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SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY

MONEY 9
PETROL PRICE HIKED BY 56 PAISE/LITRE, DIESEL BY 63 PAISE

SPORT 12
KLOPP RELIEVED TO ESCAPE NULL & VOID OUTCOME

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DAD WANTED ME TO GROW: KAJOL 10 VIVACITY



China didn't intrude, can't take an inch: PM

All-party leaders assert they should speak in one voice, but Govt must keep them posted

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Days after 20 Indian jawans were killed by the Chinese soldiers in an ambush at Galwan valley in eastern Ladakh on the intervening night of June 15-16, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday told an all-party meeting that Chinese army neither entered the Indian territory nor any of "our posts has been taken over by them on the Indian side." The meeting was called to discuss India-China stand-off on the line of Actual Control (LAC).

"Neither have they intruded into our border, nor has any post been taken over by them (China). Twenty of our jawans were martyred, but those who dared Bharat Mata, they were taught a lesson," said the PM in the virtual meet with around 20 political parties.

Modi said no one can take even an "inch of the land." "Today, we possess the capability that no one can eye even one inch of our land. India's Armed forces have the capability to move into multiple sectors at one go," announced the Prime Minister.

The important interaction was an attempt by the PM to evolve a national consensus on political, economic and military response by India after the violent incident at Galwan valley in eastern Ladakh.

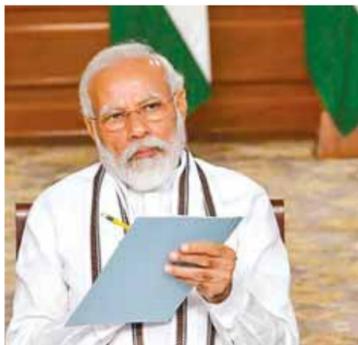
Modi said Indian Armed forces are doing what they have to do to protect the country, whether it is deployment, action or counter-action.

Incidentally, while the PM said no intrusion took place inside the India territory, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on June 17 that, "Ground commanders were meeting regularly to implement this consensus throughout the last week. While there was some progress, the Chinese side sought to erect a structure in Galwan Valley on our side of the LAC. While this became a source of dispute, the Chinese side took pre-meditated and planned action that was directly responsible for the resulting violence and casualties. It reflected an intent to change the facts on the ground in violation of all our agreements to not change the status quo."

It was obvious that Chinese jawans had entered the Indian side of the LAC and tried to raise a structure.

It's also not clear if there was no intrusion by the Chinese why the two armies were face-to-face for nearly two months. After the PM spoke, several military experts have asked if "everything was so smooth and no incursion took place, then why did we lose 20 of our jawans?"

Modi was chairing an all-party meet to discuss the volatile India-China border situation as the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh earlier denied intelligence failure in the border face-off as Opposition raised the question while extending full-support to the Modi Government in its response to the Chinese intru-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during an all-party meeting via video conferencing in New Delhi

- Neither have they (Chinese) intruded into our border, nor has any post been taken over by them: Modi
- After the PM spoke, several military experts have asked if "everything was so smooth and no incursion took place, then why did we lose 20 of our jawans?"
- "Did our external intelligence agencies not report any unusual activity along the LAC? Did the Military Intelligence not alert the Government about the intrusion and the build-up of massive forces along the LAC? In the Government's considered view, was there a failure of intelligence," asks Sonia
- A row erupted as why AAP and Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal and RJD leaders were not invited to the meeting

sions on the border. The virtual meeting began with participants standing in two-minute silence to pay tributes to the Indian soldiers who fell in the border face-off. All party leaders said they were one with the Government and should speak in one voice.

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A security guard sits outside a closed Chinese restaurant, at Chinatown in Kolkata, on Friday

China gets global rap, brazenly blames India

Beijing: Even as it has come under fire from across the world for the unprovoked fatal attacks on Indian soldiers in Ladakh's Galwan valley on Monday, China continued to blame India for the crisis.

On Friday, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said "responsibility entirely lies with the Indian side" for the face-off.

Speaking to the media, he said, "Regarding the serious sit-

uation in Galwan Valley, right and wrong are very clear and the responsibility entirely lies with the Indian side. India and China are in talks to ease the situation."

A top US diplomat on Friday said China is opening multiple fronts like the one on "LAC with India" because of Beijing's assessment that the world is "distracted" due to the Covid-19 and it could take advantage of it.

Agencies

10 Indian soldiers released by China after intense talks

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Three days after they were detained following the bloody brawl in the Galwan valley, ten Indian Army personnel, including two officers, were released by the Chinese on Thursday.

The breakthrough came following several rounds of Major General level meetings between the two Armies at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) since Monday when 20 Indian jawans, including commanding officer Colonel B Santosh Babu, attained martyrdom in clashes.

The released personnel including a Lt Colonel and three Majors were back on the Indian side of the LAC late Thursday, sources said here on Friday. They also clarified that the soldiers were unharmed.

Immediately after their return, the personnel went through a medical check-up followed by debriefing session, sources said. However, the Army on Thursday had denied reports about their captivity and said no Indian soldier was missing in action.



This satellite photo released by Planet Labs shows the reported site of a fatal clash between Indian and Chinese troops in the Galwan River valley

Interestingly, the Chinese on Friday also denied that there was any Indian soldier in their custody. Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian made the claim at a daily press briefing in response to questions about the border situation after the release of the ten Indian soldiers.

Though the Army on Friday did not confirm the release of its personnel, sources

said negotiations at the diplomatic and military level were kept a closely guarded secret to prevent any harm coming to those in captivity.

The release of the 10 soldiers figured in three rounds of talks between Indian and Chinese delegations of Major General level near Patrol Point 14 in Galwan Valley between Tuesday and Thursday. Major General Abhijit Bapat, commander of Karu-based headquarters 3 Infantry Division, and his Chinese counterpart, met for the third time on Thursday.

These regular parleys were focused on the early and safe release of the Indian personnel and early de-escalation of the situation and to disengage on the disputed border.

The two senior military officers have met seven times since the stand-off began in early May.

The last time Indian soldiers were captured by the Chinese was during the 1962 war. Incidentally, the Galwan valley also saw battles then between the Indian and Chinese armies.

India builds up defence along LAC, fighter jets moved closer

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With tension unabated at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh and China moving its troops forward, India has also strengthened its overall military strength. IAF Chief RKS Bhaduria visited the region on Wednesday and Thursday to review operational preparedness. His visit came after 20 Indian Army personnel, including the commanding officer, were killed in a fracas with the Chinese.

Bhaduria visited the Leh airbase on Wednesday and the Srinagar airbase on Thursday. He took stock of the overall operational preparedness to meet any challenge all along the LAC, sources said here on Friday. Incidentally, Army Chief General MM Naravane had visited Leh last month to review the situation in the wake of the ongoing stand-off in eastern Ladakh.

Over the last month, China has increased its troop strength to nearly 10,000 in the eastern Ladakh region where the stand-off is continue. They also moved up their heavy weapons besides increasing helicopter flying along the LAC on their side. India also took immediate steps and enhanced its strength all along the 4,000 km

IAF Chief reviews readiness for any eventuality



long LAC from Ladakh to Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh.

Besides increasing troops, India's other steps comprised moving up the fighter jets to operational bases close to the LAC and preparing the warships to conduct deep-sea surveillance. They were also cleared to take necessary action

CAPSULE

5 DAYS INSTITUTIONAL QUARANTINE IN DELHI
New Delhi: Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal on Friday passed an order ending the State Government's home quarantine policy and made 5-day institutional quarantine must for the novel coronavirus in Delhi.

8 TERRORISTS KILLED IN KASHMIR
Srinagar: Eight terrorists were killed in Kashmir in two separate gunfights during the last 24 hours. Three terrorists were killed in Awantipora area of Pulwama while five others were killed in Shopian district.

INTEL ALERTS RAILWAYS ABOUT MALWARE ATTACK
New Delhi: At a time when the country is yet to recover from the shock of losing 20 Indian soldiers in a violent clash with the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops in Ladakh's Galwan Valley, another shocker has come to light with news coming of a malware hitting the Indian Railways network and snooping its data for foreign countries, including train movements, Intelligence sources said on Friday.

MUKESH: RELIANCE IS NOW NET-DEBT FREE
New Delhi: Mukesh Ambani on Friday announced that his oil-to-telecom conglomerate Reliance Industries is now net-debt free months ahead of its March 2021 target after raising a record ₹1.69 lakh crore.

Amid boycott frenzy, Chinese phones sold out within minutes

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Despite the chorus to shun Chinese goods grows across India, Chinese smartphones — OnePlus 8 and OnePlus 8 Pro — went out-of-stock within minutes after its sale began via Amazon India on June 18.

At the same time, #BoycottChineseProducts was among the top Twitter trends in India for the past two days, after 20 Army personnel, including an officer, were bludgeoned to death by Chinese in Galwan Valley, Ladakh.

Another Chinese firm Xiaomi, the number one smartphone brand in the country, recently sold its first laptop series in India on 17 June. Meanwhile, China's Oppo cancelled the live online launch of its flagship smartphone in India due to growing anti-China sentiments.

The popular electronics brand recently hosted the sale of its flagship smartphone, the OnePlus 8 Pro in India, the sale ran out within minutes after it went on sale. The pace of sales shows that how Indians are crazy on cheap priced Chinese products. The first consignment of OnePlus 8 and OnePlus 8 Pro was sold out within minutes on June 15. The second sale which took place on June 18 also sold out within minutes.

The phone was unveiled in April, but sales in India have only begun from this month onwards due to the ongoing Covid-19 crisis. OnePlus 8 is priced in India at ₹41,999 for the exclusive Amazon base model while the OnePlus 8 Pro is priced in India between ₹54,999 and ₹59,999.

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Suspended J&K DSP Davinder gets bail in terror case, to remain in prison

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Suspended Jammu & Kashmir DSP Davinder Singh, arrested while ferrying two Hizb-ul-Mujahideen terrorists in a vehicle on the Srinagar-Jammu Highway earlier this year, was granted bail on Friday by a court here in another terror case filed by Delhi Police after it failed to file a charge sheet within the prescribed time period.

Singh, however, will remain in jail since he has yet not secured bail in the case filed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in relation to his arrest on January 10 this year while ferrying two HuM terrorists in a vehicle on the Srinagar-Jammu Highway.

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Jyotiraditya, Kharge, Soren enter RS; Jagan wins all 4 Andhra seats

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

Former Congress leader Jyotiraditya Scindia, who recently joined BJP, former Union Ministers Mallikarjun Kharge and Shibu Soren are among 19 members who were elected to the Rajya Sabha after the day-long polls at various State Assemblies were conducted under stringent norms laid by Election Commission of India on Friday. In Andhra Pradesh, the ruling YSRCP of Jagan Mohan Reddy won all the four Rajya Sabha seats.

Against 61 vacancies in 20 States, 42 members were

Satyendar Jain's condition worsens, shifted to Max for plasma therapy

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain, who is battling the coronavirus infection for a couple of days, was moved to the ICU of the private Max Hospital from a Government-run facility after his condition deteriorated on Friday, sources said.

The sources indicated that the 55-year-old Minister is likely to undergo plasma therapy though there was no official confirmation. Doctors at the Government hospital said he has been diagnosed with pneumonia and his oxygen saturation level has also dipped, prompting the hospital authorities to shift him to an intensive care unit.

Detailed report on P3

Covid-19 IN INDIA



TOTAL CASES: 3,92,544
DEATHS: 12,904
RECOVERED: 2,11,962
ACTIVE: 1,67,631

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	1,24,331	5,893	60,838
Tamil Nadu	54,449	666	30,271
Delhi	49,979	1,969	21,341
Gujarat	26,198	1,619	18,167
Uttar Pradesh	16,594	507	9,995
Rajasthan	14,156	333	10,997
West Bengal	13,090	529	7,303
Madhya Pradesh	11,582	495	8,748
Haryana	9,743	144	4,889
Karnataka	8,281	124	5,210
Andhra Pradesh	7,961	96	3,905
Bihar	7,290	49	5,098
Telangana	6,526	198	3,352
Jammu & Kashmir	5,680	75	3,194
Assam	4,904	9	3,067
Odisha	4,677	14	3,297

Stern action for defying social distancing norms, not using face masks in public: Noida Police

Noida: Strict action would be taken against people who do not use masks or face coverings in public and disobey social distancing rules, the Gautam Buddha Nagar Police said on Friday, amid the coronavirus pandemic.

PTI

Covid bed rates capped in Delhi: ₹15K-18K for ICU

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A high-powered committee set up by Union Home Minister Amit Shah has recommended fixing the rate of a Covid-19 isolation beds in any hospital in Delhi in the range of ₹8,000 to ₹10,000 and an ICU bed with a ventilator at ₹15,000 to ₹18,000 per day, the Home Ministry said on Friday.

The committee, that was set up by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, under the chairmanship of VK Paul, Member NITI Aayog, was constituted on Sunday to ensure the availability of 60 per cent beds by private hospitals at lower rates and fix the rate of corona testing and treatment.

Continued on Page 2

China's LAC act a ruse during Covid distractions: US

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

China opening multiple fronts like the one on India border may be because of Beijing's assessment that the world is distracted due to Covid-19 pandemic and it may advantage of it, a top American diplomat said Thursday.

Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs David Stilwell made the remark, adding the Trump administration is closely watching the Indo-China situation.

The latest Chinese activities with India is similar to Beijing's past activities on India border including Doklam,

Stilwell told reporters during a conference call.

"One explanation for (China) creating multiple fronts like this is an assessment in Beijing that the world is distracted and is focused entirely on survival right (now), recovering from the corona pandemic, which then possibly is seen as an opportunity to take advantage of the distraction," Stilwell said. "I'm not going to offer an official US Government position on that, but there are numerous explanations out there for that (in the public domain)," he said, responding to a question on the aggressive Chinese behaviour with its

neighbours, including India.

"What we're doing, we're obviously watching the India-China border dispute very closely," Stilwell said, during the conference call after the Hawaii meeting between Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and top Chinese diplomat Yang Jiechi to exchange views on bilateral relations and coronavirus pandemic.

"This activity is similar to the activity we've seen in the past on border disputes with the PRC (Peoples Republic of China), and again, I would point you to those I think it was 2015 when Xi Jinping travelled to India the first time," he said.

"The PLA (People's Liberation Army) invaded this contested area deeper and longer, with more people, than ever before historically. Whether that was a negotiating tactic or just a punch in the nose to demonstrate their superiority, I don't know," he said.

"But then we saw the Doklam issue down near Bhutan, where we saw similar concerns. I wish I knew. Again, we don't have a lot of visibility and we don't have a lot of open dialogue with our Chinese counterparts, and honestly, I'd like to see more of that if we can," Stilwell said.

During the news confer-

ence, Stilwell did not confirm if the ongoing Indo-China border clash came up during the Pompeo-Yang talks. But the State Department official did express concern over the recent Chinese behaviour in the region.

"The actions that we've seen out of the PRC of late — and you all know this as you watch the beat — have been not really constructive as we look at India, the South China Sea, Hong Kong issues, and just go around the perimeter. In the periphery things like trade have not lived up to the billing, unfortunately," Stilwell said.

The US seeks a constructive and result-oriented rela-

tionship that is fair and reciprocal with China, he said, adding that implies not just conversations but actions.

In addition to talks on areas like North Korea, Pompeo during the meeting insisted on the Chinese disclosing all they know about how this pandemic began, to share all the information that they have that leads to saving lives, he said. "This is not about saving face; it's about saving lives. And we insist that they live up to their agreements with the WHO and with the international health regulations to make open as this is beyond politics," he said.

Maldives condoles death of Indian soldiers at hands of Chinese troops at LAC

PTI ■ MALE

The Maldives on Friday extended its deepest condolences to India on the loss of lives of its soldiers in violent clashes with Chinese troops at the Galwan Valley in Ladakh.

Twenty Indian Army personnel, including a colonel, were killed in clashes with Chinese troops in the Galwan Valley on Monday night, the biggest military confrontation in over five decades that has significantly escalated the

already volatile border standoff in the region.

"The Maldives extends deepest condolences to the people of India for the lives lost in recent clashes on the border. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families, loved ones, and communities of the soldiers," Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid tweeted.

Bilateral ties have become stronger between the Maldives and India since President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih got elected.

SENA-NCP-CONG ALLIANCE

Uddhav takes swipe at BJP on Sena's 54th foundation day

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister and Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray had an indirect dig at the BJP on the foundation day of his party on Friday, by saying that I became the Chief Minister only because "we foiled an attempt to play politics with us". "If I am sitting with you here as the Chief Minister, it is because there was an attempt to play politics with us and we foiled it. We do not tolerate injustice. In fact, the Shiv Sena has come into being to fight injustice... Trusting isn't our weakness but it's our culture. Shiv Sena is not helpless nor will the Shiv Sena chief ever become one," Uddhav said.

Uddhav took a swipe at the BJP without naming the party which his party's long-time ally till the last week of November when the Sena teamed with the NCP and Congress and NCP to form a

Government in the State.

Irony could not be lost on his audiences — Shiv Sena MLAs, MPs, party office bearers and workers present on the occasion of the Sena's 54th foundation day whom he addressed through video-conference.

For, then Chief Minister senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnis — then an ally of the Shiv Sena — had attended the Shiv Sena's 153rd foundation day celebrations. He was incidentally the first serving Chief Minister of Maharashtra from outside the Shiv Sena to attend the Sena's foundation day ceremony.

Uddhav, who was addressing the party gathering of this significance for the first time after taking over as the Chief Minister of the Sena-NCP-Congress alliance on November 28 last year, said that the Shiv Sena had not departed from its ideology.

"We have never been scared of any crisis. Nor we have been

confused by crisis. We are firm on our footing. We have never departed from our ideology," Uddhav said, while indirectly maintaining that his party had not given up its Hindutva ideology even after forming a government in alliance with the NCP and Congress.

Uddhav recalled that last year he had gone to Shivneri Fort, the birthplace of Chhatrapati Shivaji, and Ekveera temple, the family deity of the Thackerays. "I took the soil from Shivneri to Ram Janmabhoomi (Ayodhya) and within a year a decision was announced on the Ram Temple case, and later, I became the chief minister."

"The Shiv Sena is by itself a storm. Hence we do not bother about any storm. Like my father and late Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray would say, the Shiv Sainiks are my both my shield and inspiration," the Sena president said.

WE SEE UDDHAV AS FUTURE PM: RAUT

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Shiv Sena MP and spokesperson Sanjay Raut on Friday caused a sensation in the state political circles on Friday, when he said he saw Sena president and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray as a "future Prime Minister of India".

Speaking at the Shiv Sena's 54th Foundation Day function, Raut said: "Late Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray's dream of seeing a Sena man as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra has come true... Now we want to see Uddhav Thackeray as the next Prime Minister. Now is the time to

China didn't...

The Opposition leaders, however, asked the PM to allow authentic information on the border development to come to them uninterrupted so that there could be a coordination on the sensitive issue of national importance.

Congress President Sonia Gandhi whose party had been, for last one week, throwing several questions at the Modi Government on the border escalation said the nation needs assurance of restoration of status quo on the India-China border. Posing several questions, Sonia enquired whether the military intelligence alert of the Government about the intrusion and the build-up of Chinese forces along the Line of Actual Control.

"Did our external intelligence agencies not report any unusual activity along the LAC? Did the Military Intelligence not alert the Government about the intrusion and the build-up of massive forces along the LAC? In the Government's considered view, was there a failure of intelligence?", Sonia asked the Government at the all-party meeting.

She also sought to enquire from the Government the roadmap ahead and stressed that the entire country would like an assurance that status quo ante would be restored and China will revert back to the original position on the LAC.

In the meeting NCP Chief and Former Defence Minister Sharad Pawar said issues of whether soldiers carried arms or not are decided by international agreements and we need to respect such sensitive matters.

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee said, "Don't let China enter telecom, railway and aviation sectors. We will face some problems but we won't allow the Chinese to enter."

While backing defence forces, Mamata wanted the Government to be "transparent" and maintain "flow of information" on the issue to the Opposition parties.

From Page 1

lead not only the state but also the country."

On his part, another senior Shiv Sena leader Subhash Desai said: "Sanjay Raut said that we are now looking at Uddhavji to lead the country. Uddhavji has responded by saying that he would not, but a Shiv Sainik would lead the country in future."

Speaking on the occasion, Yuv Sena chief Aditya Thyakera said: "It is not just in Maharashtra, we should have Shiv Sena shakhas (branches) in each and every state of the country so that our party can reach out our ideology to other parts of the country."

Alluding to Coronavirus crisis, the Chief Minister said: "It is an unprecedented crisis that has befallen our country. It may have come as a storm or even a cyclone, but I have absolutely no fear about anything as long as the Shiv Sainiks are with me. Earlier we have only two testing labs in Maharashtra — one at Kasturba Hospital in Mumbai and another 8in Pune. But, ever since break-out of the Covid-19 crisis,

we have established 100 such labs in the state. We will increase the number of labs further. If need be, we will convert each Shiv Shiv Sena shaka into a lab," the Sena president said. "After becoming the chief minister, my contact with you people (Shiv Sainiks) may have reduced, but I will ensure that there will not be any gulf between you and me," Uddhav told his party functionaries.

Samajwadi Party's Ram Gopal Yadav said, "Nation is one. 'Neeyat' of Pakistan and China is not good. India will not be China's dumping ground. He demanded imposing "300 per cent duty on Chinese goods."

Shiv Sena's Uddhav Thackeray said India wants peace but that doesn't mean we are weak. "China's nature is betrayal. India is 'Mazboot' not 'Majboor'." Our Government has the ability to -Aankhien Nikalkar Haath Me de dena... We are all one. This is the feeling. We are with you, PM. We are with our forces and their families," he said.

It is understood that Maharashtra CM wanted clarity on the Chinese Foreign Direct Investment in India following the border row as the State has recently cleared a Chinese company's investment in the State.

The meeting started with the presentation by Rajnath Singh who detailed armed preparedness on the India-China border and mobilisation in a presentation which was followed by Jaishankar briefing political leaders on the diplomatic efforts in the light of the border skirmishes.

Defence Minister Singh had said Indian soldiers displayed exemplary courage and valour in the line of duty and sacrificed their lives in the highest traditions of the Indian Army. He denied any intelligence failure when Opposition parties sought him to ask on the alleged intrusion of China on the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control.

Presidents of various political parties, including the BJP, Congress, TMC, AIADMK, DMK, TRS, JD(U), BJD, LJP, BSP, SP, Shiv Sena and NCP among others, participated in the meet.

Former Prime Minister and JDS president HD Dewe Gowda and DMK leader MK Stalin were also in the meet. Uddhav, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, TRS leader and Telangana CM K Chandrashekar Rao, YSR Congress Party's leader and Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and Mamata

Jyotiraditya, Kharage...

From Page 1

Just two days ago, Manipur too saw a complete change of sides and emergence of Congress as the single largest party, but interestingly in the Rajya Sabha elections BJP emerged victorious. BJP leader Jyotiraditya Scindia won the Rajya Sabha election from Madhya Pradesh. Of the three Rajya Sabha seats, the BJP has bagged two seats while the Congress one. Besides Scindia, BJP candidate Sumer Singh Solanki and Congress' Digvijaya Singh emerged victorious.

In Rajasthan, the ruling Congress won two seats while the opposition BJP settled with one seat. The winners were - KC Venugopal and Neeraj Dangi (both Congress) and Rajendra Gehlot (BJP).

In Andhra Pradesh, the ruling YSRCP of Jagan Mohan Reddy won all the four Rajya Sabha seats. The four candidates were Pili Subhash Chandra Bose, Mopidevi Venkata Ramana Rao, A Ayodhya Rami Reddy and Parimal Nathwani. In an exciting contest in

Manipur, BJP candidate Leisemba Sanajaoba defeated Congress' T Mangi Babu. Assembly Speaker had allowed three rebel Congress MLAs to vote. The three had pledged support to the ruling BJP. The three BJP MLAs who resigned did not cast their votes while four NPP Ministers who had withdrawn their support exercised their franchise.

In Meghalaya, National People's Party candidate WR Kharlukhi has won. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and the BJP have won one seat each in Jharkhand. The winning candidates are JMM president Shibu Soren and BJP's Jharkhand unit president Deepak Prakash. While Shibu Soren got 31 votes, BJP's Prakash secured 30 votes. Congress' Shahzada Anwar managed to secure just 18 votes. In Mizoram, the ruling Mizo National Front (MNF) leader K Vanlalhva emerged victorious securing 27 votes out of the 39 polled to defeat B Lachhanzova of main opposition Zoram People's Movement (ZPM).

Counting of votes in Gujarat began quite late after the Congress moved the

Election Commission of India urging it to cancel the votes of two BJP MLAs in the State. Party argued that BJP MLA Bhupendrasinh Chudasama's election was quashed by the Gujarat HC and his Assembly membership no longer existed. It said Kesarisinh cast his vote through proxy voter and therefore votes of the two BJP MLAs should be annulled. Congress' Shaktisinh Gohil won.

As many as 43 first timers are set to enter the Upper House accounting for 72 per cent of vacancies being filled up, according to the research division of Rajya Sabha. With only 12 retiring members being re-elected and seven more members with past experience of the Upper House returning for another term, the collective experience of the Members of Rajya Sabha will drop to only 63 terms, a senior official in the research division of RS secretariat said.

While 61 retiring members have a total experience of 95 terms ranging from one to four terms in Rajya Sabha, the winners come with a total composite experience of only 32 terms, resulting

in a decline in total experience of 63 terms, the official said.

Prominent leaders to enter Rajya Sabha for the first time include Jyotiraditya Scindia, Mallikarjun Kharage, M Thambidurai (former Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha), K C Venugopal and KR Suresh Reddy (Former Speaker of Legislative Assembly of composite Andhra Pradesh state). The 12 sitting members being re-elected are: Bhubaneswar Kalita (for 5th term), Premanand Gupta (5th term), Tiruchi Shiva (4th term), K Keshava Rao, Biswajit Daimary and Parimal Nathwani (all for 3rd term), Sharad Pawar, Ramdas Athawale, Hariwansh, Digvijay Singh, KTS Tulsii and Ramnand Thakur (all for second term), the sources said. Six members entering RS having been earlier members of the Upper House include GK Vasani, Dinesh Trivedi and Nabam Rabia (all for 3rd term), Deve Gowda, Shibu Soren (expected to win from Jharkhand) and Omkar Singh Lakhawat (expected to win from Rajasthan), both for 2nd term, the sources add.

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Office of the Executive Engineer, Trans. Line Maintt. Div-II, Gladni, JKPTCL, Jammu.
Email: xentlmd2@gmail.com Ph/Fax: 0191-2476357

Subject :- Rate Contract for Preventive/Routine/Breakdown Maintenance of Components for 132KV D/C Gladni-Hiranagar, 132KV D/C Hiranagar Kathua, 132KV D/C Gladni-Bari Brahmana, 132KV D/C Bari Brahmana-Miran Sahib, 132KV D/C Bishnah-Miran Sahib, 132KV D/C Canal-Miran Sahib and 132KV D/C Gladni-Janipur Transmission Line falling under the jurisdiction of TLM-D-II JKPTCL, Jammu for the year 2020-21.

Tender Extension Notice-01

In order to ensure adequate response to E-NIT No: TLM-D-II/03 of 2020-21 dated: 15/05/2020, the dates for the submission and opening of techno-commercial bids are hereby extended as under.

1. Last date for submission of hardcopy of e Bid: 22-06-2020 upto 1600 Hrs. (15.07.2020), the dates for the submission and opening of techno-commercial bids are hereby extended as under.

2. Last date & time for e-Bids submission online: 22-06-2020 upto 1600 Hrs. 3. Date for opening of Bids: 25-06-2020 at 1130 Hrs.

All other terms and conditions shall remain the same as laid down in the above E-NIT.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Trans. Line Maintt. Div-II, Gladni, JKPTCL Jammu.

No. DIP/J-509-P/20 Dated :- 19-06-2020

DIESEL LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, VARANASI-221004

Bid No. E-10/2020-2021 E-Tender Notice Date: 16.06.2020

E-Tenders are invited for & on behalf of the President of India for the supply of following items. Only e-offer will be accepted for which vendors must have class III Digital Signature and Registration on IREPS. The details of tenders are in the following sequence:- S.No. - Tender No. (Due Date), Description and Quantity. S.N. 1, 07191101A, (13.07.2020), Short Description: (i) Reflective Tape Yellow, PL No. 29670433, Qty: 90 Set. Short Description: (ii) Reflective Tape Red Orange, PL No. 29670421, Qty: 12848 metre, S.N. 2, 07200001, (17.08.2020), Short Description: Impregnated Compressed Laminates, PL No. 29170217, Qty: 216 Set, S.N. 3, 07201083, (15.07.2020), Short Description: Decal Kit, PL No. 29670123, Qty: 232 Set, S.N. 4, 09200009, (06.08.2020), Pressure Sensor Oil Circuit Transformer to PL No. 29500047, 1082 Nos., S.N. 5, 09201053, (06.08.2020), Traction Motor Blower Including Motor Wound to PL No. 29440075, 408 Nos., S.N. 6, 06201200, (13.07.2020), Terminal Bar 110V DC Part No. 29811004, 808 Nos., S.N. 7, 06201103, (16.07.2020), Cable cleat kit, Part No. 12520585, 16 Set, S.N. 8, 08201183, Advertiser Tender (10.07.2020), Helical Springs for WAP-7 cat No. R/9/0010 C&D No. T222-006 Drg. No. 1209-01.115-008 Alt. 1.209-01.115-009 Alt. 1.209-01.015-010 Alt. 1 Specn.: CLW Specn. No. CLW/MS/3/SPEC/ELDO-BOGIE/004 Alt.1 (P.L. No. 29045034) 276 Set. Note: Details terms and conditions can be seen and Hindi version also on website www.dlw.indianrailways.gov.in & www.ireps.gov.in and tender can fill up on the same website. Corrigendum Notice: Date: 17.06.2020, Bid Invitation: 06, Tender No.: 09191175, Revision: 1, Details of correction as under: Existing due date: 22.06.2020, Revised Due Date: 27.07.2020. Note: For other term and condition Please visit on IREPS website https://www.ireps.gov.in

PRO/DLW/S-13 PCMM

dieaselocoworks "Website: www.dlw.indianrailways.gov.in"

Amid boycott frenzy, Chinese phones sold...

From Page 1

OnePlus is one of the top Chinese smartphone brands in India that is now placing its bet in the premium category. Chinese smartphone players currently dominate the Indian market with over 70 per cent market share.

The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has released a list of more than 500 Chinese products to be boycotted. The list of over 500 items released by CAIT include FMCG products, consumer durables, toys, furnishing fabrics, textiles, builder hardware, footwear, apparel, kitchen items, luggage, hand bags, cosmetics, gift items, electrical and electronics, fashion apparel, food, watches, gems and jewellery, clothing, stationery, paper, household items, furniture, lighting, health and, packaging products, auto parts, Yarn, Feng Shui Items, Diwali and Holi Items and optical items.

The CAIT also wrote to cricket and Bollywood celebrities - Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Amitabh Bachchan, Aamir Khan, Deepika Padukone, Katrina Kaif, Akshay Kumar, Shilpa Shetty and Madhuri Dixit, to join the campaign to boycott Chinese products.

India relies on China for the bulk of its imports, with purchases in the year ended March running into more than \$60 billion. Beijing runs a trade surplus of about \$50 billion with New Delhi. Chinese firms such as Great Wall, SAIC and Bytedance have placed major bets on India, where investors like Alibaba also fund many startups. Chinese smartphone brands, including Oppo and Xiaomi, account for eight of every 10 smartphones sold in India.

Suspended J&K DSP Davinder gets bail in terror case, to remain...

From Page 1

Singh and another accused in the case — Irfan Shafi Mir — were granted the relief by Special Judge Dharmender Rana in the case filed by the special cell of Delhi police, who noted that it failed to file the charge sheet within 90 days from their arrest, as prescribed under the law.

In the bail applications filed on behalf of the accused, their lawyer MS Khan said that neither the police filed charge sheet within statutory period of 90 days, nor any permission was sought from the court to extend that period.

"Considering the fact that despite the lapse of statutory time limit to complete investigation, charge sheet in the instant matter is not filed till date, both the accused persons are entitled to be released on bail," the judge said, while granting the relief on a personal bond of ₹1 lakh each and two sureties of like amount.

The case was initially lodged by J&K police which was later taken over by the NIA. Singh was suspended from the Jammu and Kashmir Police in January this year.

Covid bed rates...

From Page 1

"The committee has recommended ₹8,000-10,000, 13,000-15,000 and 15,000-18,000 including PPE costs for isolation bed, ICUs without and with ventilator respectively to all hospitals as compared to the current charges of ₹24,000-25,000, 34,000-43,000 and 44,000-54,000 (excluding PPE cost)," the Ministry said in a statement. "Sample testing has been doubled immediately following decisions taken by Shah. A total of 27,263 testing samples collected in Delhi from June 15 to 17 against the daily collection of 4,000 to 4,500 earlier."

"As per directions given by the Union Home Minister, a house-to-house health survey in 242 containment zones of Delhi has been completed on Thursday in which a total of 2.3 lakh people were surveyed," it said. Further, on directions of the Minister to increase testing capacity and quick delivery of results in Delhi, testing via Rapid Antigen testing methodology was started on Thursday. A total of 7,040 people have been tested in 193 testing centers, the statement stated. The Delhi Government had on Thursday announced a price cap at ₹2,400 for Covid-19 RT-PCR test. Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia in his tweet said, "Delhi Government has decided to cap the rates for #Covid-19 RT-PCR test at ₹2,400 inclusive of all charges."

India builds up...

From Page 1

As part of its readiness, the IAF has moved its critical frontline assets including the Sukhoi-30MKI, Mirage 2000 and Jaguar fighter aircraft fleet to advanced positions where they can fly in at a very short notice to carry out operations. Moreover, the attack helicopters were deployed in the close vicinity of the areas where operations by the ground troops are taking place at the moment. Chinese has several air force bases in the Tibetan plateau across the LAC. Also, Pakistan's airbase of Skardu, in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK), could also house Chinese fighters. The IAF is monitoring the situation closely in Skardu but has not confirmed the presence of Chinese fighters at the Pakistan base. Besides, maintaining round the clock preparedness of the airbases, the IAF has also added muscle to its ALG in high altitude in all the areas facing China, especially in Ladakh. The ALG are capable of handling take-off and landing of huge transport planes carrying troops and logistical support. All these ALG are now 24 hours operational despite weather constraints, sources said.

Office of the Executive Engineer, Construction Division, U.P. Jal Nigam, Bulandshahr.

Letter No. 1846 / Samanya-5 / 56
Dated : 18.06.2020
E-TENDER NOTICE
U.P. Jal Nigam, E-tenders are invited for PRADHANMANTRI HOUSING Water Supply Works in District Bulandshahr. Is Hereby Invited On Behalf Of The Chairman U.P. Jal Nigam. Tender document shall be available at e-procurement website http://etender.up.nic.in latest by 20.06.2020 at 11:00 hrs. Interested contractors may view & download tender document and upload their tender, duly filled, online latest by 27.06.2020 up to 11:00 hrs. Uploaded tender document shall be opened on 27.06.2020 at 3:00 Hrs. onwards in the office of "Executive Engineer, Construction Division, U.P. Jal Nigam, Bulandshahr."

Office of the Executive Engineer, Construction Division, U.P. Jal Nigam, Noida JAAT Chowk, Chipynara Road (GAUTAMBUDDH NAGAR)

Letter No. 544 / M-3 / 21
Dated : 09.06.2020
SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTICE
U.P. Jal Nigam, E-tenders are invited on turn Key basis for Construction of Tubewell, Repair & Strengthening of OHT, repair of defunct Distribution System & Rising main etc. In Babupura Nagar water supply scheme under "NATIONAL URBAN DRINKING WATER SUPPLY (State Sector)" programme in District Gautam Budh Nagar. Intending tenders experience required should have completed in last 5 years ending Date 31.03.2020. Tender document shall be available at e-procurement website http://etender.up.nic.in latest by 17.06.2020. Interested contractors may view & download tender document and upload their tender, duly filled, online latest by 25.06.2020 up to 17:00 hrs. Uploaded tender document shall be opened on 26.06.2020 at 15:00 Hrs. onwards in the office of "Executive Engineer, Construction Division, U.P. Jal Nigam, Noida (Gautam Budh Nagar)"

Burari Hosp to have 450 beds for corona patients

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amidst the shortage of beds, Delhi Government has come up with another 700-bed hospital in Burari.

On Friday, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal along with his deputy Manish Sisodia visited the hospital to take the stock of the preparations. "Of these 700 beds, 450 beds in the hospital will be reserved for corona patients, all the preparations for Covid treatment have been done here. There will be 450 beds in this hospital for the treatment of corona patients, and every third bed will have oxygen supply attached to it. Around 125 beds already have oxygen supply, and 125 beds will be provided oxygen through oxygen cylinders. I think the establishment of this facility will be another great step in our bid to install more beds to treat more Corona patients in the city, Kejriwal said.

After his visit in hospital, he tweeted, "The Delhi Government is constructing a new world-class hospital in Burari with the total capacity of 700 beds. We are now reserv-



Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal inspects Burari Hospital. Pioneer photo

ing 450 beds for the treatment of Corona. I and Manish Ji went to take stock of the situation today."

WE STAND WITH INDIA & FORCES, SAYS KEJRIWAL AFTER NOT BEING INVITED AT ALL-PARTY MEETING

New Delhi: Pertinently, Kejriwal also reacted for not inviting in all party meeting by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

We stand with India and forces; want strict action to be taken against China," Kejriwal

said, "Not inviting AAP to the all-party meeting is their call, but we stand with the nation and our security forces. We demand that strict action should be taken against China," he added.

Jain's condition deteriorates, shifted to Max Saket ICU

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain has been shifted to Max (Saket) after his condition deteriorated. Jain will be given plasma therapy treatment there.

The 55-year-old Minister has difficulty in breathing with high fever. "His latest CT scan report shows that the pneumonia patches in his lungs have increased. He experienced increased giddiness and tiredness today. The advice of doctors will be followed," Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said. Jain was tested positive for Corona on June 18, a day after he was admitted to RGSSH, a dedicated Covid-19 facility, after running high-grade fever and suffering sudden drop in oxygen levels.

According to doctors, the minister was kept full-time on oxygen support as his oxygen saturation level (Spo2) had dipped.

We have put him fully on oxygen support as his Spo2 level had fallen to 89 at one



point, normal level is about 95. Also, he has been diagnosed with pneumonia, so we decided to shift him to an ICU at the hospital," a senior official of the hospital said.

He was first admitted to Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital (RGSSH) in the early hours of Tuesday and tested positive for the novel coronavirus, for which he was tested negative.

His test was repeated on Wednesday as he still had fever and showed symptoms of the infection. The second test result came out positive.

Meanwhile, Delhi government had put all people on quarantine who interacted with him in the days before his hospitalisation would be quarantined as per the advice of doctors.

145 new cases in G'gram on Friday, total touches 4,136

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

The Gurugram district found 145 more Covid-19 positive cases on Friday. The situation is alarming now the tally has zoomed up to 4,136.

Three more patient infected with coronavirus died on Friday in the city. With this, a total of 55 persons have lost their lives in the district and 51 of them died in the last fifteen days. The figures of COVID active patients are 1,789. A total of 2,292 have been cured and discharged including 128 on Friday.

Meanwhile, Coronavirus test rates in Haryana have been fixed at ₹2,400, down from the current ₹4,500. The decision

was taken after suggestion by a committee set up by Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The tests would be conducted from June 18 via new rapid antigen methodology approved by the ICMR.

Moreover, 5 collection centers have been started in Gurugram to conduct a sample test of Covid-19, in which samples will be taken from 9 am to 2 pm. "These centers have been opened in Gandhi Nagar, Wazirabad, Sector 39, Dundaheera and Civil Surgeon's office. Also, efforts are being made to reduce the time taken for the test report to take 2 to 3 days so that the report could be received in 24 to 36 hours," said Dr. Veena Singh, Director of Health Department Haryana.

According to officials in the district administration, all arrangements, be it isolation facilities or sample testing and admission of severely infected patients have been ensured. No corona infected patient will have difficulty in getting treatment, they added.

Claiming medical preparedness to tackle the present Covid-19 situation in the district Gurugram, Deputy Commissioner Amit Khatri said that a provision of about 4500 beds and 350 ventilators in both private and government hospitals have been made.

Apart from these, another 1000 beds are being arranged, so there will be no shortage of treatment facilities for the Covid-19 patients in the district.

DCP tests virus positive

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) in Delhi Police has tested positive for Covid-19 on Friday. Police said that the DCP is currently under home quarantine.

According to a senior

police official, the DCP's office is being sanitised and three members of his staff have been sent for home isolation.

"The DCP's test report came back positive for COVID-19 on Friday," he said. According to police, the source of the infection is yet to be

ascertained, but most likely he contracted it from an ACP-rank officer.

Earlier, two IPS-rank officers of the Delhi Police had tested positive for COVID-19. More than 800 Delhi Police personnel have tested positive for the disease so far.

Peak power demand clocks season's highest at 6,214 MW

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Peak power demand in the national Capital soared to the season's highest of 6,214 MW on Friday till 3: 27 pm.

A senior BSES official said that continuing with its rising trajectory, power demand clocked 6193 MW on Thursday night at 10:43 pm and piping the season's previous high of 5985 MW recorded a day earlier.

"This record too was broken at 3:27 pm today (June 19) when Delhi's peak power demand clocked 6214 MW. In just 24 hours, Delhi's peak power demand has increased by over three per cent," he said.

On their part, BRPL and BYPL successfully met the peak power demand of 2690 MW and 1379 MW respectively. Last year, Delhi's peak

DELHI'S PEAK POWER DEMAND

IN MW	DELHI	BRPL	BYPL	TPDDL
Power Demand (June 19)	6214 (3:27 pm)	2690 (00:00)	1379 (3:26 pm)	1814 (3:06 pm)
Power Demand (June 18 night)	6193 (10:43 pm)	2789 (10:44 pm)	1420 (11:01 pm)	1743 (11:43 pm)

power demand had clocked 7409 MW. In BRPL's area, it was 3211 MW and 1686 MW respectively.

After the end of the lockdown version 3 on May 17 and the easing of restrictions, power demand has started increasing and the gap narrowed. Since easing of restrictions on May 18, 2020, peak power demand has increased by around 50 per cent, he said.

The official further said that since June 1, 2020, power

demand has increased by over 62 per cent. It was 3807 MW on June 1.

Ensuring reliable supply in any season is as much the function of proper power arrangements as also accurate demand forecast and robust distribution network. On all these aspects, BSES discoms are fully geared to ensure adequate power availability during the summer months, he added.

The official also said that arrangements have been firm

up by BSES discoms to source adequate electricity to meet the power demand of over 44 lakhs consumers. "These arrangements include long term PPAs and banking arrangements of upto 800 MW with other states. In case of unforeseen contingencies because of low generation and outages in power plants, the discoms will purchase short-term power from the exchange," he said.

Being in essential services, BSES is always geared-up to ensure quality and reliable power supply to its consumers, he said, adding that the discoms are closely watching the evolving Coronavirus situation in the national Capital and taking all appropriate measures to ensure reliable power supply to our consumers without compromising the safety of our employees.

5,231 non-AC coaches converted into isolation coaches: Rlys

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In order to augment the capability against Covid-19, Indian Railways has converted 5,231 non air-conditioned coaches into isolation coaches. The decision was taken following the direction of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) on suspected or confirmed cases of Covid-19.

The Railway Ministry said that these facilities are part of the integrated Covid plan developed by MoHFW and

NITI Ayog and are normally to be used when state facilities are overwhelmed. "It was also stipulated that the Facility should be well ventilated with adequate scope for natural lighting, and air conditioning if provided, should be conducted which rules out air conditioning coaches," it said.

"The issue of AC and non-AC coaches was discussed with NiTi Ayog and MoHFW before converting these coaches for Covid Patients. It was agreed that AC coaches would not be suitable in view of the potential transmission risk of

COVID 19 virus through AC ducting, and generally a higher ambient temperature was expected to assist in fighting the virus and cross circulation of air through open windows will benefit patients," the ministry said in a statement.

A senior railways official said that as directed by empowered group II, these isolation coaches, serving as "COVID Care Centers", shall offer care only for cases that have been clinically assigned as mild or very mild cases or COVID suspect cases. "Each such isolation train must necessarily be mapped to one or more dedicated Covid health centres and at least one dedicated such hospital for referral purpose where the patients can be shifted to in case their condition starts to deteriorate," he added.

The non-AC coaches would be a little warm in Mid June if the windows are kept closed, and the ambient temperature may also be around 43 °C. But, once mosquito nets are installed and the windows kept open, the cross circulation of air is expected to improve the temperature," it said.

NIZAMUDDIN MARKAZ

Chargesheets against 46 foreigners

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Crime Branch of Delhi Police on Friday filed 12 chargesheets, including supplementary chargesheets, against 46 foreign nationals from twelve countries for attending Markaz at Nizamuddin in the national Capital by violating visa conditions, indulging in missionary activities illegally and violating Government guidelines, issued in the wake of Covid-19 outbreak in the country.

Police filed one main chargesheet and 11 supplementary charge sheets before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Gurmohina Kaur. With these, police filed 59 charge sheets till date against 956 foreign nationals belonging to 36 different countries.

In the charge sheet filed on Friday, one of the foreign nationals named as accused was hailing from Ethiopia, two each from Sudan, Bangladesh and Thailand, one each from Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Kazakhstan and France, four from Myanmar, three from Sri Lanka, 27 from Indonesia.

The punishment for various offences under penal provisions ranges from six months to eight years of imprisonment.

According to the chargesheets, all the foreign nationals have been booked for violating visa rules, violating government guidelines issued in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic and regulations regarding Epidemic Diseases Act, Disaster Management Act and prohibitory orders under section 144 of Code of Criminal Procedure.

They have also been booked for the offences under sections 188 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant), 269 (Negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life), 270 (Malignant act



likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) and 271 (Disobedience to quarantine rule) of the Indian Penal Code and relevant sections of the Foreigners Act.

The police had earlier filed 47 charge sheets against 915 foreigners in the case.

The police had on May 27 filed 12 chargesheets against 541 foreigners and on May 26 against 294 from 14 countries in the case. Police had filed 20 chargesheets against 82 foreigners from 20 countries on May 25. According to the May 27 chargesheets, 42 of the accused are from Malaysia, 85 from different parts of Kyrgyzstan and 414 from different parts of Indonesia.

As per the May 25 charge sheet, four of the accused were from Afghanistan, seven each from Brazil and China, five from US, two from Australia, Kazakhstan, Morocco, UK, one each from Ukraine, Egypt, Russia, Jordan, France, Tunisia, Belgium, eight from Algeria, 10 from Saudi Arabia, 14 from Fiji and six each from Sudan and Philippines.

Out of the 82 foreigners charge sheeted earlier, four of the accused were from Afghanistan, seven each from Brazil and China, five from US, two from Australia, Kazakhstan, Morocco, UK, one each from Ukraine, Egypt, Russia, Jordan, France, Tunisia, Belgium, eight from Algeria, 10 from Saudi Arabia, 14 from Fiji and six each from

Sudan and Philippines.

In April, COVID-19 cases across the country spiked after hundreds of many Tablighi Jamaat members, who had attended the religious congregation at Nizamuddin Markaz event, tested positive.

At least 9,000 people, including the foreign nationals participated in the religious congregation in Nizamuddin. Later, many of the attendees travelled to various parts of the country. According to police, these foreign nationals had entered India on tourist visa and had participated in the gathering at Markaz illegally. Besides, violating the provisions of visa, these foreign nationals also led to a situation where a highly infectious disease Covid-19 infection spread and threatened the lives of the inmates and the general public at large, they said.

The police also said that more than 900 foreign nationals who are accused in the case belong to 34 different countries and charge sheets are being prepared country-wise, under sections of Foreigners Act, The Epidemic Diseases Act, Disaster Management Act and relevant sections of IPC.

A FIR was registered against Tablighi Jamaat leader Maulana Saad Kandhalvi and six others on March 31 on a complaint of the Station House Officer of Nizamuddin under sections of the Epidemic Diseases Act, Disaster Management Act (2005), Foreigners Act and other relevant sections of Indian Penal Code. Kandhalvi was later booked for culpable homicide not amounting to murder after some of the attendees of the religious congregation died due to Covid-19, police said.

After being exposed to a large gathering in March amid the COVID-19 or coronavirus lockdown many members of Tablighi Jamaat from Markaz Hazrat Nizamuddin were taken out by the authorities and lodged in different quar-

antine centres in Delhi. Some of them were sent to the centres a few days later after being detained from various mosques.

The other members were directly taken to quarantine centres to contain the spread of COVID. Earlier, the Centre had cancelled their Visa and blacklisted them. The foreign nationals have not been arrested yet and are presently residing at various places approved by the Delhi High Court.

2 chargesheets filed against Tahir Hussain

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Crime Branch of Delhi Police on Friday filed two chargesheets against suspended AAP Councillor Tahir Hussain in a case related to communal violence during protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in North-east Delhi in February this year.

The chargesheets have been filed under various sections of the Indian Penal Code including 147 and 148 (rioting), 149 (unlawful assembly) and 34 (common intention), said a lawyer privy to the matter.

The police submitted the chargesheets before Metropolitan Magistrate Rakesh Kumar Rampuri in cases of rioting. The police had earlier chargesheeted Hussain in IB official Ankit Sharma's murder case and another one related to rioting in February.

Advocate Javed Ali said Hussain has been falsely implicated in the cases. Hussain has also been booked under the stringent anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in a case related to alleged conspiracy in the northeast Delhi riots.

DELHI POLICE
SHANTI SEWA NYAYA

HELP US SERVE YOU BETTER

BEWARE OF FAKE NEWS & FRAUDS

Any call related to your **BANK** account or to verify your e-wallet **KYC** can be a fraud call.

Do not forward or follow any unauthentic news on social media

Verify such messages and videos on "Fake News Verification" link available on Delhi Police web portal www.delhipolice.nic.in

Don't respond to any call to verify your e-wallet KYC

Don't share any financial details on such call

Don't do any transaction on such call

Don't install any app the caller suggests

Immediately report on

https://cybercrime.gov.in

E-mail to CP, Delhi at: cp.snsrivastava@delhipolice.nic.in

Write to: CP, Delhi at P.O. Box. No. 171, GPO, New Delhi

FOR IMMEDIATE POLICE HELP CALL 112
TO SHARE INFORMATION CALL 1090

North Eastern Railway

E-Tendering Notice

Divisional Railway Manager (Electrical), North Eastern Railway, Varanasi for and on behalf of President of India invites online (E-tendering) "open tender" for the following work:

Sl. No. : 1, Tender reference No. : E-Tender-L-01-20-21, Name of Work : Electrical work connection to (i) Provision of interlocking of LC gate no. 6C (ARJ-DHE) having less than 20000 TVU situated within block section of BSB division (ii) Provision of interlocking of LC gate no. 9C (ARJ-DHE) having less than 20000 TVU situated within block section of BSB division (iii) Provision of interlocking of LC gate no. 16A 'C' (SIP-TOI) having more than 20000 TVU in BSB division (iv) Provision of interlocking of LC gate no. 3'C (SRU-BTT) having more than 20000 TVU in BSB division (v) Gorkhapur Cantt.-Kaptanganj Section:- CTR(P) BG (359/7-376/3 & 377/5-385/0(24.100 KM)) by PQRS. Approx. Cost : ₹ 41,81,070.09, Earnest Money : ₹ 83,600.00, Cost of Tender Documents : ₹ 3,000.00, Completion Period : 90 Days. Date & Time of Closing Tender : 02.07.2020 at 15.00 Hrs., Date & Time of Opening Tender : 02.07.2020 at 15.30 Hrs., Sl. No. : 2, Tender reference No. : E-Tender-L-02-20-21, Name of Work : Power supply and lighting arrangement for provision of lifts at Ballia, Belthra, Azamgarh & Deoria Sadar stations and escalators at Ballia Railway Station. Approx. Cost : ₹ 15,66,501.21, Earnest Money : ₹ 31,300.00, Cost of Tender Documents : ₹ 2,000.00, Completion Period : 90 Days. Date & Time of Closing Tender : 02.07.2020 at 15.00 Hrs., Date & Time of Opening Tender : 02.07.2020 at 15.30 Hrs. Sl. No. : 3, Tender reference No. : E-Tender-L-03-20-21, Name of Work : Electrical work connection to (i) Provision of CGS at Belthra Road & Azamgarh (AMH-PF-1 & BLTR PF-1 & 2) of BSB Division (ii) Up gradation of rest room for ladies loco pilot & Diesel lobby at Mau. Approx. Cost : ₹ 9,98,581.91, Earnest Money : ₹ 20,000.00, Cost of Tender Documents : ₹ 2,000.00, Completion Period : 90 Days. Date & Time of Closing Tender : 03.07.2020 at 15.00 Hrs., Date & Time of Opening Tender : 03.07.2020 at 15.30 Hrs. Sl. No. : 4, Tender reference No. : E-Tender-L-04-20-21, Name of Work : Electrical work connection to Provision of facade, circulating area improvement, replacement of sheeting of PFP shelter of Platform no-1, up gradation of Yatri Niwas, provision of cafeteria, development of parking place in circulating area, up gradation of public utilities like waiting hall etc. and up gradation of second entry at Ballia Railway Station. Approx. Cost : ₹ 1,28,21,642.7, Earnest Money : ₹ 2,14,100.00, Cost of Tender Documents : ₹ 5,000.00, Completion Period : 120 Days. Date & Time of Closing Tender : 03.07.2020 at 15.00 Hrs., Date & Time of Opening Tender : 03.07.2020 at 15.30 Hrs.

• Full details of E-Tendering shall be seen in Website www.ireps.gov.in.
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/General CPRO/Elect-23 North Eastern Railway/Varanasi
About any Passenger Amenity complaint SMS on Mobile No. 0979643995
Do not travel with inflammable article in train

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given by Ms. Deepa Kaushik who is purchasing Built-up Second Floor Portion without roof rights, area measuring 50 Sq. Yds., out of Property Bearing No. 36, Situated in the abadi of Old Anarkali, in the area of Village-Khureji Khas, Krishna Nagar, Delhi from Mr. Vipin Kumar who got the ownership rights of the property vide Partition Deed dated 12.12.2019 and further will be mortgaging the same against the financial Assistance from Aditya Birla Housing Finance Ltd. To comply the requirements of bank/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any person(s) having any objection regarding ownership and/or creating mortgage of the said property please hereby requested to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of this notice, at below address.
Lucem Legal LLP, 269, Rama House, Ground Floor, Masjid Moh. Opp. Uday Park, South Extn II, New Delhi - 49 Contact@011-40046316

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client Avtar Singh Son of Vira Singh and his wife Mrs. Indrajit kaur Resident of House No A-69, Hari Nagar, Clock Tower New Delhi 110064 from our wedlock we have two sons namely Harpreet Singh aged 28 years old and Manpreet Singh aged 26 years I do hereby solemnly declare that from today my client has disowned his son Harpreet Singh 28 years old from all his movable & immovable for his misconduct and misbehaviour. That further he will not be entitled to inherit any of his property and Business from today. Anybody doing Transaction or any business with my client son Harpreet Singh in respect to my client Avtar Singh is doing in his or her own risk. My client will not be responsible for any Acts or deeds done by my clients Son's Harpreet Singh.
JASDEEP SINGH (Advocate) Ch. no. 229, Court Complex, Sector-43, Chandigarh

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform that Residential Plot No. F-17, Sector-40, Noida-201303 allotted to Late Qamar Zafar Hussain Daughter of Late Zafar Hussain is being transferred after her death in favour of Qamar Zafar Hussain Family Trust by virtue of registered Will.
Anyone who has any objection can file within 30 days from this publication with evidence to Noida Authority (Residential Plots Department) Sector-6, Noida.

SUPERIOR FINLEASE LIMITED
CIN: L74899DL1994PLC061995
Regd. Off: NS-92, Kharsa No-33/21, Ranaji Enclave, Najafgarh, Near Arjun Park Bus Stand New Delhi -110043
Email id : superiorfinlease@gmail.com
Website: www.superiorfinlease.com
Phone No.: +91-9953798335

NOTICE
Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 47 read with Regulation 29 & Regulation 33 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations & Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of Superior Finlease Limited ("the Company") will be held on Thursday, June 25, 2020 at the Registered Office of the Company at 1:00 PM, inter-alia, to consider and approve Audited Financial Results (Standalone & Consolidated) of the Company for the Quarter and Year ended March 31, 2020.
Further details are also available on the website of the Company i.e. at www.superiorfinlease.com and also on the website of BSE Limited at www.bseindia.com and Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India Limited at www.mseil.in where the shares of the Company are listed.
For Superior Finlease Limited
Date: June 18, 2020 Vaibhav Vashist
Place: New Delhi (CFO & Compliance Officer)

Follow K'taka model in corona fight, States told

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

At a time when a majority of the bigger States is grappling with increasing Covid-19 cases, Karnataka, with a population of 6.5 crore, has managed to contain the virus spread and keep the numbers down through comprehensive contact tracing of positive cases and physical/phone-based household surveys covering over 1.5 crore households.

Against this backdrop, the Centre has now asked other States to adopt the best practice from the BS Yediyurappa led-Karnataka Government for Covid-19 management which includes involvement of multi-sectoral agencies supported by technology-based solutions and interventions. The State has reported over 8,000 positive cases of which around 5,000 have been recovered.

"Karnataka has widened the definition of 'contact' to include both the high risk as well as low risk contacts as defined by the Centre. The primary and secondary contacts in Karnataka were meticulously traced and put under strict quarantine," said a senior official from the Union Health Ministry.

"Contact tracing is a critical component to contain the epidemic and ensure that the health infrastructure does not get overwhelmed," he said.

Joint Secretary, Health Ministry, Lav Agarwal too had recently openly appreciated Karnataka's corona war rooms and technology used to provide information and statistics to citizens, the media and experts.

The southern State has appointed more than 10,000 well-trained field staff which carries out specific responsibilities for contact tracing as per the detailed SOP designed by the State, prescribing step-by-step actions to be performed by each designated person.

Also, the Contact Tracing Mobile App and Web Application are being used to overcome the huge quantum of work, genuine forgetfulness of the positive persons and attempts to hide facts due to various reasons.

The State has been able to curtail the spread of infection in the slums in the municipal areas through compulsory institutional quarantine of the contacts residing in slums or similar areas.

It has also been made mandatory for all travelers arriving in Karnataka to register on "Seva Sindhu" portal, which enables it to follow them for the next few days when they are in home/ institutional quarantine.

The State has also formed mobile squads for enforcement of the home quarantine through community participation. In case a person is found violating home quarantine, he/she is moved to institutional quarantine.

With a view to identify, protect and treat high risk population like the elderly, persons with co-morbidities, pregnant women and those with Influenza like Illness / Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) on priority, the States Government has already conducted a physical/phone based survey of 153 lakh households.

The households reporting anyone with Covid-19 like symptoms are triaged by a telemedicine doctor and further advised. Field level health worker (ASHAs) also visit those households to ensure that the required healthcare service is provided.

Centre to act tough against mobile tower mafia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With reports about some companies, agencies and individuals fraudulently asking people to deposit money in their account as tax under the Telecom Act for leasing their premises for installation of mobile towers, the Centre has decided to act tough against the mobile tower mafia. From establishing a National Consumer Helpline to reaching out to the people by using mobile phone messages and social media, the stakeholders are set to go all out against the scamsters.

The action also comes with reports suggesting that the lure of extra money as rent from installation of telecom towers on their premises during the challenging COVID-19 period has gone up massively. A spurt in cases has been reported in states like Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra among others which has jolted the telecom operators, tower companies, the government and the regulators to put up a concerted effort to stop this menace, said a Telecom Ministry source.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) through public outreach program has already initiated warnings to people to be safe



from the fraudsters.

TRAI has advised victims to take up the matter with the law enforcing agencies.

"It is time to reach out to the people using mobile phone messages and social media with a powerful alert message against the tower fraud at least once a week. All stakeholders need to go on a mission mode, to educate consumers," said Prof NK Goyal, Adviser Gujarat Technological University, Goyal is also Vice Chairman at International Telecom Union, Asia Pacific Telecommunity (ITU-APT).

Fraudsters are collecting money in the name of TRAI for installation of mobile towers. In a notice issued recently, TRAI said it has been brought to its notice that some companies, agencies and individuals are fraudulently asking people to deposit money in their account as tax under the Telecom Act for leasing their premises for installation of mobile towers.

"The Telecom industry will continue its fight to counter this fraud. Our commitment to end the tower fraud is as determined as our resolve to offer the best quality of service to our consumers. Just as the industry is working to fight COVID-19 from spreading any further, so we strive to ensure there is correct information available to the public. Telecom Operators are executing a slew of measures as per the guidance of the

sector regulator in this regard.

In our efforts to provide better quality of services to customers and maintain the reliability of our networks at 99.99% of the time, installation of new towers is a critical ingredient. Tower frauds hamper these efforts and ultimately hurt both customers and Operators. We must all work together to ensure this malice is eradicated," said Rajan S Mathews, Director General COAI (Cellular Operators Association of India).

There are around 5,90,000 tower which provides seamless connectivity to 1,200 million subscribers.

"The telecom Infrastructure providers will continue its fight against the fraudsters. A concerted effort has been taken to caution the general public. We will take more specific initiatives in consultation with our members," said T R Dua, Director General TAIPA (Tower and Infrastructure Providers Association).

To report fraud cases or guidance against such attempts, the National Consumer Helpline is available for the public to call from anywhere in India at 14404 or 1800-11-4000. People can also register the complaint at www.consumerhelpline.gov.in.

ALL-OUT WAR AGAINST CORONA

MMR may dampen virus-linked septic inflammation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine could serve as a preventive measure to dampen septic inflammation associated with Covid-19 infection, according to a study, published in the journal mBio.



It said that vaccination with MMR in immunocompetent individuals has no contraindications and may be especially effective for health care workers who can easily be exposed to the virus.

Researchers, including those from the Louisiana State University in the US, said live attenuated vaccines, which are made using weakened strains of a disease causing pathogen, provide nonspecific protection against lethal infections.

They said these vaccines can induce "trained" innate immune cells for improved host responses against subsequent infections.

The researchers speculated that adults who had received the MMR vaccine in childhood likely still possess antibodies against the targeted viruses which at the very

least would provide added protection against MMR for older adults.

With the added induction of the immune system's trained innate cells, they believe MMR vaccination could also provide protection against the "worst sequelae of COVID-19."

"In direct support of this concept, it was recently reported that the milder symptoms seen in the 955 sailors on the USS Roosevelt who tested positive for COVID-19 may have been a consequence of the fact that MMR vaccinations are given to all US Navy recruits," the scientists said.

The researchers have called for a clinical trial with MMR in high-risk populations, suggesting it may provide a "low-risk high-reward" preventive measure in saving lives during the pandemic.

Covid-19 patients, who received transfusions of blood plasma from recovered persons, show no side-effects

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Covid-19 patients, who received transfusions of blood plasma from recovered persons, have shown no side-effects, thus indicating its safety, according to a study of 20,000 hospitalised patients from diverse groups with Covid-19. The study has been published in the Mayo Clinic Proceedings.

The safety report assessed the seven days following transfusion for hospitalized patients between April 3 and June 11 who were deemed at risk of progressing to a severe or life-threatening condition.

Nearly 40 per cent of the patients were women; 20 per cent African Americans; nearly 35 per cent Hispanic and 5 per cent Asian. Seven-day mortality rates declined to 8.6 per cent compared to 12 per cent in a previous safety study of the first 5,000 transfused patients.

Serious adverse events continued to be less than one percent.

"Our efforts to under-

stand convalescent plasma continue," says Michael Joyner, principal investigator of the study at Mayo Clinic and lead author of the article. "We're optimistic but must remain objective as we assess increasing amounts of data."

This expanded safety report reveals a decline in mortality which appears temporary with the more rapid availability of plasma for use, but the authors caution that this alone does not provide any evidence on effectiveness of convalescent plasma for treating Covid-19.

At this time, convalescent plasma therapy is the only antibody-based therapy for the virus.

The researchers say that while the mortality rate has decreased, the patients in the latter part of this study were less critically ill.

They also say the decrease may be in part due to improved medical care based on increased knowledge during the pandemic.

They note that there was

no system in place for delivering convalescent plasma in March and now there is sufficient donation to meet most of the demand.

Also, as donors came forward more rapidly, it was more likely their plasma contained neutralising antibodies.

In India, the ICMR is conducting a multicentric phase-2 trial using convalescent plasma on Covid-19 patients with moderate illness. Its three feasibility studies in about 20 severely ill patients found the therapy to be safe and able to resolve illness or improve the clinical symptoms.

Convalescent plasma therapy, about a century old, has shown some benefit in treating measles, chickenpox and rabies.

Small studies have shown faster clearance of virus in the case of MERS and SARS if given early in the course of the disease but no randomised controlled studies have been carried out.

Now, healthcare workers exposed to high-risk zones to undergo one-week quarantine

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Healthcare workers (HCWs) exposed to high-risk zones or confirmed Covid-19 cases have to undergo a one-week quarantine period instead of the earlier recommended 14 days, as per the latest advisory by the Union Health Ministry.

The advisory pertains to the management of healthcare workers working in Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 areas of the hospitals. The advisory aims to provide guidance to the medical professionals on preventive measures, isolation and quarantine of

health care functionaries as they are at increased risk of acquiring the virus if there is a breach in the personal protection while managing patients. The nodal officer or head of the department has been directed to form a sub-committee to assess the level of exposure and the risk as per assessment.

"Thereafter taking the profile of such doctors, nursing officers and other health workers, a decision shall be taken by the nodal officer/head of the department (or his appointed sub-committee) for further period of one week," the guidelines said.

SC takes note of different Covid-19 testing charge, asks Centre to decide

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



The Supreme Court Friday took note of the differences in COVID-19 testing charges in various States and asked the Centre to decide on the issue, and said all states should set up panel of experts to inspect hospitals to ensure proper care the patients.

PIL in SC seeks uniform education system with common syllabus

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A PIL has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking uniform education, having common syllabus and curriculum for all the children aged between 6-14 years, across the country.

The plea filed by BJP leader and advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay has sought directions to look into the feasibility of establishing "One Nation One Education Board" by merging the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education Board and the Central Board of Secondary Education.

The plea, filed through advocate Ashwani Kumar Dubey, said the Centre and States have not taken appropriate steps to introduce uniform education system having common syllabus and common curriculum in spirit of Article 21A (free and compulsory education). Children may not be able to exercise their fundamental right under Article 21A unless the Centre and the states provide value based uniform education, the plea said.

SIDBI to implement PM street vendors' AatmaNirbhar Nidhi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), on Friday, signed an MoU to engage SIDBI as the implementation agency for the PM Street Vendor's AatmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi), a special micro-credit facility for street vendors.

"As per the MoU terms, SIDBI will implement the PM SVANidhi Scheme under the guidance of the MoHUA. It will also manage the credit guarantee to the lending institutions through Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE)," said an official release. The MoU was signed by Sanjay Kumar, Joint Secretary on behalf of MoHUA, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and V Satya Venkata Rao, Deputy Managing Director, SIDBI, in the presence of Hardeep SPuri, Minister of State (Independent Charge) MoHUA.

SIDBI will also provide a project management unit to ensure effective implementation of the scheme comprising domain experts from the training/capacity building, project and platform management, Information Education and Communication (IEC), banking, NBFC and MFI sectors, up to March 2022.

portal and a mobile app, to ensure engagement and information flow between urban local bodies, lending institutions, digital payment aggregators and other stakeholders, it added.

PM SVANidhi was launched by the MoHUA on June 1 to provide affordable working capital loan to street vendors who have been adversely affected by the Covid-19 lockdown. This scheme targets to benefit over 50 lakh street vendors.

Under the scheme, vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to ₹10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year.

The MoU was signed by Sanjay Kumar, Joint Secretary, on behalf of MoHUA, and V Satya Venkata Rao, Deputy Managing Director, SIDBI, in the presence of Hardeep SPuri, Minister of State (Independent Charge), MoHUA.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, SOUTHERN (R&B) CIRCLE, BERHAMPUR
Phone : 0680-2281582, FAX : 0680-2281582, e-mail : sescpwwd@yahoo.co.in
INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB) [e-Procurement]

Bid Identification No.	S.E., S.C (R&B)-BAM-02/2020-21	No.	// Dated : 11.06.2020
1)	The Superintending Engineer, Southern (R&B) Circle, Berhampur on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for construction of Road / Bridge Works as detailed in the table below.		
2)	Nature of work	: Road Work	
3)	No. of work	: 04 Nos.	
4)	Tender Cost	: Rs.10,000/- (online)	
5)	Class of Contractor	: "B", "A", Special & Super Class	
6)	Availability of Bid document in the website	: From 24.06.2020 10.00 AM to 08.07.2020 4.00 PM	
7)	Date of Opening of Bid	: 09.07.2020 at 11.30 A.M.	
8)	The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://tenders.orissa.gov.in .		
9)	Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only		

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer
Southern (R&B) Circle, Berhampur

OIPR-34103/11/0002/2021

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority
Main Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar, (U.P.)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from eligible firms/contractors for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & <http://etender.up.nic.in> Please ensure to see these website for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

- 42/SM(Jal)-II/ET/19-20, M/o Sewerage (Annual P/F manhole cover frame, cleaning, M.S. Jall and sewer line related work in sector -70, 71, 72, 73, Sarfabad and Basai) Noida. **Cost- Rs. 46.05 Lacs.**
- 02/SM(Jal)-II/ET/20-21, M/o W/s (Repair of PVC, DI, CI Line, S/F sluice valve, chamber and allied work in Sec-52, 53, 61), Noida (For Two Year). **Cost- Rs. 47.60 Lacs.**
- 03/SM(Jal)-II/ET/20-21, M/o W/s (Repair of Water Line, S/F sluice valve, chamber and allied work in Sec-28,29,37), Noida (For Two Year). **Cost- Rs. 44.02 Lacs.**
- 13/SM(Jal)-II/ET/20-21, M/o W/s (R/o VT Motor, starter, R/o Transformer and other electrical allied work on UGR/TWs in Sec-71 and 72), Noida (For Two Year). **Cost- Rs. 31.71 Lacs.**
- 17/SM(Jal)-II/ET/20-21, M/o Sewerage (Raising of Manhole, cleaning of Manhole and P/F of Manhole cover frame and other sewer related work in Sec-52, 53, 61 and Gijhore), Noida (For Two Years). **Cost- Rs. 52.81 Lacs.**
- 18/SM(Jal)-II/ET/20-21, Vill. Dev. (Running and Operation for UGR (01Nos) and TWs (03 Nos) in Village-Gijhore), Noida (For Two Year). **Cost- Rs. 42.47 Lacs.**
- 22/SM(Jal)-II/ET/20-21, M/o W/s (R/o VT Motor, starter, R/o Transformer and other electrical allied work on UGR/TWs in Sec-28, 29, 37), Noida (For Two Year). **Cost- Rs. 42.59 Lacs.**

The above tenders can be uploaded by Date 03.07.2020 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on Date 06.07.2020 at 11.00 AM.

Office : Sector-37, NOIDA Senior Manager (Jal)-II NOIDA

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

TACKLING CORONAVIRUS

Highest single-day spike in Kerala; 118 test +ve

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

A day after Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan cautioned the people of the State against violation of guidelines and norms prescribed by the Government for checking the spread of coronavirus pandemic, 118 persons tested positive for Covid-19 on Friday.

This is the highest ever number of patients tested positive for the pandemic on a single day since the State registered the first case in January 2020.

On Thursday, Vijayan had listed violations of laws and guidelines by the people which he said would lead to a situation where the pandemic would rear its ugly head again in the State which had flattened the corona early May itself.

While the maximum number of covid-19 patients were from Malappuram district (18), Kollam district came a close

second with 17 patients. The number of hotspots in the State stood at 112 with seven places from Kannur, the home district of Chief Minister Vijayan getting designated as the new hotspots.

Out of the 118 cases tested positive on Friday, 67 were expatriates who returned to the State while 45 were from other parts of the country.

There were six cases of the persons getting infected through community transmission. Vijayan had blamed West Asian countries on Thursday for their lackadaisical approach in testing the persons leaving their shores to their native places. He had even offered that Kerala would make available facilities in these countries to test those returning home.

A release issued by the Kerala Government said there were 1.32 lakh persons under observation in the State. Samples collected from 1.73

lakh persons have been sent for testing till date. As on date, 1,380 persons were under treatment in various hospitals in Kerala. On Friday, 197 persons who were tested positive have been admitted to hospitals.

Meanwhile, the Kerala Government made a relaxation in the requirement that all those returning to the State should bring with them "no-covid certificate" issued by the authorities where they stay. This requirement would come into practice only after June 26, said the release.

There was widespread opposition to the move by Kerala Government making "No-Covid Certificate" mandatory for all those returning to the State.

The only factor which brought relief to the State on Friday was the news that 96 persons were cured of the coronavirus pandemic and were discharged from hospitals.

Despite Covid hitch, Kudankulam works progress as scheduled

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Coronavirus battering India and Russia has not deterred the determination of both the countries in completing the works of units 3 and 4 of Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant near Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu. Though there is an emergency situation prevailing in both the countries because of Covid-19, a shiplod of components to be installed in these units were shipped by Rosatom State Corporation Engineering Division on Thursday from Saint-Petersburg, said a release by the company.

Rosatom is the company helping the public sector Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) in setting up the nuclear energy power plants at Kudankulam. Units 1 and 2 (each of 1000 MW) are fully operational while the works of Units 3 and 4 (each of 1000

MW) are in full swing.

"In the context of the restrictions imposed in Russia and India, Rosatom State Corporation Engineering Division, the Indian customer, Russian manufacturers, the port of Saint-Petersburg have kept on working, meeting all the measures prescribed, on the construction of the second phase of Kudankulam NPP", - the Director for projects in India, Vladimir Angelov, informed.

"It is necessary to make a specific mention on the well-coordinated work of the employees responsible for the cargo handling and execution. The deadline for shipment was reduced by 37%", he added.

According to Rosatom, this is the 17th shiplod during the project implementation and the first one after the restrictive measures related to prevent further spread of Covid-19. The ship is expected to reach the Indian shores in the third week of July.

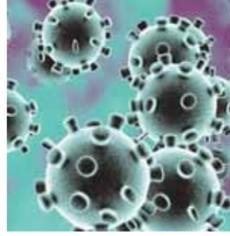
4 districts turn fortresses, but no respite from corona in TN

2,115 PERSONS FOUND +VE ON FRI

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu's woes due to coronavirus pandemic continued unabated on Friday even as the four problematic districts including the capital city of Chennai went into a total lock-down mode for 12 days since midnight. As all arterial roads in Chennai remained out of bounds for all vehicles and most part of the city wearing a deserted look, the Tamil Nadu Government announced that 2,115 persons tested positive in the State on Friday. Out of the 2,115 positive cases, 1,322 were from Chennai.

The day also saw 41 persons losing their lives in the State taking the death toll till date to 666. Out of the 666 deaths recorded in the State till date, Chennai accounted for 529 deaths, Chengalpet (41)



and Thiruvallur (33) coming second and third respectively.

Meanwhile, K P Anbazhagan, Higher Education Minister has been tested positive for covid-19 and was admitted to a corporate hospital in Chennai. K Palani, an AIADMK MLA too has been hospitalised after testing positive for the pandemic.

The Government is not leaving any stones unturned as it has made aggressive testing a moto. With two more private laboratories designated as equipped to test coronavirus, there are 83 laboratories functioning 24x7 in Tamil Nadu. Till date 7.89 lakh persons have

been tested and on Friday a total of 25,902 persons were tested.

The districts Chengalpet (95), Kancheepuram (39) and Thiruvallur (85) wore the look of well guarded fortresses as policemen stood guard and made these districts out of bound for all from other places. Vellore where 103 districts tested positive on Friday is becoming a matter of concern for health officials.

"We will be able to tell whether the lock-down would be of any help after June 30. Last lock-down ordered by the Tamil Nadu Government (April 26-30) turned everything upside down as the State saw the number of cases shooting up," said Dr C V Krishnaswamy, eminent physician.

The Tamil Nadu Government has complained that persons coming back to the State from Kerala have become a threat as most of them have been tested to be positive.

Biography of Manohar Parrikar to hit bookstalls in July

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The unique life story of Goa's illustrious son former Union Defence Minister late Manohar Parrikar is being recounted by two senior journalists who had a special relation with the former and it has resulted in the first ever book on the life and times of India's politician with a difference.

An *Extraordinary Life-A Biography of Manohar Parrikar*

authored by Sadguru Patil and Mayabhushan Nagvenkar, is being published by Penguin Random House and would hit book shelves across the country in July. Pegged as a 'Zero to Hero' story, this is the story of the man who changed the way mainstream India looked at Goa and the political goings-on in India's smallest state, say the authors.

Manohar Parrikar came from a humble background

and rose to become one of the most sought after leaders of Goa, where he undertook the role of chief minister four times and was the defence minister of India for two years before the call of his home State made him return to Panaji.

Nobody did expect Parrikar leaving this world at a rather young age of 63. Had he lived longer, Indian politics would not have been the same as his face brought in a refresh-

ing change to the way people in the country viewed politics. Parrikar was the embodiment of simplicity, honesty and integrity.

He brought in stability to politics in Goa, a State famous for horse trading and shadow boxing. But what adds to his charisma is his success in attracting the minority community members to his Hindutwa brand of politics and this itself serves as a model

case study for political scientists as well as leaders.

"Manohar Parrikar was a towering personality, who defined an era in Goa's politics, after the turbulent 1990s which produced 13 chief ministers in a decade" says co-author Sadguru Patil.

He adds, A four-time Chief Minister and Defence Minister, he had the talent, intellect and the drive to achieve, perhaps even more. Patil had inter-

viewed Parrikar at least 20 times at different occasions when the latter was leader of the opposition, chief minister and union minister.

"The biography is in part, a lively scrapbook of his Tom Sawyer-like childhood and youth, as well as a no-holds-barred report card of his subsequent political journey, through the voices of people who knew him, many of them intimately," said Nagvenkar.

50 per cent of newly recruited terrorists neutralised in J&K

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

More than fifty per cent of the newly recruited cadre of different terrorist outfits this year has been neutralised by the joint teams of security forces during Operation 'All out' in the Union territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

Meanwhile, on Friday the security forces neutralised six more terrorists, two inside the mosque in Meez area of Pampore and four others in Shopian district without suffering any collateral damage during the ongoing operations.

Two terrorists were killed in two separate encounters which were launched on the basis of specific intelligence inputs about the presence of terrorists in the area on Thursday.

So far, a total number of 109 terrorists have been eliminated since January 2020 this year. Out of these, more than 50 plus belong to Hizbul Mujahideen, 20 each from Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad and others from Al Badr and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind outfits.

Addressing a joint press conference with DGP, Jammu and Kashmir police, Lt-Gen BS Raju, GOC 15 Corps in Srinagar said, "out of 49 local recruits who had joined ranks of different terror outfits this year, 27 of them have been neutralised in different operations". He appealed to the parents to convince their children to shun the path of violence and surrender before the security forces.

Referring to the anti terrorist operations conducted in the Meez area of Pampore, Lt-Gen BS Raju said, "the security forces exercised maximum restraint while neutralising hiding terrorists to ensure safety of a local mosque".

Complimenting the joint teams of security forces Lt Gen BS Raju told media persons in Srinagar, "one terrorist was neutralised in the area on Thursday while two others

took refuge inside a local mosque in Meez area of Pampore". Lt-Gen Raju said, "the forces exercised maximum restraint and neutralised both the terrorists without causing any damage to the religious structure". He said with every successful operation we are moving on the path of peace. "I can feel it on the ground, there is a palpable difference". He also complimented the local residents for ensuring success of the anti terrorist operations in the recent weeks.

Significantly, the conduct of the forces was also appreciated by the local people and clerics in the area. Jammu and Kashmir police also released a video of a local Imam of Jamia Mosque Fayaz Ahmad where he was seen speaking on behalf of locals of Meej, Pampore thanking and appreciating the police & security forces for their patient role in ensuring zero damage to the mosque where the encounter took place.

Director General of Jammu and Kashmir police, Dilbagh Singh who also attended the press briefing along with IG, Kashmir Vijay Kumar and IG CRPF, Rajesh Kumar, told reporters, "more than 100 plus terrorists have been neutralised this year during anti terrorist operations".

He also complimented the joint teams of security forces for exercising maximum restraint during the operations and prevented collateral damage inside the mosque. He expressed satisfaction that the new recruitment has come down drastically compared to previous years.

Singh said, "several districts of Jammu division, such as Doda and Kishtwar are on the verge of getting militancy free". "Only four terrorists, one in Doda and three in Kishtwar district are active at present and the security forces are tracking their movements in order to neutralise them at the earliest.

DoC becomes first dept in Bihar to digitise amid Covid

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PATNA

Adapting to change and cracking the conundrum of new work culture in the Government, the Bihar Government Department of Cooperative (DoC) has become the first department in the State to digitise amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

"To turn our Department into digital was indispensable as the spread of Covid 19 is increasing at a faster rate. Recent news from the office of Principal Secretary, MP about virus spread among 22 officials through suspecting the transfer of same file they were acting upon created a fear among the employees and staff since files are inevitable in any Government office. The Department took cognizance of their employees safety first and thought of de-shackling it with infusion of technology to it," said Bandana Preyashi, Secretary, DoC, Bihar.

The Department of Cooperative, successfully turned into an e-office since June 16, 2020. The officials conducted a need gap assessment programme to identify all the hard and soft infrastructure required for making the department paperless. There were around more than 9,000 files having around 10 lakh documents to be scanned.

"We see this step of the department aligning to the Jal-Jeevan-Hariyali Mission by making it a paperless system for conserving the forest and natural resources. The e-filing management system is supposed to bring in speedy, accuracy and accountability by cutting down the unwanted delays caused due to physical movement of file from one table to the other. Now the officers will have flexibility to work from home with ease and without any worry of physical transfer of documents," said Anand Sharma, Joint Secretary, DoC, Bihar Government.

In the long run the department will reduce the cost of operation due to minimization of papers, printers and multiple volume and copies of the document.

To speedup transformation process, the department called for a tender for migrating all the files to electronic mode. The work order was given to a competent agency and the electronic conversion was completed in a record time amidst lockdown with limited infrastructure.

The Department also organised hands on training at their computer laboratory to all the officers of the Department. A series of training programme was conducted for electronic document management as a probable solution to manage the procedure of importing, storing, and managing documents and images as computer files. The officers adapted to the change with great enthusiasm and embraced technology for brining efficiency and effectiveness in the system.

The BJP is breathing down Mamata Banerjee's neck. So much so that the Bengal ruling outfit may just scrape through in a photo finish of sorts if Assembly elections are held today, a quick survey by a leading Bengali channel says.

According to the television channel a study done factoring in the corona crisis shows that the TMC may win anywhere between 155 and 163 seats --- which is about 60 seats less than what it got in 2016 --- clearing the half-way mark by a wafer-thin margin of about 8-15 seats.

Out of a total of 294 seats a party or a coalition needs at least 148 to cross the half-way marks.

While the TMC is likely to get about 38 per cent votes, down about 4.8 per cent from what it got in 2019 general elections the BJP is likely to poll 32.74 per cent votes which is again far below than what it polled in a thoroughly polarized atmosphere last year. In the Parliamentary elections the saffron outfit polled just about 40 per cent votes. The same opinion polls provide about 97-105 seats to the BJP which is again far below than its May 2019 tally when it won 19 MP seats --- equivalent 121 Assembly constituencies.

The Left-Congress alliance though trains far behind manages to inch up its position with about 22-30 seats polling just about 13.8 per cent votes which is one per cent more than what it got in 2019, the survey says.

TMC may scrape through if Bengal polls held now: Survey

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The TMC is likely to get about 38 per cent votes, down about 4.8 per cent from what it got in 2019 General Elections, the BJP is likely to poll 32.74 per cent votes which is again far below than what it polled in a thoroughly polarized atmosphere last year. In the Parliamentary elections the saffron outfit polled just about 40 per cent votes

Translated to MLA seats the alliance could manage only 7 Assembly wins in 2019.

The survey also finds a mild "homecoming" of the minority voters towards the LF-Congress which in 2019 had shed a large percent of it in a communalized atmosphere.

About 10 percent voters are still undecided and could play an important role in the next year's Assembly elections, experts associated with the survey said.

Against the backdrop of the present reading and taking into account the massive advantage of a thoroughly built propaganda machinery and overwhelming money power as also the charisma of Prime Minister Narendra Modi the saffron outfit could create for itself a winning situation by pulling the 10 percent undecided voters, experts say.

Apart from the other parameters the pollsters took into account the performance of how the central and State governments handled the corona and Amphan crises. In this

regard both the sides poll almost equal number of votes with about 49.28 per cent saying that Mamata Banerjee could have managed the situation better and 51 per cent feeling that the Centre could have handled the situation in a more planned manner. About 45 percent of people disapproved of imposing a lockdown in four hours' notice.

Besides, about 61 per cent of the voters felt that the migrant workers deserved a better treatment.

Speaking about the situation State BJP Sayantan Basu said elections were still quite some time away adding things will start changing quickly as it would approach relying on the charisma of Modi and sacrifices made by his party men. "We will win by a very, very comfortable margin," he said.

TMC's Firhad Hakim too said things would change when the elections drew nearer adding "people of Bengal know the difference between Modi and Mamata Banerjee" and they will choose the latter.

UP BJP eyes farmer votes through sugarcane politics

Lucknow: With an eye on farmer votes, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is especially focusing on the Ramala sugar mill that is just concluding its first crushing season -- a promise that BJP had made to the farmers in 2018.

This would be the first crushing season of the Ramala mill whose expansion was inaugurated by Adityanath in November last year.

Ramala is a large village in Badaut tehsil of Baghpat in western UP. It is known for its sugar factory. Ramala has been the focus of late Chaudhary Charan Singh's farmer politics.

BJP spokesman Chandramohan, who belongs to western UP, said, "The crushing capacity of the Ramala sugar mill has been increased from 27,500 quintals of sugarcane to 50,000 quintals per day. A 27-megawatt power plant has also been set up in the mill premises."

He said that the sugar mill caters to nearly 35,000 sugarcane farmers and after the expansion, nearly 2,500 people have got direct or indirect employment.

"We will obviously tell the farmers that while parties like Rashtriya Lok Dal and their leaders like Ajit Singh, who owe their political importance to the region, as well as Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, merely paid lip service to the farmers, it was PM Modi along with CM Yogi Adityanath who alone thought of addressing the plight of sugarcane farmers," the BJP leader added. IANS

Garib Kalyan Rojgar Yojna launch from Bihar

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of Bihar Assembly polls to boost employment and infrastructure in rural sector, the Narendra Modi Government will launch a massive rural public works scheme — Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan — on Saturday to provide livelihood to migrant workers amid nationwide lockdown due to coronavirus pandemic. The scheme will be launched via video conference in the presence of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in Telihar village in Khagaria district. The campaign also aims to create infrastructure worth Rs 50,000 crore in the rural regions across 116 districts in six states. Last month, the Modi government had announced an additional Rs

40,000 crore for the rural jobs programme. This is in addition to the Rs 61,500 crore announced in the budget on February 1.

"PM @narendramodi to launch Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan on 20th June to boost livelihood opportunities in Rural India," a Twitter post from the Prime Minister's office handle said. The programme will be launched via video conference in the presence of Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar, the Twitter post added. As per the statement, the campaign involves 125 days of work and will have "intensified and focused implementation of 25 different types of works to provide employment to the migrant workers on one hand and create infrastructure in the rural

regions of the country on the other hand, with a resource envelope of Rs 50,000 crore.

Political experts opined that the scheme will certainly help the Nitish Kumar government in Bihar to woo more 30-35 lakh migrants workers who returned to the state since May 3. Nearly 32 districts in Bihar, which witnessed the highest number of migrant returnees from across the country during the nationwide ockdown, have been included in the scheme. Kumar has been facing flak on the issue of migrants as the opposition tarnished his image as anti migrant workers. Kumar had initially opposed the migrants movement and banned their entry in the state but agreed after around criticism.

The highest number of 1,53,022 migrants have officially returned to East Champaran followed by 1,41,944 in Katihar, 1,24,572 in Madhubani, 1,17,294 in Gaya, 1,17,200 in West Champaran, 1,03,007 in Darbhanga, 1,00,973 in Araria, 1,00,672 in Muzaffarpur, 96,948 in Purnia and other districts. The state government has conducted the skill mapping of more than 17 lakhs of migrant-labourers and more than 6 to 7 lakhs of them have already been engaged in different schemes employment schemes including MNREGA. As per information, 25 type works can be allotted under the scheme including construction of gram panchayat bhawan, construction of national highway works, water conservation and harvesting works, planata-

tion, horticulture, rural connectivity works, rural housing works, construction of community toilets and railway works

The finance ministry statement on the scheme did not make it clear but the new scheme may run in tandem with the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme that allows for 100 days of work for members of rural households. The rural job guarantee scheme has seen record enrolments in rural areas following the large scale migration of lakhs of workers from their places of employment in cities and towns to the rural areas after the lockdown was imposed from 25 March.

The villages across 116 districts in the six states will join the campaign through the com-

Will ensure full normalcy in Kashmir in few months: Top Army commander

Srinagar: Lieutenant General BS Raju, corps commander of the Indian Army's Srinagar-based 15 Corps, said on Friday that the security forces will ensure complete normalcy in Kashmir within the next few months.

Addressing a joint press conference with J&K Police chief Dilbag Singh and other senior officers of police and paramilitary forces at the Badami Bagh headquarters of 15 Corps, Lt General Raju said, "Over 100 militants have been killed so far this year. 50 belonged to Hizbul and 20 each from JeM and LeT and others belonged to Ansar-Ghazwatul Hind and other small groups like Al-Badr".

Lt General Raju said that

over the past 24 hours, security forces on the ground did a great job by killing eight militants in two separate encounters in south Kashmir's Pulwama and Shopian districts.

"In one of the encounters, where militants had gone inside a mosque, the forces on ground exercised extreme restraint and no damage was caused to the religious place. With every operation we are moving on the path of peace. I can feel it on the ground that there is a palpable difference in the situation", he said.

He said that this year, so far, 102 militants have been killed in various operations. IANS

Crisis in Manipur

Congress stakes claim to government as leader of a new front after defections from BJP and its allies



While the BJP may have been successful with Operation Lotus — or breaking fragile parties to shore up its numbers for power — in the heartland, that strategy has clearly failed in Manipur. The Congress has learnt lessons from its playbook, got nine legislators to its side, formed a new secular front and staked claim to form the Government in the northeastern State. With this move, the Congress hopes to neutralise its own desertions in Gujarat and stay relevant though it lost the lone seat in the Rajya Sabha polls here, the

immediate trigger for such developments. For the BJP, this is embarrassing because most of the defections happened from its alliance partner in the State, the National People's Party (NPP), led by Conrad Sangma, someone whom the BJP groomed as one of its bankable faces in the North-east and someone who has built his political stock on anti-Congressism. Clearly, Sangma was caught on the wrong foot, not knowing what the State unit was doing or how upset it was with the BJP's high-handed manners, enough to destabilise a seemingly comfortable arrangement. And at this juncture, he cannot justify why his men flocked to the Congress in Manipur while in his home State of Meghalaya, the NPP-BJP coalition is going strong. At the moment, his credibility within the NDA is under a cloud. But this crisis is not entirely unexpected in the North-east where loyalty is a small price to pay for getting a plum post in governance. Where opportunism and individual aggrandisement matter more than pre-poll commitments and each State has its own dynamic. As a result, the region has seen many regimes change hands mid-term. Why the Manipur rebellion is serious is because all four NPP legislators who quit, including Deputy Chief Minister Y Joykumar Singh, were also Ministers in the Biren Singh-led Government. But they were not happy with the Chief Minister's style of functioning and his refusal to consult them in matters of policy. Besides, Singh, while allocating portfolios to NPP colleagues for the sake of optics, had always wanted to oust Joykumar from the Cabinet on one pretext or the other. Matters came to a head when he stripped Joykumar of the key finance portfolio. The last straw on the camel's back was when Joykumar raised the issue of foodgrain allocation during lockdown, saying the announcements didn't match the distribution on the ground. Some BJP MLAs, too, were miffed by Singh's autocratic style of functioning that they felt was costing their party's image among locals. BJP Minister Thongam Biswajit Singh, who took the lead in demanding the Chief Minister's resignation, was divested of power and public works portfolios. The BJP should not have underestimated the brewing dissent in what it considers a trusted ally. Further, it should have given a listen to its own MLAs and Ministers, who had been demanding Singh's ouster and pleaded their case before Prime Minister Narendra Modi and then party chief Amit Shah. So once Joykumar resigned, his tidal pull ensured that he got an MLA from the Trinamool Congress and an Independent. Then three more disgruntled MLAs of the BJP jumped ship.

The Congress (20 MLAs), the NPP, Trinamool Congress and an Independent, have formed the Secular Progressive Front and have claimed the support of 26 MLAs. This is undoubtedly a moral victory for the Congress as it had emerged as the single-largest party with 28 seats in the 2017 Assembly polls but was robbed of a shot at power. The BJP, which had won just 21 seats, poached seven of its MLAs and formed an unholy alliance with the NPP, Naga People's Front (NPF) and the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP). It dangled plum Ministry posts to its allies, disappointing its own legislators who had worked the ground. With the current strength of the House at 59 — one Congress MLA was suspended by the Supreme Court — and assuming the seven Congress MLAs, who crossed over to the BJP before, are suspended, the new House tally will be lower. In that case, the Congress would have 26 legislators, one more than the majority mark. Of course, the BJP won't give up easily either and there may be some shoplifting from its end, too. The Rajya Sabha win may just give it a breather. Either way, a new regime would continue to be unstable. It is now up to Governor Najma Heptulla to ensure fairplay and uphold constitutional principles instead of taking sides as has become the norm in other States. Heptulla has had a stellar innings as a parliamentarian and, therefore, is not expected to stray from the rulebook.

A unified strategy

The Corona crisis has showed that NCR needs to be more than a term that real-estate developers use to sell houses



There are many lessons that will be learnt in the aftermath of the Coronavirus pandemic in India but one definitely will be a unified administrative approach in the areas surrounding the capital, the so-called National Capital Region (NCR). The economic success of this region in the past three decades has allowed it to usurp the role of the Greater Mumbai region as India's economic heartland. For example, Delhi's airport, much smaller than Mumbai just a decade ago, now has over twice the number of flights and passengers than the financial capital. And one major reason for the development of the Delhi region has been the easy access to the plentiful of available land surrounding the city. This has led to the creation of satellite cities like Gurugram, Noida, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Sonapat along Delhi's borders. Even the likes of Meerut, Manesar, Panipat and even Bhiwadi in Rajasthan are little further away. The peripheral expressways around Delhi will only add to this development.

Or will they? Until now, it appeared that there was almost a daily crisis at the city's borders with both Haryana and Uttar Pradesh blocking daily commuters inside the region. With metro services coming to a standstill and just limited forms of other public transportation, the NCR was in a coma, barely functional. While essential goods and employees were allowed to cross the border, confusion has reigned. Pilots have, for example, found it difficult to move between Noida and Delhi and workmen in factories have not been able to cross in the Gurugram region. There needs to be an understanding that while the political boundaries of the region are defined, it does for all intent and purposes function as one economic, commercial and transportation entity. There needs to be cohesive planning between the civil administrations of all major cities in the region with Delhi playing the lead. Without these satellite cities serving as housing and industrial zones, Delhi would have been unable to become what it has. But at the same time, Gurugram and Noida would not exist without Delhi. The ill-preparedness of the authorities to a health crisis was bad enough but the lack of coordination and the constant changing status of the lockdown in different parts of the NCR have been an unmitigated disaster. It is only now, after the intervention of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, that there is a semblance of unified planning and a sameness of response protocol. That it took three months to do so, however, is a shame and emblematic of India's ham-handed response to the crisis.

opinion

Seize the opportunity

The pandemic has left both parents and school managements reeling under an economic shock but focus must be on evolving a new pedagogy for children



JS RAJPUT

One of the most serious concerns caused by the spread of Coronavirus, one that is being debated all across the globe, is when and how should schools reopen after the pandemic? Talk to any parent, their first reaction would be: We shall wait and watch. Some are not willing to send their children to schools even if they reopen in August/September. Mothers are more clearer. It is acceptable to them if their children lose an academic year. They don't want to take the dreaded risk. In an article, published on May 13 by Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, the magnitude of the problem has been estimated.

"It has been around two months since schools closed in more than 190 countries, affecting 1.57 billion children and youth — 90 per cent of the world's student population. Closures happened in quick succession as a measure to contain the COVID-19 virus. Just as speedily, governments deployed measures for learning to continue through platforms, television and radio in what has been the most far-reaching experiment in the history of education. But when it comes to reopening schools, the tempo is far more uncertain. According to UNESCO data, 100 countries have not yet announced a date for schools to reopen, 65 have plans for partial or full reopening, while 32 will end the academic year online. For 890 million students, however, the school calendar has never been so undefined."

There are around 250 million school-going students in India. It is not natural for them and their parents to be worried, especially when Coronavirus cases are rising every day. The level of anxiety and uncertainty was evident in a recent study, conducted in 224 districts. According to the survey, nearly 37 per cent of the 18,000 parents covered in the survey felt that schools should reopen only if there are no new cases in the district and within its 20 km radius for 21 days. However, more than 20 per cent parents said schools should reopen only after the country has no new cases for three weeks, while 13 per cent felt that schools should remain shut till a vaccine is developed.

The Human Resource Development Ministry has made it clear that State Governments must decide upon the date of reopening schools and has asked them to take their own decisions. The Union Ministry will issue guidelines on sanitation, quarantine and physical distancing and other such relevant aspects. To sum this up, uncertainty looms large over the education sector. Yet, creative minds are working to find possible solutions to help combat disruptions in teaching-learning scenario.

The way digital learning has been adopted in a large number of schools indicates how swiftly the system has realised the complex nature of the problem at hand and is, hence, testing alternatives. However, making the switch to digital learning is not



an easy task. There are many schools that are well-equipped on all counts. But there are also others that are perpetually deficient — even deprived — both in terms of infrastructure and professional support. In the last three decades, teacher vacancies have been a cause of considerable concern and have directly impacted the quality of learning. Owing to this, the credibility of the school, too, is impacted.

There's yet another phenomenon that has been affecting schools, both in metro cities and small towns. The migration of labourers from the cities to their home States has posed several questions both to the workers and the system. This prominently includes children's education. That school education would be affected was very much anticipated. It has been confirmed from various sources in different parts of the country that Government schools are being approached by parents of those children presently enrolled in high-fee-charging private schools, the English medium ones. With the Corona pandemic triggering an economic crisis, the lower and lower-middle rungs of the society have been badly affected. Even highly-educated people, who had admitted their children in private schools, have found themselves at the crossroads. Parents, who have been forced to meet their regular monetary demands by cutting on genuine family expenses, are in two minds. Many of them are no more in a

position to pay the school fees even though it will not be hiked this year.

As a result, there would be a considerable exodus from these high-end schools to either private ones that target economically weaker sections or to Government ones. At present, there seems to be no way out to prevent this exodus. All of this is bound to create considerable ripples in the education industry, which is mostly run by private entrepreneurs. Schools in our country are broadly divided into two categories: First, those that are run on public funds — the *sarkari* schools. Second, those that are run by private entrepreneurs.

It is indeed intriguing that most parents are not happy with the way school education system functions. Those sending their wards to privately managed "public" schools are unhappy as they are persistently under pressure from the management to loosen their purse strings under one pretext or the other. Parents of children in *sarkari* schools lament their inability to put their wards in English medium "public" schools.

Managements in private schools, too, are a worried lot. They fear they may not get permission to implement their annual quota of fee raise. Their apprehensions, restlessness and anxiety are understandable. Recently, I was informed that an innovative entrepreneur decided to charge extra fee for "internet teaching and learning." This

tussle shall take varied dimensions in the months to come.

Instead of concentrating on how to deal with the tough situation thrust upon the education system, the focus must be on evolving a new pedagogy and teacher training strategies.

Private schools are more worried about the economics of how to sustain their incomes. Everyone knows the real situation but formally, India still insists that education enterprise is not for profit-making. Several school managements have informed me that they would like to earn an honest income on their investment, keep the records clean and pay taxes. They have a very strong case. A serious attitudinal transformation in policy formulation is necessary at this juncture.

The emerging school scenario and reference to the plight of workers returning to their villages remind me of what Swami Vivekananda had said in his letter to the Maharaja of Mysore on June 23, 1894: "The one thing that is at the root of all evils in India is the condition of the poor... The only service to be done for our lower classes is to give them education, develop their lost individuality."

Whatever plans and programmes the Governments, Union and State, unfold henceforth, they must ensure good quality education to children from the weaker sections of society. Give them an opportunity and they will wade through every impediment and rediscov-

er their individuality. The ideology of progress, growth and development must be woven around these two sectors.

India has realised just how important it is to not ignore its farmers, artisans and workers who make village life worth living. Now, we have to reach the stage that Gandhiji dreamt of in his autobiography after he read John Ruskin's book, *Unto This Last*: "That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all. That a lawyer work has the same value as the barber's, inasmuch as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work. That a life of labour, ie, the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman, is the life worth living."

These lines were preceded by the reaffirmation of the age-old dictum, "The good of individual is contained in the good of all!" Gandhiji transformed his own life and wanted the last man in the line to be omnipresent in every new initiative by the statuses and also by every individual. Swami Vivekananda had said: "Material civilisation, nay, even luxury, is necessary to create work for the poor. Breat! Breat! I do not believe in a God, who cannot give me bread here, giving me eternal bliss in heaven!" The path of progress is cut out and well lit before us. It has to be comprehended in the context envisioned for the days ahead and put to practice with competence and commitment.

(The writer works in the education and social cohesion sector)

SOUNDBITE

Sourav made the Indian team a feisty side. He made the side tough and when he was captaining the side, you knew you were in a big battle with them.



Former England captain —Nasser Hussain

Good if it is as per your will; better if it is not as per your will. I didn't understand when Babuji taught me this at a distracted turn of my life. How can it be better if it is not as per our will?



Actor —Amitabh Bachchan

China opening multiple fronts like the one on India border may be because of Beijing's assessment that the world is distracted due to pandemic and it may take advantage.



Top American diplomat —David Stilwell

The Chinese neither entered our territory nor has any post been taken over by them. We possess the capability that no one can eye even one inch of our land.



Prime Minister —Narendra Modi

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Better than nothing

Sir — Researchers in England say they have the first evidence of a drug that can improve the chances of surviving COVID-19. A cheap, widely available steroid called dexamethasone reduced deaths by up to a third in severely ill patients. This is good news for India. One saved life for every eight to 25 people treated may not seem like much but there are thousands of people hospitalised around the world right now who could benefit from this medicine. Thousands more are likely to join them if current trends continue. This drug has a better chance than most to reach patients worldwide and could lead to many better outcomes in the months to come.

Dexamethasone reduced the 28-day mortality rate by 17 per cent with a highly significant trend showing the greatest benefit among those patients who require ventilation. Even though the drug helps in severe cases, countless lives will be saved. It is highly affordable, easy to make, can be scaled up quickly and one only needs a small dose. There are currently no approved treatment

An insecure neighbour

This refers to the editorial, "China provokes, again" (June 17). The sacrifice of 20 Indian soldiers who were killed by the Chinese Army along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh is a turning point in India-China relations. India has once again been deceived in exchange for trust. A few days ago, both countries decided to withdraw troops from the Galwan Valley and settle disputes through negotiations to reduce tension but China did not keep the promise and attacked Indian soldiers instead of removing the encroachment. Experts in diplomatic affairs have been constantly warning that there is a difference between the words and actions of China. It specialises in running different lines to expand its dominance. For a few weeks, India had been more active in the area against the mobilisation of Chinese troops. The result of preparing to deal with any possible situation is that our brave soldiers have caused heavy losses to the Chinese troops in a clash without modern weapons.

China, which specialises in hiding information and facts, shied away from the news of casualties of its soldiers in large numbers. The situation can also turn into a war when there is a serious border dispute between two powerful countries. The events since last month are part of Chinese defence and foreign policy to increase



pressure on India. It wants to prevent us from constructing roads or developing the border areas. It also tries to ensure India's importance does not increase in global forums. For this reason, along with supporting Pakistan, it is also provoking Nepal. It's also trying to reduce our economic clout by continuing to invest and trade in neighbouring countries. It wants to blunt India's growing cooperation with the US, Japan and Australia in the Indo-Pacific region. In such a situation, one should also prepare to beat China's moves at a diplomatic level.

Bhupendra Singh Ranga
Haryana

or vaccine. If a decades-old steroid can prevent deaths, there are more benefits to reap from other anti-inflammatory drugs or combination therapies.

Ravi Teja Kathuripall
Hyderabad

Take precaution

Sir — While it is appreciated that the Supreme Court has stayed the annual Rath Yatra and associated activities at the Jagannath

Temple in Odisha's Puri in the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic, its observation is overreaching to say the least. The apex court is supposed to issue judgments in accordance with the prescribed law, scientific truths and

overall interest of the nation and its populace. Lord Jagannath is not just the presiding deity of the State but signifies the collective consciousness of the people. The yatra is a symbol of resilience and unity of the people. Agreed, in the wake of the pandemic, social distancing needs to be maintained. That can be done with necessary restrictions in place. People can watch it live on TV, too.

TT Sakaria
Delhi

Weigh all options

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "China provokes, again" (June 17). Beijing is in a race to establish itself as the undisputed leader of Asia through a display of brute power. In this situation, New Delhi must take stock of this new reality and frame a response accordingly. Nations across the world would be watching India. It must not lose sight of the long-term consequences.

Shashank
Via email

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Pompeo accuses Bolton of being traitor

Says he damaged US by violating his sacred trust with the people

Washington: Amidst a war of words between the Trump administration and John Bolton, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has accused him of being a traitor, saying he damaged America by violating his sacred trust with the people.

On the other hand, Bolton fired back and said that a series of tweets by President Donald Trump against him were unbecoming of the office of the president.

Pompeo, in a statement in response to the excerpts from a book of Bolton who has made some stunning allegations against Trump, said that he has not read the book, but "from the excerpts I've seen published, John Bolton is spreading a number of lies, fully-spun, half-truths and outright falsehoods".

"It is both sad and dangerous that John Bolton's final public role is that of a traitor who damaged America by violating his sacred trust with its people," the Secretary of State said.

Excerpts from the book,



'The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir, were carried by The New York Times, The Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal on Wednesday.

Published by Simon & Schuster, the book is slated to hit the stores on June 23.

Trump had fired Bolton last year as the National Security Adviser, saying he had done some "big mistakes" and his actions were not in line with the administration.

In the book, Bolton claims that Trump virtually pleaded with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping at a G-20 summit for help in his reelection.

Earlier in a series of tweets, Trump said that Bolton's book, "which is getting terrible reviews, is a compilation of lies

and made up stories, all intended to make me look bad.

"Many of the ridiculous statements he attributes to me were never made, pure fiction. Just trying to get even for firing him like the sick puppy he is!" Trump said.

"When Wacko John Bolton went on Deface the Nation and so stupidly said that he looked at the 'Libyan Model' for North Korea, all hell broke out. Kim Jong-un, who we were getting along with very well, went 'ballistic', just like his missiles - and rightfully so..." Trump said, adding that he did not want Bolton anywhere near him.

The president said that Bolton's dumbest of all statements set the US back very badly with North Korea, even now. **PTI**

Biden seizes on Bolton book to hit Trump's record on China

Washington: John Bolton's claim in an explosive new book that President Donald Trump urged China's Xi Jinping to help him win reelection could undermine his campaign's effort to portray Democratic rival Joe Biden as soft on Beijing.

Biden's top aides moved quickly on Thursday to argue that it's Trump who has taken a weak approach to the rising superpower. They seized on accusations from Bolton, Trump's former national security adviser, that the president continually kowtowed to Xi and ignored human rights abuses while trying to get his foreign counterpart's assistance with domestic politics.

"The Bolton allegations are just the most noxious and hateful cherry on top of a sundae that already existed here," Ron Klain, a longtime Biden adviser, said in an interview. "We have seen for three years that Donald Trump has carried favor with authoritarian regimes that are willing to help him per-

sonally and politically."

China already loomed large in the contest as Trump and Biden have traded accusations over corruption, geopolitical pandering and the president's shifts in tone toward the country during the coronavirus pandemic, which ignited in the central Chinese city of Wuhan. But Bolton's accusations intensified the debate with less than five months remaining until the election.

Biden's team hopes the book will help reinforce their argument that the administration was slow to react to the pandemic, in part because of the tone set by Trump.

Klain, who served as President Barack Obama's Ebola coordinator and Biden's chief of staff when he was vice president, said he began briefing Biden on the situation in China as early as Jan. 10. Biden wrote an op-ed warning about the virus on Jan. 27 and began speaking about the issue on the campaign trail around that time. **AP**

Twitter flags Trump's tweet of doctored 'racist baby' video

London: Twitter has slapped another label on a tweet by President Donald Trump, this time warning that a video he shared was doctored and escalating the social media company's crackdown on one of its most widely followed users.

After Trump tweeted the video late Thursday, Twitter took the rare step of adding a warning that it was "manipulated media" and linked to a page that said multiple journalists confirmed the clip was edited to make it look like a CNN broadcast. The video remains visible in Trump's timeline.

The doctored clip used footage from a video that went viral last year of two toddlers, one black, one white, which CNN used for a story it did on the boys' friendship. The video Trump shared begins with footage of the boys running set to ominous music, with a fake misspelled CNN caption reading, "Terrified toddler runs from racist baby." Then it cuts to other footage from the original video of the boys excitedly running to each other and hugging, which formed the basis of the original CNN story, before showing the message, "America is not the problem. Fake news is." **AP**

US Supreme Court rejects Trump bid to end young immigrants' protections

Washington: The Supreme Court on Thursday rejected President Donald Trump's effort to end legal protections for 650,000 young immigrants, the second stunning election-season rebuke from the court in a week after its ruling that it's illegal to fire people because they're gay or transgender.

Immigrants who are part of the 8-year-old Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program will retain their protection from deportation and their authorization to work in the United States — safe almost certainly at least through the November election, immigration experts said.

The 5-4 outcome, in which Chief Justice John Roberts and the four liberal justices were in the majority, seems certain to elevate the issue in Trump's campaign, given the anti-immigrant rhetoric of his first presidential run in 2016 and immigration restrictions his administration has imposed since then.

The justices said the administration did not take the proper steps to end DACA, rejecting arguments that the program is illegal and that courts have no role to play in

reviewing the decision to end it. The program covers people who have been in the United States since they were children and are in the country illegally. In some cases, they have no memory of any home other than the US.

"These horrible & politically charged decisions coming out of the Supreme Court are shotgun blasts into the face of people that are proud to call themselves Republicans or Conservatives. We need more Justices or we will lose our 2nd Amendment & everything else. Vote Trump 2020!" he wrote on Twitter, apparently ignoring the LGBT ruling as well.

In a second tweet, he wrote, "Do you get the impression that the Supreme Court doesn't like me?"

Later, he said the decision showed the need for additional conservative justices to join the two he has appointed, Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh, and pledged to release a new list from which he would choose a nominee if another opening occurs on his watch. Both of his appointees dissented on Thursday, though Gorsuch wrote the LGBT rights ruling. **AP**

GLOBE TROTTER

MALALA CELEBRATES HER DEGREE FROM OXFORD

London: Malala Yousafzai, the youngest Nobel Peace Prize winner who once took a bullet for campaigning for girls' education in Pakistan, was over the moon on Friday after completing her degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Britain's prestigious Oxford University.

1 BN KIDS EXPERIENCE VIOLENCE EVERY YR: UN

United Nations: Half of the world's children — one billion every year — are affected by physical, sexual or psychological violence, suffering injuries and death because countries have failed to follow established strategies to protect them, the first report of its kind from the UN has said, with experts noting that the coronavirus-related lockdowns have left far too many youngsters stuck with their abusers.

MMR vaccine may protect against worst symptoms of Covid-19

New York: The MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine could serve as a preventive measure to dampen septic inflammation associated with Covid-19 infection, say researchers.

According to the study, published in the journal mBio, vaccination with MMR in immunocompetent individuals has no contraindications and may be especially effective for health care workers who can easily be exposed to Covid-19.

"Live attenuated vaccines seemingly have some nonspecific benefits as well as immunity to the target pathogen. A clinical trial with MMR in high-risk populations may provide a low-risk-high-reward preventive measure in saving lives during the COVID-19 pandemic," said study researcher Paul Fidel from the

Louisiana State University in the US.

"While we are conducting the clinical trials, I don't think it's going to hurt anybody to have an MMR vaccine that would protect against the measles, mumps, and rubella with this potential added benefit of helping against Covid-19," Fidel added.

The researchers said that mounting evidence demonstrates that live attenuated vaccines provide nonspecific protection against lethal infections unrelated to the target pathogen of the vaccine by inducing trained nonspecific innate immune cells for improved host responses against subsequent infections.

Live attenuated vaccines induce nonspecific effects representing "trained innate immunity" by training leuko-

cyte (immune system cells) precursors in the bone marrow to function more effectively against broader infectious insults.

In Mairi Noverr's laboratory -- from Tulane University, in collaboration with Fidel, vaccination with a live attenuated fungal strain-induced trained innate protection against lethal polymicrobial sepsis.

The protection was mediated by long-lived myeloid-derived suppressor cells (MDSCs) previously reported inhibiting septic inflammation and mortality in several experimental models.

The researchers say that an MMR vaccine should be able to induce MDSCs that can inhibit or reduce the severe lung inflammation/sepsis associated with Covid-19. **IANS**

Germany, France, UK press Iran to provide atomic site access

Berlin: The board of the United Nations' atomic watchdog agency on Friday adopted a resolution calling for Iran to provide inspectors access to sites where the country is thought to have stored or used undeclared nuclear material, the Russian representative said.

Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia's ambassador to international organisations in Vienna, said on Twitter that his country and China had voted against the resolution that Germany, France and Britain proposed at a meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency board "We believe that the resolution can be counterproductive," Ulyanov said, while also "stressing the need for Tehran and IAEA to settle this problem without delay."

Earlier this week, agency

Director General Mariano Grossi reiterated concerns that for more than four months Iran had denied his inspectors access to two locations "to clarify our questions related to possible undeclared nuclear material and nuclear-related activities."

Activities at the sites are thought to have been from the early 2000s, before Iran signed the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. Iran maintains the International Atomic Energy Agency has no legal basis to inspect them.

The agency has said that Iran continues to provide access to sites covered by the nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA.

Iran's representative to the IAEA, Kazem Gharibabadi,

said his country rejected the resolution.

"We do not consider this resolution acceptable at all," he said. "This resolution cannot create any legal obligation for the Islamic Republic of Iran in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency to grant the two accesses."

Since the United States withdrew unilaterally from the deal in 2018, the other signatories — Germany, France, Britain, Russia and China — have been struggling to save it.

Meanwhile, Iran has been violating its restrictions, including the amount of uranium it can enrich and the purity of enrichment, to try to pressure those countries to provide additional economic relief to offset American sanctions. **AP**

2 Pak paramilitary soldiers among 4 killed in bomb blasts in Sindh

Karachi: Two Pakistani paramilitary soldiers were among four persons killed in separate incidents of a roadside bomb explosion targeting a security vehicle and a hand grenade attack on a government office in Sindh province on Friday, police said.

Two Pakistan Rangers personnel and a civilian were killed when a roadside bomb targeting the vehicle of the security troops exploded near a railway station in Ghotki town in Sindh province.

Three other persons, including a paramilitary official, were also injured in the blast.

The remote-controlled blast took place near the vehicle of the paramilitary Pakistan Rangers which was parked at the main railway station in Ghotki, police said. **PTI**

COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Virus was in Italy's wastewater before Christmas

Rome: A study by Italy's National Institute of Health has found that the new coronavirus was in circulation in wastewater in the northern cities of Milan and Turin in December 2019, at least two months before the virus was confirmed to have spread locally in the population.

The study, released Thursday, was based on 40 water samples collected as part of regular checks from sewage treatment plants in northern Italy from October 2019 to February 2020. It showed the virus that causes Covid-19 in Dec. 18 samples from Milan and Turin, while earlier samples were negative.

"This research can contribute to understanding the beginning of the circulation of the virus in Italy," the institute said in a statement.

The research has so far not linked any confirmed cases to the virus' earlier presence, but researchers have proposed using the system to monitor the presence of the new coronavirus in water systems in a bid to help identify any possible new outbreaks. A pilot monitoring system will launch next month in tourist destinations, in preparation for wider monitoring ahead of a possible new spike in contagion next fall, the institute said. **AP**

Coronavirus strain in Beijing has EU origins: Chinese virologists

Beijing: China has reported 37 new coronavirus cases including 25 in Beijing where 183 patients are undergoing treatment while the Chinese virologists said the strain of the new cluster of cases in the capital may have come from Europe.

An initial epidemiological survey shows the coronavirus strain detected at the Xinfadi wholesale market in Beijing came from Europe, a report in state-run Global Times said.

It said the strain had existed longer than the current coronavirus strain circulating in Europe, Chinese virologists inferred.

They say it is possible that the virus did not mutate during transport as it was sealed in frozen food, stored in cold and damp conditions, it said.

Wu Zunyou, chief epidemiologist at the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, told the media on Thursday that the "findings at Beijing

reminded us of the first outbreak of Covid-19 in Wuhan last year, which happened at the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market".

The focus of the Huanan investigation was the wild animal stalls, even though the seafood sellers were right next to them, Wu said.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has already questioned the Chinese officials' claims that the virus was traced to the imported salmon in Xinfadi and purported origins to Europe saying that there is no evidence to back it.

It is not yet clear whether China shared the genome sequence with the WHO which had asked for it.

Ever since US President Donald Trump blamed China for not containing COVID-19 when it first showed up in Wuhan in December last year, the debate over the origin of the virus has intensified. **AP**

Spain adds backlog of over 1,000 virus deaths

Madrid: Spain is adding more than 1,000 more fatalities to its coronavirus death toll in the first update in nearly two weeks after officials revised a backlog of inconsistent data.

At least 28,313 people have died through Friday with a COVID-19 diagnosis, health officials. Authorities had stopped updating the tally at 27,136 on June 7.

The country has also confirmed more than 244,000 infections since the beginning of the outbreak, although an official immunization survey estimates that 5 per cent of its 47 million inhabitants are presumed as having contracted the virus.

Spain's health minister says that 34 clusters have been detected in the past six weeks, since Spain began to relax its confinement rules. **AP**

UK virus alert downgraded from level four to three

London: The UK's coronavirus alert level has been downgraded from four to three on Friday, a move hailed by the government as a "big moment" in its pandemic fight.

Under level three of a five-level alert system, the virus is now considered to be "in general circulation" and therefore allow for a "gradual relaxation of restrictions" to ease the lockdown further.

Previously, at level four, transmission of the deadly virus was considered "high or rising exponentially".

"The UK moving to a lower alert level is a big moment for the country, and a real testament to the British people's determination to beat this virus," said UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock.

"The government's plan is working. Infection rates are rapidly falling, we have protected the NHS and, thanks to the hard work of millions in our health and social care services, we are getting the country back on her feet," he said. **PTI**

Around the Globe

Berlin: Germany's disease control center reported the highest daily increase in COVID-19 cases in a month, as positive tests from an outbreak at a slaughterhouse enter the statistics. The Robert Koch Institute listed 770 new cases Friday, taking its total tally since the start of the outbreak to 188,534. It was the biggest daily increase since May 20.

Tokyo: Japan and Vietnam have agreed to partially lift travel bans and ease restrictions as a way to reopen economic and bilateral exchanges between the two Asian nations where coronavirus infections have been largely under control.

Islamabad: Pakistan's coronavirus death toll reached 3,229 with 136 more fatalities reported in the last 24 hours, while the total number of infections jumped to 1,65,062, the health ministry said on Friday.

London: A meat processing plant in West Yorkshire has been shut down amid a localised outbreak of COVID-19, the third such site to shut down in the UK in recent days. The shutdown of the Yorkshire plant follows further outbreaks in food processing sites in Anglesey and Wrexham in North Wales.

Geneva: The head of the UN refugee agency expressed concerns Thursday about impact of the coronavirus pandemic from Africa's Sahel region to Latin America and beyond, warning that millions fled upheaval at home and could face hardship abroad among lockdowns and other restrictive measures to fight the outbreak. UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said 164 countries have either partially or totally closed their borders to fight COVID-19. Many people who flee abroad rely on the "informal economy" often involving day work with cash wages — economic activities that are at risk as governments ratchet up coronavirus lockdowns.

Seven-day mortality rates declined to 8.6 per cent compared to 12 per cent in a previous safety study of the first 5,000 transfused patients, the researchers said.

Serious adverse events continued to be less than one per cent, they said.

"Our efforts to understand convalescent plasma continue," said Michael Joyner, principal investigator at Mayo Clinic in the US, and lead author of the research article.

"We're optimistic but must remain objective as we assess increasing amounts of data." **PTI**

UJVN LIMITED
(An Unlisted Govt. Enterprise)
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Tel.: 0135-2763508, 2763808, Fax: 0135-2763507, website: www.ujvnl.com

Tender No. 379 Date : 19.06.2020

TENDER NOTICE

Office of the Executive Engineer, PCM-Dakpathar, UJVN Ltd. Dakpathar (Dehradun), invites sealed and separate tenders from interested bidders. Brief summary of tenders is given below:

Tender No. 04/EE/PCM-DKP/TN/2020-21 : Repair of downstream left bank Protection work of spillway of Khodri Power House, at Khodri (Dehradun).
Estimated Value of Work (Excluding GST) : ₹ 77.27 Lakh only.
Earnest Money : ₹ 18,500.00 only.
Tender Fee (Including GST) : ₹ 590.00 Only
Date of Availability of bid document on website : - 22.06.2020
Last Date for submission of tender : 14.07.2020 upto 15:00 hrs
Date of opening of tender : 15.07.2020 at 11:00 hrs
For full & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents of the above works can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "www.ujvnl.com".
Executive Engineer
Project Civil Maintenance-Dakpathar

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSONS

General public is hereby informed that three persons (1) **Namely:** Jhangir Hussan, S/o Unknown R/o North 24 Pragna, West Bengal, Age: 31 years, Height: 5'7", Face: Long, Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Gray Check Shirt (2) **Namely:** Deepu, S/o Unknown R/o Etawah, U.P., Age: 23 years, Height: 5'6", Face: Round, Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Blue Checkered Shirt and White Cap (3) **Namely:** Mohit, S/o Unknown R/o Fatpurr Sikri, U.P., Face: Long, Age: 22 years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Blue Baniyan and Yellow Gamchha in Neck has been missing / kidnapped since 6 or 7.05.2020 from the area of P.S. Ranhola. In this regard a DD No. 27-A dated 09.05.2020 has been registered at P.S. Ranhola, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about these persons but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about these persons kindly inform to the following.

E-Mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in **SHO**
Website: http://cbi.nic.in **P.S. Ranhola, Delhi**
Fax: 011-24368639 **Ph. 011-28363001, 7065036128**
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641 **DP/219/00/2020**

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person **Namely:** Unknown S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown Age: about 50 years, Height: 5'2", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Built: Medium, Wearing: Sky blue colour shirt, Black colour pant and bare footed has been found dead in Urdu park, Meena Bazar, Jama Masjid, Delhi on 12.06.2020. In this regard a case vide DD No. 37A Dated 12.06.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Jama Masjid, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved for 72 hours in MAMC Mortuary, Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about this dead found person may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO:
P.S. Jama Masjid, Delhi
Central Distt., Delhi
DP/155/CD/2020 **Tel. No. 011-23261625, 23269777**

MUKESH AMBANI ON NET-DEBT

Reliance debt-free after ₹1.69 lakh cr fund raising

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

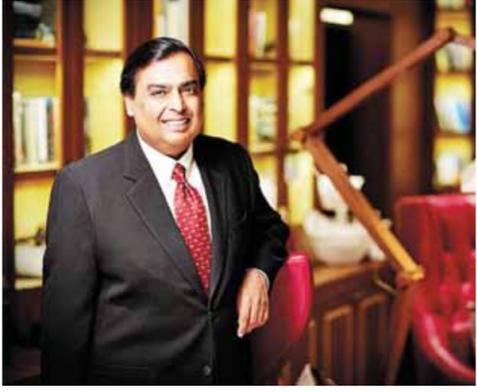
Billionaire Mukesh Ambani on Friday announced that his oil-to-telecom conglomerate Reliance Industries is now net-debt free months ahead of its March 2021 target after raising a record ₹1.69 lakh crore from stake sales and rights issue in less than two months time.

Reliance secured ₹ 1.15 lakh crore from global tech investors including Facebook by selling a little less than a quarter of its digital business and raised ₹53,124 crore selling shares to existing investors in the past 58 days. Taken

together with last year's sale of 49 per cent stake in fuel retailing venture to BP Plc of UK for ₹7,000 crore, the total fund raised is in excess of ₹ 1.75 lakh crore, the company said in a statement. Reliance had a net debt of ₹1,61,035 crore as on March 31, 2020.

"With these investments, RIL has become net-debt free," it said. "I have fulfilled my promise to the shareholders by making Reliance net debt-free much before our original schedule of March 31, 2021," said Ambani, 63, who raised record funds amid coronavirus pandemic.

After a planned USD 15



billion stake sale in his oil-to-chemical business to Saudi Arabian Oil Co got delayed, he set out to prove skeptics wrong by luring partners to Jio Platforms Ltd, which houses India's biggest telecoms firm by subscribers, Reliance Jio. With more than 388 million users, Jio has forced out several rivals and driven consolidation in the sector since entering the market in 2016 with free voice services and cut-price data. Sale of stake in Jio Platforms raised ₹1,15,693.95 crore from leading global investors including Facebook, Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners, General Atlantic,

While only a quarter of the rights issue has accrued to the company, banks treat residual amounts of a partially paid rights issue to release corresponding short-term debt, if needed. Also, cash profits of the last two quarters has not been factored in the calculations.

Ambani had at the company's annual general meeting on August 12, 2019 announced a roadmap for Reliance to become a net-debt free company before March 31, 2021.

"We have a very clear roadmap to becoming a zero net debt company within the next 18 months that is by March 31, 2022," he had said last

year highlighting strong interest from strategic and financial investors in consumer businesses, Jio and Reliance Retail.

In the statement on Friday, he said he was both delighted and humbled to announce the fulfillment of the promise.

"Exceeding the expectations of our shareholders and all other stakeholders, again and yet again, is in the very DNA of Reliance," he said.

"Therefore, on the proud occasion of becoming a net debt-free company, I wish to assure them that Reliance in its Golden Decade will set even more ambitious growth goals, and achieve them," he said.

Sensex in green amid volatility, RIL hits record high



IANS ■ MUMBAI

The key Indian equity indices traded in the green amid a largely volatile trade so far with the BSE Sensex trading over 100 points higher.

High volatility was witnessed in the market so far.

However, shares of Reliance Industries hit a record high of Rs 1,689 on Friday morning after the company announced that the recent

AGR WOES

Funds from Voda, Infratel-Indus merger may aid VIL's upfront payment, say analysts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The planned merger of Bharti Infratel and Indus Towers and additional payment from Vodafone Plc may help crisis-hit Vodafone Idea make part upfront deposit for securing staggered payment of balance AGR dues, if the apex court permits, analysts said.

Hearing the AGR case on Thursday, the Supreme Court had said private telecom companies including Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea must come out with a "reasonable payment plan" and make some payment to "show their bonafide".

"Bharti Airtel and Tata Tele have deposited 41 per cent and 25 per cent of DoT demand, and Vodafone Idea (VIL) has done only 12 per cent," ICICI Securities said in a note on Friday.

VIL can source funds from Vodafone Plc's unpaid indemnity of ₹67 billion (or ₹ 6,700 crore) and can receive ₹

Bharti Airtel better placed to make upfront payment for AGR dues

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Bharti Airtel is better placed to make upfront payment for AGR dues as due to cash availability and assets available for monetisation, it is better placed to raise funds from the market. According to a research by Axis Capital, Bharti Airtel is better placed to make payments and gain market share. Bharti has a balance AGR dues of ₹260 billion. If the court accepts a 20-year staggered plan for balance AGR dues, maintaining the same NPV with 7.5 per cent interest rate will result in cash outflow of ₹ 25.5 billion per year. Bharti looks in a position to make this payment from existing cash flow with increased tariff in December 2019. Axis Capital said Bharti is better placed to make upfront payment in case of court order for AGR dues as it had ₹136 billion in cash at end of Q4FY20 and it has assets available for monetisation and is better placed to raise funds from the market.

ICICI Bank sells 3.6% stake in ICICI Lombard for ₹2,250 cr

IANS ■ MUMBAI

ICICI Bank on Friday sold 3.6 per cent stake in ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company for around ₹2,250 crore.

The development comes after the bank, while announcing its January-March quarterly results in May, had said that it would look at further strengthening the balance sheet as opportunities arise.

Post the divestment, ICICI Bank's stake in its general insurance stands at around 51.9 per cent.

"In line with this intent and pursuant to approval granted by the board, the bank has today divested 18,00,000 equity shares of face value of ₹10 each of ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited, representing 3.96 per cent of its equity share capital at March 31, 2020, on the stock exchange for an approximate total consideration of Rs 22.50 billion," the bank said in a regulatory filing.

13TH STRAIGHT DAY OF INCREASE Petrol price hiked by 56 paise/litre, diesel by 63 paise

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Petrol price on Friday was hiked by 56 paise per litre and diesel by 63 paise a litre, taking the cumulative increase in rates to ₹7.11 and ₹7.67 per litre respectively in less than two weeks.

Petrol price in Delhi was hiked to ₹78.37 per litre from ₹77.81, while diesel rates were increased to ₹77.06 a litre from ₹76.43, according to a price notification of State oil marketing companies. Rates have been increased across the country and vary from state to state depending on the incidence of local sales tax or VAT.

This is the 13th daily increase in rates in a row since oil companies on June 7 restarted revising prices in line with costs, after ending an 82-day hiatus in rate revision.

In 13 hikes, petrol price has gone up by ₹7.11 per litre and diesel by ₹7.67 a litre.

The freeze in rates was imposed in mid-March soon after the Government hiked excise duty on petrol and diesel to shore up additional finances.

Oil PSUs Indian Oil Corp (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL) instead of passing on the excise duty hikes to customers adjusted them against the fall in the retail rates that was warranted because of fall in international oil prices to two decade low.

International oil prices have since rebounded and oil firms are now adjusting retail rates in line with them.

Air filters of Kolkata metro stations replaced

Kolkata: Metro Railway Authorities have been utilising the lockdown period to improve Kolkata Metro's infrastructure for providing better services and amenities to its commuters, once Metro services resume.

During this lockdown, 514 numbers of 10-micron air filters at all 15 underground stations of North-South Metro have been replaced.

These improved stainless steel filters are easily washable with soap water, thus preventing any possibility of spreading of Corona virus.

These newly installed air filters will not corrode due to washing. They will provide clean air to all the commuters inside the stations and also improve its air quality.



Nodal officer takes stock of containment zones in Noida

Noida: Gautam Buddh Nagar nodal officer Narendra Bhooshan and Dr Jileedat Rawat, a neonatal surgeon at King George's Medical University (KGMU), Lucknow, along with team of police and medical department officials on Friday took stock of the containment zones in Noida. They accelerated and monitored efforts by the health department in breaking the chain of infection as well as combating the coronavirus spread in the district. Bhooshan asked officials to ensure that proper Covid-19 beds were available in hospitals, besides cleanliness and food for patients.



Railway board chairman inspects isolation coaches stationed at Anand Vihar

New Delhi: Chairman Railway Board, VK Yadav visited Anand Vihar T where 267 coaches converted to isolation wards for Covid-19 patients have been placed. Yadav went around the premises and inspected the rakes. He also took stock of the facilities provided in the coaches for housing very mild to mild Covid 19 patients.

He was taken around and apprised about the work being done by Divisional Railway manager SC Jain and his team of officers. He expressed satisfaction on the efforts made by Northern Railway to serve the society and the Nation in these difficult times. He added as the cases in the national capital are on a rise innovative use of

Railway assets will help the State Government to deal with the cases.

He later interacted with the Media persons present there and briefed them that IR has more than 5200 coaches ready as Isolation wards. The coaches will be given to the State Govts. on demand.



DELHI JAL BOARD
OFFICE OF THE EX. ENGINEER (NE) II
R-POCKET DILSHAD GARDEN DELHI-95

PRESS NOT. NO. 07 (2020-21)

S. No.	Name of Work	Amount Put to tender	EMD Amount	Tender Fees	Date of release of tender in procurement solution	Last date/ time of receipt of tender through eprocurement solution
1.	Making interconnection of newly laid water line with existing distribution network in Ward NO.61-E and 62-E under Karawal Nagar, AC-70	30,13,516.00	60,500.00	500.00	19.06.2020	06.07.2020 upto 02:30 P.M.

All the terms and conditions including technical specification and special conditions is available on Delhi Govt. Website <https://delhi.govtprocurement.com>.

ISSUED BY P.R.O (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 78(2020-21)

Sd/ (Sukhpal Singh)
EX. ENGINEER (NE)-II

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform public in general that Kotak Mahindra bank ltd has organized an auction in below mention respect of vehicles.

VEHICLE FOR SALE

- VOLVO EICHER-EICHER TERRA 25 REG. NO. HR69B0553-YOM -2012
- TATA LPT 2518 FULLY BUILT GOODS REG. NO. RJ11GA7773-YOM-2014
- TATAMOTORS- LPT 3718 REG. NO. UP31AT3100 YOM 2018
- EICHR_VECV-EICHER_PRO REG. NO. UP95T3157-YOM -2017
- TATA MOTORS TATALPT3118-REG. NO. UP25BT4329-YOM-2014
- CB_VE 10.59 FULLY BUILT REG. NO. DL1LAC3678-YOM -2019

UNDER HYPOTHECAHATION WITH M/S KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION" INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS WITH IN 7 DAYS AT

BRANCH ADDRESS:
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK 3RD FLOOR, PLOT NO 7, SECTOR 125, NOIDA-201313 OR CONTACT : RAJESH ANTIL KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD. CONTACT NO. 9711173320

PUBLIC NOTICE

DESTRUCTION OF OLD MEDICAL RECORD OF PATIENTS

It is hereby notified to all our Patients and General Public that Max Healthcare proposes to destroy all Medical Records for the period Jan'2011 to 31st Dec'2015. Any patient wishing to request for a Certified True Copy of his/her Medical Record pertaining to above period may get in touch with the contact person mentioned in the table between 10.00am to 5.00pm (working days).

The patient should apply for these in the prescribed format along with their ID Proof and can also authorize any other person on his/her behalf. All such applicants must reach the concerned personnel within fifteen days from the date of publication of this notice. Please note that the standard charges shall be applicable for supplying such records.

Name & Address of the Hospital	Contact Person's detail
Max Super Speciality Hospital, Shalimar Bagh FC-50 C&D Block, Shalimar Bagh, New Delhi-110 088	Ms. Mahima Singh Email:mahima.singh@maxhealthcare.com Mobile: 9911846190 Ph.: 011-66422124 / 011-66422128
Max Multi Speciality Centre, Pitampura HB Twin Towers, Netaji Subhash Place, Near TV Tower Wazirpur District Centre, Pitampura, New Delhi-110034	Ms. Dimple Singh Email:dimple2@maxhealthcare.com Mobile: 9873180046

For Max Healthcare Institute Ltd.

Authorized Signatory
Date: 16/06/2020
Place: New Delhi

MAX HEALTHCARE

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General Public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Barkha D/o Raj Kumar R/o B-1/16 G, No.1, Guru Nanak Dev Colony Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped since 05.06.2020 at about 08:20 AM from her house. In this regard a case vides **DD No. 03A dated 06.06.2020** has been registered at PS. Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi. The description of missing/kidnapped girl is as under:

Name :Barkha, Father's Name : Raj Kumar, Age : 20 years, Height : 5'2", Face : Round, Complexion : White, Built: Thin, Wearing : Chocolate Colour Suit & Salwar and Chappal in feet.

If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned.

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

SHO P.S., Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi Ph.: 011-27811933 27811934

DP/280/ON/20

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice

Chief Engineer/TMC, Northern Railway, Headquarters office, Baroda House, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites tenders through E-Procurement system for supply of the following items:-

S. No.	E-Tender No.	Description of item	Qty.	Due Date Time
01	A02P90TMC2020	CYLINDER, PUMP AND VALVE FOR TRT MACHINE.	05 Items	13.07.2020 at 11:30 hours.
02	A03P90TMC2020	FILTER, LIMIT SWITCH AND CABLE FOR TRT MACHINE	04 Items	13.07.2020 at 11:30 hours.
03	A04P90TMC2020	CYLINDER FOR T-28 MACHINE	03 Nos	13.07.2020 at 11:30 hours.
04	A05P90TMC2020	RUBBER PAD FOR TRT MACHINE	3503 Nos	13.07.2020 at 11:30 hours.
05	A02P90USFD202	DIGITAL ULTRASONIC TESTING EQUIPMENT, RDSO SPECIFICATION NO. M & C/NDT/129/2005 REV-II AUG 2014).	04 Nos	13.07.2020 at 11:30 hours.

NOTE:-1 The complete information of above E-Procurement tenders is available on website www.irops.gov.in. The firms who desire to participate against E-Tenders, are advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which they would be required to have a class-III digital certificate from certifying agencies authorized under IT Act 2000, by Govt. of India. Manual offers against E-Tenders will not be accepted.

Tender Notice No. 219-S/ITMC/01/2020-21 Dated: 19.06.2020 1390/2020

Serving Customers With A Smile

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that one lady **Namely: Suman, W/o: Naresh Kumar, R/o: H.No. 489, Hospital Wali Gali, Harijan Choupal Ke Pass Village Auchandi, Delhi, Age: 40 Years, Height: 5'3", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Built: Stout, Wearing: White Colour Suit-Salwar and Black Chappal in feet** has been missing since 07.06.2020 from the area of PS. Bawana, Delhi. In this regard **DD No. 64-A, Dated 10.06.2020** has been lodged at **PS. Bawana, Delhi.**

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing lady but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing lady please inform the undersigned.

Web-site : <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-Mail ID : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639

SHO PS. Bawana, Delhi Ph.: 27751949, 27756090 & 7065036321

DP/276/ON/2020

SHORT CIRCUITS



BHUMI PEDNEKAR

Little did I know you meant every word you said Sushant. With a smile full of pride you showed it to us. This massive big black hole, your best friend, your telescope. I was like, wait, what, really, you got this here. Full of excitement, in the middle of nowhere, you jumped like child, ready to take us all on a journey...



KAJOL

My dad believed that my hands could heal anything. He wanted me to be wild and grow however huge I could imagine — just because he saw it in me. I never realised Father's Day was so close to his birthday till he wasn't there anymore to celebrate it with. I want to tell the fathers out there to give this precious gift to their little girls, belief.



SONU NIGAM

I loved the song *Do ka chaar* so much that I requested for a copy of the song right after I sang it. This is not generally my practise. There are some songs you want the world to listen to in your voice. I am just in love with the composition, lyrics and arrangement of the song.



ABHAY DEOL

I would mention that almost all the award functions demoted me and Farhan from leads, and nominated us as 'supporting actors'. Hrithik and Katrina were nominated as 'actors in a leading role'. So by the industry's logic, this was a film about a man and a woman falling in love, with the man supported by his friends for whatever decisions.

WILL SMITH

With Shreee and Trey, that was a really difficult time. Divorce was the worst thing in my adult life, it was the ultimate failure for me. Nothing touches the failure of getting divorced from my two year old son's mother.



IMMERSIVE 60 MINUTES

THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

Boy-next-door actor NAMIT DAS tells SAKSHI SHARMA that his role in the latest series, *Aarya*, is nothing like what he has done before

When we called up actor Namit Das, he shared that he was enjoying the rain and trying to absorb nature's rhythms — pure and peaceful. Trying to spot patterns and shapes in the clouds and watch them shift, he said, "What else do I need? How does it get better?" Certainly, like many of us trying to make sense of unprecedented times, he is a man who has learnt to find joy in the little things of life. But then hometown does that to you. Takes you back to where you began. And for Namit, it has got him to write poems again.

But he got back to camera mode the moment we mentioned his latest offering, *Aarya*, a dark crime thriller. He plays Jawahar, who he described as a "fearless, unpredictable and dark" character, unlike any other role he has essayed before. It's hard to imagine someone who loves the rain and is the loveable boy-next-door in a negative role. That, too, one who is into guns and the narcotics business. "Jawahar is just the opposite of what I have played so far. His values and politics are completely different from how I am in real life and how I behave. He is an outsider who wants to be inside the game and eventually rule it. He wants to gain that



power and in pursuit of that, he ends up being in situations where he creates an arc for himself. And that is probably the biggest arc in the show. That's very interesting. It's a multi-layered and unpredictable character. Till the end you won't understand his motive behind doing things. That is what keeps me hooked till the end," said the actor.

The web series is an adaptation of Dutch drama *Penoza*, which revolves around Aarya Sareen (played by Sushmita Sen), who takes it upon herself to get to the bottom of the truth and bring the culprit to justice after her husband Tej Sareen (played by Chandrachur Singh) is murdered by a masked man. But, everyone in the series has secrets of their own. The series explores a few questions — Who has murdered her husband and why? How far will Aarya go to survive and

'THE AUDIENCE DOESN'T WANT TO SEE YOU IN SIMILAR ROLES. THEREFORE, IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO BREAK OUR MOULDS CONSTANTLY AND BECOME OTHER PEOPLE (CHARACTERS) BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT ACTORS ARE SUPPOSED TO DO'

protect her family?

It was a challenge disguised as an opportunity for Namit as he wanted to play something different and look unusual. "When director Ram (Madhvani) showed me how Jawahar would look and his character board, I was thoroughly excited because I have been waiting to break out for a long time," said Namit. "The audience doesn't want to see you in usual or similar roles. Therefore, it's very important to break our moulds constantly and become other people (characters) because that's what actors are supposed to do. Versatility is the game changer," he added.

Though Jawahar is a cocaine-sniffing business partner, the actor doesn't want to label the character as a negative one. He said, "I wouldn't call this a negative character because defining

roles with a term dilutes its essence. These are judgemental statements. He is that grey character whom you wouldn't understand and that's what makes him interesting as you watch the story unfold through his eyes."

Namit doesn't believe in defining a character as he feels every actor builds a role and plays it in his own unique way. And in every role you can see a glimpse of the person the actor is. "Which is why it's important to have rich life experiences so that you can use them while playing someone," he told us.

His biggest takeaway from his role was the amount of responsibility he can take for his actions in life. In the show, his character only wants to be entitled to the profits and not losses. So that moral debate has got him thinking.

Since it is an adaptation, the makers of the show have kept in mind Indian sensibilities. Namit said that the nuances had been changed according to the context and scenario. "If you are talking about a semi-metropolitan city in Rajasthan, how would it be? The kind of business they do, their style, way of talking, personality, and their ability to handle people and situations are all situational. All these things were explored and various new elements were added to cater to the Indian audience."

Namit credited his director for developing a new facet. "On his sets, there is no action or cut, there's only 'go'. We don't discuss the kind of shot we have to give. You live that scene and that is the closest you can get to reality by doing things your way. It was also easy because you live closest to the character when you are constantly living his/her life," said he. However, Namit didn't watch the original series as he didn't want to get influenced and play the character as he understood it. He said, "You decide what your graph is going to be. You create that. The show has multiple layers but you have to find how you fit into them."

So where does Jawahar fit? "One of my co-actors said Jawahar is Aarya's host," he quickly responded. And post this, he would like to explore espionage (spy thriller) and horror genres.

Since he has now performed on all media — TV, web and films — which is his favourite? We heard a laugh as he said, "This is like asking a mother who is the favourite of her two kids! Every media has its own charm, challenges and level of satisfaction that comes with it. At the end of the day, you express yourself as an artiste, that's it!" For now, he is enjoying the dark alleys as his next venture is called *Mafia*.

JUKEBOX 45 MINUTES

Love and compassion

Singer SONA MOHAPATRA's new song for World Music Day puts a spotlight on our most valuable gift in these times — people who value us



Singer Sona Mohapatra has conceptualised a music video *Portraits of Quarantine* as an idea to timestamp this tough period of isolation with a 'moving photo album' of her band, crew, team members and the people they have shared this lockdown with. There is also a message for many who are battling depression and mental health issues to reach out and seek support. And in turn for people who know them to rally around and lean in. Everybody needs somebody who can remind them of their own value, beauty and strength.

The songstress and producer performs a soulful song *Tori Surat - Unplugged* with a chill lounge soundscape and Ameer Khusraus poetry with her band. The video features the faces or *surats* that made this period an easier one to navigate. A moving extended family 'photo album' to watch back in better times and remember the quar-



antine and it's lessons.

Sona believes that despite the tough situation of the last few months, these are the people around her who kept her going and motivated as an artist and human being. On her worst days, she derived strength from her beloved team and band whom she misses the most in this lockdown after travelling with them across the world on an average of 16 days in a month.

Sona says, "We don't have to have mental illness to experience psychological issues during COVID-19's stressful impact on humanity. To cope, everyone needs connection and compassion. We are lucky if we have shared this quarantine period with someone who provides that support, be it by being physically around or even available virtually. This music video is an ode to that. World Music Day is around the corner and is a wonderful occasion that lets my whole team come together virtually to do what we do best — perform music that not only entertains people but also uplifts their soul."

Crehyl Periera is a talented young music arranger and he produced a jazz-lounge track for Ram Sampath's composition that she knows will be loved. "The music video has been shot individually by each team member but edited in the Himachal Pradesh by Nitesh Bisht. The piano, melodica, flutes, electric and acoustic guitars, and the percussion including cajon, the Hindustani and *Konnakol bols* performed in this track make *Tori Surat - Unplugged* a truly world music gem. A perfect blend of the music of the West and the East too. The last few months haven't been easy on any of us. Today when I look back, I feel it is important for us to cherish and celebrate our support systems — the ones we share our life with. *Portraits of Quarantine* celebrates that thought. *Tori Surat* is timeless poetry by a Sufi master and I hope my relationship with my band and team also endures similarly," adds she.

CAUSE 30 MINUTES



Colours of change

OPRAH WINFREY hosts in-depth, two-night conversation with Black thought leaders, activists and artists for *Oprah Spotlight: Where Do We Go From Here?*

In response to the continuing civil unrest in America following the tragic murder of George Floyd, OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network announced a two hour special — *Oprah Spotlight: Where Do We Go From Here?* It features Winfrey as she speaks directly with a range of Black thought leaders, activists and artists about systematic racism and the current state of America.

The in-depth conversations offer insight and tangible plans to answer the questions 'What matters now?' 'What matters next?' and 'Where do we go from here?' Featured guests include politician Stacey Abrams; journalist Charles M Blow; Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, Academy award-nominated filmmaker Ava

DuVernay (*Queen Sugar*); author of *Biased* and professor Jennifer Eberhardt; journalist and Pulitzer prize-winning founder of the *1619 Project* Nikole Hannah-Jones; historian and author Ibram Kendi (*How to be an Anti-Racist*); award-winning actor David Oyelowo (*Selma*); Color of Change President Rashad Robinson; and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) national board member Rev Dr William J Barber II.

Winfrey said, "I've been having private conversations with friends and thought leaders about what's next and where we go from here. I thought it would be both of interest and service to bring their ideas, concerns and comments into a national

spotlight." "As a network dedicated to supporting and uplifting Black lives, OWN is committed to providing our community with important dialogue and helpful resources in this challenging time as we mourn the murder of George Floyd and ask ourselves how can we come together to create meaningful change. I am proud that our Discovery family has joined us to amplify this message in solidarity," said Tina Perry, President, OWN.

"There is no one like Oprah to bring us all together at this critical moment in our history to offer insights, perspective and action," said David Zaslav, President and CEO of Discovery, Inc.

(The two hour special will broadcast today on Discovery Plus.)

CONVERSATION 45 MINUTES

Actor **KEERTHY SURESH** says that her character, Rhythm, in the web film, *Penguin*, is authentic and could strike a chord with the audience through the angst of motherhood. By **TEAM VIVA**

Out of her nest

Suddenly, a child disappears from the world, nowhere to be found. A year later, his mother reopens his personal diary and with it, the case of his kidnapping. This is just one little hint about the big thriller that Amazon Prime Video's new film, *Penguin*, is. Actor Keerthy Suresh, known for her National Award-winning portrayal of Savithri Ganesh in her biopic, *Mahanati*, plays the lead, Rhythm, a pregnant woman who has lost her first child. She sets out to solve the puzzle and retrieve her missing child and uncovers the bitter truths about the kidnapers. From Savithri to Rhythm, Keerthy narrates her transition into different and demanding roles and how challenging was this one to play.

with the recently released Jyotika-starrer *Ponmagal Vandhal*, which was set in the backdrop of Ooty, a chilly hill station, where a few young children went missing. But while *Ponmagal Vandhal* was a courtroom 'message' film, *Penguin* promises to be a full-fledged edge-of-the-seat thriller, with a difference.

What was your inspiration behind playing Rhythm? How demanding was it?

When it comes to finding inspiration for a role, as an actor, I have always been in a different zone. I do not try to get the 'hang' of my character myself, but just leave myself at the hands of my director. S/he knows everything about the intricacies of the person he wants to create through that character as in the first place, it is he who has written the subject. It was physically very demanding because it was for the first time that I was acting in a thriller, which was also an action film, and playing a pregnant woman's character, I had to fight like her and at the same time, maintain my own pace. It is not at all easy to carry your own belly throughout the shooting, you know!

Is the story based on a real-life incident?

A few years ago, a friend of Eashvar had shared with him his personal experience of travelling by a train from Mumbai to Chennai when he realised that his pregnant woman co-passenger had lost her child during the journey and had set out to retrieve the child by fighting against all odds. It is definitely inspired by that.

Were you sceptical about playing a pregnant mother with a kid in *Penguin*? What were the major challenges?

The way Eashvar narrated the role to me was so dramatic and endearing that I did not know that four hours had already elapsed since he had begun the narration. I felt that the role was so challenging that not even for a moment did I feel that I was required to play a pregnant woman with a child. I had no inhibition at all to play the character of a pregnant mother with a



kid who has been kidnapped. It was actually the script which did the trick and I forgot all about whether playing a role like this will affect me or not.

It was a really challenging but intriguing script. There is a lot of meat in this emotional thriller that I had to come across regularly. *Penguin* has definitely been one of the most exciting and interesting projects that I've worked on. As a mother, my character Rhythm is both gentle and caring, but she is also fiercely determined. She is complex as well as authentic, something I believe will strike a chord with the audience. And personally, as an actor, I think I have grown over the past couple of years and hence, feel more responsible. I feel there is a lot more responsibility on my slender shoulders to portray good characters, especially after I won the National Award for *Mahanati*.

Before I started preparing for *Penguin*, I had actually lost a lot of weight but Eashvar asked me to put on weight. He wanted to get the correct colour palette and costume for my character. My mother Menaka who was a popular actress in Malayalam films also helped me a lot with her inputs. We shot the film for 35 nights.

In what way did your previous venture, *Mahanati*, help you get your subsequent offers in films?

The film definitely played a very salient role in getting me an opportunity to get many women-centric films.

There were talks about you making a debut in Bollywood...

I was to make my debut in the Hindi cinema alongside actor Ajay Devgn in *Maidaan*, a film that represents the glorious decade of Indian football but as of now I am not doing any Hindi film per se. Right now, I don't have any projects in Hindi cinema.

Instead of theatres, *Penguin* is now all set to be streamed on an OTT platform...

I am quite excited because it is after a long gap of two years after *Mahanati* that the audience will see me in a film. It wasn't ideally supposed to get released on OTT but it's because of this pandemic. I believe that it has its own advan-

tages as well as disadvantages. But I still feel butterflies in my stomach and I am very confident that *Penguin* will connect with all the mothers in the world because it sets out to talk about motherhood and all the sacrifices that a mother makes in the world.

Do you feel any kind of pressure when you're the only lead in a film and there's no other actor to support the narrative?

The pressure has increased manifolds after *Mahanati*, especially because I had also bagged a prestigious, the national award for my performance in it. For my role as Rhythm, I had to put in a lot of efforts and do preparations. And it's because I had to crack the exact look of a pregnant woman with a child. It could be indeed very challenging to carry a film's story solely on your shoulders.

Any memorable anecdotes while shooting the film...

Yes! One day, when it was raining heavily in the dense forests where we were shooting, several unit members were stung by the bees and hurt badly and we had to even cancel the shoot for a day. It's unforgettable! Thankfully, all went fine, I escaped and wasn't hurt.

How would you compare *Penguin's* Rhythm and *Mahanati's* Savithri Ganesh?

The first would be the shift of genres. And I think this shift was tough to adapt to considering the fact that *Penguin* is a thriller. It was quite tough to shoot for the film in Kodaikkanal during the winters in the wee hours of the morning but not even once did I question myself what I was doing. It was a group and we had fun shooting. I could get into the skin of my character thanks to the implicit trust that I had in my director Eashvar.

Your forthcoming films?

After *Penguin*, the films which are in my kitty as of now are Priyadarshan's *Marakkar: Arabikkadalinte Simham*, *Miss India*, (Telugu) *Rang De* and *Annathe* (Tamil). The film, *Marakkar: Arabikkadalinte Simham* alongside Mohanlal and Suniel Shetty is set in the 16th century and is said to be made on a mammoth budget of ₹100 crore.

STUDIO CHAT 15 MINUTES

RELEASE THE BEAST

While actor **ALEXANDER SKARSGÅRD** says that he was nervous as he has never done anything extreme like this before, for **MARGOT ROBBIE** it was fun shooting *The Legend of Tarzan* as the stunts in the film are her absolute favourite. By **TEAM VIVA**



How was it working with Margot Robbie?

Alexander Skarsgård: Margot is such a warm, engaging and open personality. It really didn't take long to gel with her. Shooting was a lot of fun.

What makes this adaptation of *The Legend of Tarzan* unique?

Alexander: The very first question I asked when the idea of this film came to me was why are we making another version of it. Undoubtedly, it's an amazing story but why has it been told so many times? What was the new element this time? Then I got the script and the first page read that 'John was in London drinking tea with the Prime Minister'. He is in a suit with a proper hairdo. I thought it was such an interesting take on a very famous story. Instead of following the original story of him growing up in the jungle, which is obviously shown in the flashback, the main story line is him in London. He's already been back. He has left the jungle behind and has been a sophisticated man for almost a decade now with Jane as his wife. The novel and most of the adaptations are about taming the beast, this is more about releasing the beast.



Tell us about the physicality of the roles?

Alexander: In terms of physicality, it was very important for the character to put on some weight but not become too big. It was important for him to not look like a bodybuilder. I've never done anything like this before, this extreme. I was just really nervous. It was a big challenge and I didn't know how my body would respond to the training and diet. We worked a lot on being agile and flexible which was very difficult. My trainer had to work

really hard because I'm incredibly stiff. It was important that every single fibre and every muscle was there for a reason.

Margot Robbie: Jane's role is a very physical role. Every role is emotionally and mentally draining but this one was physically draining as well. I had trained everyday during those times. Mastered a couple of stunts which I never thought I'll ever do. I got to beat up a couple of stunt guys, they obviously let me beat them up. It was really fun, and I learnt a lot of things. The stunts in the

movie are my absolute favourite.

How was it working with filmmaker David Yates?

Alexander: David knows exactly what he wants but he is also an incredible collaborator. He is curious, he knows the movie and is prepared for it. He wants you as an actor to indulge into the film. He gets very excited if we have an idea or want to play around with something which is why it feels so great to work with him. He has that trust for his actors which is great because it makes us feel brave.

Margot: David is incredibly sensitive and visionary. It was an incredible experience. For me it was nice to be on the set with him. The atmosphere at the set is dictated by the person who is running it and if your director is yelling and screaming, it's going to make a really tense working environment. But at this set, it was very calm, no one was yelling, and it really comes from David. He's got this lovely and gentle demeanour. It was a pleasure to be around.

Tell us more about your character Jane?

Margot: I didn't want to end up playing Jane's which were

already established before. So I was just trying to create a character that worked with the story line. In this case technically, Jane was abducted and there was a chase kind of thing. But I was determined not to play the damsel in distress. She is really feisty, incredibly capable and a very fiery character, that's what I was excited about. We had a lot of fun doing stunts, throwing punches and fighting backwards. Jane had a really great dynamic with Christoph Waltz character, who is the villain here.

How was your chemistry with Alexander?

Margot: When David first showed me the script and I asked what are the next steps, he told me to meet Alex and see if you guys have chemistry because that is going to be of utmost importance for the whole film. So we met up and instantly got along. He is such an amazing personality and he is so tall. He has an inherent presence because of his height, which is very believable for Tarzan. Beyond that he is a great guy. He was so committed to his role. It was like a dream to work with him. I felt so lucky.

(Watch the film on June 22 at 9 pm on Sony PIX.)

Good Night for Madrid

Benzema surpasses Puskás tally, Asensio returns with goal in Los Blancos 3-0 win

AFP ■ MADRID

Karim Benzema's volley could well be La Liga's goal of the season and Marco Asensio's was his first touch in over a year as Real Madrid stormed past Valencia 3-0 on Thursday.

Two brilliant strikes helped Madrid to a convincing win at the empty Alfredo di Stefano Stadium, where Benzema continued his excellent form with a brace after putting his team in front thanks to another combination with Eden Hazard.

Valencia had been the better side in the first half when Rodrigo Moreno hit the post and then had a goal controversially ruled out after referee Jose Sanchez consulted VAR.

Yet Madrid found a different gear after the break to carve out an impressive victory that reduces their deficit to two points behind Barcelona, who play away at Sevilla on Friday.

Benzema's stunning second goal that saw him take the ball out of the air with one foot and then volley home with the other was a breathtaking moment that came shortly after a dramatic one for Asensio too.

"We know all these matches are finals so this was very important for us and for me personally as well," said Benzema.

"It was a beautiful goal, I think I can say it was beautiful, it went in and that was great. Sometimes I do that in practice and today I did it in the match."

Asensio has not played since June

10 last year after suffering an anterior cruciate ligament injury but the 24-year-old announced his return in style, volleying in with his first touch, 31 seconds after coming on.

"It's been many months of hard work and I'm very happy to play again and to score," he said afterwards.

"I feel a lot of emotion, satisfaction. A lot of work has gone into this."

"It means a lot to him," said coach Zinedine Zidane. "We're just happy to see him on the pitch again."

But with nine games to go in the title race, Benzema appears key, particularly as his partnership with the resurgent Hazard continues to flourish.

TRULY AMAZING

This was his 243rd goal for Real Madrid in all competitions, putting him above Ferenc Puskas into fifth in the club's all-time list.

"His performance was magnificent, like the whole team, but his goal was extraordinary," said Zidane.

"We know that he is comfort-

able with his left foot but wow, to lift the ball in that way and to swing like that with his left foot, without the ball touching the ground, truly it's a very complicated piece of skill.

"It's beautiful to see it and I'm happy for him."

"Often we see Karim as the number nine of Madrid and he must score goals, but he doesn't only do that. So when he does score, I'm happy because he shuts people up a bit, and the work, he always does that no matter what."

REAL SOCIEDAD STALLS

Earlier, Real Sociedad failed to regain fourth place after a 2-0 loss at Alavés in which it couldn't get a single shot on target.

Borja Sainz opened the scoring with a goal awarded following video review in the 56th, and Martín Aguirregabiria sealed the victory deep in stoppage time at the Mendizorroza Stadium.

A victory would have sent Sociedad past fourth-place Atlético Madrid, which won 5-0 at Osasuna on Wednesday. It stayed in sixth instead, two points from the final Champions League spot.

"We didn't play our best today, and we hadn't played our best in the previous match either," Sociedad midfielder Igor Zubeldia said.

"We need to improve for our next match." Sociedad will next host Real Madrid, while Alavés visits Celta Vigo. Alavés, which hadn't won in three

FIGURATIVELY

20 Up to 20 players from Real Madrid have seen door in La Liga, being the first team that sees so many members of its squad scoring among all those who make up the Five European Major Leagues this season

31 Real Madrid's Marco Asensio scored just 31 seconds after coming as a substitute in this match, the fastest goal by a Real Madrid sub in LaLiga since at least 2005/06

243 Karim Benzema has scored 243 goals for Real Madrid in all competitions, beating Ferenc Puskás and becoming the club's fifth-highest historical scorer

Real Madrid have not lost any of their four games with Toni Kroos, Casemiro, Luka Modric and Fede Valverde in their starting XI in all comps (W3 D1)

8 Real Madrid have completed their first half with more shots on goal without scoring (8 of 9 attempts) in any competition under the orders of Zinedine Zidane

Real Sociedad failed to register a single shot in a first half of a LaLiga game for the second time this season (also vs Athletic Club in August)

3 Alavés have won their last three La Liga games against Basque opposition, after losing their previous three. Indeed, Real Sociedad have won their last four such games — they have never won five consecutively in the top-flight

straight league matches, moved to 11th place.

Sane wants to leave Man City: Guardiola

MANCHESTER: Leroy Sane is heading for the Manchester City exit door after rejecting a new deal, manager Pep Guardiola said on Friday.

The Germany international has 12 months left on his contract and has been heavily linked with Bayern Munich.

"Leroy said he does not want to extend the contract next season so it means he wants to leave and it is going to happen this summer or at the end of the contract," Guardiola said on a videoconference on Friday.

"The club offered two or three times to extend his contract, he rejected, so he wants to play in another club."

"I think everybody knows if at the end of this season there is an agreement of both clubs, he is going to leave."

Winger Sane, 24, has won the Premier League title twice at City since joining from Schalke in 2016. However, he has not played for first team since suffering a torn knee ligament in the Community Shield match against Liverpool in August.

AFP



Klopp relieved to escape null & void outcome

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp is delighted his side have the chance to win a first Premier League title in 30 years on the field after the uncertainty of a three-month halt to the season due to coronavirus.

The Reds hold a commanding 22-point lead at the top of the table and will seal the much-awaited title with victories over Everton on Sunday and when Crystal Palace visit Anfield on Wednesday.

Had the Premier League not been able to resume, various proposals were discussed as to how the campaign would be decided. The idea of declaring the season null and void gained little support and Klopp was relieved when that was taken off the table with Liverpool on course to smash a series of records after 29 games.

"I became worried in the moment when people started talking about null and void the season because I was like 'wow, I felt it physically because that would have been really, really hard,'" Klopp said in a

pre-match conference ahead of Liverpool's return to action.

Had the Premier League followed the example of some other leagues around Europe by ending the season on a points-per-game basis, Liverpool would already be champions. But Klopp is glad to have the opportunity to win it on the pitch, even if no fans will be in the stadium to witness the historic moment.

"We don't expect to get it as a present so we did not want it to happen on points-per-game (PPG). We were really happy when it was decided we could play again," he added.

"There were moments, people brought it up (null and void) from time to time for different reasons. When that was off the table I felt quite relieved. Now we are here. If they had done PPG and we could not have played we would probably be champions. Now we aren't, we have to play for it."

"That is great, that is how it should be in sports. Now we go for it. We do not think in our mind we are already there."



Napoli fans celebrate their team's Coppa Italia win in Naples

Health officials slam celebrating Napoli fans

NAPLES: Thousands of Napoli fans who poured into the streets to celebrate their team's Italian Cup title without social distancing amid the coronavirus pandemic were criticized by health officials as being "reckless."

WHO assistant director general Ranieri Guerra said the scenes reminded him of Atalanta's Champions League game with Valencia in February.

That match, which has been labeled *Game Zero* by local media, is believed to have been a key factor in why the virus has

been so deadly in the northern city of Bergamo.

"Reckless," Guerra said. "Right now we can't permit these things." Deputy Health Minister Sandra Zampa added that it amounted to "dangerous behavior."

Shortly after Napoli beat Juventus in final, supporters in Naples flooded into central piazzas and set off fireworks as they celebrated into the early hours of Thursday morning. Hardly any of them were seen wearing masks.

Lankan Govt launches probe into 2011 WC final fixing allegation

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's sports ministry on Friday ordered an investigation into former sports minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage's allegation that the national cricket team's loss to India in the 2011 World Cup final was fixed by "certain parties".

The sports minister Dullas Alahapperuma has ordered the investigation and asked for a report on its progress every two weeks.

The sports secretary, KADS Ruwanchandra, on Alahapperuma's directive, had complained to the ministry's investigation unit on Friday.

Aluthgamage has alleged that his country "sold" the game to India, a claim that was ridiculed by former captains Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene who demanded evidence from him.

He said that in his opinion no players were involved in fixing the result, "but certain parties were."

I step up when everyone is tired in 2nd innings: Shami

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mohammed Shami has an uncanny ability to up the ante late in the game when everyone else is tired and the Indian pacer feels this is what makes him more successful in the second innings when it comes to Test cricket.

Shami has enjoyed stupendous success in the second innings of five-day games. Out of his 180 Test wickets, 92 have come in the first innings at 32.50 but there are 88 in the second innings that have come at an impressive average of 21.98.

"I use the game very smartly in the second innings. Like in the recent match we played in Vizag (against South Africa) where I got a five-for, the pitch was pretty dead and wasn't offering any bounce," the 29-year-old told former India player Deep Dasgupta on ESPN*Cricinfo* talk show *Crickebaazi*.

During the 2017-18 tour of South Africa, 12 of his 15 wickets came in the second innings. "...You need to use the available



conditions smartly. I am usually pumped up in the second innings when everyone else is tired.

"Everyone has spent three days on the field. Diesel engines take time to pick up compared to petrol ones. I wait patiently for everyone to tire out. You have five days in a Test match. Once everyone is tired, I step up," he said.

Nasser backs Rohit to excel as Test opener in Australia

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Former England captain Nasser Hussain has backed the supremely gifted Rohit Sharma to come good as a Test opener on India's tour of Australia later this year, provided he sees out the first 30 minutes of the day.

Rohit, who had scored three hundreds including a double ton against South Africa at home in his debut series as Test opener last October, had missed on two games in New Zealand due to a calf injury.

The Australia tour will be his first big test as an opener in the longest format. "If Rohit Sharma is not a Test match opener, I've been watching a different game... If you go and ask fellow cricketers who your favourite players, a lot of them will say Rohit Sharma,"



Hussain said in chat show on Sony Ten's Pit Stop.

"Follow cricketers watch Rohit Sharma and say this bloke seems to have so much time to bat."

Rohit, who has become an ODI great, has only played 32 Tests. Hussain advised caution to Rohit at the start of the innings.

"Test match cricket at

the top of the order is about having time, it's about having a technique as well. You have to cover your off stump, like Virat did in England against Anderson, the way he left him outside after all his problems of the previous tour, that is a Test match cricketer.

"And that's the only thing Rohit has to do when he goes away from home and when is moving around. He has to just spend half an hour and say to the bowler you can have this half hour I'm going to leave you, I'm going to take the slip cordon out of play."

India are scheduled to play four Tests in Australia.

The cricketer-turned-commentator remembered the 2018 Edgbaston Test where India had dropped their premier No 3 Pujara and went on to lose the match by 31 runs, saying Kohli and Co will need to be spot on team selection Down Under.

"I think India need to select well because they have so many great batsmen so it's very easy that when Rohit doesn't do anything for two games, Prithvi will get in, and when he doesn't do well, someone else will get in..."

"Select, stick by them and give them a long run. They are very fine players and eventually if you don't get runs in Australia then you've got a problem because like I say it is a good place to bat you will find out who your Test match players in Australia."

India will also play a Day-Night Test on the tour, at the Adelaide Oval from December 11-15.

"Australia in general is a very good place to bat and the one game where it might do a little bit is the Day-Night Test. So if you get an opportunity of it moving around, you better make sure you use it."

Prannoy issued notice for his outburst

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Badminton Association of India (BAI) on Friday recommended Kidambi Srikanth for the Khel Ratna award after the top Indian shuttler apologised for pulling out of a tournament midway and show-caused his teammate H S Prannoy for slamming the federation after not being nominated for the Arjuna honour.

Both Srikanth and Prannoy had not played the semifinal of the Asian Team Championship at Manila in February. Instead, they left for Barcelona to play in another event. India ended up losing the semifinal but finished third in the competition.

On disciplinary grounds, the BAI did not nominate world number 14 Srikanth and 28th ranked Prannoy for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna and Arjuna



Award respectively.

Though Srikanth's application has been forwarded to the Sports Ministry, Prannoy has been ignored and instead been asked to respond for his outburst

against BAI within 15 days.

"...Srikanth and Prannoy had left the squad at the Asian Badminton Championship in Manila in February, despite advice not to leave, which put India's chances of winning the historic medal at the championship in lurch," read a BAI statement.

"We have received an e-mail from Srikanth in which he has accepted the mistake and he has also promised to not indulge in such activities in the future," it added.

"Considering the talent of Srikanth and the accomplishments, we have decided to recommend his name for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award," BAI General Secretary Ajay Singhania said.

Prannoy had launched a scathing attack on BAI after being overlooked for the Arjuna

nomination for the second successive year.

"Same old story. Guy who has Medals in Cwg and Asian Championships not even recommended by Association. And guy who was not there on any of these major events recommended, #waaah #thiscountry-isajoke," Prannoy had written on Twitter.

On Prannoy, Singhania added: "There are several instances of disciplinary issues with Prannoy. The Federation had been very tolerant all this while but in the recent past his attitude has forced BAI to take action and also relook at the disciplinary policies."

"A show-cause letter has been issued for the remarks made. If the player fails to respond in the allotted time, BAI will be taking stern action," Singhania said.

'Rahane still good at No 5 in Tests'

MUMBAI: Ajinkya Rahane may not be the batsman he used to be during his first two years in Test cricket but is still good enough to be India's number five in the traditional format, feels Sanjay Manjrekar.

The former Test batsman believes that even though KL Rahul has done well in white-ball cricket, that can't be a parameter for replacing Rahane in five-day format as the stylish Karnataka batsman needs to score heavily in domestic first-class games.

"KL Rahul has been brilliant at number five. Yes granted, Rahane doesn't look the same player he was in the first two years of his Test career and I would like to see that kind of form coming back," Manjrekar said in his YouTube channel answering fans questions.

Manjrekar said although Rahane has been getting some



Test runs of late but the player himself would ideally like to be more consistent.

"It comes in little sparse, sometimes, but not as consis-

tently as he would like. But based on his runs that he has got, I don't think it is right to think of Rahul at number five in Test matches," added Manjrekar, who played 37 Tests.

As far as Rahul was concerned, Manjrekar reminded his fans that the batsman wasn't exactly successful when he last played Test matches in the West Indies.

"The last time he (Rahul) played Test cricket, he wasn't that impressive and let's not get too carried away with a batsman getting runs in T20 and 50 overs cricket and push into Test match cricket."

"So, (for) KL Rahul to nudge the Indian batsman at the Test level in the middle-order, he will have to get a truckload of runs at the domestic level, just like (Mayank) Agarwal did to get in the Indian team," he explained.

Hockey players leave B'loru SAI centre; granted month's break

NEW DELHI: Confined to the SAI Centre in Bengaluru for near about three months because of the Covid-19 lockdown, "homesick" Indian hockey players were on Friday allowed to leave the facility after being granted a month's break.

Both the men's and women's national teams were stuck at the Sports Authority of India South Centre in Bengaluru since March 25 when the Government announced the nationwide lockdown.

On Friday, barring a few, most of the team members returned to their native places after being granted the break.

"Having consulted with the Chief Coaches of both the teams, Hockey India decided that it was important to give the players a much-needed break," Mohd Mushtaq Ahmad, President, Hockey India said in a statement.

"The players have been specifically briefed that they need to adhere to Government guidelines during this break and continue to follow social distancing."

"We are very proud of how our players have handled this situation over the last 3-4 months and have stayed strong as a unit. It is important they continue to



act responsibly during this break," he added.

Barring men's team goal-

keeper Suraj Karkera, who belongs to Mumbai, and the women's team trio of Vandana Katariya, Sushila Chanu and Lalremsiami, all other players left the SAI Centre for their respective homes on Friday morning.

"Suraj didn't go because of the grave situation in Mumbai while Sushila, Vandana and Lalremsiami stayed back because of the Covid-19 protocols in their respective states," a source said.

While Sushila is from Manipur, Vandana and Lalremsiami hails from Uttarakhand and Mizoram

respectively. The support staff of the men's team, including chief coach Graham Reid had to stay put in Bengaluru because of the restrictions on International travel.

However, women's team chief coach Sjoerd Marijne and analytical coach Janneke Schopman, both from the Netherlands, are currently on their way back home via Mumbai.

Both the teams will now reassemble at the SAI South Centre in Bengaluru on July 19 as part of their preparations for the Tokyo Olympics. PNS

CA ready for first woman CEO: Perry

MELBOURNE: Cricket Australia is ready for a woman to be its CEO for the first time, according to premier all-rounder Ellyse Perry, who insists there are several deserving female candidates for the job.

Cricket Australia appointed T20 World Cup chief executive Nick Hockley in an interim role amid the financial crisis the body is facing after Kevin Roberts resigned from the post earlier this week.

The 29-year-old feels Western Australia chief executive Christina Matthews could be a good option for the permanent role.

"I think Cricket Australia



has been ready for a female CEO for a long time," Perry told reporters in a video call.

"I know Chris was in dis-

cussions for the last round of hiring for the role. I don't think it's something that's new," she added.

Perry said there are several women, at high posts, who play a crucial role in the functioning of the board.

"We've got a number of women working in high executive roles in Cricket Australia, Belinda Clark and Steph Beltrame to name a couple. They are absolutely pivotal in the way that we operate."

"So, yeah, I think there's some really strong representation within cricket and leadership in the organisation already," Perry said.