKISTAN ALL ROUNDER

ABDUL RAZZAQ



Opening doors to prosperity

The changes announced in the rules of agriculture marketing might provide women and vulnerable sections easier access to markets but we need a wider social security net and modernisation



ARIJIT DAS

Given the agrarian crisis that the country had been going through, which got exacerbated by the pandemic, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced 11 measures to boost the farm sector, ranging from the amendment to the Essential Commodities Act to a ₹1 lakh crore fund to boost agri-infrastructure. The changes announced in the rules of agriculture marketing might provide women and vulnerable sections easier access to markets.

The existing Agricultural Produce Market Committee or APMC Act was planned to protect the interests of the British Government, which wanted to ensure the supply of pure cotton at reasonable prices to the textile mills of Manchester. The first regulated market (Karanja) under the 'Hyderabad Residency Order' was established in 1886 and the first legislation was the Berar Cotton and Grain Market Act of 1887, which empowered a British Resident to declare any place in the assigned district as a market, for the sale and purchase of agricultural produce and constituted a committee to supervise the regulated markets. In 1928, the Royal Commission on Agriculture proposed a regulation of marketing practices and the establishment of regulated markets. The Government of India prepared a 'Model Bill' in 1938 and circulated it to all the Indian States. It was the guiding force for our APMC Act. So, it is not difficult to infer why the spirit of the APMC Act favours buyers rather than farmers. Of course, some would argue that it allows States to protect the farmers, as procurement is done under the supervision and surveillance of the State. But many mechanisms are available to protect the interests of farmers rather than being discriminatory against them.

The APMC Act designates a few patches as formal procurement centres. Currently, there are only 6,746 pockets in a vast country like ours and this allows limited buyers to purchase from farmers. This is a classic case of a State-backed oligopsony market structure. Field data from Maharashtra, Karnataka and Telangana shows a minimum of three gives enough power to buyers to set the minimum price to farmers. Ironically, the maximum distance between a farmer and the mandi is five kilometres (km) but our field information suggests a minimum of 30-40 km travel for a farmer out to sell his produce. This means the APMC Act not only gives oligopsonistic power to buyers but also creates a geographical monopoly for them.

Further, the small number of APMCs and traders poses a challenge for farmers to sell their produce as they have to wait for days for their turn. This makes some sense for big farmers but not for small producers. Field data from Maharashtra, Karnataka and Telangana shows a minimum of three to five man-day loss for small farmers.

How the proposed changes will help: An independent country should favour the marginalised and protect their interests. This proposed change in agri-marketing rules is a step in that direction. Hopefully, new rules will empower big-aggregators and start-ups to use technology in a better way to procure directly from farmers. These channels may be existent in pockets but operate informally due to stringent market rules (procurement and cross-border trade). A big push is necessary to bring the changes on the ground.

“ MOST WOMEN, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS, ARE ENGAGED IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR AND DERIVE THEIR LIVELIHOOD FROM ACTIVITIES RELATING TO AGRICULTURE, HANDLOOMS AND ARTISANAL PRODUCTS. UNFORTUNATELY, THESE WOMEN REMAIN AT THE LOWEST END OF THE VALUE CHAIN, WITH THEIR SHARE IN EARNINGS BEING LOW OUT OF MARGINS WHICH ARE EVEN OTHERWISE VERY MINUSCULE. IN THIS CONTEXT, THERE IS SCOPE TO INCREASE THEIR INCOME BY CONTINUING IN THE EXISTING ACTIVITY AND BECOMING ORGANISED AS A COLLECTIVE, SO AS TO POOL THEIR OUTPUT



The pandemic is an opportunity to deregulate agri-marketing effectively to ensure social distancing. A perfect model of social distancing could be doorstep collection of agri-produce or at least at the village/cluster level. As an experiment, local collection centres were set up in parts of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra to procure agri-produce at the doorstep. These also acted as local storage and sorting facilities. All procurement activities were done by women farmers who were otherwise absent in post-harvest management. The process was iterated with tur dal. Calculations show that through this process small farmers save about ₹175 per 50 kg of tur or approximately 10 per cent of its price, which means a marginal farmer can gain up to 10 per cent from doorstep collection. A similar experiment was done in other parts of Maharashtra and other States like Telangana and Karnataka. The outcome in those areas was also on a similar line; of course with a little variation.

Farmers can also minimise wastage in the direct procurement system. For example, a year ago the India Development Foundation (IDF) studied a vegetable value chain in Siddipet in Telangana and found big savings when Big Basket and Reliance Fresh started procuring vegetables directly from the farmers for their shops in Hyderabad. Farmers used to get the order one-day in advance and usually pluck the exact amount and quality of vegetable demanded. These are some out-of-the-box experiments that reveal huge benefits for small and marginal farmers through local collection.

New marketing rules should encourage such initiatives which are resilient in the current context, efficient and pro-farmer.

Gender aspect: The rising partici-

tion of women in farm work in India — a phenomenon commonly referred to as the feminisation of agriculture — is a huge reality now. According to OXFAM 2018, the agriculture sector employs 80 per cent of all economically productive women in India. They comprise 33 per cent of the agricultural labour force and 48 per cent of self-employed farmers. Despite their large contribution, women continue to remain invisible in the rural economy of India. Our critical evaluation suggests that women are acting as non-paid workers in agriculture or as other traditional sector; be it handicraft or weaving. Men are in control when it comes to selling their products to mandis/APMCs or handicrafts to local traders.

A vast majority of women, particularly in rural areas, are engaged in the informal sector and derive their livelihood from activities relating to agriculture, handlooms and artisanal products. Unfortunately, these women remain at the lowest end of the value chain, with their share in earnings being low out of margins, which are even otherwise very minuscule. In this context, there is scope to increase their income by continuing in the existing activity and becoming organised as a collective, so as to pool their output.

Others can be helped by getting them involved in some productive activity that is or can be popularised in the locality, and then selling the output as a group of women producers.

Doorstep selling/localised procurement will be liberating for women farmers. It will open up an opportunity for women farmers to participate in the selling activity and directly deal with the buyers. Our experience shows that exposure to agri-marketing made women aware of the information inputs and

upgrades that could make their work more gainful. It made them receptive to new skills and knowledge on good agriculture practices and agri-markets. Communities witnessed that the traditionally-gendered division of agricultural work has changed. Women farmers are more confident, deciding on crop-related activities like the choice of crop, selection of fertiliser, taking loans or even children's education.

Putting Women Self-Help Groups at the forefront: SHGs are a great way of empowering women in villages. However, the sustainability of such groups is a challenge as limited contribution from women and frequent defaults make them fragile. SHGs are formed and get dissolved in a few years. Connecting these SHGs to value chains is a great way to sustain them in the long-run. With the changed law, the SHGs now can participate in selling activities effectively, directly contact end-buyers and get a five per cent hike in the value of their produce. This amount is enough to sustain them for most of the year. And more importantly, it will increase activities in SHGs, encouraging women to meet others regularly. It has been observed that once the SHGs are linked to value chains, beneficiaries actively participate in entrepreneurial activities and have a much better understanding of their profits and savings.

In the end, one must understand that changing marketing laws is not a panacea to all of our farm woes. Agriculture is a delicate area which needs continuous attention and care. Reforming a colonial era marketing practice will definitely help the disadvantaged section of farmers but a wider social security and modernisation of agriculture is needed.

(The writer is Fellow, IDF. The views expressed are personal)

Trump must create an alternative to the WHO

The US must also ensure that Beijing does not start its 'Health Aid Diplomacy' to fill the leadership vacuum



GAURIE DWIVEDI

US President Donald Trump, who has been a vocal and strident critic of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) handling of the Coronavirus epidemic and the deferential treatment it meted out to Beijing, finally made good on his threat recently and exited the 72-year-old global body the US had co-founded. The US withdrawal will severely impact the overall functioning of the WHO and there has been concern over the timing of the President's decision as well.

First, it comes at a time when countries continue to see a huge upsurge in cases. Second, global efforts to discover a vaccine have

never been as united as they are right now. The US' efforts to fight or find a cure/drug/vaccine for the Coronavirus epidemic, which spread all around the world, need to be further intensified after it chose to exit the WHO. In failing to do so, it will create a leadership vacuum that Beijing will exploit to further cement its position not just as a global alternative to the US but as its possible replacement.

China did so at the time of the initial outbreak when it sent PPEs to Europe, Africa, America, Asia including India, as part of Beijing's 'Mask Diplomacy' despite being accused of deliberately misleading the world. This public relations exercise was part of a larger design where even the pandemic was identified as an opportunity to score points for global supremacy, make big money by selling substandard PPEs to the US and cover up its failure to contain the outbreak.

Xi Jinping projected himself as the world's saviour by sending aid which was a complete eyewash driven

by propaganda. In the first 35 days (March 1-April 5) of the outbreak in Europe, China exported medical equipment worth \$1.45 billion. These were commercial contracts that Chinese companies entered into with nations that were most severely hit by the virus.

Agencies like the USAID (United States Agency for International Development) which helped Africa fight the Ebola outbreak in 2016, are not around to help countries fight the Coronavirus this time. Caught up in a deep crisis itself, the US, for the first time since World War-II (WW-II), is not at the forefront of relief and aid measures.

Beijing's propaganda machinery — which aimed to position China as a benign global power, more so in poor CIS countries like Belarus — was helped by the US' virtual absence from the world stage during the pandemic. Beijing is aware that several countries may start viewing it as a friendly power, which would in turn reduce the resistance that Chinese corporations

like Huawei face and also provide fresh impetus to its ambitious Belt and Road Initiative initiative.

The US' exit from the WHO raises many questions. How significantly will the WHO's functioning be impacted due to reduced funds? Will the US' exit lead to a reform of the UN and its key agencies like the WHO? Is the announcement a precursor to setting up of an alternate organisation or will the US pre-empt all its aid efforts independently? Will Beijing step in to fill the leadership gap left by the US?

The WHO — for all its noble causes, including eradication of polio and other diseases — has an overall budget of \$5.62 billion (2018-2019). Of this, 80 per cent comes from voluntary sources and only 17 per cent comes from assessed sources, with others accounting for the remaining three per cent. In 2019, the US' contribution was \$419 million, which includes \$119 million in assessed and \$300 million in voluntary contributions. The other top donors to the WHO are

the UK, Germany, Japan and the EU. China comes in at number 15.

The WHO reports that the US contributed nearly 16 per cent of its total revenue in the 2018-2019 biennium and almost a fifth of its programme budget. Compare this to the nearly \$12 billion annual budget of the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) — the US leading federal agency for national public health that is working to save American lives. The CDC has over twice the budget of the WHO which has a charter to save all mankind from disease. Clearly, the WHO's role and scope, in spite of its exalted image as the world's leading health agency, is practically limited due to its existing funding constraints.

The US' withdrawal from the agency will impact its functioning to some extent but a part of the gap will be filled by other resources.

While the WHO may be further hamstrung in running its programmes across least developed countries (LDCs) and the developing world, it can be expected to sustain itself, albeit with some interim constraints. This move by the Trump Government appears to be more of political posturing, since the President is set to face an election in five months. For the domestic audience, it is an unequivocal expression of displeasure by the US Government indicating that Trump will focus on policies that protect American interests.

The message to the UN is also clear that the US will not watch from the sidelines if its interests are either compromised or not fully addressed by multilateral agencies like the WHO. Reform and course correction is long due for the UN and its agencies and the US' exit from the WHO could be the trigger to undertake those tough reforms, including accountability and transparency from the organisation and its top bosses.

To ensure that the US, as the world's richest country, does not abdicate its responsibility towards

low income and poor countries, Trump should immediately announce substantial increase in the USAID from the present \$2.7 billion to at least \$4 billion. Additional funds should be directed to LDCs in Africa that will be most significantly impacted due to any budget cuts in WHO projects. It will also ensure that the US will focus on providing aid directly to vulnerable and smaller nations and regain some of the leadership vacuum created since February. It will also ensure Beijing does not start its 'Health Aid Diplomacy'.

Another major fallout of Trump's announcement will be the urgent need for most countries to beef up their health infrastructure and create more capacity. It will be the first time since WW-II that low-income countries will have to almost exclusively rely on their internal resources to tackle healthcare issues due to greater uncertainty around the WHO's future prospects.

(The writer is a senior journalist)

Deploying forces to DC shows how to quell protests: Trump

Washington: President Donald Trump on Wednesday took credit for a massive deployment of National Guard troops and federal law enforcement officers to the nation's capital, saying it offered a model to states on how to quell protesters nationwide.

Trump argued that the massive show of force was responsible for protests in Washington and other cities turning more calm in recent days and repeated his criticism of governors who have not deployed their National Guard to the fullest.

It was a striking contrast to the hands-off approach of the White House on Monday night, advocated by the president who wanted to make the aggressive action in the nation's capital an example for the rest of the country, a senior White House official said.

"You have to have a dominant force," Trump told Fox News Radio on Wednesday. "We need law and order." He quickly pivoted to the politics of the moment, adding, "You notice that all of these places that have problems, they're not run



Protesters reenact the scene where George Floyd was restrained by police while marching in a solidarity rally calling for justice for the death of George Floyd in New York on Wednesday. AP

by Republicans. They're run by liberal Democrats."

The Defense Department has drafted contingency plans for deploying active-duty military if needed. Pentagon documents reviewed by The Associated Press show plans for soldiers from an Army division to protect the White House and other federal buildings if the security situation in the nation's capital were to deteriorate and the National Guard could not secure the facilities.

But interest in exerting that extraordinary federal authority appeared to be waning in the

White House. Though the crackdown on the Washington demonstrations was praised by some Trump supporters Tuesday, a handful of Republicans expressed concern that law enforcement officers risked violating the protesters' First Amendment rights. AP

Johnson says Floyd's death 'inexcusable'

London: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson says the death of George Floyd was "inexcusable" and he understands why people are protesting.

In his first public comments on the turmoil riling the US, Johnson told lawmakers "what happened in the United States is appalling, and it was inexcusable, we all saw it on our screens and I perfectly understand people's right to protest what took place." He added "protest should take place in a lawful and reasonable way."

Johnson, who has sought to nurture close ties with President Donald Trump as he leads the UK out of the European union, deflected calls from the opposition to suspend exports of fear gas and rubber bullets to the United States. AP

Trump preening and sweeping away all guardrails that have protected US democracy: Biden

Washington: Accusing the US President of fanning the flames of hate for political gain following the custodial killing of George Floyd, Democratic presumptive presidential nominee Joe Biden has said that Donald Trump was preening and sweeping away all guardrails that have long protected the American democracy.

The US is in the midst of the biggest civic unrest in the history of the country following the death of 46-year-old African American man who was pinned to the ground as a white police officer knelt on his neck, killing him on the spot in Minneapolis on May 25.

Curfew was imposed in several cities on Tuesday as most protests turned violent during the night. In some

cases, peaceful protests turned violent resulting in large-scale looting, damage to properties and monuments, and vehicles being set ablaze.

"The president held up the Bible at St. John's Church yesterday. I just wish he opened it and read it instead of brandishing it. If he opened it, he could have learned something. They're all called to love one another as we love ourselves. It's really hard work but it's the work of America," Biden said in a major policy speech on Tuesday. "I won't traffic in fear and division. I won't fan the flames of hate. I'll seek to heal the racial wounds that have long plagued our country, not use them for political gain. I'll do my job and I'll take responsibility," Biden said. PTI

Statue of divisive ex-Philadelphia Mayor Rizzo removed

Workers removed the statue early Wednesday of controversial former Philadelphia Mayor Frank Rizzo, which was recently defaced during a protest following George Floyd's death.

"As National Guard troops deployed in the wake of recent protests watched, a crane lifted the 10-foot-tall (3-meter-tall) bronze statue and workers shook it from its stand outside the Municipal Services Building, across from City Center, and loaded onto the back of a truck.

Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney said he "never liked" the statue Monday and announced a plan to move the statue later this month.

"I can't say I see it go away," Kenney said. AP

Bus strikes roadside bomb in southern Afghanistan, 9 killed

Kabul: A roadside bombing in southern Afghanistan on Wednesday killed nine people, including a provincial governor, a spokesman for the provincial governor said.

Another five passengers were wounded in the explosion, said the spokesman. Ashraf Ahmad, a spokesman for the provincial governor said.

The Taliban have not claimed responsibility for any of those attacks but they did say they carried out one attack on the weekend of the Eid holiday. The truck was not officially extended but neither of the warring sides appears to want a return to an all-out fighting.

On Tuesday night, a bomb exploded inside a mosque in the Afghan capital of Kabul, killing two people, including the mosque's prayer leader, and wounding eight others.

Also Tuesday, the IS group claimed responsibility for a deadly roadside bombing over the weekend that killed a man belonging to a local TV station in Kabul, killing at least seven civilians, including a woman and several children. AP

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Johnson OK's visa plans for 3 mn Hongkongers

London: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Wednesday reiterated the UK's plans for some of the "biggest changes" to the country's visa system in order to allow around three million Hong Kong nationals a path to British citizenship if China does not back off over a new controversial law.

Writing in 'The Times', the UK prime minister said that offer would be triggered only if China presses ahead with the new law which threatens to strip the former British colony of its traditional freedoms.

An estimated 3,50,000 Hongkongers hold British National (Overseas) passports and another 2.5 million would be eligible to apply for them. At present, these BNO passports only allow visa-free access to the UK for up to six months.

"If China imposes its national security law, the British government will change our immigration rules and allow any holder of these passports from Hong Kong to come to the UK for a renewable period of 12 months and be given further immigration rights, including the right to work, which could place them on a route to citizenship," writes Johnson.

"This would amount to one of the biggest changes in our visa system in history. If it proves necessary, the British government will take this step and take it willingly," he said.

The offer was laid out by UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab in the House of Commons on Tuesday and Johnson stressed that she hopes things don't have to come to it as China risks "inflaming" the situation in Hong Kong with the new law. PTI

Carrie Lam accuses foreign critics of double standards

Beijing: Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam accused foreign critics on Wednesday of displaying "blatant double standards" over moves by Beijing to strengthen control over the semi-autonomous territory.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced earlier that his country is ready to open the door to almost 3 million Hong Kong citizens if China enacts a national security law for the city.

Following talks with officials in Beijing, Lam said China has the same right as the US and Britain to enact legislation protecting its national security and that foreign criticism and threats

of sanctions could not be justified. She said that China was compelled to take the step at the national level because opposition in Hong Kong's own legislature and among government critics made it impossible to do so locally. "I can only say that the international jurisdiction of any country to enact laws to protect and safeguard national security. USA is no exception. UK is no exception." Lam said.

"It is within the legitimate jurisdiction of any country to enact laws to protect and safeguard national security. USA is no exception. UK is no exception." Lam said.

With wins in 7 States, DC, Biden closes in on nomination

Washington: Joe Biden is on the cusp of formally securing the Democratic presidential nomination after winning hundreds more delegates in primary contests that tested the nation's ability to run elections while balancing a pandemic and sweeping social unrest.

Biden could lock down the nomination within the next week as West Virginia and Georgia hold primaries. On Tuesday, voters across America were forced to navigate curfews, health concerns and National Guard police presence. The success dramatically reduced the number of in-person voting sites to minimise the spread of the coronavirus outbreak. AP

US to suspend flights by Chinese airlines from June 16

The United States on Tuesday ordered the suspension of all flights by Chinese airlines into and out of the country after Beijing failed to allow American carriers to resume passenger service to China.

"US carriers have asked to resume passenger service beginning June 1st. The Chinese governments failure to approve their requests is a violation of our Air Transport Agreement," the US Transportation Department said in a statement.

The suspension order takes effect June 16, but could be implemented sooner if President Donald Trump orders it to be.

COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Virus forges rare accord among bitter Venezuelan rivals

Caracas: President Nicolás Maduro and Venezuela's opposition, led by Juan Guaidó, have agreed to a measure for battling the new coronavirus to be overseen by international health workers, a first step toward cooperation between bitter political rivals for the benefit of the country.

While focused narrowly on the pandemic response, experts said Wednesday the agreement opens a small window of hope for tackling Venezuela's overarching political stalemate that has left the once-wealthy oil nation in deepening economic and social crisis.

"It's hard to overstate how important this is for Venezuela," said Geoff Ramsey of the Washington Office on Latin America think tank.

"It seems like both Maduro and the opposition are beginning to see that they can't simply sit back with their arms folded and blame the other side."

Venezuelans are increasingly losing patience with the lack of progress in finding a

political solution, he said, adding that this agreement could next lead to more badly needed humanitarian assistance and create momentum for negotiations for a political solution to the crisis.

"If they can negotiate a humanitarian accord, the next step would be to negotiate conditions for free and fair elections," Ramsey said.

The one-page agreement signed June 1 says both sides will work in coordination to find funds for fighting the coronavirus. It is signed by Maduro's health minister, Dr Carlos Alvarado, and Dr Julio Castro, who represents the Guaidó-led National Assembly.

It was also signed by Dr Gerardo de Cosío, the head of the Venezuela office of the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization, which will oversee the cooperation.

"This document is, I hope, a step to move forward to a level of collaboration of both sides," Dr De Cosío told The Associated Press. AP

Two Pakistani lawmakers die from Covid

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Two Pakistani lawmakers died from the novel coronavirus here on Wednesday, a day after a provincial minister succumbed to COVID-19 in the southern Sindh province.

Mian Jamshed Kakakhel, 65, a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, died here while undergoing treatment after having tested positive for the coronavirus 10 days ago.

"Mian Jamshed was on ventilator for the last three days and passed away this morning," an official said.

"His son Mian Omar has recovered from coronavirus with mild symptoms and members have tested negative for it," he added.

Kakakhel was elected from the constituency of PK-63 Nowshera in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018.

Pakistan Muslim League-(Nawaz) MPA from from Gujranwala Shaikat Manzoor Cheema also died after being on ventilator since Eid, Geo News reported.

BRITAIN Ethnic minorities face higher proportion of lockdown fines, arrests

PTI ■ LONDON

Scotland Yard on Wednesday released its first set of data from policing action taken to enforce the coronavirus lockdown across London, which reveals a high proportion of ethnic minorities being fined or arrested for breaches.

The Metropolitan Police said it had issued 973 fines, or Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), between March 27 and May 14. Those categorised as Asian, which would include people of Indian origin, received 220 fines reflecting 22.6 per cent of FPNS compared to their 18 per cent share of London's population.

Black people received 253 fines, reflecting 26 per cent of FPNS compared to their 12 per cent share of the UK capital's population. This compares with 444 fines for those categorised as White British, making up 45.6 per cent of the FPNS while making up 59 per cent of London's population.

"When compared with the composition of the resident population, higher proportions of those in black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups were issued with FPNS or arrested across London as a whole," the Met Police admitted.

"The reasons for this are likely to be complex and reflect a range of factors. This includes interactions between the areas subject to significant proactive policing activity targeting crime hot-spots and both the variation in the age-profile and geographical distribution of ethnic groups in London," it said.

Of a total of 711 arrests made in connection with COVID-19 legislation, the largest group of arrested people were white at 38 per cent, followed by blacks at 31 per cent and 14 per cent Asian. When taken just in terms of total numbers without proportionality, more white people received FPNS or were arrested than other individual ethnic groups.

Italy reopens to tourists from Europe

Rome: Italy reopened to travellers from Europe on Wednesday, three months after the country went into coronavirus lockdown, with all hopes pinned on reviving the key tourism industry as the summer season begins.

Gondolas were ready to punt along Venice's canals, lovers will be able to act out "Romeo and Juliet" on Verona's famed balcony, and gladiator fans can pose for selfies at Rome's Colosseum.

But there were fears many foreign tourists would be putting off to a country still shaking off a vicious pandemic.

"Come to Calabria. There's only one risk that you'll get fat," the southern region's governor Jole Santelli said on Sunday as the race began to lure big spenders - or any spenders - back to Italy's sandy shores.

Italy was the first European country to be hit hard by the coronavirus and has officially reported more than 33,000 deaths.

It imposed an economically crippling lockdown in early March and has since seen its contagion numbers drop off dramatically. AP

Yemen programmes fighting virus might stop by end of June, warns UN

Cairo: The United Nations warned on Wednesday that its programmes to fight the coronavirus in war-torn Yemen might have to stop by the end of the month unless they get an immediate injection of cash.

The warning comes a day after a UN appeal for countries to fund emergency aid in the Arab world's poorest nation fell a billion dollars short of what aid agencies needed - USD 2.41 billion - to cover essential activities from June to December.

"This will severely handicap efforts to contain the outbreak, which is already spreading rapidly," said Hayat Abu Saleh, a spokesperson for the U.N. Officer for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

At least 31 major UN programmes in Yemen, covering essentially every sector, from food to health care and nutrition, were at a "serious risk of significant reduction or closure," she said.

The coronavirus is threatening to decimate Yemen's health care system, already ravaged by more than five years of civil war. AP

Around the Globe

Islamabad: Pakistan has reported a record 4,132 fresh cases of the coronavirus in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of infections to 80,463, the health ministry said on Wednesday.

Madrid: Spain's national statistics body says nearly 44,000 more people have died since the beginning of 2020 than in the same period a year earlier - an increase of 24%.

Singapore: Coronavirus cases in Singapore crossed the 36,000 mark on Wednesday as 569 new cases, mostly foreign workers living in dormitories, were confirmed, a day after low-risk businesses resumed operations with the end of the two-month long "circuit breaker" period.

Berlin: Germany's government says it plans to lift a travel warning for European countries on June 15 - but it may still advise against travel in some cases, for example to Britain if quarantine rules are not implemented in place.

Seoul: South Korea has reported 49 new cases, continuing a weeklong resurgence that has alarmed a nation where millions of children have begun returning to school. The figures announced by the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Wednesday brought national totals to 11,590 cases and 273 deaths.

SEARCH FOR MISSING WOMAN



General public is hereby informed that this woman namely Saazdaa Parveen W/o Md. Salim R/o H.No. H-221, J.J. Colony, Shakurpur, New Delhi Age : 18 years 4 Months, Height : 5'2", Face : Round, Complexion : Sallow, Build : Medium, wearing light blue colour suit, yellow colour salwar, red colour dupatta and green colour chapple in feet, has been missing since 25.04.2020 from her house from the area of P.S. Subhash Place, New Delhi. In this regard DD No. 12-A dated 26.04.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Subhash Place, New Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing woman may kindly inform to the following:-

E-mail: clic@cbl.gov.in SHO : P.S. Subhash Place, New Delhi
 Website: http://cbl.nic.in P.S. Subhash Place, New Delhi
 Fax: 24368639, 24368639
 Tel.: 24368638/24368641 Tel. No. : 011-27356336

SEARCH FOR MISSING WOMAN



General public is hereby informed that this woman namely Neetu W/o Suresh R/o H.No. G-691, J.J. Colony, Sawda, Delhi Age : 30 years, Height : 5', Complexion : Wheatish, Face : Round, Identification: A tattoo of Star on right hand, wearing pink colour full sleeves suit-Salwa and ladies hawai chapple in feet, has been missing since 30.04.2020 from the area of P.S. Kanjhawala, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 43-A dated 30.04.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Kanjhawala, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing/ Kidnapped woman may kindly inform to the following:-

E-mail: clic@cbl.gov.in SHO : P.S. Kanjhawala, Delhi
 Website: http://cbl.nic.in P. No. : 011-25951485, 25951486
 Fax: 24368639, 24368641
 Tel.: 24368638/24368641

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified deadbody male namely Age : 40 years, Height : 5'7", Complexion : Sallow, Identification : One lateral mark of heart with arrow on the dorsal of right hand, wearing only grey colour lower (one sky blue colour shirt, one pair of slippers and one white towel found near body) was found dead on 24.05.2020 at 300 ft road, near underpass, agriculture land, village Bakkarwala, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 08-A dated 24.05.2020 has been lodged at PS Mundka, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone numbers.

SHO : P.S. Mundka, Delhi.
 Tel. No. 011-28352010, 28352011

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified deadbody of male Age : Approx. 35-40 years, Height : 5', Complexion : Sallow, Build : Thin, Face : Long, wearing blue colour lower, was found dead on 31.05.2020 in front of D-Addiction Centre, Near P.S. Kotwali, Chandni Chowk, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 13-A dated 31.05.2020 u/s 174 Cr.P.C. has been lodged at P.S. Kotwali, Delhi. The dead body was preserved for 72 hours for identification in the mortuary of Subzi Mandi, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this found person may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO : P.S. Kotwali, Delhi
 Tel. No. 011-23977100, 8750870121

NIFTY RECLAIMS 10K-MARK SENSEX CLIMBS 284 PTS

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Sensex climbed 284 points while the Nifty finished above the 10,000-mark on Wednesday as risk-on sentiment remained in the gear amid supportive global cues.

Banking and finance counters saw heavy demand, helping the benchmarks close in the green for the sixth straight session. After hitting a peak of 34,888.69, the Sensex shed some gains in a gap-end trade to finish at 34,109.54, up 284.01 points or 0.84 per cent.

Similarly, the NSE Nifty jumped 82.45 points or 0.83 per cent to end at 10,061.55. The index closed above the crucial 10,000-level for the first time since March 11, 2020.

M&M was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, spurring 4.82 per cent, followed by Kotak, Bajaj Finance, SBI, Nestle India, ICICI Bank, ONGC and HDFC Bank. On the other hand, NTPC, Bharti Airtel, Maruti and Hero MotoCorp were among the laggards, slipping up to 1.12 per cent.

Global markets soared to three-month highs as investors cheered the gradual reopening of economies the world over, even as the rising coronavirus cases and US-China tensions remained an overhang. The domestic markets were also aided by robust foreign



Global stock markets continue to rise as economies reopen

AP ■ TOKYO

Global stock markets rose Wednesday, extending three days of gains, as more economies reopened from shutdowns they had imposed to stem the coronavirus pandemic.

Asian markets closed higher and European markets were up in midday trading, while Wall Street futures pointed to gains on the open in the US.

"The theme of reopening optimism has its stronghold on markets going into the mid-week," said Jingyi Pan,

market strategist for IG in Singapore. So far, the markets' momentum has not been derailed by the wave of protests across the US.

That began last week in Minneapolis after a black man, George Floyd died with a Minneapolis police officer choking on his air. President Donald Trump has threatened to send troops to quell the unrest.

Investors appear to be focused instead on hopes that the worst of the pandemic downturn has passed, or will soon, as governments slowly lift the restrictions that

fund investors, analysts said.

On a net basis, foreign portfolio investors bought equities worth ₹7,498.20 crore on Tuesday, provisional exchange data showed.

"The buoyancy of the global markets triggered gap up opening and it traded range-bound thereafter. However, profit-taking in the last hour trimmed the gains. Amid all, Nifty reclaimed 10,000 mark and settled above the hurdle of 10,050 as well.

"Mixed trend was witnessed amongst the sectoral indices wherein sectors like metal, banking, and capital goods were the top gainers while sectors like IT and telecom ended in the red," said Jitendra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

BSE Realty, bank, finance, capital goods, oil and gas, industrials and consumer durables indices rallied up to 3.07 per cent, while telecom, power, tech and IT shed up to 0.95 per cent.

Broader BSE mid-cap and small-cap indices surged up to 1.24 per cent. Meanwhile, India's service sector activities declined sharply in May as the coronavirus pandemic continued to impair business operations, restrict consumer footfall at shops and resulted in job losses, PMI data showed on Wednesday.

On the currency front, the rupee surrendered all intra-day gains to provisionally settle 11 paise lower at 75.47 against the US dollar.

AMRAPALI CASE - ED: Morgan used sham deals, shell firms to launder homebuyers' funds

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Employees of JP Morgan India Ltd, who were on the board of various Amrapali real estate group companies, "laundered" deposits worth ₹187 crore of homebuyers and "diverted" them to the multi-national financial advisory firm's entities based in Mauritius and Singapore by undertaking sham transactions and using shell companies, the Enforcement Directorate has found in its probe.

The central probe agency submitted to the Supreme Court these findings of its investigation as part of a reply affidavit after it attached ₹187.34,92,519 in bank deposit of JP Morgan India Pvt Ltd at a bank branch in Mumbai on May 26 under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The company, during the last hearing of the case in the Supreme Court on May 27, had denied any wrongdoing and said that this attachment of properties by the ED was blatant and illegal as it was not full of any kind of financial dealing with the Amrapali Group.

The SC had asked the central agency to file a reply on this grievance raised by the company. The ED, through Additional Solicitor General Sanjay Jain, filed the reply in

which it described the modus operandi of the company to allegedly launder the hard-earned money of homebuyers who wanted to purchase an abode in Amrapali real estate projects.

The apex court, which is monitoring this case, had in December last year directed the ED and its Lucknow zone Joint Director Rajeshwar Singh, who was present in the court, to take action against JP Morgan under the anti-money laundering law and the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA).

The top court had first cracked the whip in July last year on errant builders for breaching the trust of home buyers and ordered cancellation of Amrapali Group's registration under the real estate law RERA and ousted it from its newly roped-off Mumbai national capital region by nixing the land leases.

The ED probe in the case found the role of "shell companies" and "dummy directors" in perpetration of the alleged money laundering crime.

"It is revealed in the PMLA investigations that the employment of JP Morgan India Ltd on board of Ms Amrapali Zodiac Developers P Ltd and Ms Amrapali Silicon City P Ltd and Ms Amrapali Property Mauritius Company-II"

the respective companies and securing interests of the funds but they also indulged prima facie in money laundering to divert the home buyers' funds to the tune of ₹187 crore to JP Morgan India Property Mauritius Company-II in Mauritius and Ms JP Morgan IPI-I Singapore 2 PTE Ltd in Singapore," the agency said in its affidavit that was accessed by PTI.

"The employees have been identified as Gunjan Bahl, Hrushikesh Kar and Chanakya Chakravarty. The agency said the Mauritius company "was an active participant in the conspiracy from the very outset" and that JP Morgan India "played a key role in the remittance of diverted funds of the home buyers to Mauritius and Singapore."

"These employees of JP Morgan India P Ltd, it said, serving on the board of Directors of Amrapali Zodiac Developers P Ltd "got arranged the cash flow in the company through funds arranged from other companies in Amrapali group, diversion of the funds of the home buyers, staged valuation of shares, creation of shell companies with dummy directors and sham transactions to finally get accrued about ₹140 crore to JP Morgan Mauritius Property Mauritius Company-II."

WEF Davos summit to focus on 'The Great Reset' in 2021; will be open to all online

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/GENEVA

The World Economic Forum (WEF) will adopt a new twin-summit format for its next annual Davos meeting in January 2021, by bringing together leaders from across the globe for in-person as well as virtual dialogues with a theme of "The Great Reset".

The gathering of the world's rich and powerful, held every year in the Swiss ski resort town, will also open its doors virtually for everyone across the world online and through a network of more than 400 hubs globally.

The 50th WEF Annual Meeting, which was held from January 21-24, 2020, was one of the last high-profile gatherings this year, before the coronavirus pandemic brought almost the entire world to a halt.

In a statement, Geneva-based WEF said its 51st Annual Meeting will again bring together global leaders from government, business and civil society, and stakeholders from around the world, but this time in a unique configuration of both in-person and virtual dialogues. "The Great Reset" will be the theme of this unique twin summit in January 2021, it added. The WEF, which

describes itself as an international organisation for public-private partnership, said "The Great Reset" is a commitment to jointly and urgently build the foundations of economic and social systems for a more fair, sustainable and resilient future.

"It requires a new social contract centred on human dignity, social justice and where societal progress does not fall behind economic development," it said.

Charles Wicks, the global health crisis has laid bare longstanding ruptures in economics and societies, and created a social crisis that urgently requires decent, meaningful jobs.

The twin summit in January 2021 will be both in-person and virtual, connecting key global Governmental and business leaders in Davos with a global multi-stakeholder network in 400 cities around the world for a forward-oriented dialogue driven by the younger generation. These would include cities in India, among other countries. The announcement of "the great reset" summit was made by the Prince Charles of Wales and WEF founder and Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab during a virtual meeting.

Only 5% Asia Pacific infra firms highly exposed to Covid-19 disruptions: Moody's

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Only 5 per cent of the rated project and infrastructure companies in Asia Pacific have high exposure to coronavirus disruptions, Moody's Investor Service said on Wednesday.

Moody's said it eased for Chinese toll roads, while a small number of utilities face moderate exposure, it said. A high proportion (67 per cent) of rated project and infrastructure companies in Asia Pacific have low to moderate exposure to coronavirus disruption, giving rise to pressure from falling power prices and lower demand, which is only partly offset by lower fuel costs," the statement said.

Following the reclassification of these toll roads and utilities, the number of companies with moderate exposure has increased to 28 per cent from 23 per cent in April. "Moreover, a limited number of projects with exposure to commodity risk - particularly energy-related - also face rising challenges following the recent material fall in oil, gas and coal prices," Muskler said.

Airports now make up

most of the high exposure category, he said.

Whereas Moody's in April estimated 9 per cent of project and infrastructure companies had high exposure to coronavirus disruptions, this number has now declined to 5 per cent.

"On the other hand, a small number of power utilities now have moderate exposure to coronavirus disruption, giving rise to pressure from falling power prices and lower demand, which is only partly offset by lower fuel costs," the statement said.

Following the reclassification of these toll roads and utilities, the number of companies with moderate exposure has increased to 28 per cent from 23 per cent in April.

"Moreover, a limited number of projects with exposure to commodity risk - particularly energy-related - also face rising challenges following the recent material fall in oil, gas and coal prices," Muskler said.

India saves ₹5,000 crore in filling strategic oil reserves

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has saved ₹5,000 crore in foreign exchange after it capitalised on the global oil price to fill its underground strategic oil storage tanks.

The Ministry said crude and LNG sourcing has been further diversified to strengthen India's energy security. Indian Oil Corp (IOC), the nation's largest oil firm, in 2019-20 entered into a long-term contract for sourcing crude oil from the USA.

It also signed a first-ever term contract for importing 2 million tonnes of Urals grade crude oil from Rosneft of Russia in 2020, the Ministry said. "First Russian cargo of 2 million barrels under the contract was received by IOC at Paradip on April 8, 2020," it said.

In just over two years, bilateral hydrocarbon trade with US increased from almost negligible in 2017 to 11 per cent of total two-way trade, it said. "US is the 6th largest source of crude oil imports while India has become the 4th largest export destination for the US crude oil, however, did not give details.

The Strategic Petroleum Reserve entity of India (ISRPL) built the underground storages at Mangalore and Padur in Andhra Pradesh and Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh as insurance against supply and price disruptions.

The storages at Mangalore and Padur were half-empty and there was some space available in Vizag storages as well. These were filled by buying oil from Saudi Arabia, the

NORTHERN RAILWAY "Notice"

Sub: - Sh. Rahul Yadav S/o Sh. Ram Charan/pointsman/DEE/Delhi division/Northern Railway address, R.O. 187-B, Railway colony, basant lane, Paharganj, New Delhi-110055

You are running absent w.e.f. 23.09.2017 without any information to this office. Please report within 10 days of publication of this notice to this office of the under signed, otherwise administration would be bound to take ex-parte decision/removal from the service.

12527020 DOM/Chp/DLI SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

UJVN Limited (An Uttarakhnad Govt. Enterprise)

H/O "LUJAWAL" Mahanagar, Bagh, CMS Road, Dehra Dun-248306 Tel: 0513-263260, Fax: 0513-263267 CIN No. U41011UR2015GSC02866 Website: www.ujvn.com

Date Extension Notice-03

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the date of submission & opening of the Tender No. 02/E/Gen./CHILLAL/TN/2019-20 is hereby extended as, Last Date & Time for submission of : June 11, 2020 Upto 17:00 Hrs Bid in the e-Portal

Last Date & Time of Submission of : June 11, 2020 Upto 17:00 Hrs hard copies

Date & Time of Opening of Tender : June 12, 2020 At 11:00 Hrs. in the portal

For full & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal "https://tenders.gov.in"

Executive Engineer (Gen.) Chilla Power House

सं. सं. 349 एच.एच. 03.06.2020

"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male Age: About 48 years, Face : Oval, Height : 165cm, Complexion : Sallow, Build : Thin, wearing blue colour shirt and black colour trouser, was found unconscious on 26.05.2020 outside of gynae department, Sadfarjung hospital, he was admitted in Sadfarjung Hospital, New Delhi vide MLC No. 153864/20. Where doctor declare him brought dead. In this regard a DD No. 17-A dated 26.05.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Sadfarjung Enclave, New Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on following address or telephone nos.

SHO : P.S. Sadfarjung Enclave, New Delhi Tel. No. : 011-24106345, 24106346 DP/153/59/20

HARYANA AWARDS

OUTSTANDING SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF PREVENTION OF ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Applications are invited from individuals/institutions under "State Awards for Outstanding Services in the Field of Prevention of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse" Scheme for the year: 2020-21. 1st, 1st and 1st prizes are Re. 50,000/-, Re. 30,000/- and Re. 20,000/- respectively.

- Awards Categories: Best Drug De-addiction Centre - Providing services to alcoholics & drug users. Best Panchayati Raj Institution - Working for prevention of alcoholism & substance abuse. Best Municipal Body - Working for prevention of alcoholism & substance abuse. Best School - For outstanding work in awareness generation and prevention of alcoholism & substance abuse. Best College - For outstanding work in awareness generation and prevention of alcoholism & substance abuse. Best Curative Campaign - open category. Best Awareness Campaign - open category. Outstanding individual Achievement - by a Professional. Outstanding individual Achievement - by a non-Professional. Interested individuals/institutions/Organizations may apply along with complete data of their district along with all enclosures, by 4:00 pm on or before 20-06-2020. Details of conditions can be obtained from District Social Welfare Officer concerned.

DIRECTOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT, HARYANA RO No. 81115 Dt. 02-06-2020

5paisa.com announces hikes, advance bonuses for employees

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid pay cuts and layoffs across sectors, discount broker 5paisa.com on Wednesday announced bonus hikes of up to 15 per cent and advance bonus pay-outs to boost employee morale.

The move is also aimed at helping employees tide over the difficult times amid the COVID-19 outbreak, the country's only listed discount broker said in a statement.

As the startup ecosystem undergoes revenue losses and client attrition, 5paisa.com had a good quarter recently in terms of client addition, continues the streak of business growth in the April-June period so far, it added.

Company said it is on-boarded over 1.2 lakh customers in the four quarter of fiscal year 2019-20.

"Within a span of four years, 5paisa.com has become a well-managed fintech firm with focus on efficient cost management and advanced technology. While we face uncertainties, we are also aligning ourselves to prioritise on employee benefits," the company's CEO Gagdani said.

Google pulls down Remove China Apps, Mitron

FROM PLAY STORE FOR POLICY VIOLATION

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Google has removed from its app store an Indian mobile application "Remove China Apps" that allowed users to delete Chinese games and other software from their Android smartphones, citing violation of its policies.

Alphabet Inc's Google had previously reported "Remove China Apps" as a popular Indian alternative to the Chinese TikTok.

The two apps had drawn millions of downloads in India as border tensions between India and China surged.

The app pulled over 5 million downloads. Developed by little-known OneTouch AppLabs, based in Jaipur, Remove China Apps had become a top trending free app on Google's mobile app store in India with more than five million downloads since May.

"Our global Play policies

are designed to provide a safe and secure experience for our users while also giving developers the tools they need to succeed. However, when violations of these policies are identified, we have an established process of working with developers to help them find remedies," Google spokesperson said in response to an e-mail query.

"Remove China Apps helped users identify the country of origin for apps installed on the phone, highlighting Chinese ones and suggesting steps for removal.

Once detected, a message popped up saying "You are awesome, no China app found." The app came in the limelight after innovator and educationist Sonam Wangchuk appealed to Indians to boycott Chinese products because of aggression by the Chinese army on the Ladakh border in the Ladakh region.

Govt. of Bihar DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL & FISHERIES RESOURCES DIRECTORATE OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, BIHAR, PATNA TENDER NOTICE FOR SUPPLY OF VETERINARY MEDICINES FOR THE YEAR 2020-21 and 2021-22

Sealed tenders are invited (for selection of firms and rate fixation) under two-bid system from reputed MANUFACTURER with strong market standing and having an in-house Research and Development (R&D) facility duly registered with Department of Science and Industrial Research, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India (Reliable for 55 unit of Bihar or Govt. undertaking/ Govt. Enterprises) along with valid registration of the product and appropriate license for manufacturing or from their authorized distributors/authorized agencies/authorized representatives in conformity with details contained in tender documents for "Tender for Supply of Veterinary Medicines - 2020-21 and 2021-22" for Animal Husbandry Directorate, Bihar, Patna as per the specifications mentioned in detailed tender document.

The interested manufacturers and their authorized distributors/authorized agencies/authorized representatives are required to submit the technical and financial bid separately for items (Veterinary Medicine) which they intend to supply and then these two envelopes are to be put in one common envelope super-scribed "Tender for supply of Veterinary Medicines - 2020-21 and 2021-22". Bids should be submitted in the office of The Director, Animal Husbandry, Bihar, New Secretariat, Vias Bhawan, Patna-800015 by dropping in prescribed tender box or by Registered post/Speed post or by before 01.00 PM on 26-06-2020. The bid received after due date and time will not be entertained whatsoever may be the reason. The technical bids shall be opened on the same day at 04:15 PM in the office of The Director, Animal Husbandry, Bihar, in the event of the above mentioned date being declared as a holiday/closed day, the tenders will be received and opened on the very next working day at the scheduled / appointed time. The date of opening of financial bid of technically qualified agencies will be announced later.

The detailed tender notice and tender document containing technical bid form, financial bid form, technical description/ specification and terms & conditions can be downloaded from official website of the Department i.e. www.ahd.bih.nic.in.

The amount of bid security (EMD) as mentioned in the detailed tender document should be paid by Bank Draft/ Bank Guarantee of any scheduled bank in favour of "Director, Animal Husbandry, Bihar" payable at Patna and will be placed in cover-1 with technical bid.

The authority reserves the right to reject / cancel any or all the tenders received without assigning any reason therefor. Any legal clarification and/or corrigendum(s) shall be communicated through Director, Animal Husbandry, Bihar, Patna on the department website: www.ahd.bih.nic.in. For further details please visit website www.pdbihar.gov.in

Director, Animal Husbandry Bihar, Patna. PR. 001833 (Animal) 2020-21

Trend
Slazer

Bhumi launches anti-spitting campaign

BHUMI PEDNEKAR is a socially conscious star who has come forward strongly to raise awareness on Coronavirus during this lockdown. The versatile actor is now urging the entire nation to fight the COVID-19 pandemic through an anti-spitting campaign that aims to educate people.

The actor says, "We have to defeat Coronavirus and everyone has to join hands. Leave the habit of spitting. Currently, our country is under the threat of Corona and the fatal disease spreads every by spitting."



'I am not my child's friend and don't think I need to be. I am his parent and why can't I be a friendly parent and have a great time together. There are certain things he will speak with his father, with his aunts, with his friends, with his grandparents, there needs to be an outlet for healthy relationships.'

Actor **MALAIKA ARORA** has shared her various stages of lockdown in a hilarious new post on social media.

She took to Instagram, and she shared a photo collage of four images of herself.

In the first picture, Malika is seen playing with her hair, the second features her flaunting flawless skin, the third picture has her hair on her face and in the fourth she is seen lying in bed.

"My various stages of lockdown... #stayhomestaysafe #stay sane," Malika captioned the image.

Tom builds Corona-free village

Hollywood star **TOM CRUISE** is reportedly planning to build a 'coronavirus-free village' for the cast and crew of *Mission: Impossible 7* so that they can complete the shoot of the film without contracting the virus.

"Cruise is planning to create a makeshift village at an abandoned RAF site in Oxfordshire. It is being reported that the actor and producer along with his A-list cast will stay in VIP Winnebago trailers so they can protect the crew from catching Coronavirus," said a source.

Everybody has their own vision of what a happy home filled with love looks like. However, this year more than the past ones, we have been practically forced to spend more time confined to our houses. Earlier, we believed that life would bounce back to normal but now are learning to live with the virus in order to survive and embrace the new conditions. So it is time to redesign our houses to fit the needs of the current times, where safety against diseases, is the prime focus.

Adeete Sawhney from Altus Interio says "This is the time where we have no option but to stay home. So, we need to make relevant changes, especially, in the areas where we spend a lot of time like the kitchen, bedroom, living area and bathroom. They would need a change to begin with." On the other hand interior designer Punam Kalra, creative director of IM the Centre says, "We have been reminded that our lifestyle is nothing but an ode to nature and hence it's essential to embrace the green movement by shifting our focus to biophilia and easy to recycle elements like wood, vegetable fibre, jute, sisal, hemp, stone, and many more. We have to also become more sensitive to the sourcing of our materials, the manufacturing process and the end design, so that our interiors are environment conscious, heart-felt and inspiring."

Since there is a stronger focus now on cleanliness and sanitation, there will be emphasis on incorporating uncomplicated, easy to maintain and innovative surfaces within the house for easy upkeep in the future. "The role of interiors has always been to aid daily routines and lifestyle of the inhabitants. It can't build immunity on its own, but provides its users with a safe space and convenience to successfully achieve it," says Kalra.

HEALTHY INTERIOR

Curtains and carpets are always integral part of interior décor. But they also attract dust which is harmful, especially during these times. "These are essential part of the décor which we can't remove from our houses. But now we have to choose light and natural fabrics which are easier to clean on a daily basis. The upholstery should be in distinctive, natural fabrics like linen and silk, bamboo, cotton, etc. These are which can add an organic feeling of luxury and intimacy," says Sawhney.

Curtain are essential to maintain our privacy and make the interiors look beautiful. Interior designers, Pooja and Arbaysy Ashley, co-founders of Ashley, say, "Curtain fabrics should be treated with special technology to make them easy to maintain. Anti-microbial coating can be used on any upholstery and carpets too. These make the furnishing more hygienic. Rather than curtains one can opt for tech-based switchable glass films too which are made of a thin layer of glass surface. These technologically advanced films can be dimmed by a wave of hand, voice or by a remote. These can even be smart and automated to change the intensity of opacity depending upon sunlight."

Our homes are our heaven and a healthy interior is all about eco-friendliness. The world is now realising the importance of designing spaces which



BRING OUTSIDE INSIDE

Clean lines, uncomplicated easy-to-maintain and innovative surfaces will dominate homes in the future, says **PRIYANKA JOSHI**

connect well with our state of mind while creating a balance between our physical and mental health. Sawhney says, "This is the time to choose environment-friendly options for our houses. For instance, we can use all natural fabric for sofa and other covers, bamboo chairs and tables, indoor plants, wooden furniture and natural lights. Secondly, we can use energy saving devices like eco-friendly kitchen appliances and solar lights."

INVOKE EMOTIONS

Using a combination of colour in décor means introducing various shades of emotions. The work from home culture brings in the opportunity to reimagine both, how we live and how we work, as colours can influence our moods and thoughts. Kalra says, "A combination of materials, patterns, textures and colours within a space will be necessary to create an interesting and inspiring ambience, that is also acoustically sound, multi-functional, easy to maintain and comfortable". Colour can also be added in the form of wallpaper, photographs, memorabilia and big art work, used as feature walls, statement ceiling finishes, wall art and installations.

Bold and dramatic, or soft and understated, or an eccentric mix of the two; the freshly coloured walls, ceilings and furniture immediately make the interiors look new. The Pantone Colour of the year — classic blue — paired with earthy and neutral tones, highlighted with bolder shades like orange and terracotta create an elegant and artistic ambience. Pastel and muted shades of pink, green and lilac give the space a hint of cheery pop and modern vintage glamour. Adding deep forest tones to the upcycled furniture creates a fresh natural look. Nature-inspired motifs and vivid colours like mauve, black, purple and yellow in wallpapers, tiles and



statement accessories create a vibrant interior," says Kalra.

SPACE MANAGEMENT

With homes doubling up as offices a dedicated space to work in may become the new trend. Pooja and Arbaysy said, "People have learnt that working from home is a possibility and more people may engage in it. It may be more advisable to look at furnishing options which are natural and comfortable to body contact and health as you spend longer hours at home. Quieter spaces with sound absorption and soundproofing are going to be important."

Since we might be spending more time at home in the future, our private spaces need to change in their fundamental use. We need to make more space for daily activities like exercising and soaking in the sun, create dedicated work spaces and accessible heating areas which facilitate easy disinfection and natural ventilation.

The existing spaces have to be decluttered and reorganised to accom-

modate new open furniture layouts, personal working and relaxation corners which can be conveniently sterilised at the entrance. These areas also need to incorporate minimal exposed surfaces, clean forms, hygienic surface treatments like brass and copper and more automation with touchless technology like automatic doors, motion-sensor lights and temperature control. Kalra says, "The dedicated space should be inspiring, well-lit and quiet. Personalising a small corner with comfortable furniture and chic accessories like lamps, small planters, vibrant art, tea coasters, speakers and cosy rugs, throws and cushions, can create an ideal work environment. The colour tones and materials can be balanced with a healthy dose of neutrals and wood, along with bolder accent colours and highlight accessories, while also ensuring minimal clutter and visual conflict of the arrangement."

In a small space choose a corner in your living room or bedroom to create a compact desk so that it does not occupy too much of floor area. Create space

THINGS TO DO

Convert the rooms into art galleries, libraries and personal memoirs.

Creating orderly yet more personalised and intimate spaces within the home is required. Sculptures, artwork, books and photographs, can be stitched together scrupulously to create new mood boards and spatial arrangements. Refreshed in moderation, *avant garde* rugs can be used as wall art and rugged woven fabric as throws, while paintings and installations can be create a statement wall, or even a ceiling. Grouping similar objects in clusters of three further creates a natural symmetry and a sense of luxury within the space.

GREEN FINGERS

A mix of modern aesthetic planters and recycled household items like old ceramics and glass jars, can be upcycled to create an interesting green space. Huge corner planters are a calm and lively highlight, while smaller succulents and bromeliads make the space look classy and delicate. Simple vases with fresh flowers, along with lamps, poufs, Ottomans, benches, bean bags, coffee tables and artwork add a dreamy, charming, cozy and relaxing look.

NOVEL FURNITURE

Furniture in natural materials, with accessories in macramé, rattan and wicker add an effortless charm to the space. Reclaimed furniture, designed with a skillful use of old forms and artworks, paired with upcycled materials make the accessories, in a combination of modern bio-synthetic and recyclable materials, radiate an affable, ultra-modern vibe. Soft curves and solid, rounded, irregular shapes, along with sharper geometric shapes, expressed in furniture, pillows, prints, modern artwork, contemporary accessories and statement lighting, create indulgent and mesmerising interiors.

Bringing in the decorative glory of maximising with an understated expression, subtle metallic details in rose gold, copper, steel, tin and brass, with delicate surface finishing like patina, rust, mercury glass, give a raw and intimate textural feel to the décor. These details can be added in the form of discreet upholstery pieces, luminous metallic fabrics, lighting details, sleek furniture details, crockery, wall hangings and screens for a more dramatic space with an enhanced ornamental look.

— Punam Kalra

for your pens, pencils and other paraphernalia along with some small potted plants. Decorate the wall behind the desk with inspirational quotes and miniature artworks.

Sachin Gupta from Beyond designs says, "By choosing a sofa that will double up as a bed whenever needed, a centre table with storage and floating shelves on the wall for your memorabilia and accessories, the living room can have space for all essentials with minimal furniture. Similarly, you should go for furniture pieces that also offer storage in all rooms so that you can do without separate storage units that occupy precious floor space."

No boundaries for toxins

Discovery and Discovery Plus will showcase *The Story of Plastic* on World Environment Day. It focusses upon man-made pollution and its worldwide effects

This World Environment Day, June 5, Discovery, Discovery HD and recently launched Discovery Plus will showcase, *The Story of Plastic*, a look at the man-made crisis of pollution and the effect it has on our planet and the people that inhabit it. Spanning three continents, the film illustrates the ongoing catastrophe: fields full of garbage, veritable mountains of trash, rivers and seas clogged with waste; and skies choked with the poisonous emissions from plastic production and processing. It features interviews with experts and activists on the frontlines of the fight, revealing the disastrous consequences of the flood of plastic smothering ecosystems and poisoning communities around the world — and the global movement rising up in response. With engaging original animation, archival industry footage starting in the 1930s and first-person accounts of the unfolding emergency, the film distills a complex problem that is increasingly affecting the planet and its residents' well-being.

The issues highlighted in the film illuminate how the decisions made locally can affect us globally. We are eager to highlight the solutions laid out in the film that will help make our world a cleaner and healthier place to live in," says Nancy Daniels, chief brand officer, Discovery and



Factual. "It was always a priority for us to find the film a home that would amplify the important messages and voices," states film maker Deia Schiesserg. "I have been passionate about this issue for over 10 years. *The Story of Plastic* showed us the truth of what plastic is doing to our planet," explains co-executive producer and award-winning musician Jackson Browne.

It shines a light on the environmental damage and human rights abuses that occur throughout the life cycle of plastic — not just once it's disposed off. The message around plastic has, for decades, been controlled by its producers, who have deliberately focussed on waste. The film reveals how the plastics' industry is simultaneously blaming consumers for pollution and aggressively investing to produce more single-use plastic than

ever before. It highlights, that while cleanup is important, the real solution lies in stopping the mass production of plastic in the first place. "The crisis doesn't start when the plastics enter the ocean. It starts when the oil and the gas leave the wellhead, and it keeps on being a problem at every step along the way," says film subject Carroll Muffett of Centre for International Environmental Law.

Beyond illuminating the nature of the crisis, the film also puts the spotlight on the global resistance and network of every-day heroes working internationally to combat this urgent problem, including Charlie Moore (Algalita Marine Research & Education) who discovered the North Pacific Garbage Patch, Ellen and Elise Gerhart of Pennsylvania who protested the construction of a fracked gas pipeline through their family's property and Yvette Arellano (Texas

Environmental Justice Advocacy Services), who supports communities sitting at the fence-line of the petrochemical corridor along the Gulf Coast.

The Story of Plastic forcefully identifies a pressing global challenge which first surfaced around 15 years ago. It highlights how the actions of one group can affect not only their world but that of their neighbours on the other side of the globe too. As activist Shibu K Nahir explains, "Look at our globe: it's a water world... So if you imagine that we are in a womb filled with water, whatever I do here is going to affect every single life form on this earth... Whether a person in Europe or US or India or Africa or Philippines, it's a life... We need to bring in that kind of a spirit of unity across boundaries, because these toxins do not understand political boundaries."

Anushka urges strict hygiene



Anushka Sharma has come forward to raise awareness on the need to maintain hygiene and sanitation during the pandemic. She is urging people to stop open defecation and is making them aware of the health hazard associated with it. The superstar has been associated with the *Swachh Bharat Mission* and the new campaign aims to tell the citizens that the COVID-19 crisis can be curbed through strict sanitation.

The actor says, "When women all over the world had decided that they would educate everyone on the lesson of close the door, shut the disease, no one had thought that their initiative would turn into such a huge wave. Today, we all have to remember that and remind others about the lesson of cleanliness."

She urges her fellow citizens by saying, "If we take care of cleanliness around us, by not defecating in the open, we will keep ourselves healthy and India clean. We will become strong to fight against any kind of disease. Drive the disease out of the country by stopping defecating in the open and closing the toilet door at all times."

A NOTCH HIGHER

The government of Rajasthan and its Department of Information and Public Relations primarily have set new dimensions in fighting the pandemic



DIPR Commissioner and Special Secretary, Mahendra Soni

In the ongoing fight against Coronavirus, all departments of Rajasthan Government played a vital role. The main Corona warriors were doctors, paramedical staff, police, district administration, revenue officers, teachers, sanitarians, staff, media personnel newspaper hawkers, NGOs and philanthropists. When people of the entire state were sitting at home, scared of coming in contact with the virus, these corona warriors were busy treating people (doctors and paramedical staff), maintaining law and order (police), making people abide by the lockdown guidelines and helping people by addressing their problems (administrative personnel, teachers, revenue officers and others), maintaining cleanliness (sanitation staff), delivering news through newspapers and electronic media and distributing newspapers (media personnel and hawkers), helping people stuck due to lockdown by providing food and water (NGOs) and helping the society by providing food, sanitizers and masks (philanthropists).

In the government departments, Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) was silently playing its role and was keeping people of the state and media informed about the developments of the state government including the announcements and decisions through various platforms.

According to DIPR Minister, Dr Raghu Sharma, the department was



Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot

quite alert and gave every piece of government information to the people through press releases, advertisements in newspapers, social media posts and electronic media through scripts on television channels and jingles on FM radios.

The department also arranged 11 video conferences (VCs) of Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot with media and his interviews with national and regional media including print and electronic. Media veterans believe that 11 daily VCs with media is perhaps a historic initiative.

After the first Corona positive case was reported in Jaipur on March 2, the DIPR immediately sprang to action to make people aware about this pandemic. Till now, more than 50 advertisements have been published in newspapers starting from March 5. "The decisions taken by Gehlot were published so that the people get to know about them and benefit from various schemes announced during the lock-



down," informed DIPR Commissioner and Special Secretary, Mahendra Soni. It is notable that Rajasthan was the first state to announce lockdown from March 22 and since then people were kept informed about the routine decisions. Some of the major decisions and

announcements include: only chemists, provision/grocery and vegetables and fruits shops to remain open during lockdown; distribution of free wheat to National Food Security Act (NFSA) beneficiaries; distribution of free packets of food items to daily wagers, street vendors and other needy people who do not

come under the ambit of NFSA; food for all; one no poor should sleep hungry; one-time assistance of ₹ 2500 to 33 lakh needy people; important helpline numbers at the state level and district level for assistance to people during the Corona pandemic; payment of outstanding pension up to March to more than 78 lakh social security pensioners including the precise communication of vital information during the entire period of lockdown 1.0 to 4.0.

As per the commissioner and special secretary, the department substantially enhanced the activities on social media and was continuously updating its website, facebook, twitter and instagram accounts with latest information, decisions and announcements that helped the general public and media. As a result, the followers on twitter touched 2 lakh. The timely decisions taken by Gehlot were praised by one and all in the state as well as the country," he added.

IN SHORT

Virendra Nath Datt, director (Marketing), NFL, has taken over the additional charge of chairman and managing director (CMD) of the company. An MBA from Maharshi Dayanand University, Datt has a rich professional experience of over 35 years with premier CPCEs such as GAIL and ONGC besides the fertilizer industry. Datt is credited with sustained growth in fertilizer sale of company from 43 lakh MT in 2017-18 to 57 lakh MT in 2019-20, an increase of 32 per cent over past two years. During this period, NFL established a pan India footprint in the fertilizer industry.



Indian Railways had suspended its regular passenger train services during the nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of the Coronavirus. As the trains were cancelled en masse, railways faced the challenge to refund huge amount of money to the rail passengers. Railways has successfully refunded ₹ 1885 crore towards cancellation of tickets to passengers from March 21 to May 31 on tickets booked online. The entire cost of the ticket purchased has been refunded in the account from where the payment was made during the booking of the ticket. Due to the initiative taken by the national transporter, the passengers got their refund in time and did not face the inconvenience of visiting a PRS counter for collecting their amount.



Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Steel, Petroleum and Natural Gas, chaired a video conferencing with officials from Ministry of Steel, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Ministry of Railways, INSDAG, SAIL and steel fabricators from Bhilai to work out a detailed plan for developing a steel fabrication cluster around the Bhilai Steel Plant.



The steel fabrication cluster envisaged will give boost to the MSME sector in the region, facilitate employment generation and give impetus to the local economy. This is in line with the spirit of PM's call for an *Aatmanirbhar Bharat*.

Pradhan directed the CEO of the Bhilai Steel Plant to ensure that the steel plate requirement of the steel fabricators is fully met and any restrictive conditions coming the way of such procurement be removed.



NHPCC has diversified its portfolio to include Solar Power business. It has given Letter of Awards (LOA) to solar power developers for interstate transmission system (ISTS) grid connected photovoltaic projects aggregating to 1,600 MW installed capacity. Previously, NHPCC had successfully conducted the e-reverse auction for ISTS grid connected solar PV project to be set up anywhere in India. As part of the LOA, NHPCC shall purchase the power generated from the proposed ISTS-connected solar PV power project at tariffs of ₹2.55 and ₹2.56 per unit. The 800 MW Parbati-II Hydroelectric Project, located in Himachal Pradesh, is a run-of-the-river scheme proposed to harness hydro potential of the river Parbati. NHPCC has successfully completed awarding of the above-mentioned works amid nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic, following all guidelines of the government.



In yet another step to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, state-owned Power Finance Corporation Ltd (PFC) has come forward to provide financial assistance of ₹ 1.22 crore to the Uttarakhand government. The fund will be utilised for procurement of 500 PPEs kits for frontline staff and six fully equipped ambulances which will be handed over to health department of Uttarakhand. The CSR initiative by PFC will further support the preparedness of the state in its fight against the spread of COVID-19.

Faculty project at GGSIPU

University School of Environment Management (USEM), IP University, organised a six-day faculty development programme (FDP) on environmental impacts of COVID-19 pandemic: challenges and future research. Eminent Environmentalists and experts from various fields like professor CK Varshna, professor Emeritus, School of Environment, Samrat Shri JGU; Padma Shri professor Dr Mahesh Verma, Vice Chancellor, GGSIPU; Ravi Dadhich, Registrar, GGSIPU; professor VK Jain, Vice Chancellor, Tezpur University, Assam; Dr M Mohapatra, DG, IMD, New Delhi; Dr Anand Krishnan, professor of Community Medicine, AIIMS, actively guided the FDP.

Professor NC Gupta, Dean, USEM, IP University, inaugurated the programme. The FDP covered many themes including origin of COVID-19, lessons learned from the crisis,

healing of earth and ecosystem during the lockdown period, impact on small holding farmers/MSMEs, reverse migration and future sustainable environment, Sendai framework for disaster risk management, climate change agenda and action for post-COVID scenario. In welcome address, professor NC Gupta enlightened the audience about importance of resources and how the water and air quality has shown significant improvement during the lockdown period. Professor Dr Mahesh Verma and Ravi Dadhich congratulated Dean, USEM and organising team for organising such an important faculty development programme. Professor Mahesh Verma said that the outbreak of COVID-19 has forced us to alter the way of understanding life. Eminent speakers and experts including professor Anubha Kaushik, professor Pradyut Bhattacharya, professor

Jens Rydell, Dr Abi T Vanak, Dr Mukesh Thakur, Dr Faiyaz Khudsar, Dr Meenakshi Arora, Dr Ravinder, Khaiwal, Dr Apoorva Ratan Ghosh, professor HP Garg, professor Sas Biswas, professor Agni Mitra, Dr Sanjeev Sarangi, Bharti Chaturvedi, professor NC Pant, professor CP Kaushik, professor Anil Kumar Gupta, professor Arun Kumar, Dr Anurag Chatterjee, professor Shyamala Mani, professor M Afzal Wani and Dr Suman Mor, share their experiences on environment and biodiversity, climate, rural livelihood, medicine, wildlife and so on. Professor Anubha K Pantha, director of National Institute of Immunology, gave the keynote address during valedictory ceremony. All deans and directors of various university schools, faculty members and research scholars were present and contributed to the successful organisation of FDP.



KIIT, KISS and KIMS salute Corona warriors through a song

Staff of KIIT, KISS and KIMS sang *Sande Utkala Janani* to honour and motivate Corona warriors at KIMS Campus on Saturday. Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik on Thursday urged people of the state to show solidarity with COVID warriors by singing this song on May 30 at 5:30 pm. Showing solidarity with the frontline COVID warriors including doctors, nurses, paramedical staff and others, Dr Achyuta Samanta,

founder, KIIT, KISS and KIMS said that it is the duty of all Odia people to honour them. He thanked all the doctors and other staff of KIMS who are treating COVID patients, putting duty above their families. He also thanked staff of KIIT, KISS and KIMS who are dedicatedly preparing and distributing food and other essential commodities to the needy people, including police personnel on duty till date.

The healing power of Vedas

Coronavirus has indeed turned the whole world upside-down. Everybody — the government, intellectuals, scientists, doctors, social workers — have put in their best efforts to control the pandemic. They all deserve much appreciation for all their selfless efforts. But it's still very much true that it may take a long time to find out the antidote of the disease. And when all the sources to overcome any problem are not readily available then we the human beings ultimately remember god.



It shall not be out of place to mention here — a very few people know that almighty nurses the whole universe and his speech for the same exists in Vedas. So it's clearly understood that everybody will have to pay their attention towards the eternal vedic path for a healthy and happy life.

I would like to mention the *Rigveda* wherein the god states, "The earth is meant for spreading happiness. All the innumerable matters — the sun, moon, forests, mountains, food

crops, vegetation, rivers — are meant to give us pleasure. But what a wonder that in the present scenario, human-beings have been experiencing unlimited problems, mental stress, anxiety and destruction. Isn't it because we human-beings have deviated ourselves from the eternal path followed by our

ancestral ancestors.

Another *Rigvedic* mantra tells us that in the beginning of the creation, knowledge of the four Vedas emerges directly from god and is originated in the heart of four *rishis*. Brahma served these four *rishis* and he alone obtained the knowledge of Vedas. It is utmost important to

possess the knowledge of Vedas and until it's given by a *guru*, it cannot be gained. For the last several decades, human beings have ignored vedic knowledge. As a result, we have indulged in one-sided materialistic progress only. Therefore, we must pay our attention towards the ideas of the mantras and Vedas. If you only gain progress in science, leaving behind the *Brahma vidya* then the power required to understand and destroy sins such as anger, pride, ego, greed, injustice, would leave you. Thus, you would not be able to gain the main motto of human-life i.e. to realise the existence of god. Therefore, to attain healthy and joyous life, spiritualism along with science is required. If anybody follows vedic preach and performs daily *yajien/agnihotra*, the whole universe is purified, automatically destroying all diseases and problems of life. (The author, yogacharya Swami Ram Swarup, is the chief editor of *Ved Ishwarya Vani*, a bi-annual magazine.)

EESL and GAIL sign MoU for trigeneration projects

GAIL (India) Limited and Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in development of trigeneration projects in the country.

The MoU aims at building a closer strategic partnership between the two companies by jointly exploring business opportunities in Trigeneration business segment. Under this MoU, GAIL and EESL shall jointly undertake studies and if found viable, 50:50 joint venture will be incorporated.

Santanu Roy, executive director (Business Development and Project Development) signed the MoU on the behalf of GAIL, while Amit Kumar Kaushik, executive director (Strategic Growth) inked the MoU on the behalf of EESL.

Trigeneration or Combined Cooling, Heat and Power (CCHP) typically involves natural gas-fired generators to produce electricity. The waste heat from flue gas is recovered to produce hot water/steam which in turn used for heating purpose and also



in absorption chillers for cooling.

During the signing ceremony, Manoj Jain, CMD of GAIL, stated, "There is a significant market potential for trigeneration projects in India, particularly small industrial and commercial sectors and office buildings. As trigeneration business is at initial stage, the collaboration would enable to take first mover advantage in the business similar to GAIL's city gas business. Further, it would also push gas usage in new applications which is in line with GAIL's Strategy 2030.

Accordingly, the strategic partnership between GAIL and EESL is a win-win situation for both the companies." Saurabh Kumar, MD of EESL, added, "The intervention potential of trigeneration technology in revolutionising India's energy landscape is significant. EESL is proud to pioneer the effort towards harnessing this potential with GAIL, which will set a precedent for forthcoming trigeneration projects. I wish both the parties all the very best for the successful implementation of this initiative."

3 WI players refuse to tour Eng

Hetmyer, Keemo and Darren Bravo will not participate in three-match Test series as Caribbean squad also include 11 reserves



West Indies batsman Shimron Hetmyer and all-rounder Keemo Paul

PTI ■ ST. JOHN'S

Three West Indies players – Darren Bravo, Shimron Hetmyer and Keemo Paul – on Wednesday refused to tour England for next month's proposed three-match Test series, which will be conducted in a bio-secure environment to combat Covid-19 threat. Cricket West Indies (CWI) announced a 14-man squad for the

series, which is expected to mark resumption of international cricket if it gets the final approval from the UK Government. "Darren Bravo, Shimron Hetmyer and Keemo Paul all declined the invitation to travel to England for the tour and CWI fully respects their decision to choose to do so," Cricket West Indies said in a statement. "As previously stated, CWI will

not hold this decision against these players when considering future selection," it added.

The specific reasons for their withdrawal were not given by CWI. The West Indies squad will live, train and play in a "bio-secure" environment during the seven weeks of the tour, as part of the "comprehensive" medical and operations plans to ensure player and staff safety. "The bio-secure protocols will restrict movement in and out of the venues, so the selection panel has also named a list of reserve players who will travel to train and help prepare the Test squad and replacements are available in case of any injury," said CWI.

The touring party, which will be tested for Covid-19 this week, is scheduled to fly to England on a chartered flight on June 8.

The two newcomers to the Test squad are middle-order batsman Nkrumah Bonner and fast bowler Chemar Holder.

The 22-year-old Holder, who is not related to West Indies captain Jason Holder, was the leading fast bowler in the national championship with 36 wickets in eight matches at 18.91 each, and was part of the ICC Under-19 World Cup winning side in 2016.

Bonner, 31, is in line to make his Test debut after being one of the leading batsmen in the 2020 West Indies Championship with 523 runs in seven matches at an average of 58.11.

"The new cricketing environment will take some getting used to.

However, being in England and working together for four weeks before the first Test will give the squad the opportunity to get acclimatized and hopefully, mentally and technically adjusted to the demands of the new environment," said lead selector Roger Harper.

"Playing in July could be a blessing as the weather is likely to be warmer which will allow the squad more of an opportunity to play its best cricket."

THE SQUAD

Jason Holder, K Brathwaite, Shai Hope, Shane Dowrich, Roston Chase, Shemar Brooks, Rakheem Cornwall, Nkrumah Bonner, Alzarri Joseph, Chemar Holder, John Campbell, Raymon Reifer, Kemar Roach, J Blackwood. Reserves: Sunil Ambris, Joshua Da Silva, S Gabriel, Keon Harding, Kyle Mayers, Preston McSwen, M Mindley, Shane Moseley, Anderson Phillip, O Thomas, Jemel Warrican.

Root backs Stokes for interim captaincy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

England skipper Joe Root might have to skip the opening Test against West Indies if it coincides with the impending death of his second choice with vice-captain Ben Stokes taking over the mantle.

Root said Stokes can be a huge success not only in short term but even if he is given the job for long term.

"People will always look up to him and want to play for him, whether captain or not. But especially as captain he'll have people wanting to play for him and short-term he'd be a huge success. Until you get the opportunity to do it longer, you just never know, it might be a huge success. I wouldn't put it past him," he said.

"He drags people with him and gets the best out of the players around him. I think that's a great quality to have as a leader and something he can take into captaincy if he was to get the opportunity. I could see him doing a very good job."

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"People will always look up to him and want to play for him, whether captain or not. But especially as captain he'll have people wanting to play for him and short-term he'd be a huge success. Until you get the opportunity to do it longer, you just never know, it might be a huge success. I wouldn't put it past him," he said.

'Play around pitch to maintain balance b/w bat & ball'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Spin great and ICC Cricket Committee chairman Anil Kumble on Wednesday reiterated the panel's reluctance to allow use of artificial substances on the ball despite the saliva ban, saying the balance between bat and ball can be maintained by "playing around" with the pitches.

"So in cricket you have the surface that you can play around with and bring about a balance between the bat and ball," said Kumble at a FIICC webinar.

The bowlers will miss using saliva the most in Test cricket as



it aids them in generating both conventional and reverse swing.

"...You can still probably leave grass on the surface or even

have two spinners, let's get spinners back in the game in a Test, because one day game or a T20 you are not really worried about shining the ball, it's Test match that we are talking about," said the former India captain.

"And in a Test match why not get two spinners to play in Australia, two in England, which doesn't happen often."

Like he had said right after recommending saliva ban as an interim measure, Kumble reiterated that allowing use of artificial substances would have taken the creativity out of the game.

used on the ball. That was something that we felt, the creativity was something that we should not (tinker with)," he said.

Kumble, however, admitted that it would be hard for players to adjust to not using saliva.

"Although it is second nature in cricket, and that's something that players will find

it hard to manage. And that's why I believe that at training, they'd like to start slowly because it's not just about coming back and playing cricket in a match," he said.

"It's also about coming back from two and a half months, being locked up. And especially if you're a bowler, you need to have those bowling overs under

your belt before you start competing.

"So, it's important that you slowly and gradually come back into sort of normalcy that you can and the advantage that cricket has over other sports is that there's an element of adjustable variance in the pitch, which not many sports have," he added.

Kumble said the committee's recommendations focused on resumption of cricket at the earliest. "... I know there's been a lot of debate about shining the ball but the idea was to kickstart cricket, play the sport, and then I'm sure things will fall in place. Yes, there will be some challenges. You have to go one game at a time.

USP

SBI launches 'Financial Inclusion & Micro Market' vertical

Chandigarh: In a major restructuring exercise, SBI, the largest lender of the country has created a separate FI&MM vertical within the Bank with an exclusive focus on Financial Inclusion & Micro markets specially in rural & semi urban areas to vastly improve customer experience for the citizens in the hinterland. Under this newly launched Vertical, the Bank will offer loans for micro market, agriculture & allied activities, and micro/small enterprises. Launched at a national level, the FI&MM vertical will be headed by Sanjeev Nautiyal, CMD of the Bank. About 8000 branches in rural and semi urban areas have been identified all over India for providing specialized services to the micro segment including micro credit for small businesses and farmers. The new Vertical will provide a boost to the micro-finance sector.

Launching the Vertical, Rajnish Kumar, Chairman, SBI said "This is a key initiative by SBI to cater to financial requirements of people residing in the hinterland of the country, as part of its financial inclusion journey. The new FI&MM Vertical will provide an opportunity to serve the small business, Agri & allied segment so that they can run their businesses smoothly, especially in the current times of uncertainty due to COVID-19. The Pilot Project for FI & MM Vertical was run by Chandigarh Circle of the Bank with 672 Branches across the States of Haryana, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh designated for the purpose.

SBI introduces 'Guaranteed Emergency credit Line'- Pre-approved loans to MSMEs with no additional security coverage

Chandigarh: In order to provide collateral free loan to Business Enterprises (BES)/MSMEs (including PMSY borrowers) affected due to Covid 19, Government of India through Ministry of Finance, Department of financial services has introduced the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS). In line with the guidelines of ECLGS Scheme, a new product Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line has been introduced by State Bank of India and is available in all branches where borrower is maintaining his/her account. The scheme is aimed at helping stressed existing borrowers of State Bank of India, affected by the COVID 19, who are not in default, with standard accounts with overdue up to 60 days are eligible to take these loans. Existing borrowers with up to 25 crores of total borrowing with an annual turnover up to Rs 100 Cr in the previous financial year (2019-0) can avail an additional 20 percent of the loan outstanding of the bank as on 29 Feb 2020 with 100 percent guarantee coverage by NCGTC. Loans will have four-year tenor including one-year moratorium of repayment. Interest rate charged by the bank will be EBLR (presently 7.05%) +75 bps (present effective rate 7.80%), capped at 9.25% during entire tenor. The principal shall be repaid in 36 equal instalments after the moratorium period is over. Prepayment allowed with no additional charges to borrower. In order to be eligible, the borrower must be GST registered in all cases where such registration is mandatory. The scheme is available up to 31.10.2020.

Fitness level has dipped a bit: Neeraj



NEW DELHI: There is a stark difference between what javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra is used to while training and what he is doing now. However, he is just happy to be back outside even though for now it is without a javelin, an equipment that he has gained mastery over in his career but one that he could not do much with during the last two months.

"It was certainly a matter of great happiness," Neeraj said when asked about how he felt when he got the news of the resumption of outdoor training. "This is the reason why we are here at the camp, to train. So when that was not an option there was not much to do. For now we are looking to get back to the way we used to train before all this. "It's not good for an athlete to be away from training for too long. For the past two months I was doing some exercise to maintain core fitness but couldn't really do anything hitting a javelin. Now hopefully we can slowly get back to our routine." The 22-year-old is one of several elite athletes who were

held up in the hostels of the National Institute of Sport (NIS) in Patiala throughout the time that the lockdown had been imposed.

Outdoor training for athletes at NIS started on Monday but they are yet to be allowed to use their equipment. Neeraj however is not too bothered by that as he has to rebuild strength before going full steam.

"(Training) starts around 6.30am and for now we are not spending more than two hours. Slowly we will increase the intensity," he said.

"My fitness levels have dipped a bit in these last two months. I have to get my elbow and shoulders back to full strength again and then only will I get back to the heavy training I used to do before."

"The coaches haven't really taken a measure of exactly how much difference has come in the body. Maybe there could be a fitness test taken some time in the future but I don't really know when. My weight has not really changed much it's just a few crucial muscles that need strengthening."

AFI had said last month that it is looking to resume the domestic calendar in September and Prez Adille Sumarivalla has made it clear that no foreign training camps will be held for any athlete this year. Neeraj said that with no competitions in the horizons, there is no rush to get back to training with full intensity. "The thing is there are no competitions happening in the near future so we don't need to rush with anything. This year at least until November there won't be anything. There is no scope of going outside of course, for any training or competitions," he said.

IANS

Know my importance in white-ball formats: Pandya

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Flamboyant Indian all-rounder Hardik Pandya is wary of risking his injury-ravaged back for Test cricket right now and says it's because he understands his "importance" in the white-ball formats.

Pandya hasn't played a Test since September 2018, appearing in a total of 11 five-day matches, but has cemented his place as a big-hitting all-rounder in the limited overs formats. He is currently on road to recovery from the back injury which needed a surgery last year.

"I see myself as a back-up seamer for sure. After my back surgery, I don't know playing Test cricket right now will be a challenge," the 26-year-old told *Cricbuzz in Conversation*.

"If I was a Test player and didn't have the game in white-ball cricket, I could go now and risk my back in Tests but I know my importance in white-ball cricket." "It has happened that I played Tests and then didn't do well in ODIs and T20s because my plus point is my energy," he explained.

Pandya first picked up the back injury in 2018 when he was stretched off the field during an Asia Cup match against Pakistan.

Recalling the day, Pandya said he thought his career was over because he'd never seen anyone being stretched off for 10 minutes, after that the pain never went away.

"What happens to me is that my body goes into recovery mode straight away... Asia Cup was anyway going to be my last series before being rested but then the injury happened," he remembered. Pandya said he owes it to his IPL team Mumbai Indians' coach Ricky Ponting for being there for him during the tough phase.

"In 2015, someone who looked after me the best was Ricky Ponting. He



looked after me as a child. I felt like he was a father figure for me. Learnt so much," he said.

"Ricky taught me situations, mind-sets. He used to sit with me before I went into bat. I would sit near boundary rope and call Ricky: He would sit with me and tell me what's happening. So I grasped and learnt quickly," he revealed.

Speaking of support, national skipper Virat Kohli, coach Ravi Shastri and NCA Director Rahul Dravid are also among those, Pandya feels grateful to.

"Virat, Rohit (Sharma) or Ravi sir don't come and teach you the game. They have given me that freedom," he said.

"The security that they gave me backing with all their heart helped big time. That was the reason I started taking decisions on my own," he added.

As for Dravid, Pandya said he is thankful to the former captain for never judging him.

"...He accepted the way I am. He never judged me. Always respected me as a cricketer. He enjoyed my work ethic," said Pandya.

JUNE 5, 2020

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

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- Manohar Lal
Chief Minister, Haryana

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