

OPINION 6
TEACHERS TOO
MUST LEARNWORLD 8
PAK 'EPICENTRE OF
TERRORISM': INDIASPORT 12
BALE CLOSE TO
SPURS RETURN

BHUBANESWAR, THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 17, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹4

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China stalling bid to defuse tension at LAC

Beijing yet to confirm date of upgraded military-level talks planned for this week

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After agreeing to hold upgraded military-level talks this week, China is yet to confirm the date, stalling attempt to defuse the volatile situation prevailing at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh. The situation is so grim that the border saw at least four incidents of firing by the Indian and Chinese armies in the last 15 days.

Tension cooled down after extensive talks between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on September 10. It was agreed there to continue the military and diplomatic-level talks.

Sources said China was yet to inform India about the next date though they had agreed in principle to have the next round sometime this week.

With the Opposition seeking to know from the Government if China occupied any part of our land during repeated attempted transgression since May, the Defence Minister will make a statement on India-China issue in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

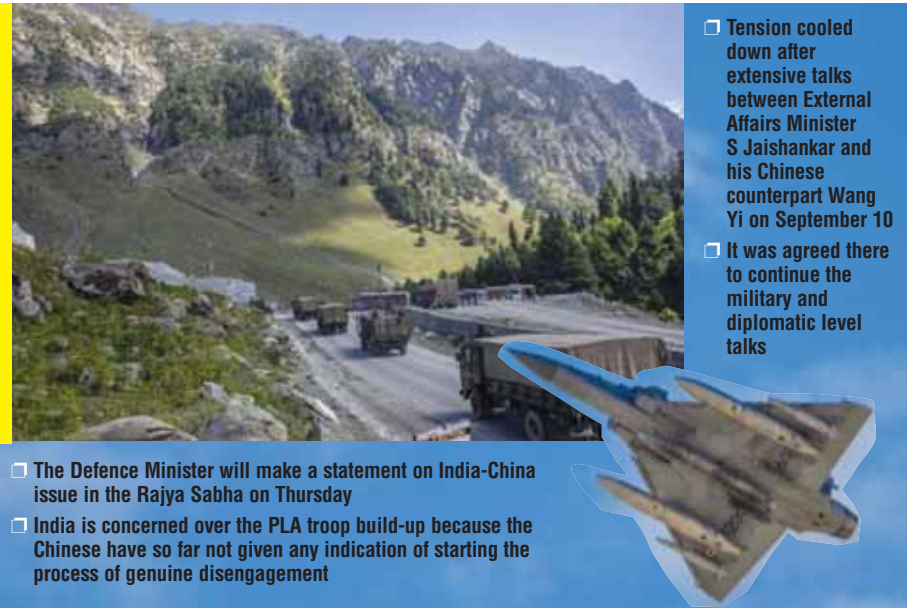
This announcement came after a meeting chaired by the Defence Minister resolved that the Government will allow dis-

cussions on issues like the China crisis, GST, Covid and National Education Policy.

During the meeting, Rajnath agreed to take one or two questions on the LAC situation after his speech in the Rajya Sabha.

India is concerned over the PLA troops build-up because the Chinese have so far not given any indication of starting the process of genuine disengagement. So far Lt General Harinder Singh and his Chinese counterpart Liu Lin have held five rounds of talks since June but could not achieve any breakthrough. In the last round of talks on August 2, both sides agreed to withdraw their troops from the friction points and pull back additional troops from the depth areas as a confidence-building measure. However, China later refused to do so and the stalemate continues.

Holding a bilateral meeting at the political level in Moscow for the first time since the stand-off on the LAC in Eastern Ladakh started in May, the two Foreign Ministers agreed on a five-point plan to disengage and de-escalate at the border. Since then relative peace prevailed with both the armies staying put at their positions on all the friction points.



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As regards incidents of firing, sources said here on Wednesday the border witnessed four such episodes. This revelation came even as both the sides so far maintained that one incident had taken place on September 7. While China had blamed India of opening fire, India flatly denied the accusation and held responsible Chinese troops for breaching the 45-year-old peace.

Giving the chronology of events, sources in the security establishment said the first two incidents took place on August 29 and 30 when the Indian troops thwarted a Chinese provocative action to advance into south bank of the Pangong Tso (lake).

The third incident also

took place there on September 7 when the belligerent Chinese troops fired warning shots in the air but the Indian Army maintained calm. This

provocative act by the Chinese was part of a failed attempt to dislodge the Indian Army troops now positioned on the strategically important hill tops

Withdrawal of Army's purported statement on readiness to take on China creates confusion

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A purported statement from the Indian Army about its operational preparedness to take on China in a war has created a lot of confusion after the "statement" was cancelled on Wednesday evening.

The source of the confusion was an email sent by the

PRO of Udhampur (Defence) to Jammu-based reporters of all major TV channels and print media.

The statement attributed to a spokesman of the Northern Command said, "The Indian Army is fully prepared and more than capable of fighting a full-fledged war even in winters in Eastern

Ladakh."

The spokesman said the Indian soldiers have experience of winter warfare and are psychologically tuned to operate at short notice.

He said, "The Indian Army has experience in Siachen where conditions are much more demanding than the frontiers with China."

most points in the zone. This rattled them and the Chinese tried to dislodge the Indian troops on September 7 and 10 leading to firing, sources said.

Since then, the Indian Army is now deployed on key hills, including Black Top

No infiltration reported along India-China border in last 6 months, RS told

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of the massive troop buildup along the Line of Actual Control in Eastern Ladakh and several skirmishes between China's PLA and the Indian Army since May, the Centre on Wednesday informed the Rajya Sabha that "no infiltration has been reported along the India-China border during the last six months."

Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said in a written reply that since February there had been 47 cases of attempted infiltration along the India-Pakistan border and added that "no infiltration has been reported along India-China border during the last six months."

BJP MP Anil Agarwal asked the Upper House in a written question whether it was a fact that cases of infiltration from Pakistan and China had increased in the last six months.

besides Rezang La and Rechin La. Mountain passes are known as La in the Tibetan language. The latest attempt by the PLA to remove the Indian soldiers was in the area between these two mountain passes at Mukhpari, sources said.

On Tuesday, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh informed the Lok Sabha that China had mobilised a large number of troops and armament along the LAC as well as in the "depth areas." He said the LAC was not commonly delineated.

Singh said that in early May, the Chinese side took action to hinder the normal, traditional patrolling pattern of Indian troops in the Galwan valley area, causing a face-off.

However, MHA officials said the answer by Nityanand Rai is not in conflict with what Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has said.

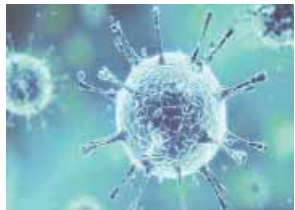
"Infiltration as terminology is associated with terrorists or action where a hostile element sneaks into our territory and moves to the hinterland," a senior official said.

MHA officials added that Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had also spoken about attempted transgressions by Chinese troops in his address to Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

Covid patients' movement to twin city not banned

Clarifies Chief Secretary

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR



past has affected patients seriously. Reference of the patients with proper medical support would be helpful in further management of the disease at referral points and would save their lives, he added.

Meanwhile, the Government has decided to clinically discharge patients after 10 days from the date of sample collection, given that he has no symptoms for the last three days.

The decision was taken in view of the shortage of beds in dedicated Covid Hospitals here. Notably, the twin city is a Covid hotspot with 2,193 and 4,568 active cases, respectively, till Tuesday.

Total mounts to 17,295

362 fresh Covid cases in BBSR

286 local contacts far outnumber 76 quarantine cases

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As many as 362 new Covid-19 positive cases were detected under the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) area on Wednesday.

With this, the total tally in the city rose to 17,295 cases, out of which 4,524 were active ones. Of the new positive cases, 286 were local contact cases and 76 from quarantine, all linked to earlier positive cases.

Obviously, local contacts far outnumbered quarantine cases. However, as many as 406 persons recovered from the infection of the day, taking the city's total recoveries to 12,694.

Covid-19 IN INDIA	
TOTAL	
CASES: 51,12,428	
DEATHS: 83,208	
RECOVERED: 40,17,766	
ACTIVE: 10,10,724	

Serum Institute of India gets DCGI nod to resume Oxford vaccine trial

New Delhi: Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) Dr V G Somani has given permission to Serum Institute of India to resume clinical trial of the Oxford Covid-19 vaccine candidate in the country while revoking its earlier order of suspending any new recruitment for phase two and three trial, but with certain safety conditions.

18K-page chargesheet filed against 15 for Delhi riots

Anti-CAA WhatsApp groups used to trigger violence, says chargesheet

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI



cedural requirements.

Among those named in the chargesheet are Pinjra Tod members and JNU students Natasha Narwal and Devangana Kalita, Jamia Millia Islamia student Asif Iqbal Tanha, former Congress Councillor Ishrat Jahan,

Meeran Haider, Jamia Coordination Committee members Safoora Zargar, expelled Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Councillor Tahir Hussain and activist Khalid Saifi. Apart from these, the names of Mohammad Pervez Ahmed, Mohammad Illas, Shahdab Ahmad, Taslim Ahmad, Salim Malik, Mohammad Salim Khan and Athar Khan appear in the chargesheet as key conspirators.

According to police, the chargesheet includes accounts of over 700 witnesses, technical evidences WhatsApp chats and call data records (CDRs). "Police teams have specifically mentioned about the WhatsApp chats on February 24 as evidence in the chargesheet.

That was the time when riots were happening in the city. At that point, the key conspirators were guiding their foot shoulders about violence in the Northeast area. They were directly in touch with rioters," said the sources.

Ex-GMU Prof dies of Covid

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

Former HoD of English Gangadhar Meher University Prof Sanjay Kumar Panigrahi (64) succumbed to Covid-19 at the Aswini Hospital, Cuttack, after prolonged treatment.

His wife Dr Smita Devi, former principal of GM College and first registrar GM University was also suffering from corona and both were undergoing treatment in the same hospital. But she got cured. His sister-in-law cine artist Aparajita Mohanty gave the Mukhagni at the Satyanagar crematorium in Bhubaneswar as Prof Panigrahi's two daughters are staying in the USA.

The GM University authorities, in a condolence meeting deeply mourned the death of the popular teacher. It needs mention that Prof Panigrahi's father Kamala Kanta Panigrahi, a retired magistrate, had also died of corona last month.

Gadkari tests Covid positive

New Delhi: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday said he has tested positive for the coronavirus and has isolated himself. Taking to Twitter, Gadkari said, "Yesterday, I was feeling weak and consulted my doctor. I have been tested Covid-19 positive. I have isolated myself."

Russia to give India 10 cr doses of Sputnik-V by Dec

New Delhi: Russia on Wednesday said Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), which is leading the Covid-19 vaccine project in India, will supply 10 crore doses to Dr Reddy's by December end. It is in partnership with Dr Reddy's Laboratories for clinical trials and distribution of its Covid-19 vaccine "Sputnik V" in India.

Provide slum dwellers along rly tracks pucca houses: Jain to Centre

Delhi Minister says if needed, they can be accommodated in 40K available flats

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



an affidavit in another case in the Delhi High Court.

"The Delhi Government has over 40,000 flats, of which some are ready and some will be ready soon. These flats can also be used if needed, and the Delhi Government had also written a letter to the railways last week in this regard. But, these flats are located on the outskirts of Delhi.

These flats can be given to slum dwellers who live in areas that do not have vacant land around and who cannot be provided houses under 'Jahan jhuggi, wahin makaan' policy," he said.

11 more deaths; total toll 656

All-time high 4,270 +ves; State total 1,62,920

Highest single-day recovery of 4,121; total 1,29,859 recover so far

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Day's highest 876 cases in Khordha again

Kandhamal 73, Ganjam 68, Malkangiri 64, Dhenkanal 63, Gajapati 58, Bhadrak 55, Nayagarh 47, Kalahandi 44, Sundargarh 38, Boudh 22 and Deogarh 18. Besides, 262 positives were recorded from the State pool.

Meanwhile, the virus claimed 11 more lives on the day, taking the total death toll to 656.

While three deaths each were reported from Sambalpur and Puri districts, two were registered in Khordha and one each in Kalahandi, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh.

The deceased in Sambalpur included a 60-year old man, a 62-year-old man and a 65-year old man. The deaths in Puri were of a 45-year-old man, a 80-year-old man and a 70-year-old woman. The other deceased were a 61-year-old man and an

52-year-old man of Khordha, a 59-year-old man of Kalahandi, a 45-year-old man of Mayurbhanj and a 31-year-old woman of Sundargarh. However, another 4,121 patients recovered on the day, taking the total recoveries to 1,29,859. The day's recovery figure was the highest. The highest 752 recovered in Khordha followed by Cuttack 440, Puri 275, Jaipur 272, Nuapada 268, Angul 187, Bargarh 181, Dhenkanal 150, Mayurbhanj 126, Subarnapur 122, Koraput 119, Balangir 108, Ganjam 103, Jagatsinghpur 97, Keonjhar 83, Boudh 76, Kendrapada 75, Kandhamal 69, Jharsuguda 66, Sundargarh 64, Bhadrak 62, Rayagada 61, Sambalpur 60, Nayagarh 56, Kalahandi 51, Gajapati 29, Deogarh 24, Nabarangpur 24 and Malkangiri 13

Covid precautionary measures issued for Assembly session

MLAs, PSOs, drivers to undergo test twice

BMC, OSMCL, Capital Hospital entrusted responsibilities

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

All MLAs who would attend the Monsoon Session of the State Assembly beginning on September 29, their Personal Security Officers (PSOs) and drivers would undergo RT-PCR tests for Covid-19, said Health and Family Welfare ACS PK Mohapatra on Wednesday.

On the advice of Speaker Suruja Narayan Patro, Mohapatra has also directed the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd (OSMCL) and the Capital Hospital Director to take all precautionary measures at their

levels against the Covid-19 in the Assembly premises during the upcoming session.

The MLAs and their PSOs and drivers would undergo RT-PCR tests from 7.30 am to 9.30 am on September 27 and 28 in the Assembly premises by a team of doctors.

They would undergo the test again on October 4. If any member feels uncomfortable during the session, they may go for Antigen test by the doctors at the above said place.

All officers and staff of the OLA Secretariat and staffs of offices of the Chief Minister, Ministers, Leader of Opposition and Chief Whips from 7.30 am to 9.30 am from September 26 to 28 in the Assembly premises.

MLAs and officials of the Legislative, Question, Reporting Branches and other House-related staff, who are

required to go inside the Assembly hall, would be provided with face-shield, mask, hand gloves and sanitisers by the Health Department daily before commencement of each sitting.

The Assembly Secretariat would submit the list of members and staff to the Health Department and the BMC well in advance. While BMC would provide all infrastructural facilities for tests inside the OLA premises, the OSMCL would provide face-shields, masks, hand gloves and sanitizers to the members.

The Capital Hospital Director has been directed to deploy a team of doctors and medical staff along with sufficient testing kits at the OLA premises for the testing. A team of doctors will also remain present during the entire session.

Former Min Ghadai hails tax waiver from DMF fund

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Former State Finance Minister and chief advisor, Kalinganagar Mazdoor Union, president, Odisha Mining Workers Federation and chief advisor, Sukinda Region Chromite Khadan Mazdoor Sangh, Prafulla Chandra Ghadai has hailed the Union Government's decision for exemption of Income Tax from District Mineral Foundation (DMF) fund.

"The savings there will no doubt help a long way for developmental programmes in the mining affected areas which have still remained backward and undeveloped despite of State Government's various poverty alleviation schemes," said Ghadai.

He also praised the efforts of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik who had moved the



Government of India time and again for waiving of Income Tax and GST of (DMF) fund. Besides, he also thanked Rajya Sabha MP for raising the demand of Odisha for exemption of IT and GST from DMF.

Ghadai said he had also written a letter in this connection to the Union Finance Minister in this regard.

BBSR minor girl gang-rape: HC moved for CBI probe

Parishad also seeks ₹30L compensation

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Bharatiya Bikash Parishad (BBP) has moved the Orissa High Court seeking a CBI probe into the sensational case of alleged gang-rape of a minor girl by several employees of a Bhubaneswar-based TV channel.

A writ petition has been filed by BBP president Surendra Panigrahi in which the Parishad has also sought a compensation of Rs 30 lakh to the victim girl.

The Central Government, Odisha Chief Secretary, Home Department Secretary, Odisha DGP, Twin City Commissionerate Police, Bhubaneswar DCP and Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSCPCR) Secretary have been made parties in the petition. It

has been pleaded that the court admit the writ application and issue Rule NISI calling upon the opposite parties to show cause as to why six of them should not be directed take immediate action to book the accused under law and or otherwise to recommend the Central Government to investigate the matter by the CBI and to pay compensation. As per a complaint lodged by the mother of the victim with the OSCPCR, the girl was gang-raped by several employees of the TV channel for around 15 days during the month of April-May.

The accused committed the offence after tying the hands and legs of the girl. They also recorded videos of the incident and threatened the victim against making it public, alleged the girl's mother,



who was working as a receptionist in the channel.

The woman also mentioned in her complaint that though she had reported the matter to the MD of the news channel, the latter did not take any action against the accused and suppressed the incident.

The MD also pressurised her not to proceed further in the case, the woman alleged.

ECoREA celebrates Engineers' Day

Conducts webinar

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Due to the Covid pandemic, the East Coast Railway Engineers Association (ECoREA) celebrated Engineers' Day in virtual mode to commemorate birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Sir M Visvesvaraya on Tuesday.

A webinar was conducted on the topic "The pandemic and engineers of East Coast Railway". In beginning, association general secretary Bishnu Prasad Dash welcomed guests and members. Thereafter, a tribute to Sir Visvesvaraya was given through video and a power-point presentation was made by Dash describing role of railway engineers during



pandemic. Chief guest ECoR Additional GM appreciated hard work by railway engineers despite difficult situations.

He insisted on members to not compromise with safety work at any cost which is directly related with public life. Guest of honour Principal Chief Signal and Telecom Engineer S Manga V praised works done by railway engineers without fearing pandemic. Guest of honour Principal Chief Engineer US

Uikey advised engineers not to reduce time of maintenance for safety-related works. Guest of honour Chief Planning Director advised members to follow all instructions given against Covid.

Secretary Dash placed four major difficulties faced by railway engineers during pandemic such as transport facilities to sites, separate rest houses for railway engineers, stopping anti-social threats at sites, etc.

Cheating, kidnapping: 7 held in S'garh

MALAY RAY ■ SUNDARGARH

The Sundargarh police arrested seven persons on Wednesday allegedly for kidnapping a person and demanding ransom for his release and also arrested another three persons including a complainant for cheating Rs 3 lakh in connection with Hanuman coin. Another accused in this cheating case was absconding.

One Bunty Sahu, a resident of village Patrapada, under Town police station of Sundargarh district, lodged a complaint on September 15 in Town police station that on September 14 evening at 4.45 pm while he along with his friend Madhaba Minz, had been to Kirei area in a motorcycle, 4-5 persons kidnapped Madhab in a car.

Later, the kidnappers demanded Rs 6 lakh for release of Minz. Town police registered a case and started search-

ing the kidnappers. However, on September 15, one Sraban Kumar Patra (24), resident of Birbira under Dharuadih police station in Sundargarh district lodged FIR against Bunty Sahu, Sony, Madhab Minz and Shiba for cheating on September 10.

Based on the two complaints, police on Wednesday arrested seven persons who had kidnapped Madhab. The seven persons were identified as complainant Sraban Kumar Patra (24), Rakesh Kumar Sharma alias Lokesh (26), Suresh Kumar Rout (38), Lingaraj Suhuda (27), Agasti Kumar Mishra (30), Dev Barbhuyan (25) and Tapan Kumar Bagh (33). Police also rescued Minz from them.

After coming to know about cheating of Bunty and his friends, police on Wednesday arrested complainant Bunty, Sanik Kumar and Madhab Mjinz.

State Govt fast-tracks OMBADC projects

₹12K-cr Phase II schemes underway

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC) projects have been fast-tracked with Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy taking a sector-wise review of the programmes in a Board of Directors' meeting held on digital mode from the Lokseba Bhawan here on Wednesday.

OMBADC CEO Uma Nanduri presented the updates and outlined the issues for discussion. The Chief Secretary

directed the implementing departments to complete the CAMPA projects within the scheduled time. He laid emphasis on expeditious implementation of livelihood, drinking water and health sector projects.

Tripathy directed the department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment to build up a mega nursery for all verities of horticultural plants.

It was decided that the Skill Development and Technical Education Department would set up innovative skill development centers in the OMBADC area.

Nanduri informed that so far projects worth Rs 1,080.92 crore in priority sectors like housing, drinking water, skill development and forestry have been sanctioned under Phase-

I fund of the OMBADC. The major projects include construction of 29,829 dwelling houses, 215 small pipe water supply projects, three mega pipe water supply projects and distribution of 9.8 lakh seedlings for urban plantation.

Similarly, the projects worth Rs 12,118 crore were sanctioned under Phase-II (compensation money) for sectors like drinking water supply, education, skill development, health infrastructure, child development, water harvesting and soil and moisture conservation etc.

So far, more than 95% (28,500) of the dwelling houses and 93% (199) of the drinking water projects have been completed. "So far, Rs 2,085 crore have been released against Phase-II projects.

Central team begins flood loss study

To hold talks with CS today

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A six-member inter-Ministerial Central team led by Ministry of Home Affairs Joint Secretary Praveen Vashista arrived here on Wednesday morning on a two-day visit to the State for on-the-spot assessment of the damages caused by recent floods in different districts of State.

The other team members belong to Ministries of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Water Resources, Road Transport and Highways, Rural Development and Finance.

The team held discussions with SRC PK Jena before getting divided into two sub teams and moving to four districts.

HIGH COURT RULES DCP to take final call on Durga idols' height

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Orissa High Court on Wednesday left it to the discretion of police administration in allowing the Puja Committees of Cuttack city to make clay idols of the deities for the next month's Durga Puja taller than the stipulated height of four feet after physically verifying the structures at the puja pandals.

The court asked the Puja Committees to apply to the City DCP mentioning the present status of the construction of the idols and their heights. "The police would then inspect the puja pandals, verify the status and allow the committees to observe Durga Puja if everything is in order," informed senior advocate Ashok

Mohapatra, counsel of a Puja Committee. Notably, idols measuring seven feet and more are generally erected by major Puja Committees.

Following a massive public outcry over the Government's decision on the height of the idols, the Puja Committees had moved the court stating that the idol-making process had already started before the Government notification came.

The committees also maintained that they have already made several gold and silver ornaments for deities and altering height of the idols at this stage would render ornaments useless. The court's Wednesday decision followed failure of a discussion between puja committees and city DCP on Tuesday.

Sero survey begins in Paralakhemundi

PNS ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI

To analyse the extent of Covid-19 infection, a serological survey began in Gajapati district headquarters town Paralakhemundi on Wednesday.

A 15-member team from ICMR-Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC), Bhubaneswar has been engaged to accompany the health officials and municipality staffs in the survey. In the first phase, 50 samples each is being collected from 20 localities in the town. Collector Anupam Saha on Wednesday visited all swab collection centres.

"The survey will reveal the rate of penetration and antibodies developed in the people. Based on the survey report, further measures will be taken to curb the virus transmission," Collector said.

Low pressure to trigger heavy rain

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Heavy to very heavy rains are likely to lash several parts as a fresh low pressure area is likely to develop over northeast Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood around September 20.

The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) Regional Office here on Wednesday said under the influence of the system, widespread rainfall activity would be observed over the with heavy to very heavy rains likely to occur in some districts between September 20 to 23.

Squally weather surface wind speed reaching 45-55 kmph is very likely over northeast adjoining east-central Bay of Bengal starting September 20, IMD added. Fishermen were advised not to venture into deep sea and those in deep sea area are advised to return to coast by September 20.

8-day-old twins contract Covid

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

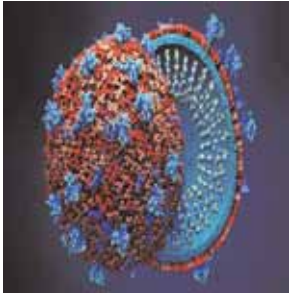
A set of twin babies have contracted the Covid-19 infection. They are eight days old and undergoing treatment at the KIMS Covid Hospital here.

The twins are one of the youngest patients for the viral infection in the State.

As per reports, their mother had initially tested negative for the virus in Jharsuguda, where the family of the twins lives.

But after the woman's condition worsened, she was brought to the Sambalpur Covid Hospital on September 7.

During a test at the Sambalpur hospital, the woman's report mentioned she was positive for the virus.



Due to her health complications, doctors made an early delivery of the woman during her seven-month pregnancy. The woman gave birth to the twins at the Sambalpur hospital on September 8.

Two days later, she died during her treatment. When doctors sent samples of the twin babies for tests, they were found to be Covid positive.

Student among two killed in M'bhanj

As truck hits auto-rickshaw

PNS ■ BARIPADA

A truck hit an auto-rickshaw on NH-49 at Bangiriposhi Ghat in Mayurbhanj district on Wednesday, killing two persons, including a school student. Several school students and their parents and guardians were heading towards Suliapada from Dopatta village by the auto-rickshaw to collect rice allotted under the midday meal scheme.

A speeding truck rammed into the three-wheeler from rear, killing the two persons on the spot and injuring 10 others.

Being informed, police and Fire Service personnel rushed to the spot, rescued the victims and admitted them to the Bangiriposhi Hospital.

GST: Let Centre borrow to compensate States



SAHADEV SAHOO

decline till August stands at 30.4 per cent. Odisha's collections during five months, up to August, declines by 24 per cent.

The States have to spend more to meet the Covid situation and for revival of economy; and on the other hand, its resources have depleted. The taxes subsumed in GST contribute more than fifty percent of a State's revenue. Since GST collection has fallen, so also the cess collected for compensation has plummeted. The revenue gap is increasing.

Compensation is determined by compound growth rate of 14 per cent of a State's 2015-16 collection and deduction of the actual GST collected in the year from the projected revenue so arrived.

The States demand the Centre pay the compensation and the Centre, as stated by Finance Secretary before the Joint Parliamentary Committee

on Finance, is not in a position to compensate to the States. The Centre's revenue collection, no doubt, has also suffered. All the States have compensation claim of Rs 1.51 lakh crore.

In Odisha GST collection for April-July has registered a negative growth of 24.91 per cent. In the month of August, the State's GST collection has dropped by 6 per cent.

During this period, collection of taxes from the non-GST goods like petrol, diesel and liquor is also more discouraging, that has fallen by 34.63 per cent compared to last year's collection. Odisha had claimed compensation of Rs 3,647 crore for April-July, pending with the Centre. Odisha like any other States is in dire need for additional resources.

The forty-first GST Council met to discuss only the compensation issue. The Union Finance Minister proposed two options before the States. First,

the States can borrow Rs 97,000 crore, the loss they suffered for GST implementation. The loan can be paid by the compensation cess. The States need not pay back from any of its other resources. Second, the States can also borrow Rs 2,35,000 crore, the loss incurred due to both Covid and GST implementation. In this case, the principal shall be paid by the compensation cess and the States have to pay the interest. The States are advised to borrow on both the options.

Cess is collected on luxury cars, aerated drinks, pan masala, tobacco products and coal, which go to the compensation fund, and from the fund the losing States are compensated.

The basis on which the Finance Ministry has determined the loss does not seem rational. The Ministry has applied 10 per cent growth rate to the actual GST collection of

FY 2019-20 to arrive at a loss of Rs 1,65,000 crore, and estimated compensation cess of Rs 68,700 crore for FY 2020-21. So the loss to be compensated to the States is Rs 97,000 crore. This, the Ministry says, is loss for GST implementation only. But economic slowdown had set in much before the Covid, the GST collection for FY 2019-20 was only 8 per cent.

For the quarter ending December, 2019, the growth rate was 3.07 per cent and for the quarter ending March, 2020, it was 2.47 per cent. In the month of March, the collection dropped by 4 per cent.

Odisha's collection for the year 2019-20 registered a growth rate of 10 per cent, but in the month of March, the collection has fallen by 7.37 per cent. So, applying a growth rate of 10 per cent when the collection is declining is arbitrary. Some States have sought for a written reply questioning

the basis for the calculation. In the second option, the Ministry has determined the loss for the entire 2020-21 to be Rs 3 lakh crore and compensation cess would be approximately Rs 65,000 crore. The balance Rs 2,35,000 crore loss is on account of Covid (approximately Rs 1,38,000 crore) and GST implementation (Rs 97,000 crore).

It's the moral responsibility of the Centre to compensate the States for the loss in GST collection without demarcating loss for GST and loss for Covid.

Section 10 of the GST Compensation to States Act provides, if any amount of the compensation cess remained unutilised after five years, one half will go to the Centre and the other shall be distributed among the States.

No provision is there in the Act, if there is shortfall in compensation cess how to meet the State's demand, perhaps, for

the reason that a Covid-like situation was never foreseen. The Centre has always initiated reforms in the indirect taxes which are in the States' domain and has compensated to the States for the loss.

The Centre had compensated for loss on account of implementation of VAT from 2005-6 to 2007-08 although it did not have any share in it. Similarly, the Centre also compensated the States for reduction of CST, the tax collected and appropriated by the States, from 2007-08 to 2012-13.

The States agreed to implement GST and surrender their rights of taxation over 50 per cent of their revenue on the assurance that, in case of shortfall, the Centre would compensate. As pointed out earlier, the decline in GST collection started before Covid, and the Centre had a problem in compensation from August 2019. The Covid aggravated the con-

ditions. It is learnt that 15 States including Kerala, West Bengal, Punjab, Tamil Nadu demand that the Centre borrow and compensate to the States. The States directly handle the Covid situation and also have more proximity to the people regarding welfare measures.

The States have certain limitations: it cannot borrow above 3 per cent of its income. The Centre now wants to relax and increase to 3.5 per cent, but it's not enough. So the argument is the Centre should borrow and compensate to the States.

The loan can be repaid by the compensation cess, neither from Centre's, nor from States' exchequer. For this purpose, the period of cess collection can be extended beyond five years.

(The writer is a former Additional Commissioner, GST, Odisha. Views expressed are his own)

Angul set to lose 2,417 ha forests

Govt goes ahead with mining project despite public protests

BIJAY MISHRA ■ ANGUL

When the Government has launched 'Comprehensive Action Plan for Clean Air' under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in Angul, ironically, it has started the process to auction eight open-cast coalmines with enough potentiality for air pollution in the district.

Already, Angul has been declared as a critically polluted area. The six-city action plan, along with Angul has been designed to enable time-bound reduction in air pollution levels.

Of the six cities, industrial towns of Angul, Talcher and Rourkela have special challenge of reducing industrial emissions and mining

impacts. As per the action plan of the Government, the industrial and mining towns have to reduce particulate matter of 10 micrometre in diameter or less (PM10) level by at least 39% to 45% and fine particulate matter (PM2.5) level by about 14% to 30% depending on the city from the current base line to meet the clean national ambient air quality standards. The clean air action plan is designed to arrest the trend and increase the number compliant days in worst performing cities.

According to a study, air pollution is the second largest risk factor in the State. In fact, the death rate per 1,00,000 population at 65.3 is quite similar to that of Delhi. If air quality improves, life expectancy of average citizens in Odisha

can increase by about 1.2 years. But contrary to its Action Plan, out of total nine in Odisha, the Government is allowing as many as eight coal mines for commercial use in Chhendipada block of Angul district.

In Chhendipada block, already four coal mines have been allotted earlier to various companies, including Utkal D and and Utkal E to Nalco, Utkal C to Gujarat Electricity Board and Naini to Singarani. As much as 1,256.74 hectares of forest will be lost for these mines, whose works have been started already.

Again after the scheduled commercial coalmine auction of eight coal mines, total 1,160.63 hectares of forest will be lost. So for the above 12 coal mines, 2,417.37 hectares forest

will be lost in Chhendipada block. Moreover, large forest patches have been destroyed in this block due to already established big steel and power plants and coal mines. Angul district already has 16 coalmines of MCL and big industries like Nalco, NTPC, TSTPP, NTPC, TTPS, JSPL, Monnet, Tata BSL Steel and many coal washeries.

Coal dust, fly ash and other pollutants have converted this once agrarian clean area into one of the Critically Polluted Area of the country. "Without assessing the carrying capacity of this most polluted area, operating eight more coal mines will bring disaster to the people," State Congress working president Pradeep Majhi. Majhi said, "Auctioning of coal blocks

makes no sense, particularly when most of these blocks do not have environmental clearances or clarity in land ownership issues. Many are in heavily forested areas."

Environmentalist and team leader, Foundation for Ecological Security, Swapna Sarangi said, "This is the first time private players have been allowed in India to mine coal for commercial mining purposes.

The world is progressively reducing its reliance on coal for power generation and a majority of all global new electricity capacity installations are based on renewable energy. Coal-fired power plant retirements are accelerating across the world. Coal has suffered 100 per cent of demand decline evident across

India. In this context, new coal mines in Angul will lead to disaster." In the mean time, people of Angul in general and Chhendipada in particular, are very much apprehensive about the private coalmines.

Already thousands of people including women are facing court trials due to false and fabricated cases slapped by private companies upon them, while they had strongly protested forcible land acquisition for establishment of mines in the Chhendipada area.

"People are no way prepared to lose their land, livelihood, common property resources and forest as mining by private players will only benefit a few rich people," said Citizen Action Forum secretary CR Sahu.

Aadi Bandh built illegally in Jajpur

Flood-hit landowners move from pillar to post

PNS ■ JAJPUR

Illegal construction of an Aadi Bandh (check-dam supporting river embankment) along the Brahmani river has added to the woes of floods-hit villagers of Brahmabarada in Jajpur district.

According to reports, the river embankment had developed a 200-meter breach at Brahmabarada during the recent floods. Due to inundation, villagers lost crops on hundreds of acres of land. They expected to undertake Rabi cultivation and meet the loss to some extent.

However, a greedy contractor in connivance with engineers has constructed a supporting embankment on acres of private lands in an aim to get a tender for repair work



of the breached embankment and earn a lucrative amount. Ironically, the concerned Government authorities have not taken consent of landowners for the purpose.

Now, the floods-affected land owners, who had expected that a layer of alluvial soil would help them get a good Rabi crop, have started moving from pillar to the post for restoring land and getting com-

ensation for the loss. It is learnt that the Aadi Bandh work is being done under the direct guidance of the Executive Engineer, Water Resources Department, Jaraka and the Odisha Construction Corporation (OCC).

Now, the landowners have threatened to take to the streets if they aren't paid adequate compensation and given back land at the earliest.

Girl abducted, gang-raped in Rourkela



PNS ■ ROURKELA

In yet another incident of the deteriorating law and order situation in Rourkela, a 22-year-old girl was allegedly abducted by unidentified miscreants and gangraped on Tuesday night in Rourkela.

The miscreants reportedly abducted the victim of Gurundia area and took her to an unknown location in an SUV. The accused raped the girl and later dumped her near OMFED office here under the Chhend police station.

Locals spotted the victim on Wednesday morning and informed police about the incident. Acting on a complaint lodged by the family members of the girl, police have started an investigation.

Chhatar Yatra sans devotees this year

Animal sacrifice banned

PNS ■ BHAWANIPATNA

In view of Covid-19, the Kalahandi district administration on Wednesday decided to conduct the famous annual Chhatar Yatra under restrictions to prevent congregation of people.

As decided at a meeting, the festival of Goddess Manikeswari would be conducted without devotees. No devotee would be allowed to enter into the temple or to take part in rituals during the event.

Besides, the traditional animal sacrifice would be banned at the temple on the occasion of Chhatar Yatra, which would be held on October 24 this year. Notably,



the district administration bans animal sacrifice during the Chhatar Yatra every year. However, devotees sacrifice hundreds of animals and birds to "fulfil their wishes" despite the ban order.

During the event, a ceremonial Chhatar of the goddess is taken out to a location on the outskirts of Bhawanipatna from the temple in the morning following performance of secret rituals.

The return journey of the Chhatar to the temple is known as Chhatar Yatra.

PIL seeks permission for Biraja Rath Yatra

PNS ■ JAJPUR

Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, servitors of the famous Biraja Temple in Jajpur district have filed a PIL in the Orissa High Court (HC) seeking permission for holding of the nine-day-long Rath Yatra of the goddess.

In the PIL, the servitors of the Biraja Temple Mukti Mandap stated that Rath Yatra of the Goddess is being held since time immemorial. Discontinue of the festival will hurt religious sentiment of thousands of devotees.

Like the Puri Rath Yatra, let the car festival of Goddess Biraha be held with strict adherence to Covid-19 guidelines, the servitors pleaded before the court.

Advocate Biplab Kumar Tipathy is representing the servitors in the HC for the matter. "Once the Rath Yatra gets discontinued, it can not

be held again. We have prayed to the court to grant permission for the annual festival. We are ready to follow all Covid-19 guidelines to be issued by the HC," said a servitor.

It is pertinent to mention here that Goddess Biraja is the only Goddess in the country to have her own chariot festival, which is held during Dussehra.

The Supreme Court had granted permission for conduct of Puri Rath Yatra in June after a prolonged legal battle.

The State has not given a green signal for Biraja Ratha Jatra owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In fact, the State Government has decided to keep Dussehra festival a low key affair by imposing several restrictions, including public participation and cultural activities.

21,000 litre PDS kerosene recovered

3 held; 2 tankers seized

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Special Task Force (STF) of the Crime Branch on Tuesday seized a huge quantity of PDS kerosene stored for the purpose of black-marketing in the Gurudijhatia area of Cuttack district.

Acting on a tipoff, a team of the STF conducted a raid on the premises of one Khirod Chandra Patra near Church Baula under the Gurudijhatia PS and seized 21,000 litres of PDS kerosene.

The three arrestees are Gokulananda Pal of Kolar in Cuttack and Radhashyam Barik and Jitendra Rout of Ganjam district. However, during raid the owner of the premises Patra managed to escape.

The police also seized two tankers, an electric motor, five empty drums, plastic pipes, chemicals used for conversion of blue kerosene into white, Rs 18,600 cash and equipment used for draining out PDS kerosene from the tankers. "A case has been registered at Gurudijhatia police station in this regard and necessary action will be taken.

NHRC issues summons to Delhi CP, K'pada DM

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA:

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has recently issued conditional summons to the district Collector, Kendrapada, as well as to the Commissioner of Police, Delhi, to appear before the Commission on November 10 along with requisite reports related to tragic dengue death of a child in Delhi that resulted in suicide of his parents in 2015.

The apex rights panel passed a series of directions while adjudicating a petition and rejoinder filed by Supreme Court lawyer and activist Radhakanta Tripathy.

The NHRC also considered the reports of the Delhi Government and a Magisterial inquiry report submitted by the SDM, Saket.

Tripathy alleged that Laxman Rout, the youngest son of 80-years old Kartik Chandra Rout, of Jagulapada was staying with his wife Babita Rout and 7-years old son, Avinash

Rout, in a rented house at a four storied building in Lado Sarai of South Delhi and eking out his living with a company that provided services to Pizza Hut outlets.

Avinash fell sick as he suffered from dengue. Later, the couple ran from pillar to post to get their sick child admitted to hospitals but was turned away by Moolchand Hospital and Max super speciality Hospital at Saket, as there was not bed available.

Later, Laxman's son was admitted at Batra Hospital and Medical Research Centre in a very critical condition, but he died.

As a result, on the night of September 8, 2015, Laxman and Babita had buried Avinash after he succumbed to dengue. Being depressed over the fact, the couple jumped to death from the four-storey building in Lado Sarai, hours later Avinash was buried.

The Commission held that there was lack of coordination and professionalism among

Suicide related to dengue death of kid

the medical professionals, who were approached by the attendants of the patient Avinash. Further no punitive action has been taken yet by the Delhi Government against the private hospitals and the doctors who have violated the provisions of Delhi Nursing Registration Act 1953 & Rules laid thereon.

The district Collector, Kendrapada was directed to provide legitimate relief and assistance to the family of deceased Laxman Rout.

Since Commissioner of Police, Delhi and district Collector, Kendrapada could not submit their reports despite repeated opportunities, the NHRC issued the conditional summons.

₹1-crore ganja seized from truck in R'gada



PNS ■ RAYAGADA

Police on Wednesday seized a huge cache of ganja from a secret compartment hidden in a truck, which was intercepted by the Rayagada RTO on suspicion during a routine check. After intercepting the vehicle, RTO DK Dalai took the vehicle along with the driver to the Rayagada police station.

Later, during search by police in presence of the Executive Magistrate and witnesses, 1618 kg of the contraband was recovered from the secret compartment. The estimated

₹ 50L ganja seized; 3 held in K'put

PNS ■ KORAPUT

The Jeypore police seized a number of vehicles for allegedly being used in ganja smuggling and arrested three persons in this connection in Koraput district on Tuesday.

Acting on a tipoff, police conducted a raid near Ambaguda village when the contraband was being loaded into a Volvo truck. An Innova

SUV with Army logo and four motorcycles. The seized vehicles were searched in the presence of the Executive Magistrate.

A total of 728.6 kg of ganja worth around Rs 50 lakh was recovered from the vehicles. The accused were identified as Rahul Pratap Singh (37) and Sunder Singh (55) of Uttar Pradesh and Prafulla Khemundu (24) of Koraput.

accused was booked under Sections 20(b)(ii)(c)/25/29 of the NDPS Act 1985. Preliminary investigation revealed that the ganja was procured from Vijayawada and was being transported to Patna.

OKCL: Journey for holistic growth, social change



MANORANJAN PUTHAL

Ipsita was never obsessed about her freelancing career, until now. "On an average, I earn around Rs 12,000 in a month," says the Bhubaneswar based urban youth, who is a freelancing professional, in her early 20s.

Over the last one year, she has been working to build a career in this field of freelanc-

ing. "I check my bank account once a week and it shows that I am fairly getting paid for my work every time." Typically, when you start searching a job, you go into to the loop of searching. "Days were tough, the mind was never at peace and earning was not happening anymore," says Chittaranjan reeling under latent Covid-19 stress and anxiety.

Unemployment has emerged as a major problem "as is where is" and it's become more intense in the wake of the global pandemic and the subsequent lockdown, shutdown and many related concurrent happenings. "I came to know of freelancing about a few months back and since then I started exploring the freelancing market, now I am at peace as I am able to earn something out of it". Further, he says "The Digital Freelancing programme by the

Odisha Knowledge Corporation Limited (OKCL) has helped me a lot in enhancing my skill set."

The journey of the OKCL begins in the year 2011, on September 12; formed with the State Government's vision of creating a knowledge-led economy and knowledge-based communities in all the urban, rural and tribal regions of the State. The OKCL advocated online freelancing to create a sustainable local self-employment for semi-urban and rural youths who cannot afford to migrate to cities, since September 2019,

when it started its pilot project with local youths in its corporate office in the area of freelancing. In this period of pandemic and job losses, the youths working in the space of online freelancing were unfazed. Dhirendra says, "The timing of my joining this pro-

INBRIEF

M'GIRI MLA TESTS COVID +VE, HOSPITALISED

Bhubaneswar: Malkangiri BJP district president and MLA Aditya Madhi has tested positive for Covid-19. He was admitted to the AIIMS Bhubaneswar in a critical condition on Wednesday, sources said. With Madhi, as many as 30 MLAs belonging to the BJD and the BJP have got infection so far. Besides, six Ministers have also tested positive for the virus. Most of them have recuperated.



BRAHMAPUR MLA RECOVERS FROM COVID



Brahampur: Local MLA Bikram Kumar Panda, who had been undergoing treatment for Covid-19 at the Ashwini Hospital here for about a fortnight, has recovered fully. Earlier, his associates Tumbanath Panda, Sanjeet Panigrahi, Badri Narayan Mihsra and Pradeep Nayak, who were also undergoing treatment, had been discharged from the hospital. After returning home, Panda thanked doctors, nurses and other hospital staffs for treatment and good behaviour to him and other patients. He has requested infected persons to follow doctors' advice and all Covid guidelines to defeat the virus.

FIVE-DAY SHUTDOWN IN UMARKOTE

Nabarangpur: In view of the rising Covid-19 cases in Umarkote, the Chamber of Commerce and other trade unions have declared to observe a five-day shutdown in the town from Wednesday to midnight of Sunday. During this period, the entire Umarkote municipal area would be sanitized, said Umarkote trade union legal advisor Prasant Kumar Sahu.

102 KG OF GANJA SEIZED IN UMARKOTE

Nabarangpur: Police seized 102 kg of ganja worth about Rs 8 lakh from village Dongriguda under Umarkote block. A team of Umarkote police raided the house of one Pradeep Das of the village and seized the contraband along with five bikes, a car and cash of Rs 2 lakh. While the culprits were about to transport the ganja, police caught them, said SDPO Hemanta Padhi. The police arrested Kuta Sanna of village Sunabeda and Satyam sharma of Patna of Bihar and forwarded them to judicial custody. The contraband was being transported from Malkanagiri to Chhattisgarh.

HINDI PAKHWADA HELD BY IIT BBSR

Bhubaneswar: The IIT Bhubaneswar organised Hindi Pakhwada from September 1 to 14 to celebrate the importance of Hindi. Dr Raj Kumar Singh welcomed everyone to the programme. IIT Director Prof RV Raja Kumar said, "The students, faculty and staff have actively participated in various competitions held through the online mode. At IIT Bhubaneswar, we give due importance in the implementation of the Rajbhasha Policies of the Govt. of India." A host of programmes were organised and winners of various competitions were felicitated.

DHAMRA PORT LAUNCHES LIVESTOCK UNITS

Dhamra: The Adani-Dhamra Port Company has launched an integrated livestock care and development programme in coordination with BAIFF in its periphery areas. In the first stage, in April 2019, the programme was started in three GPs, Dosinga, Kaithkhola and Karanjmal with two operational Integrated Livestock Development (ILD) centres. As many as 218 hybrid calves have been born to enhance milk production of mother cows. The company has already demonstrated 30 Hybrid Napier plots, 20 Azola Pots for green fodder development. On September 14, another ILD centre was inaugurated at Bijaypatna village of Karanpalli GP.

MP KUMAR MOEA PANEL MEMBER

Bhubaneswar: Rajiya Sabha BJD member Sujeet Kumar has been nominated as a member of the Consultative Committee in the Ministry of External Affairs (MoEA).



Bike ambulance in K'put soon

PNS ■ KORAPUT

In a major step for healthcare to ensure that patients reach hospitals on time, a motorbike ambulance service would be launched to provide quick emergency response in remote areas of tribals-dominated Koraput district soon. The district has received eight bike ambulances under a special fund released by

the Central Government. The service would be rolled out soon following a decision to be taken within three days, informed Koraput CDMO.

The fully-equipped bike ambulances can run on kutcha roads to provide service to patients in remote areas of Narayanpatna, Bandhugaon, Lamataput and Dasmantpur blocks in the district.

JAYA BACHCHAN REMARKS IN SUPPORT OF BOLLYWOOD

Mumbai Police ramps up security outside ‘Jalsa’

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

After actress-turned Samajwadi MP Jaya Bachchan spoke vociferously in Rajya Sabha against the attempts being made by certain people to “vilify” Bollywood, the Mumbai Police on Wednesday beefed up security outside the outside Bachchans’ bungalow ‘Jalsa’ at Juhu in north-west Mumbai.

Taking serious cognisance of intense trolling that Jaya has come under after remarks in Rajya Sabha made in response to BJP MP and Bhojpuri actor Ravi Kishan and actress Kangana Ranaut, the Mumbai police deployed police personnel outside Bachchans residence “Jalsa” to ensure against untoward incidents.

Simultaneously, the Mumbai Police Cyber Cell is looking into trolling and virulent social media posts that have targeted the Bachchans during the last two days. Talking to media persons here, Mumbai Guardian Minister Aslam Shaikh said: “I have told the Mumbai police to increase security for the Bachchan family which is being trolled and targeted viciously in the social media after her remarks in support of Bollywood in Parliament”

It may be recalled that actor Ravi Kishan said that there was a drug problem in Bollywood, Jaya Bachchan had hit back saying that some attempts were being made to “vilify” Bollywood.

“Just because of a few people, you cannot vilify the whole

industry... I was really embarrassed and ashamed that yesterday one of our members in the Lok Sabha, who is from the industry, spoke against the film industry. Jis thaali mein khaate hain usi mein chhed karte hain (they are biting the hand that feeds them),” Jaya had said in Rajya Sabha, without naming Kishan.

“At a time when the financial situation is in a depressing state and employment rate at the worst levels, in order to divert the attention of people, we are being flogged on social media and there is no support from the government.... the entertainment industry in the country provides direct employment to 5 lakh people daily and indirect employment to 5 million people,” Jaya had said.

After 6-month, Mamata to resume administrative meetings soon

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

After almost a six-month Agap Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has decided to visit the districts to hold administrative meetings. Her district tour will begin with visits to North Bengal towns where the Chief Minister will take stock of situations, officials at State Secretariat Nabanna said.

The resumption of Banerjee’s administrative meetings amid corona crisis comes in the backdrop intensified movements on the part of principal Opposition party BJP.

The Chief Minister will reach Siliguri on September 21 where she will stay for a night before holding meetings with district officials of Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri districts at

“Uttarkanya” building which is the second secretariat of the State.

After meeting officials there she would the district authorities of Darjeeling, Coochbehar and Kalimpong before returning to Kolkata on September 24, sources said.

Soon after coming to power Banerjee had started regular administrative trips to district headquarters taking along with him respective ministers, and secretaries. During administrative meetings she would confront local authorities and evaluate their progress report on various pending projects. Besides she would also meet local people to take feedbacks from them.

The formula had yielded results with the effect that projects were speedily completed.

State BJP to stage Nabanna march on Oct 6

Now we have promised to make them ‘saaf’ (clear them out) and we will do that with the help of the people. No amount of administrative meeting will help.”

Bengal Minister Partho Chatterjee however said “The victory of 2019 has gone to BJP’s head and in the past one year they have shown their metal to the people. Now they have once again made up their mind because they know that their future lies with Mamata Banerjee and not the communal party like BJP.”

Meanwhile, the State BJP had decided to stage a Nabanna march on October 6, party sources said adding the march will be organized to raise a number of issues including corruption, syndicate raj, falling law and order situation etc.

BJP: Vijayan direct beneficiary of gold scam, LIFE Mission corruption

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

For the first time in the history of Kerala, leader of a political party stood in front of the main gate of the Kerala Secretariat on Wednesday and shouted that Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan was the direct beneficiary of the gold smuggling scam, LIFE Mission corruption and even the drug trafficking cases in the State.

“Pinarayi Vijayan is the direct beneficiary of gold smuggling scam, LIFE Mission corruption and drug trafficking. That’s the reason behind his over enthusiasm in saving and protecting K T Jaleel, the minister for higher education who has been questioned by the Enforcement Directorate,” declared K Surendran, president of the Kerala BJP on Wednesday.

Surendran, who was addressing hundreds of party workers including activists of Mahila Morchcha, said that Vijayan was afraid of his own shadow. “It is because of his sense of guilt. We want the investigating agencies to question Vijayan’s daughter and son-in-law in these cses,” said the BJP leader.

The BJP president was referring to Vijayan’s press briefing on Tuesday evening when he shouted at the former describing him as a person who lost his mental balance. “ A sense of fear is haunting Vijayan and it is because of his involvement in the criminal deeds,” charged Surendran.

Earlier VV Rajesh, senior BJP leader, alleged that the CPI(M) was conspiring with the Police in sabotaging the rallies and demonstrations organized by the saffron brigade all over Kerala.

Kerala Cong braces up to celebrate Chandy’s golden jubilee

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Though the Congress presence is not felt in the State-wide agitation against the CPI(M)-led Kerala Government over the gold smuggling scam and LIFE Mission corruption charges, the Grand Old Party is busy with warming up for a two-day mega event to be held at Kottayam and Thiruvananthapuram on Thursday and Saturday respectively. The fact that Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi are addressing the virtual rallies live from New Delhi shows the importance of being Oommen Chandi, the face of the party in Kerala.

Congressmen and cadre in the State are getting ready to

celebrate the Golden Jubilee of former Chief Minister Oommen Chandi’s membership of the Kerala Legislative Assembly. Chandi (75) is the only law maker in the Kerala who has been elected to the assembly in all elections he had contested since 1970. Though he was playing a subdued role in politics after the 2016 election in which the Congress-led UDF was defeated by a huge margin by the CPI(M)-led Left Front, the Congress staged an impressive return in the 2019 Lok Sabha election from Kerala.

The Congress High Command in a major reorganization of the party, inducted Oommen Chandi as a member of the Congress Working Committee making it clear

that who would be the chief ministerial candidate of the party in the 2021 election. It has its own explanations. “Chandi is always the man of the hour to whom the High Command turns to in emergency times. He has the capability to disarm even hardcore critics of the party with that disarming smile. Moreover he has only obsession and that is Kerala politics,” said Sam Rajappa, a long time observer of Kerala’s politics.

Though belonging to the Christian community, Chandi is acceptable to all including Hindus in the State and that makes him the frontrunner for the chief minister’s post. “All allegations levelled against him by the CPI(M) prior to the 2016 have fallen flat. The

Hindus have understood that had the Government of Kerala followed the affidavit filed by his Government in the Sabarimala Case, the unpleasant events that took place in the holy shrine would not have been there. The CPI(M) government took back that affidavit and filed another one which earned it the wrath of the people,” said P Rajan, former editor of Mathrubhumi and venerated commentator.

In a politically surcharged State like Kerala, it is impossible to any person to win successfully and successively from a single constituency all elections. But Oommen Chandi, popularly known as Kunjoonju is different and he is here to stay for some more years, say friends and foes alike.

UP Defence Corridor: Search on for land in Khyamai, Barakalan and Jalalpur

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

Along with progressing the work of setting up the Defence Industrial Corridor in Andla, the UPEIDA team is also actively looking for land in Khyamai, Barakalan and Jalalpur in Gabhana. Today, two UPEIDA land officers OP Pathak and Sanjay Chawla also visited Khyamai, Barakalan and Jalalpur.

60 hectares of government land is being found in Khyamai, 20 hectares in Jalalpur and 50 hectares in Barakalan. ADM DV Pal told that land is being searched for setting up an explosive making factory. Therefore, the land is being searched in a safe and

secluded place.

He further stated that these three locations are good for expansion for the Defense Corridor. The land is also cheaper because it belongs to the government, so these lands are a better option for expansion. Recently, in the video conference of CM, Home Secretary Avnish Awasthi had instructed the investors to transfer the land of Andla at the earliest under their firm’s name. After this, the local administration has started the process of transferring the land. The forest department has been asked to clear the land in Andla by cutting down trees.

The current circle rate of land in Khyamai is around Rs

32 lakh per hectare while the land is being sold for Rs 26 to 27 lakh per hectare. If the land is taken for the defense corridor, the farmers will get double the circle rate, that is, around Rs 64 lakh per hectare. Therefore, farmers are also excited to sell their land.

Along with UPEIDA officials, Navneet Varshney, Mukesh Jain and Mohit Kumar of the Federation of Innovative Manufacturers also inspected the land and talked to the farmers. The total land of Khyamai can come up to 60 hectares in this project. Therefore, all the connectivity routes from Andla to Khyamai are being looked at, so that the connectivity can be improved.

Prof Habib: Raja Mahendra Pratap not mentioned giving land to AMU

PNS ■ ALIGARH

In the preparations to give back the land leased by Aligarh Muslim University to the descendants of King Mahendra Pratap, the famous historian Professor Irfan Habib has said that despite being close to him, Raja Mahendra Pratap never told him that he had given any land to Aligarh Muslim University. This matter is between the taker and the giver.

A 90-year-old Professor Irfan Habib has said that in 1962, he helped Raja Mahendra Pratap in contesting Parliament election. He and his father Prof Habib had good relations with Raja Saheb, but he never mentioned anything like giving land to the university. He said that as far as taking and giving land is concerned, there must be some documents of a lease. Those who have given should be having some papers.

Aligarh admin braces up for panchayat poll preparation

PNS ■ ALIGARH

As soon as the information about the voter list revision campaign was released from the State Election Commission for the Panchayat elections, stir started in the villages and towns. The administration also has tightened up. From 1st, BLO will start door to door visit.

DM Chandra Bhushan Singh told that orders have been issued regarding the Panchayat elections from. In this, door to door survey will start from 1st October, while inspection of online application will be done from 6th to 12th November.

Claims and objections will be sought on the list from 6th to 12th December and will be cleared of in 4 days. Last list will be made available on 29th December.

‘Govt should study time capsule before burial in AMU’

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

On the completion of 100 years of establishment, Aligarh Muslim University is preparing to bury the time capsule. Hathras MP and AMU court member Rajveer Diler in his written letter to the Union Education Minister Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, has demanded from a government to study a time capsule before its burial so that the next generation can know correct history.

On the completion of 100 years of AMU, it has been decided by the university administration to bury the time capsule in the ground. MP Rajveer Diler says that the time capsule will be preserved in the ground for thousands of years. To avoid any wrong facts in this time capsule, the government must have complete information about the capsule and permission from the Central Government and what is being buried in it.

Higher Covid-19 cases in East & West Godavari dists, 8,835 cases in AP

Amaravati: The two Godavari districts, East and West, continued to witness a virulent spread of coronavirus while most other districts in Andhra Pradesh seemed to be gradually lowering their numbers as the state reported 8,835 fresh cases on Wednesday.

The latest COVID-19 bulletin said 10,845 patients had fully recovered in 24 hours ending 9 AM on Wednesday, while 64 more succumbed.

The states COVID-19 table now showed a total of 5,92,760 positive cases, 4,97,376 recoveries and 5,105 deaths. The active cases came down further to 90,279, according to the bulletin. After 48.06 lakh sample tests, the infection positivity rate stood at 12.33 per cent, as against the national average of 8.44 per cent.

The tests per million

increased to a record 90,016.

East Godavari district, which revealed one of the lowest antibody levels of 14.4 per cent in the Sero prevalence study, continued to add its regulation 1,400 daily cases.

It has now touched a total of 81,064 cases, with 12,036 of them being active.

The neighbouring West Godavari, which too had a lowest Sero prevalence of 12.3 per cent, added 1,051 in the last 24 hours, pushing its overall tally to 53,571.

The district currently has 8,710 active cases.

Chittoor reported nine more COVID-19 deaths in 24 hours, followed by SPS Nellore seven, Guntur and Prakasam six each.

Kadapa, Krishna, Srikakulam and West Godavari saw five new fatalities each, according to the bulletin. **PTI**

NCB seizes 2 kgs of charas, arrests 2 peddlers from Palghar

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Mounting its crackdown on the drug peddlers in and around the metropolis, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) officials on Wednesday seized 2.04 kg of Charas (weed) and arrested two peddlers from the neighbouring Palghar district.

Identifying the arrested alleged drug peddlers as Avinash Arun Singh (24) Shravan L. Gupta (38), the NCB officials said that both Avinash and Gupta were residents of Nalasopara in Palghar district.

Acting on a tip-off, a Mumbai Zonal NCB team apprehended Avinash and found the narcotics hidden in a backpack on his person. Immediately afterwards, the team arrested Gupta near his Nalasopara residence.

Gupta had been in touch with Avinash earlier for delivery of a bag containing Charas received from an alleged supplier Baliram alias Balli, a resident of Bhayander (east) in Thane district.

The NCB officials said that the seized contraband was found in eight taped packets sewn in cloth bags. The bags were concealed in Avinash’s backpack.

The NCB officials are investigating the antecedents of the arrested accused, the source and destination of the seized drugs and the supply chain involved.

Wednesday’s operation involving the drug seizure and arrest of two alleged peddlers was independent of the ongoing investigations into the much-discussed drug case related to actor Sushant Singh Rajput’s death.

Bihar reports more recoveries than new coronavirus cases

Patna: Single-day recoveries outnumbered new COVID-19 cases in Bihar on Wednesday as 1,724 people were cured of the disease and 1,531 tested positive for the infection, health department bulletin said.

The recovery rate in the state has increased to 91.16 per cent on Wednesday which is 13 per cent more than the national average, Information and Public Relations Department Secretary Anupam Kumar said.

The number of recoveries has shown a steady increase in the state since August 17, except on September 3 and 4.

Out of the total 1,62,631 COVID-19 cases, the number of people who have recovered from the contagion increased to 1,48,257.

Twelve fatalities have been reported in the past 24 hours taking the death toll to 848, the bulletin said.

Four deaths were reported

from Patna district, two each from Aurangabad and Bhojpur, and one each from Buxar, East Champaran, Samastipur and Vaishali.

There are 13,526 active cases in the state.

As many as 1,07,970 samples were tested for COVID-19 in the past 24 hours while 52.02 lakh samples have been examined for coronavirus infection across Bihar so far, it said. **PTI**



Migrants from various States arrive at Thane Railway Station to reach their workplaces, amid the coronavirus pandemic, in Thane on Wednesday

PTI

Pak renews map war

Despite Russia’s protests, it circulates fictitious map showing parts of India at SCO. Is China behind this adventurism?

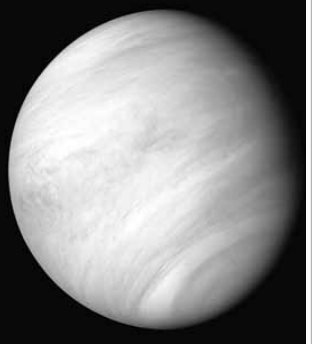


Pakistan is playing a dangerous geo-political game, needling India from the other end as China’s serf State, without realising that all of it could boomerang on itself. Having failed to internationalise the Kashmir issue despite the abrogation of Article 370, it has now taken its territorial aggression to redrawing its maps and appropriating what it fancifully feels is owed to it. So in August it released a new map, incorporating Kashmir, parts of Ladakh and Junagadh in Gujarat. India had rightly called this vacuous and unilateral declaration, which is not backed by any credible reasoning, support groups, historical reasoning or legal validity, as a “political absurdity.” So Pakistan, in a bid to legitimise its claims, circulated this map at a virtual meeting of the national security advisors of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member countries, despite host Russia’s resistance. India rightly walked out of the meeting, saying Pakistan’s move violated SCO norms, which mandated that no bilateral issue would be discussed and that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of member-states would be respected. The Russia-India-China axis dominates the SCO, which, as a counterweight to the US-dominated NATO, has emerged as one of the largest trans-regional international organisations accounting for almost 44 per cent of the world population, stretching from the Arctic Ocean to the Indian Ocean and from the Pacific Ocean to the Baltic Sea. China is seeking to use it in its global domination against the US and while it has sufficiently debt-trapped Central Asian republics and other regional players to do its bidding, it is trying to neutralise Russia by becoming its biggest investor and is now needling India. Considering that India is intransigent on yielding to China’s terms on the Ladakh standoff, regardless of the meetings of the Foreign and Defence Ministers of both nations on the sidelines of the SCO, it just wanted to embarrass India, making it look like an “occupier” at a public forum. And for this it used its proxy, Pakistan. China has also been trying to convince Russia to scale down its defence deals with India following the border stand-off and the map fiasco, which undoubtedly has left Moscow red-faced, was about strong-arming it as well. True, Russia is pragmatic enough about keeping both China and India on its side to establish its relevance in a multi-polar world and even front India to counter Chinese heft. But China certainly doesn’t want India, which has won brownie points at international fora for being decorous and respecting the rule of law, to prevail at SCO. In fact, it was what Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said recently that shows this cartographic offensive to be a part of a larger pattern and not just Pakistan’s independent move. “The new map shows Kashmir shares a clear border with China,” a clear indication that like Nepal, this attempt to redraw boundaries was made at China’s behest and underlines our eastern neighbour’s desire for strategic contiguity in the region than Pakistan’s any real concern for Kashmir. While India is firm on Chinese withdrawal from eastern Ladakh that seems to have driven a wedge in their greater plan to control the Karakoram by squeezing us with salami-slicing, Pakistan’s map claims are clearly intended to warn us of a two-front offensive. Pakistan is heating up the Line of Control (LoC), having moved almost 20,000 soldiers recently to match Chinese deployment on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Its ceasefire violations and infiltration bids have gone up by about 60 per cent this year, something which didn’t happen even after the Balakot airstrikes. If recent reports are to be believed, then the Chinese are no longer shadow-boxing. Just like in Nepal, their officials have had a series of meetings with their Pakistani counterparts in Gilgit-Baltistan and have been aiding them clandestinely to revive old terror networks against India. Debt-trapped by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), with its economy in the doldrums and heavily dependent on borrowings and bailouts, Pakistan is but a pawn in China’s gameplan.

Yet Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan forgets that such unilateralism will beget unilateralism from the Indian side as well. And hurt its interests. The new map is nothing but an adventurist version of its 1947-48 map and in one blow scythes through all bilateral agreements that came after it, primarily the 1972 Shimla Agreement. If Khan wants to negate the understanding that bilateral disputes will be resolved bilaterally, is he also prepared for the negation of all other bilateral treaties we have regarding water-sharing? And if he has taken the liberty of depicting territories under Indian control as Pakistani territory, then how would he counter other valid land claims from our side? In that sense, Pakistan’s latest offensive is nothing short of playing with fire. Realising that the US is now more an ally of India and is humouring it, Pakistan is desperately coopting the Kashmir issue under the banner of pan-Islamism. So it is involving Turkey, which wants to be a leader of the neo-Islamic world, in its criticism of India and seeking Chinese endorsement. Only Pakistan doesn’t realise that its Kashmir strategy is still not quite exportable. And that China, while using it for posturing, will continue to engage with India for geo-strategic reasons.

Life on Venus

There’s proof of life in the unlikelyest of planets, also known for being one of the least explored



For years, the search for extraterrestrial life inside our solar system has always concentrated on the “red” planet Mars. That is because Mars is similar in size to Earth. There is now clear evidence that there was once water on its surface and most importantly, like Earth, it is also in the so-called “habitable” zone, close enough to its star for enough radiation but not so much that life wouldn’t take off. Mars is, therefore, considered to either have life or to have once harboured life and capable of supporting a human expedition. As a result, we are constantly sending probes to Mars and even to its tiny moons. Probes that circle the planet as well as robotic vehicles that have roamed its surface. We actually have a greater grasp of the surface of Mars than we do of the bottom of our oceans. Even now, the aim for mankind, both in real and reel life, is to make Mars the first step on our eventual voyage to the stars.

Venus, the second rock from the Sun, is, however, given as an example of where global warming will take us. A planet benign on the outside but one where every probe sent since the start of space exploration has been dissolved in acid in the atmosphere or fried by the extreme heat that the greenhouse effect has caused. Even though the Soviet Venera programme did land several probes on Venus and many survived a few hours, there was a succession of lens cap failures. As a result, Venus is one of the least explored planets of the solar system, lacking the romanticism of Mars and the grandeur of Jupiter and Saturn, which have both seen billion-dollar spacecraft visit them in the past decade. Yet, the discovery of phosphine in the Venusian atmosphere is an intriguing prospect because the only way for this gas, with three hydrogen molecules attached to one phosphorus molecule, to occur naturally is as a byproduct of biological processes. While the gas can be made industrially by man, that isn’t clearly a possibility on Venus. So, have we been barking up the wrong tree for decades? After all, as the old adage goes, “Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus” and as we all know, women have all the answers. Maybe some strange process creates phosphine on Venus that we are unaware of and we should send a probe or two to the planet we never thought could harbour life. But as we know from Earth herself, life can survive in some really extreme conditions. This time though, let us make sure that the lens caps work.

Teachers too must learn

The NEP expects every teacher to develop a comprehensive perspective on life and living and follow an application-based module



JS RAJPUT

For over six decades, one has never witnessed such a strong projection of the national resolve to implement a policy. This rare privilege goes to the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020. The President of India addresses the nation, the Prime Minister addresses twice within a week, the Union Education Minister and his team seem busy 24x7, conducting and guiding national-level webinars on specific topics that would require new initiatives and action at the implementation stage. It’s evident that the nation has realised that for equitable growth, progress and development, it has to be “education, education, and education.” India is now determined to create a pool of teachers who would not only be degree-holders but possess “personalities.” These would be people imbued with a comprehensive multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional perspective.

In fact, the new approach to teacher preparation would expect every instructor to develop a comprehensive perspective on life and living. They would internalise the higher goals of education. The focus, henceforth, would be on them believing in *Sarva Bhut Hite Ratah*. And as was the ancient tradition, they would be life-long learners, *yavadjeevait adhiyate viprah*. It is, in a sense, a revolutionary recommendation that by 2030 all teachers would be prepared in multi-faculty colleges and universities through four-year integrated programmes. As one goes through the various sections of the NEP, this expectation becomes evident to everyone.

The objective of achieving *scharyatwa* would require a strong support system that must emerge from the establishment and society. There are clear indications to ensure that: “In order to improve and reach the levels of integrity and credibility required to restore the prestige of the teaching profession, the regulatory system shall be empowered to take stringent action against sub-standard and dysfunctional Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) that do not meet the basic educational criterion, after giving one year for the remedy of breaches. By 2030, only educationally sound, multi-disciplinary and integrated teacher education programmes shall be in force.” This objective of restoring the credibility



of TEIs is achievable. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) had, during 1998-99, successfully exercised this authority, and certain well-known but sub-standard teacher preparation programmes were closed down. Once teacher educators accept this responsibility, they could transform the entire system. Let them never forget that the recommendations on teacher education arise from the expectations and aspirations of the young. But somewhere besides these is also the hidden pain and anguish which was recorded – with a heavy heart – by late Justice JS Verma: “A majority of stand-alone TEIs – over 10,000 in number – are not even attempting serious teacher education but are essentially selling degrees for a price.” One could mention it only with immense pain, as the first chairperson of the NCTE said, that all these 10,000 institutions selling degrees were certified by senior teachers, teacher educators, professors and other academics. The policy has done its part, no more stand-alone colleges. Now it is the responsibility of teachers, teacher educators and professionals in the field to ensure that in future regulatory mechanisms are not trivialised.

This policy suggests alternative regulatory structures, which would transform the manner in which future multi-disciplinary

teacher preparations institutions and universities would emerge. The responsibility of teachers at every stage would grow multi-fold as autonomy would be the in-thing.

When one goes through the various general recommendations in the policy, one finds serious concern for drastic change in teacher education in content and pedagogy, and the need to achieve an attitudinal transformation among aspiring teachers. It is now learning, learning and more learning. Examinations shall no more be days of nationwide anxiety and widespread tension. The focus of assessment in schools shifts to application of knowledge gained and internalised.

The present pattern of examinations was transplanted in this country by alien rulers. It had been discarded in Britain much earlier but we still adhere to it in India. Teachers, and teacher educators, have a tremendous task ahead in implementing curriculum load reduction, to ensure that textbooks and textual materials are neither deficient on new knowledge nor too overloaded with obsolescence content.

Teaching and learning shall become more interactive, and much would transpire outside the closed classroom. Skill development and bringing in vocational education elements early in

schools would require TEIs absorbing them in their own curricula. Those who know the story of Richard Feynman would find it much easier to visualise its great transformative and inspiring impact on the system as a whole. It would be possible only when the promises to ensure the assured recruitment process are put to practice, and the assurances on the professionally acceptable teacher-student ratio is implemented without any aberrations. One must not ignore considerable dilution in the quality of education and decline in the acceptability and credibility of schools funded by the public. The policy realises this.

The ancient Indian tradition of knowledge quest spreads over four stages: *adhyayan*, *manan*, *chintan* and *upayog*. And its relevance is eternal. It is the essence of the process of transfer of knowledge to generations ahead. Every teacher, henceforth, would be expected to comprehend the essence of Indian philosophy of education that finds reflection throughout this policy.

Let me recall three sentences of Sri Aurobindo; first being that the process must begin with “from near, to far”, and hence the mother tongue medium and other aspects. His second principle was that “nothing can be taught.” Every active, alert and vibrant teacher shall

have to grasp its essence. It is “learning the treasure within.” It is the perfection within that the child is discovering, and teachers are assisting, supporting, guiding, and much more.


When Sri Aurobindo states that the “mind must be consulted in its growth,” he is emphasising how pertinent it is to “know the child.” It is the comprehension of these basic principles that has led to the restricting of the school education system to 5+3+3+4. The most significant is the addition of initial three years, after the age of 3. India would need very specialised teachers for this age group.

A couple of years ago, India had anticipated the importance of open and distance learning. That experience comes very handy as the global attention diverts to online learning. Creation of digital platforms and e-content had already begun in full swing and has come handy during the corona crisis, as children are confined to their homes. The pedagogy is undergoing unprecedented change, teachers associated with schools will have to gear up to learn new skills. While tools and techniques shall change – sometimes beyond recognition – the pedagogical principles would remain the same.

(The writer works in education and social cohesion)

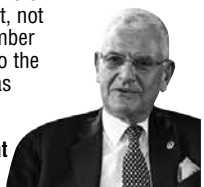
SOUNDBITE

I call on the Palestinian leadership to recognise reality and show responsibility as did the UAE leaders, by returning to negotiating table.




Israeli Minister
—Gabi Ashkenazi

Security Council reform is very important, not only for the member states but also to the United Nations as a whole.



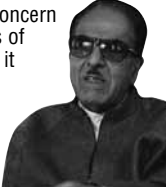
Turkish diplomat
—Volkan Bozkir

We will be taking action to counter the unjust tariffs put on Canadian aluminum by the United States. We will always be there to defend Canadian workers, defend our aluminum sector.



Canadian PM
—Justin Trudeau

If J&K UT government is of the view that it has no concern and duty for the feelings of Kashmir’s masses, then it must take that position, categorically.



Former Union Minister
—Saifuddin Soz

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Medical education

Sir — The Tamil Nadu Assembly has unanimously passed a Bill to provide 7.5 per cent horizontal reservation in medical admissions for State Government students who clear the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET). The provisions of the new law are applicable to all government and private medical, dental, Indian medicine and homeopathy streams. The reservation will benefit 300 underprivileged scholars annually and will be implemented from this year onwards.

Amit Singh Kushwaha
Madihya Pradesh

MPLADS should be permanently scrapped

In the wake of the Coronavirus outbreak, the Government has decided to reallocate the funds from the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS). Amounting to ₹5 crore a year per Member of Parliament (MP), the money will now be allocated by the Centre for relief packages. Rather than just suspending the scheme, it should be permanently scrapped.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament and Planning Commission termed MPLADS useless and as encouraging corruption. A sting operation caught few parliamentarians accepting bribes to approve schemes to be funded through MPLADS. The then Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee had argued for scrapping the scheme. Many members of Parliament and the Legislative Assembly have been over-generous by funding their favourite organisations through this scheme even though such funding may have had nothing to do with public welfare. It may be recalled that trusts floated by the then Chief Election Commissioner

Madhu Agrawal
Chandni Chowk

warrant, the force can prove useful in apprehending criminals. The officer can also immediately search that person’s property and house. However, the possibility of this power being exploited by the authorities cannot be ruled out.

Bhupendra Singh Ranga
Haryana

Inflation a concern

Sir — Inflation is primarily driven by food prices, which account for 39 per cent of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket, and a sharp spiral in prices of transport and communication services, which amount

eggs have doubled. Even fruits are extremely costly. While the CPI in August is lower than that of July by 0.04 per cent, it is still higher than the upper limit of the RBI’s comfort level of six per cent for the fifth consecutive month. The data is not at all encouraging.

CK Ramanathan
Ghaziabad

A proud moment

Sir — India got elected as Member of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the principal global body focussed on gender equality and women empowerment, beating China in a hotly-contested election. India garnered 38 votes of the 54 ballots cast.

India and Afghanistan will join Argentina, Austria, Dominican Republic, Israel, Latvia, Nigeria, Turkey and Zambia, which were elected by acclamation, to the Commission on the Status of Women for a four-year term between 2021 and 2025. This is a proud moment for us indeed.

Vihaan Gupta
Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Mitigate data intrusion worries

Instead of thinking of security as a prevention tool, firms must incorporate it into product design from the start so that the architect systems are impenetrable



RIPU **BAJWA**

In the new digital era, where data is growing at an unprecedented rate by the second and where organisations are quickly becoming data-first, one thing has become crystal clear. That the “this is good enough” approach by businesses, across the globe and in India, is no more acceptable when it comes to safeguarding the most precious capital, i.e. data, from an external intrusion. Ever since businesses have become increasingly dependent on their data to fuel innovation, drive new revenue streams and so on, Information Technology decision-makers have not just been evaluating their current data protection preparedness but have also been ramping up their investments in this regard.

However, over the past few months, since organisations have been fixated on quickly transitioning towards remote working due to the Coronavirus pandemic, they might have missed out on something vital that they should have been focussing on and that is the threats that come along with this work culture. As a result, the world and India with it, has been witnessing a steady uptick in the instances of cyber attacks.

For example, as per a recent report, India witnessed a 37 per cent increase in cyber attacks in the first quarter of this year as compared to the last quarter of 2019. The data also show that India now ranks 27th globally in the number of web-threats detected in the first quarter of this year as compared to when it ranked on the 32nd position globally in the fourth quarter of 2019. India also ranks 11th worldwide in the number of attacks caused by servers that were hosted in the country, which accounts for 22,99,682 incidents in the first quarter of this year as compared to 8,54,782 incidents detected in the fourth quarter of 2019, says the Kaspersky Security Network report.

Another report claims that data of over 21,000 Indian students, including their Aadhaar cards, photos and so on, have been put on sale on the Dark Web. Another instance of data being leaked on the Dark Web came to light in June, with a massive data packet — nearly 100 gigabytes in size — being put up for sale. The data comprises scanned identity documents of over one lakh Indians, including passports, PAN cards, Aadhaar cards, voter IDs and driver’s licences. Thus, given the rising data security concerns and incidents, chief technology officers (CTOs) need to look for a holistic approach towards data protection and management. Now, they need to be cognisant about how to respond, recover and learn in case a cyber intrusion occurs. Here are a few tips for CTOs that will help them redefine their data protection strategy.

Drift away from security to resilience: With the evolving nature of cyber attacks, it’s time for businesses to stop reacting and start anticipating. Loss of critical data has the power to not just cripple a company in no time but also damage its reputation for the long-term. Hence, instead of relying on traditional methods of data security i.e. identify, protect, detect, respond and then recover, organisations must imbibe state-of-the-art resilience strategies i.e. learn, respond, monitor and anticipate.

Adopt a security strategy ingrained in product mindset: Businesses must not only think about making security intrinsic to technology infrastructure but also aim at enabling security professionals become intrinsic to future product development. They need to transform into a data-first and product-first mindset organisation in order to be able to remain competitive in the future. Thus, instead of thinking of security as a prevention tool, the need of the hour is to incorporate it into the product design from the beginning so that it will make the architect systems and processes impenetrable.

The key to a winning strike is the right digital partner: In the past, businesses have been using a hit and trial method with regard to choosing their digital partner and this approach has brought in more vulnerability to their sensitive data assets. As per a report by Vanson Bourne, organisations in the Asia Pacific and Japan, which were relying on more than one data protection solution provider, were almost four times more vulnerable to a cyber incident that prevents access to their data. Hence, in order to combat the external threats, businesses must choose a single technology partner that delivers multi-platform security.

While it is critical to invest in the right technologies, it has also become utmost important for businesses to ramp up their education and awareness levels to stay abreast with new security threats. Therefore, to end the constant tussle between finding the right data protection architecture and keeping up with the modern security approaches, CTOs must focus on strategies that redefine their data protection ecosystems from time to time.

(The writer is Director and General Manager, Data Protection Solutions, Dell Technologies)

WE WANT TO WORK WITH YOU TO REALLY RECOGNISE THE CHANGE IN CLIMATE AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR OUR FORESTS. WE CAN'T BURY OUR HEAD IN THE SAND. —CALIFORNIA SECRETARY FOR NATURAL RESOURCES WADE CROWFOOT

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



IT WILL ALL START GETTING COOLER SOON, YOU JUST WATCH. I DON'T THINK SCIENCE KNOWS, ACTUALLY —US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

The pleasures of victimhood

If impersonating was Jessica Krug’s way of legitimising herself as an academic, mobilising the disenfranchised and then representing them as perpetual victims is another



JYOTIRMAYA **TRIPATHY**

The recent confession of Professor Jessica Krug about her true identity may have outraged many. However, it offers an opportunity to re-evaluate what academics given to consciousness-raising often do. Krug, a historian teaching African history at George Washington University, admitted in a blog that she is a Jew born of White parents and has nothing to do with African-American Blackness, something which she had been claiming for a long time. She regretted that her action was “the very epitome of violence, of thievery and appropriation, of the myriad ways in which non-Black people continue to use and abuse Black identities and cultures.” In the same breath, Krug declared that she is no culture vulture but a culture leech. Her actions though have proved otherwise. Prior to her outing of herself in the blog, Krug had used a more African-sounding name (Jessica La Bombalera) in her activist avatar, and during a demonstration had questioned the gentrification of New York by calling out the “White New Yorkers” for having failed to spare a thought for Black and Brown New Yorkers. We don’t know what prompted her to come out as White though it is said that there were increasing murmurs about her identity that forced her to do so.

The knowledge market: On the face of it, a situation such as this is not representative of the academic environment in the US or India. This is where the present intervention marks its departure. Krug’s admission, no doubt, betrays her inability to fake it any longer, but more importantly, it reveals the malaise of contemporary academic knowledge production. The difference between usurping the voice of the weak (what academics do) and pretending to be the weak (what Krug did) is perhaps one of degree and not of kind. When Krug claimed to be a culture leech rather than a vulture, she was highlighting that subtle difference. We can be reasonably sure that Krug is not the first one and won’t be the last, at least until the academic market stops converting experience of marginality to elitist knowledge and suspends placing a premium on the dish of victimhood.

Those who see Krug’s problem as an individual transgression are either oblivious of what goes in the name of knowledge or are beneficiaries of such methods. Academic scholarship has often been obsessed with not just representing cultural difference but also in producing, controlling and owning it. Few questions are raised about the moral foundation of such knowledge. It is taken for granted that if cultural difference does not exist, it is to be invented and if academic knowledge has to sustain itself, “savage slots” are to be continuously filled. Krug took it one step further. Instead of being content with immersion or academic self-othering, or sponging on cultural difference of the Blacks like a leech, she chose to become indistinguishable from what she was writing about.

A few years ago, Harvard University had gone to the market advertising its culture of diversity by projecting Elizabeth Warren, a law professor who claimed to be a Cherokee Indian (and went on to have a thriving political career). The difference between birth identity and assumed identity may appear as academically adventurous and a cool way of moving beyond fixed identities, but in reality, and for the people whose identity is thus stolen, it is an act of violence. In a post-modern academic world, race is increasingly seen as a political invention rather

“KRUG CONVERTED THE BLACK EXPERIENCE TO SOME BARE CODES DEFINING BLACK AUTHENTICITY: ANGRY, VIOLENT, ABUSIVE. THAT IS WHAT SHE WAS DOING WHILE APPEARING AS JESSICA LA BOMBALERA. THE RESONANCE OF THIS MENTALITY IN INDIA IS NOT DIFFICULT TO FIND. DALITS AND MUSLIMS ARE OFTEN PROJECTED IN THE MEDIA AS ANGRY AND VIOLENT BECAUSE THAT IS THE ONLY WAY TO BE WEAK AND A MINORITY. BEING HELPLESS AND BEING VIOLENT ARE THE EXPRESSIONS OF THE SAME AUTHENTIC CORE”



than a frozen identity, thus creating a pathway for becoming someone else, or belonging without believing. That way, what Krug did was chic because she was making herself a trans-individual. But we all understand that Blackness as knowledge and Blackness as experience (not just individual but collective and communal) are different things. One is of romanticisation, appropriation, exoticisation, even silencing, and the other of everyday-ness and its struggle.

Though living the marginal life involves costs in real life — humiliation, powerlessness, sub-human life and so on — the academic world knows the benefits of being Black or minority, at least in the latter’s potential for being objects of knowledge. In the market of scholarship, victimhood sells and is safely monetised: Black or Coloured in America and Muslim or Dalit in India. Cultural difference and victimhood are a minefield of fame and money.

That said, the demonstrations over the death of George Floyd or over atrocities against Dalits reveal a mindset of remembering the victim only when they can be used as a medium of accumulating symbolic capital. It is not just about dehumanising and instrumentalising them for advancing one’s career but also the belief that being a victim pays. The willingness to barter away one’s identity, as Krug did, springs from the conviction that academic benefit from such impersonation outweighs the losses.

Imaginary victims: What Krug did not acknowledge in her confession is that her violence was not only directed as genuine Black experience but also at White experience. While faking to be Black, she was creating a template in which Whiteness is antagonistic to Blackness and so was perpetuating a race binary. She was reducing her own race by making it appear inflexible, intolerant, exclusivist and the negation of Black experience. Her impersonation implied that sincere appreciation

of Black history is not possible while being White. She also pandered to those radical elements who believe that genuine understanding of the other is possible only by denying one’s own authenticity. Her pretension perpetuated the academic world of make-believe that being majority is a matter of shame and its disavowal or degradation is necessary to speak for the weak.

Krug converted the Black experience to some bare codes defining Black authenticity: Angry, violent, abusive. That is what she was doing while appearing as Jessica La Bombalera. The resonance of this mentality in India is not difficult to find. Dalits and Muslims are often projected in the media as angry and violent because that is the only way to be weak and a minority. Being helpless and being violent are the expressions of the same authentic core. Academics like Krug not only stereotype or steal identity, they also create norms which guide victimhood. As long as the Black man is anti-police or a Muslim is anti-State or a Dalit is anti-Brahmin, they are authentic; a republican African-American is beyond this template as is a nationalist Indian Muslim.

An academic from Hunter College named Yariamar Bonilla said something very revealing about Krug, that the latter not only fooled others about being a woman of colour, but also into thinking that they are actually inferior, intellectually and politically. Krug was denying them their being, their worth outside her own writings and activism. What it reveals is that being a victim of violence has more moral, academic and perhaps political worth than being normal and majority.

So behind minority identity, its production and circulation, there is a political economy of cultural difference and of diversity that can be a passport to capital — economic or symbolic. Becoming the other involves a life-time of dedication to live another life. Krug must have internalised the new identity. In the acknowl-

edgment section of her book *Fugitive Modernities*, she thanked her “ancestors, unknown, unnamed, who bled life into a future they had no reason to believe could or should exist. ... Those whose names I cannot say for their own safety, whether in my barrio, in Angola, or in Brazil.” It may be mentioned here that Krug had received financial assistance for writing this book from Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

It is not important to know whether being White or feigning Blackness is better for being a scholar of African history. What is important is the knowledge itself — of victims and minority. As long as we are getting ethnic food in Delhi *haat* (market), it does not matter if the cook is White or Brown. There may be many service providers but the good/service is the same.

Impersonation as passport: If impersonating was Krug’s way of legitimising herself as an academic, making common cause with a supposedly discriminating law or mobilising the disenfranchised and then representing them as perpetual victims is another. The latter is much more rampant and a fairly common practice governing funding agencies that guide research on minority cultures. Though such politically engaged research may appear as a fight for an inclusive polity, it also betrays the desire to be the source of all cultural politics.

That partly explains Brahmin academics monopolising Dalit experiences. At a poetry reading session, a very fair-skinned Brahmin poet advocated “our own” Dravidian cause and how her Dravidian skin will always be a marker of her identity. She spoke with a flair even as her complexion struggled to adjust itself to the victim narrative. Playing around this politics of “we” and trying too hard to be someone else in order to be legitimised is an effort complementary to Krug’s.

(The writer is Professor, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Madras and a cultural critic.)

Why the double standards on demolition of holy places?

Will the global Muslim community raise its voice for the restoration of the holiest of Islam’s revered sites that were destroyed by the Wahhabis?



HASAN **KHURSHID**

The five centuries-old Babri Masjid in Ayodhya was demolished on December 6, 1992 by a Hindu mob, mostly comprising diehard *Kar Sevaks* (volunteers) of the Vishva Hindu Parishad led by Sangh Parivar leaders. Intellectuals across the globe, irrespective of caste, creed and religion condemned the demolition, as did the Supreme Court (SC). No sane person will justify the demolition of the Babri Masjid but the bigger heinous crimes of massacres, multiple demolitions and destruction of the holiest of religious and heritage sites, shrines, relics have taken place in Saudi Arabia. This was done at the behest of its Wahhabis/Salafi rulers of Zionist ancestry who, wearing the cloak of Islam, in the middle of the

18th century introduced a new and distorted version of the faith based on terrorism. The demolished and desecrated holiest of Islamic religious places included the birth place of Prophet Mohammad.

Wahhabism, the new, distorted version of Islam, aimed to capture worldwide political power using terrorism. The dreaded terrorist, Abu Bakr Baghdadi, is one such example of this diabolical plan. This negative ideology was created by one Sheikh Najdi ibn Abd-al-Wahhab, in association with a Bedouin tribal leader Muhammad-ibn-Saud. Wahhabi ideology should not be mistaken as Islam’s tenets, although its practitioners shrewdly camouflage their real identity under the cover of Sunni Islam and associate the names of their terror groups with typical Islamic names, such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), and so on.

Wahhabi ideology manifestly declares, “Follow my ideology, else get ready to be killed.” According to renowned British historian and writer Charles Allen, all dreaded terrorist organisations like the ISIS, the

Taliban, the Al-Qaeda, the Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Boko Haram, and so on, follow Wahhabi ideology. And, Abu Bakr Baghdadi’s ISIS, following the Wahhabi ideology alone, murdered more than 20 lakh people. A majority of them were Muslim youth in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and other parts of the world.

On December 6, 2019, the day marking the 27th anniversary of the demolition of Babri Masjid, several review petitions were filed in the SC by individuals who were party to the case. The pleas were supported by the All India Muslim Personal Law Board. Earlier, the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind had also filed a review petition against the order saying justice can be done only by ordering the Centre and the UP Government to build the mosque at the disputed site.

Surprisingly, the entire Muslim community across the globe, including the intellectuals, remained silent spectators when Saudi ruler Abd-al-Aziz, the son of Muhammad ibn Saud, who was also the son-in-law of Sheikh Muhammad Najdi ibn Abd-al-Wahab, the founder of Wahhabism, in 1802 attacked

Karbala in Iraq. He allowed the desecration of the shrine of Hazrat Imam Husain (grandson of Prophet Mohammad).

Giving the details of the attack, Charles Allen in his book, *God’s Terrorists: The Wahhabi Cult and the Hidden Roots of Modern Jihad*, has quoted Lieutenant Francis Warden who wrote, “They pillaged the whole of it and plundered the tomb of Hazrat Imam Husain, slaying in the course of the day, with circumstances of peculiar cruelty, about 5,000 of the inhabitants. A huge amount of booty was seized.”

In 1803, Abd-al Aziz ibn Saud obtained a visit permit from the Shareef of Mecca on the pretext of performing Haj, whereupon his Wahhabi fighters laid waste Islam’s holiest shrine the *Kaaba*, wherein Muslims across the globe perform the ritual of Haj. Abd-al Aziz ibn Saud followed in the footprints of Yazid who had earlier desecrated *Kaaba* in 682 AD.

According to TE Ravenshaw, author of *A Memorandum on the Sect of Wahhabees*, “They robbed the splendid tombs of the Mahomedan

saints, who were interred there and their fanatical zeal did not even spare the Prophet’s Mosque (in Medina), which they robbed of the immense treasures and costly furniture to which each Mahomedan Prince of Europe, Asia and Africa had contributed his share.”

In 1804, a Wahhabi gang crossed the great desert in the Hijaz and destroyed tombs of Prophet Mohammad’s family members at Jannat-ul-Baqi, the ancient cemetery of Medina, and even despoiled the grave of the prophet. After this, the Wahhabi gang reached Mecca and demolished another heritage site, the cemetery of Jannat-ul-Mualla, where the ancestors and other close relatives of Prophet Mohammad are interred. Again on April 21, 1925, Wahhabis demolished the shrine of Prophet Mohammad’s daughter Hazrat Fatima Zehra as well as those of his grandsons, namely Imam Hasan, Imam Zain ul Abideen and Imam Mohammad Baqir. The shrines are still lying demolished and the Saudi Government does not repair them or allow pilgrims to offer prayers at the revered sites.

Again in 2014, a leading Saudi academic had proposed to destroy the tomb of the Prophet Mohammad in Medina with the mala fide intention of removing the remains of the Prophet from there and burying them anonymously in the Jannat-ul-Baqi cemetery. However, the nefarious plan to destroy the tomb under the custody of Saudi monarch Abdullah was exposed by another academic, hence it could not be executed. Had it been executed, the motionless Muslims would have remained calm as the perpetrators were Wahhabis in Muslim attire and not people from any other religion.

In India, those who demolished the Babri Masjid are still facing trial in the Special CBI Court at Lucknow, under various sections of the Indian Penal Code. In all, there are 32 accused and the apex court has directed the Special CBI Court to conclude the hearing by September 30 this year. Till now the CBI has presented 351 witnesses before the court.

What legal action has the Saudi Government or the groups of

Muslim countries taken against the perpetrators of mass destruction and demolition of heritage and revered sites and massacres committed by Wahhabis feasting on Saudi petro dollars and spreading terrorism in the name of Islam? There is a deafening silence on that account.

The cacophony created by the Muslim leadership and millions of their followers on the matter of Babri Masjid may be based on the presumption that its perpetrators were Hindu bigots and the thugs behind the demolition of the holiest of Islamic sites, like the Jannat-ul-Baqi in Medina and the Jannat-ul-Mualla in Mecca, were Muslims. It matters little to them that the perpetrators of the crimes against Islam are Muslims just in name.

Will the global Muslim community raise its voice and take a conscious decision for the restoration of the holiest of Islam’s revered sites of religious and heritage importance that were systematically destroyed by the Wahhabis? If they don’t it will smack of hypocrisy and bigotry.

(The writer is a legal journalist and author)

PAK ‘EPICENTRE OF TERRORISM’: INDIA

Persecutes Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, says India at Geneva; slams OIC, Turkey, Pakistan over Kashmir

PTI ■ GENEVA

Describing Pakistan as an “epicenter of terrorism”, India has said that no one deserves an unsolicited lecture on human rights from Islamabad that has consistently persecuted its ethnic and religious minorities including Hindus, Sikhs and Christians.

Exercising the Right of Reply to the statements made by Pakistan at the 45th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) here, the Indian representative on Tuesday said that it has become habitual for Pakistan to malign India with false and fabricated narratives for its self-serving malicious purposes.

“Neither India nor others deserve this unsolicited lecture on human rights from a country that has consistently persecuted its ethnic and religious minorities, is an epicenter of terrorism, has the distinction of providing pensions to individuals on UN Sanctions list and has a Prime Minister who proudly admits training tens of thousands of terrorists to fight in Jammu & Kashmir,” the Indian diplomat said.

It was not surprising that other relevant multilateral institutions have been raising serious concerns on Pakistan’s failure to stop terror financing and lack of effective actions against all terror entities in Pakistan, India said.

Highlighting the nefarious designs of Pakistan in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), it said, “the mass influx of outsiders has whittled down the number of Kashmiris to an insignificant number in Pakistan occupied parts of Indian Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh”.

“In its zeal to reassert its theocratic ideology, it (Pakistan) has ensured that ethnic and religious minorities have no future through systematic persecution, blasphemy laws, forced conversions,

targeted killings, sectarian violence and faith-based discrimination,” India said. Thousands of Sikh, Hindu and Christian minority women and girls have been subjected to abductions, forced marriages and conversions in Pakistan, it said.

On the plight of people in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh, India said, “Not a single day has gone by when a family in Balochistan doesn’t find its members picked up or kidnapped by the security forces of Pakistan.”

“Pakistan does well when it comes to intimidation and attacks against journalists, human rights defenders and political dissidents in particular by its state machinery. It is not without a reason that Pakistan has been highlighted by international organisations as a country where journalists are slain and their killers go scot free,” India said.

India also slammed Pakistan for “abusing various HRC mechanisms and platforms for raising issues, which are extraneous to the mandate of the HRC and which relate to the internal affairs of India, with a view to distract the attention of the international community from serious human rights violations committed by it against its own people, including in Indian territories occupied by it”

India also rejected the reference made by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to Jammu & Kashmir, which is an integral part of India. “The OIC has no locus standi to comment on internal affairs of India. The OIC has allowed itself to be misused by Pakistan to subvert its own Agenda. It’s for the members of the OIC to decide if it is in their interests to allow Pakistan to do so,” it said.

India also advised Turkey to refrain from commenting on its internal affairs and develop a better understanding of the democratic practices.

He’s taking something: Trump accuses Biden of using drugs

AFF ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump, in his latest shredding of political niceties, suggested Tuesday that his Democratic opponent Joe Biden has taken drugs to improve his performance in debates. The Republican, who is well behind in national polls, initially insinuated during a Fox News interview that “something was strange” with what he saw as Biden’s improvement during the Democratic primary season debates.

Early on, when there were multiple Democratic candidates lined up on stage, Biden was “a disaster” and

“grossly incompetent,” Trump said. But at a later debate where Biden was one-on-one with leftist rival Bernie Sanders, “he was OK.”

Trump told Fox he didn’t want to say what he thought was the reason for the improvement. Seconds later, he did. “He’s taking something (that) you know, gives him some clarity, or whatever,” he said.

Trump repeated his demand that Biden should undergo a drug test before their first of three presidential debates scheduled for September 29.

“I would take one too,” he said. Biden responded by telling a Florida radio station “I’m looking for-

ward to the debate and he’s a fool. The comments are just foolish.”

Trump, 74, has for months tried to persuade voters that Biden, 77, is suffering from mental decline.

The former businessman cites Biden’s penchant for gaffes — which some believe to be linked to the Democrat’s lifelong struggle with stuttering — and his reluctance to face unscripted questioning from reporters. Trump — who takes questions from reporters almost daily but is known for his own frequently garbled and baffling statements — said, “Joe is lost. We can’t have a president that is mentally lost.”

Trump making dent in Indian-American vote bank: Survey

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has made inroads into the Indian-American vote bank, the biggest ever by a Republican president, according to a survey which has sent worrying signals to the Democrats that the support of this influential ethnic community can no longer be taken for granted.

The survey by Indiaspora and Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders (AAPI) Data on Tuesday showed that a majority of Indian-Americans still favour former vice president Biden, the Democratic Party’s nominee in the November 3 US presidential election.

It found that 74-year-old Trump, seeking re-election, is making a big dent into the Indian-American vote bank despite the fact that Biden has a strong relationship with the community and played a key role in bilateral ties over the past few decades. Biden, 77, also scripted history last month by selecting Senator Kamala Harris, 55, as his running mate.

According to the survey, 66 per cent Indian-Americans

currently favour Biden and 28 per cent favour Trump while six per cent were undecided.

Notably in the 2016 presidential election, 77 per cent voted for former US secretary Hillary Clinton, and 16 per cent for Trump. In 2012, as many as 84 per cent Indian-Americans voted for Barack Obama. Dr Karthick Ramakrishnan, professor of public policy and political science at University of California, Riverside and founder of AAPI Data who is author of the survey, said that the Indian-Americans’ support to Trump, in case of a swing of the undecided Indian-Americans, would probably reach the 30 per cent mark.

“Democrats absolutely should be concerned about making sure that they conduct sufficient outreach to the Indian-Americans,” Indian-American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi said. “The Democrats should conduct sufficient outreach to the different groups that comprise Indian-Americans, because every vote is going to count, especially in those battleground states as the survey result indicated,” he said.

Report: Biden holds lead over Trump among Indian-American voters

AGENCIES ■ SAN FRANCISCO/ WASHINGTON

Sixty-six per cent of Indian Americans currently favour Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden for the 2020 presidential election as compared to only 28 per cent who prefer President Donald Trump, according to a survey released on Tuesday.

Indiaspora, a nonprofit member organisation of global Indian diaspora leaders, and Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPPI) Data on Tuesday released their joint report on Indian American voters’ attitudes in the upcoming 2020 US presidential election.

“66 per cent of Indian Americans currently favour Vice President Biden, 28 per cent favour President Donald Trump, and 6 percent were undecided. In the 2016 presidential election, 77percent voted for Secretary Hillary Clinton, and 16 per cent voted for President Trump. If the remaining undecided voters broke in the same pattern as those who have madeup their mind, Joe Biden would secure 70 per cent of the vote, when compared to 30 per cent for Trump,” the report read.

Election experts project that Democrats should be worried about Indian American voters attrition considering the overall percentage number may have dropped down for the Democrats from the 84 per cent that supported Obama in 2012 and the 77 per cent who supported Hillary Clinton 2016

as compared to the 66 per cent supporting former Vice President Joe Biden. Meanwhile, President Trump’s vote share has gone up from 16 percent in 2016 to 28 per cent.

“I think Democrats absolutely should be concerned about making sure that they conduct sufficient outreach to Indian Americans that they conduct sufficient outreach to the different groups that comprise bases and Indian Americans because every vote is going to count especially in those battleground states,” said Raja Krishnamoorthi, a Democrat congressman.

An Indian American himself and representative from state of Illinois, Raja Krishnamoorthi further said that the states of Pennsylvania, Michigan, Florida and North Carolina could be a part of tipping factor this election. “And because of that I think the Joe Biden campaign has to be especially attentive,” Raja Krishnamoorthi further asserted. The survey report also documents the strengthening political power of the Indian American electorate in the U.S. due to factors such as their rapidly growing population and increased political participation. “With increased attention being paid to the Indian American vote given our growing numbers, increasing political contributions and overall political engagement, we wanted to shine a spotlight on the issues that really matter to Indian American voters,” said MR Rangaswami, founder of Indiaspora.

China sends 9 satellites into space in first sea-based commercial launch

Beijing: China has successfully sent nine satellites into orbit in its first commercial launch of a rocket from a platform at sea, state media reported on Wednesday.

The satellites, one of which belonged to video-sharing platform Bilibili, were deployed by a Long March 11 rocket from the Yellow Sea on Tuesday, media reported.

The Long March 11, designed to be deployed quickly and from mobile launch sites such as a ship, is mainly used to carry small satellites. The rocket made its first sea launch in June last year.

“Sea launch platforms will

increase the number of China’s launch areas, improve launch efficiency, and make launches safer and more flexible,” the official People’s Daily cited Li Zongli, director of the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center, as saying. China has three inland space launch centres, where used rocket stages return to earth and sometimes pose a danger to inhabited areas. Sea launches would reduce that risk.

China has made its space programme a top priority in recent years as it races to catch up with the United States and become a major space power by 2030.

Agencies



YOSHIIHIDE SUGA NAMED JAPAN’S PRIME MINISTER, SUCCEEDING ABE: Japan’s Parliament elected Yoshihide Suga as Prime Minister on Wednesday, replacing long-serving leader Shinzo Abe with his right-hand man. Suga, who was chief Cabinet secretary in Abe’s Government, is to launch his own Cabinet later Wednesday. (In pic) Yoshihide Suga, second from right, being appointed Japan’s new Prime Minister by Emperor Naruhito, left, during attestation ceremony at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, on Wednesday

AP

Just monkeying around: Primate takes phone, then selfies!

Kuala Lumpur: A Malaysian student whose cellphone was stolen while he was sleeping has tracked down the culprit: a monkey who took photo and video selfies with the device before abandoning it.

Zackrydz Rodzi, 20, said his phone was missing from his bedroom when he woke up Saturday. He found the phone’s casing under his bed but there was no sign of robbery in his house in southern Johor state. When his father saw a monkey the next day, he launched a search in the jungle behind his house. Using his brother’s phone to call the device, he found it covered in mud under a palm tree. But a bigger surprise came when he checked his phone and found a series of monkey selfies and videos recorded in the phone.

“My uncle was joking that maybe the monkey took some selfies with the phone... So when I checked my phone picture gallery, I was shocked. The suspect’s face was plastered on the screen. It was hilarious,” Zackrydz said.

AP

Israel strikes Gaza after rocket fire during US ceremony


Jerusalem: The Israeli military struck Hamas militant sites in the Gaza Strip early on Wednesday in response to rocket fire toward Israel the previous night that coincided with the signing of normalisation agreements between Israel and two Arab countries at the White House.

The barrage against Israel began on Tuesday night just as the ceremony in Washington was getting underway to formalize the new agreements with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. Two Israelis were lightly wounded.

The rocket fire continued overnight, with sirens sounding across southern Israel. The military said five projectiles landed in open areas with the rest intercepted by Israel’s rocket defense system.

In response, the military said it struck about 10 sites belonging to Gaza’s militant Hamas rulers, including a weapons and explosives manufacturing factory, underground infrastructure and a military training compound.

AP

<div>  CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED </div> <div> <div>Corporate Office: No.2, Dare House, 1st Floor, NSC Bose Road, Chennai 600 001.</div> <div>Branch Office: 1st & 2nd Floor, Plot No.6, Main Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110 005.</div> </div>								
DEMAND NOTICES ISSUED TO THE FOLLOWING BORROWERS UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION & RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002								
S. No.	No. of Loan	Account No.	Name of The Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor	Address	Secured Asset	Date of Demand Notice	Loan Amount	Amount Outstanding
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
1.	23/06/2008	XOHEDE0000347428	1. Dayanand Besoya 2. Jaspal Besoya	85, Pakash Mohalla East of Kailash Delhi 110 065.	Property Bearing Municipal No.226-B/5a, Measuring 194 Sq Yds., (Said Portion) Of The Property Measuring 300 Sq.Yds., Out Of Khassa No. 182/150 Min, Situated At Prakash Mohalla, East Of Kailash, Village Garhi (Jharia Maria), Delhi.	31.07.2020	Rs. 50,00,000/-	Rs.56.52,848.57 as on 28.02.2020 with further interest thereon
2.	03/05/2018 & 23/05/2018	XOHEDE0000248723 & XOHEDE0000243215	1. Faruk Malik 2. Parveen Begam 3. M/s V R Enterprises 4. Shahid V	H.No-B-58-59, Shalimar Garden, Sahitabad, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201005. F-71, BLK-F, Seelampur Shahdara New Delhi-110 053.	Portion of Plot No. B-58 & 59 area measuring 100 sq. Yds., i.e. 83.61 sq. mtr., "Said Portion" out of entire land 200 sq.yds, situated in the residential colony Known as Shalimar Garden main, Village Pasonda, Pargana Loni Teh. & Dist. Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh.	20.03.2020	Rs. 50,00,000/-	Rs.48.32,624.14 as on 28.02.2020 with further interest thereon
3.	31/12/2014 & 27/10/2016	XOHEDE00001337410 & XOHEDE00001181686	1. Jaideep Singh 2. Kuldeep Kumar 3. Sheetal Devi 4. M/s Gautam Hardware And Paints	RZ-701, Palam Village, Gali No-8, Raj Nagar-1, Palam Colony, Delhi - 110 045.	Property 1: Plot No. RZ-691/A1, area measuring 50 sq.yds, out of Khassa No.64/12/1 & 13/4 & 18/2, Situated in Village Palam, Known as Raj Nagar Part-I Palam Colony New Delhi. Property 2: Plot No. RZ-698, area measuring 31.5 sq.mtrs (37.1/2 sq.yds.) out of Khassa No.64/12/1, Situated in Village Palam, Known as Raj Nagar Part-I Palam Colony New Delhi.	20.03.2020	Rs. 62,00,554/-	Rs.22,24,917.14 as on 28.02.2020 with further interest thereon
4.	31/01/2014 & 16/03/2015	XOHEDE0001135654 & XOHEDE0000133160	1. Manoj Mendirata 2. Bhaja Ram 3. Deepika Mendirata	H.No.2 N 3, NIT Ward No.8, Block-N, Faridabad, Haryana 121 001.	Back side portion of property bearing No.2-N/3 area measuring 240 sq.yds. NIT Faridabad. Haryana.	20.03.2020	Rs. 78,72,980/-	Rs.56.32,710.18 as on 28.02.2020 with further interest thereon
5.	29/04/2014 & 26/04/2018	XOHEDE0001191981 & XOHEDE0000238622	1. Ramesh Chand 2. Sunita M 3. M/s Vansh Enterprises	2053, Sec-3, Ballab Garh, Market Faridabad, Haryana 121 003.	Property No.2053, HIG on Ground Floor, area Admeasuring 140.69 sq yds, in Sector-3 Housing Board Colony, Faridabad, Haryana,	20.03.2020	Rs. 75,00,000/-	Rs.30.58,569.66 as on 28.02.2020 with further interest thereon
6.	31/05/2013	XOHEDE0000954592	1. Ravi Kumar Bansal 2. Sneh Lata Bansal	AM-141, S/F, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi 110 088.	Property No. 167, Entire First Floor, Block AB, Admeasuring 68.75 Sq.Mtr., Shalimar Bagh, Delhi.	31.07.2020	Rs. 70,00,000/-	Rs.98.69,516.05 as on 28.02.2020 with further interest thereon
7.	30/03/2018, 30/01/2019 & 31/07/2019	XOHEDE000238924, XOHEDEF00000954592 & XOHEDEF0002783152	1. Vimla Sharma 2. Nikunj Kumar Sharma 3. M/s Sharma General Store 4. M/s Yaksh Cosmetics	H.No-5/79, Gajju Katra Bada Bazar, S.o. Shahdara New Delhi 110 032. Shop No-452 A, Anaj Mandi Shahdara New Delhi 110 032. Shop No. 453, Bara Bazar, Shahdara New Delhi 110 032.	Property Bearing No.V/78 & V/79 area measuring 33.61 sq.yds, out of Khassa No.642 situated in the area of village Chandrawali alias Shahdara in the abadi of Gajju Katra Illaga Shahdara Delhi. Bounded as East- Property of others, West- Property No.79, North-Property of others, South- Gali and Property of others.	20.03.2020	Rs. 74,00,000/-	Rs.76.34,316.94 as on 28.02.2020 with further interest thereon

The Under signed is the Authorised Officer of Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limitedhereinafter called the secured creditor, under Rule 2(a) of the Security Interest [Enforcement] Rules framed under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

In pursuant to loan agreement on the dates mentioned in column [A] the above named borrowers in column [C] residing at the address in column [D] were sanctioned loans indicated in column [G] in loan account number indicated in column [B]. Towards the due repayment of loan, equitable mortgage by deposit of title deeds of the assets in column [E] was created by the borrowers.

On persistent default in repayment of the loan amount the loan accounts of the borrowers have been classified by the secured creditor as Non Performing Asset in accordance with the directions and guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India. Consequently notice under Sec. 13(2) of the Act was also issued to each of the borrowers on the dates mentioned in column [F], which have been returned undelivered.

I state that under section 13 [B] of the Securitisation Act, you can redeem the secured asset by payment of the entire outstanding including all costs, charges and expenses before notification of sale.

In view of the above, the above named borrowers are called upon to discharge in full their liabilities towards the Secured Creditor by making the payment of the entire outstanding indicated in Column [H] above including up to date interest, costs, and charges within 60 days from the date of notice, failing which, the secured creditor shall be entitled to take possession of the Secured Asset and shall also take such other actions as are available to the Secured Creditor in law. In the absence of full discharge of dues even after the transfer of secured assets the secured creditor reserves its right to proceed against the borrowers before a Sole Arbitrator, in terms of the Loan Agreement

In addition the above named borrowers shall not alienate by way of transfer, sale, lease or otherwise or create third party interest or dealing with the Secured Asset in column [E] mentioned against the name of the each borrowers in any manner except with specific prior written permission of the Secured creditor.

Date : 17.09.2020
Place : Delhi

Sd/- Authorized Officer

Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited

NORTHERN RAILWAY	
NOTICE INVITING TENDER	
Name of work and its location	30-Elect-24-T-2020-21-E3
Electrical work in connection with replacement of over head with underground cable & augmentation of power supply arrangement with other allied works at S.P. Marg.	
Approx cost of the works in	Rs. 72.98 lacs
Address of the office	Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.
Earnest Money	Rs. 146000.00
Date & time of submission of tender	12.10.2020, 13.00 Hrs.
Opening of tender	12.10.2020, 13.00 Hrs
Website & notice board	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/ General, New Delhi.
2010/20	
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority	
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.) Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com	
E-TENDER NOTICE	
E-Tender are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow 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 & https://etender.up.nic.in . Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.	
(A)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 28/GM/SM(WC-2)/2020-21, Name of Work:- M/o Drain (Construction of RCC drain and culvert in F-Block Sector-27) Noida Cost-Rs. 45.39 Lacs 34/GM/SM(WC-10)/2020-21, Name of Work:- Annual Maintenance of Road in Work Circle-10, Area, Noida Cost-Rs. 28.97 Lacs
Which can be uploaded by date 05.10.2020 upto 5.00 P.M. Pre-qualification shall be opened / downloaded on date 06.10.2020 at 11.00 AM. General Manager NOIDA	
CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA	

J&K PROJECTS CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LTD. (A J&K Govt. Undertaking)
e-NIT No: 33/E/J of 2020-21 Dt. 07.09.2020
On behalf of Managing Director, Jammu & Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation Ltd., the Deputy General Manager, Unit Electrical, JKPCCLtd. Jammu invites e-tenders from approved and eligible electric contractors registered with JKPCCLtd./J&K Govt./CPWD/Railways and other State/Central Govt. undertaking for the following work:
S.No 1. Name of Work :- Internal Electrification work for Workshop Block, Polytechnic College at Udhampur.
Estimated Cost (Rs. in Lacs) :- Rs. 13.50 Lacs, Cost of document :- Rs. 1,000/-, Earnest Money (Rs) :- Rs. 27,000/-, Time of completion :- In tandem with civil works, Class of Contractor :- "A"
Qualification criteria, scope of work, tender documents, BOQ and all other terms & conditions can be seen and downloaded from www.jktenders.gov.in .
Critical Dates:
1. Period of downloading of NIT :- 09.09.2020. to 30.09.2020 upto 1400 Hrs.
2. Pre-Bid Meeting :- 16.09.2020 at 1230 Hrs. in Office of Deputy General Manager, Unit- Electrical, JKPCCLtd., Rail Head Complex, Jammu
3. Bid submission dates along with proof of cost of Tender Document and EMD :- 09.09.2020 to 30.09.2020 upto 1400 Hrs
4. Date of opening of Technical Bid :- 01.10.2020 at 1230 Hrs. in Office of Deputy General Manager, Unit- Electrical, JKPCCLtd., Rail Head Complex, Jammu
5. Hard Copies of Technical Bid will be invited from L1 only Any other information regarding e-tendering process can be had from the office of undersigned or e-tendering Cell, Jammu.
Sd/- Deputy General Manager, Unit -Electrical, JKPCCLtd. Jammu.
No.DIP/J-1638-P/20 Dated: 15.09.2020

Economic recovery still not well entrenched: RBI Guv

New Delhi: RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday said economic recovery is still not well entrenched and that the central bank is "battle ready" to take appropriate measures to support growth.

Addressing a virtual conference organised by industry body Ficci, Das said that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data released by the government was a "reflection of the ravages of the COVID-19".

The economy contracted 23.9 per cent during the April-June quarter on account of the strict lockdown imposed by the government towards end of March to check the spread of coronavirus infections.

"Nevertheless, high frequency indicators of agricultural activity, the purchasing managers' index that is PMI for manufacturing and certain private estimates on unemployment point to some stabilisation of economic activity in the second quarter of the current year, while of course contractions in several other sectors are also simultaneously easing," he said.

However, Das said that the economic recovery was not yet fully entrenched and also that the recovery is likely to be gradual.

"The recovery is, however, not yet fully entrenched and moreover, in some sectors, the uptick, which was noticed in June and July they appear to have

levelled off. By all indications the recovery is likely to be gradual as efforts towards the reopening of the economy are confronted with rising infections," he said.

At the same time, Das assured the industry that the RBI stands "battle ready" and whatever measures are required will be taken to support liquidity, growth and control price rise.

According to him, the immediate policy response to COVID-19 in the country has been to prioritise the stabilisation of the economy and support quick recovery policies for durable and sustainable high growth in the medium term post the coronavirus. **PTI**

Banking regulation Bill taking Urban Co-Operative banks under RBI passed in Lok Sabha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill bringing the Urban Co-Operative Banks under the supervision of the Reserve Bank of India to protect the interest of depositors. The Bill was supported by many opposition parties including Shiv Sena while the Congress and the Trinamool Congress objected that the Bill intended to usurp the State's power in the co-operative sector.

Replying to opposition, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the bill is only intended to protect the depositors and only apply to

the banking operation of the Co-operative Banks and not applicable to primary agricultural credit societies.

"This is not the first time RBI intervening into the banking operations co-operative banks. From 1965, RBI issued many circulars on this regard. Many urban co-operative banks are facing serious problems like NPA and many wound up losing money of the depositors. Those functioning as Banks must work as Commercial Banks and RBI rules must apply on them," she said.

She also clarified that co-operative banks engaged in land mortgage will come under the RBI supervision since it is a banking activity.

Govt working on setting up single window system for clearances: Goyal

New Delhi: The Government is working on setting up a single window system for clearances and approvals of industry, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said despite the presence of several IT platforms for investing in India such as in departments of the central government, and state single window clearances, investors have to visit multiple platforms to gather information and obtain clearances from different stakeholders.

To address this, he said, the creation of a centralised investment clearance cell which would provide end-to-end facilitation

support, including pre-investment advisory, information related to land banks and facilitating clearances at central and state level, was proposed.

"The government is working on setting up a Single Window System for clearances and approvals of industry in the country," he said.

He also said the cell is being planned as a one-stop digital platform to obtain all requisite central and state clearances/approvals to start business operations in India.

The investment clearance cell will be a national portal that integrates the existing clearance systems of various ministries/departments of the government and of states. **PTI**

5G services relying on equipment, eco, telcos' economic consideration: Govt

New Delhi:The Government on Wednesday informed Parliament that introduction of 5G services in the country will depend on equipment, device ecosystem and economic considerations by telecom operators.

The Government also said that State-owned BSNL and MTNL have not planned introducing 5G services yet on their networks.

Minister of State for Telecommunications Sanjay Dhotre, in a written reply to a question on the 5G rollout, said, "5G services depends on 5G equipment and device ecosystem, and economic considerations by the telecom service providers." **PTI**

94 phishing incidents reported during Jan-Aug 2020: Dhotre

New Delhi:A total of 194 phishing incidents and two financial fraud incidents affecting ATMs, cards, point-of-sale (PoS) systems and Unified Payment Interface (UPI) were reported between January-August this year, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

As per the information reported to and tracked by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), a total of 454, 472 and 194 phishing incidents were observed during the year 2018, 2019 and 2020 (till August) respectively, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Sanjay Dhotre said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

"Further, a total of 6, 4 and 2 financial fraud incidents affect-

ing ATMs, Cards, Point-of-Sale (PoS) systems and Unified Payment Interface (UPI) have been reported during the year 2018, 2019 and 2020 (till August) respectively," he added.

Dhotre said cyber space is a complex environment of people, software, hardware and services on the Internet.

"With a borderless cyberspace coupled with the possibility of instant communication and anonymity, the potential for misuse of cyberspace including identity theft, creation of fake e-mails and websites is a global issue," he added.

He noted that the Government has taken several steps to prevent such cyber security incidents. **PTI**

SBI, Titan launch contactless payment watches

Mumbai: State Bank of India (SBI) and Titan Company have partnered to introduce a range of Titan Pay watches powered by YONO, the lender's mobile banking app.

These watches will have contactless payment functions. With this launch, account holders of the bank can tap their Titan Pay watch on contactless payment point-of-sale (POS) machines without the need of swiping or inserting their debit card, the bank said in a statement.

"We believe this innovative offering will redefine the shopping experience for our customers with tap and pay technology.

India's GDP to contract by 8.6 pc in FY21, fiscal stimulus needed soon: UBS Securities

Mumbai:Swiss brokerage UBS Securities said it forecasts a GDP contraction of 8.6 per cent in FY21 as against its earlier prediction of 5.8 per cent, citing factors including the "modest" government response to the crisis for its estimate.

It said the country's potential rate of growth has also come down to 5.75-6.25 per cent as per its estimate as against 7.1 per cent, driven by factors including the weak government response to arrest the growth slide.

Some improvement is being observed in the high frequency data, but much of it is pent-up demand and economic recovery will be "gradual" after the September quarter, its chief economist Tanvee Gupta Jain told reporters.

It can be noted that the country's gross domestic product (GDP) shrunk by nearly a fourth in the June quarter as the COVID-19 pandemic fuelled lockdowns chilled all economic activity. The infections continued to increase, making India the second most affected country.

Jain said the modest recovery which we are seeing right now cannot be sustained because of the rising infections and also income uncertainty, which is holding back people from consumption in the economy that relies 60 per cent on consumption."We are a little bearish as against the consensus and feel that the GDP will contract by 8.6 per cent in FY21 before growing by 10 per cent in FY22," she said.

Markets build on gains ahead of Fed decision; Nifty reclaims 11,600

Mumbai:Equity benchmarks darted up for the second straight session on Wednesday as banking, auto and IT stocks saw robust buying amid mixed global cues. A strengthening rupee and supportive comments by the RBI Governor also bolstered investor sentiment, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 258.50 points or 0.66 per cent to close at 39,302.85. The broader NSE Nifty rose 82.75 points or 0.72 per cent to finish at 11,604.55.

M&M was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, climbing 4.24 per cent, followed by Bajaj Auto, Sun Pharma, HDFC Bank, Infosys, L&T and UltraTech Cement.

On the other hand,

IndusInd Bank, NTPC, SBI, ONGC, Bharti Airtel and Axis Bank were among the laggards, skidding up to 1.80 per cent.

According to traders, stock-specific action and sustained foreign fund inflows drove domestic equities higher, despite mixed cues from global markets ahead of the US Federal Reserve's policy outcome. Foreign institutional investors bought equities worth Rs 1,170.89 crore on a net basis on Tuesday, exchange data showed.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday said economic recovery is still not well entrenched and that the central bank is "battle ready" to take appropriate measures for liquidity and growth. **PTI**

Rupee gains 12 paise to 73.52 on weak dollar, firm equities

Mumbai:The rupee strengthened by 12 paise to settle at 73.52 against the US dollar on Wednesday supported by positive domestic equities and weak American currency. At the interbank forex market, the local unit witnessed high volatility against the US dollar ahead of the US Federal Reserve's policy statement that will be released later in the day. During the session, the domestic unit touched an intra-day high of 73.48 and a low of 73.78 against the greenback. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.12 per cent to 92.94. **PTI**

₹1.06 lakh cr tax refunds issued to 30.92L taxpayers till Sept 15: CBDT

New Delhi: The income tax department on Wednesday said it has issued refunds of over Rs 1.06 lakh crore to more than 30 lakh taxpayers between April 1 to September 15. This includes personal income tax (PIT) refunds amounting to Rs 31,741 crore issued to 29.17 lakh taxpayers and corporate tax refunds worth Rs 74,729 crore to over 1.74 lakh taxpayers.

"CBDT issues refunds of over Rs 1,06,470 crore to more than 30.92 lakh taxpayers between 1st April, 2020 to 15th September, 2020.

"Income tax refunds of Rs 31,741 crore have been issued in 29,17,169 cases & corporate tax refunds of Rs 74,729 crore have been issued in 1,74,633 cases," the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) tweeted.The government has emphasised on providing tax-related services to taxpayers without any hassles and has been clearing up pending tax refunds. **PTI**

Economic activities revived with phased unlocking since June 1, says Govt

New Delhi: The Government on Wednesday said with the phased unlocking of the Indian economy, high frequency economic indicators like PMI manufacturing, index of eight core industries, kharif sowing and power consumption have recovered since June 1.

Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said in the Rajya Sabha that the strict lockdown, first announced on March 24, was effective in containing the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

"With the phased unlocking of the Indian economy since June 1, 2020, high frequency economic indicators like PMI Manufacturing, index of eight core industries, E-way bills, Kharif sowing, power consumption, railway freight, cargo traffic and

passenger vehicle sales have recovered and indicate growing convergence with previous year's activity levels," he said in a written reply to a question.

Rai said the lockdown helped the country in bringing down the growth rate of the infection and reduced transmission of the contagious disease. This had a direct impact on reduction in case load, morbidity and mortality. In addition, the slowing down of the pandemic helped the country in augmenting its health infrastructure, he said. **PTI**

Govt to bring out strategy paper on boosting industrial growth: Goyal

New Delhi: The Government is in the process of bringing out a strategy paper on boosting industrial growth which will be a road map for all businesses in the country, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said the government is in the process of rationalising the existing central labour laws into four labour codes -- on wages; industrial relations; occupational safety, health and working conditions; and social security by simplifying, amalgamating and rationalising the relevant provisions of the existing central labour laws.

The Code on Wages has been

India's exports of PPE Kits, masks, sanitisers during April-August 2020 stood at USD 632.23 million

approved and notified, he added.

"The government is in the process of bringing out a strategy paper on boosting industrial growth which will be a road map for all businesses in the country," he said.

In a separate reply, he said an EFC (Expenditure Finance Committee) note on startup India seed fund scheme, with a total proposed corpus of Rs 945 crore, has been formulated by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

(DPIIT).

"The EFC note was circulated for inter-ministerial consultations to the concerned departments/ ministries," he said, adding that the note has been finalised.

He also said that since the launch of Startup India initiative on January 16, 2016, a total of 36,106 startups have been recognised by DPIIT in 586 districts, as on September 6.

"A total number of 4,22,986 employment has been reported by 34,267 DPIIT recognised startups as on September 6," he added.

In a separate reply, the minister said India's exports of PPE Kits, masks, sanitisers during April-August 2020 stood at USD 632.23 million. **PTI**

Beyond fundraising, tariff hike-led ARPU improvement must for VIL: Report

New Delhi: Vodafone Idea will need a rise in ARPU to meet its obligations in the long run, and without undertaking tariff hike, its cash from current fundraising will sustain operations till the end of the financial year 2022-23, according to a report.

Tariff hike is imminent to fund Voda Idea's financial obligations and capex (capital expenditure) plans, Axis Capital has said in its latest report.

"We think that despite the fund raise, Vi (Vodafone Idea) will require ARPU (average revenue per user) increase to meet its cash flow obligations in the long run," it said and added that in absence of tariff hike, cash from current fund raise will sustain operations till end of FY23. **PTI**

ADB to fund 58-km-long airport metroline in Bangalore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has agreed to partially fund the 58-km-long airport metro line in Bangalore from Central Silk Board Junction to Kempegowda International Airport. The Karnataka government has asked the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for early approval of the proposal along with Detailed Project Report (DPR) for implementation of Phase 2A (18.236 kms) and 2B (36.511 km) of Bangalore Metro Rail Project. According to Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation (BMRC), financial bids for phase 2A are yet to be opened while the last date to submit bids for phase 2B has been recently extended upto October 16.

In a written reply to Rajya

Air India earned over ₹2,550 crore revenue from Vande Bharat flights till Aug 31: Puri

New Delhi:Air India earned a revenue of Rs 2556.60 crore from flights that have been operated under the Vande Bharat mission till August 31, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said.

Scheduled international passenger flights have been suspended in India since March 23 due to the coronavirus pandemic. However, the Central government started the mission from May 6 to help people stranded in different countries reach their destinations through special international flights.

"As on 31.08.2020, the total number of inbound and outbound special repatriation

flights undertaken by the Air India group was 4,505," Puri said in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha.

Out of a total of about 11 lakh Indian nationals repatriated till August 31, about four lakh passengers were carried by the Air India group into India, the minister mentioned.

In addition, the Air India group also carried about 1.9 lakh outbound passengers (including foreigners) to foreign destinations from India, the minister noted.

"The revenue generated by Air India group from Vande Bharat flights up to 31.08.2020 is Rs 2556.60 crore," Puri stated. **PTI**

KVIC to begin online booking of Lakshmi-Ganesh idols, earthen lamps

Varanasi:The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) will soon start online booking for delivering idols of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesh as well as earthen lamps for Diwali celebrations. This is a step towards promoting local products and replacing Chinese items.

Potters, mainly from Varanasi region, will play a key role in KVIC's venture, which entered the e-commerce industry in July, with handmade paper packaging materials to prevent plastic pollution. **IANS**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Sh. Sukhbir Singh Verma S/o Late. Sh. Tej Singh Verma R/o House No. G-63, Sector-56, Noida, District-Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. Died On 14/02/2020. As per his last will and testament dated 05/11/2014 duly registered with the office of Sub Registrar-1 Noida on 05/11/2014 Vide Book No. II, Volume No 477 On Pages 181 to 192 At Document Serial No 2201 property residential plot/house No. G-63, Sector-56, Noida, District-Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh is being transferred to Mr. Lalit Verma S/o Sh. Sukhbir Singh Verma R/o House No. G-63, Sector-56, Noida, District-Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. Anyone having any objection may inform to Residential Plots Division, New Okhla Industrial Development Authority, Sector-06, Noida within 30 Days of publication of this notice with relevant valid legal documents in support of his/her their objection. False Declaration/ Document or perjury is a criminal offence and may attract legal action against the defaulter/guilty.

Lalit Verma

WESTERN RAILWAY

LAYING & LINKING OF LOOPLINES & VARIOUS OTHER WORKS

Dy. Chief Engineer (Construction) II, Western Railway, Pratapnagar, Vadodra - 390 004, invites tenders for the execution of the works given as follows:
Tender No. Dy.CE/CI/III BRC/MYG-DB-SMLA/22 (R2). Name of Work : Laying and linking of BG/NG for main & loop lines including points & crossing at various yards, Transportation of P-way materials, spreading of ballast, ramping of track, dismantling of existing BG/NG track & Points & Crossing, flash butt / SKV welding and other incidental miscellaneous works between Miyagam (including Yard) and Dabhoi (Including Yard) in connection with "Gauge Conversion of existing NG track to BG track between Miyagam - Dabhoi - Samlaya Section.
Approximate Cost of Work : ₹ 883.85 Lakhs.
Availability of Online Tender for Bidding : From 05/09/2020 at 10.00 hrs. to 19/10/2020 up to 15.00 hrs.
Date & Time of Opening : 19/10/2020 at 15.30 hrs.
Regarding detailed notice containing cost of tender document (non-refundable), EMD eligibility criteria, Similar Nature of Work, detailed tender conditions, please visit www.irfps.gov.in Manual offers will not be considered.

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Total tax collection falls 22.5% till Sept 15: Source

Mumbai: Total tax collection of the Centre, including advance tax collection for the second quarter, fell 22.5 per cent to Rs 2,53,532.3 crore till September 15 of the current fiscal as compared to the year-ago period, according to an income tax department source. The source shared some details about the provisional data. During the same period ended September 15, 2019, total tax collection stood at Rs 3,27,320.2 crore, the income tax department source from Mumbai zone told PTI over phone on Wednesday.

However, the source refused to share the advance tax numbers separately for the current quarter. The numbers are provisional as banks will be able to update the final data by the end of the day, the source said. During the first quarter ended June, gross tax collections fell 31 per cent driven down by a massive 76 per cent plunge in advance tax mop-up, as the country was in a full lockdown due to the pandemic.

Of the total collection till September 15, when taxpayers, both individuals and companies, are supposed to pay advance tax for the quarter, personal income tax at the national level stood at ₹1,47,004.6 crore and corporate tax at ₹99,126.2 crore, totalling the two major components of the tax revenue at ₹2,46,130.8 crore, the source said. **PTI**

Indo-China trade deficit dips to USD 5.48 bn in April-June

New Delhi:The trade deficit between India and China in April-June this fiscal year fell to USD 5.48 billion as compared to USD 13.1 billion in the same period last year, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

In a written reply, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said the bilateral trade between the countries too dipped to USD 16.55 billion during the first three months of 2020-21 as against USD 21.42 billion in the same period last year.

"Government has consistently taken steps to balance our trade with China by increasing our exports to China and reducing our dependence on imports from China," he said. **PTI**

In a separate reply, the minister said at present, about 550 tariff lines (or products) are under the restricted/prohibited category for imports under the Foreign Trade Policy. Imports of these products are restricted from all countries, including China.

Replying to a separate question, he said merchandise exports from special economic zones (SEZs) dipped to Rs 81,481 crore during April-August, 2020 as against Rs 1,30,129 crore in the same period of 2019-20.

"However, services exports have shown a growth of 9 per cent during April to August 2020 in comparison to corresponding period of previous year," he added. **PTI**

BAJAJ HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED

Registered Office: Mumbai-Pune Road, Akurdi, Pune, Maharashtra-411035. Branch Office: 14th Floor, Aggarwal Metro heights, Netaji Subhash Palace, New Delhi, 110034

PUBLIC NOTICE

Please take notice that the original 1. BUILDER BUYER AGREEMENT DATED 15TH APRIL 2013 EXECUTED BETWEEN BPTP LTD. & PINKY YADAV. 2. ALLOTMENT LETTER DATED 14 DECEMBER 2012 IN THE NAME OF PINKY YADAV FOR THE PROPERTY BEARING NUMBER 74-1204, PARK GENERATIONS, SECTOR-37 D, GURUGRAMHARYANA. 3. PAYMENT RECEIPTS FOR THE PAYMENTS MADE BY PINKY YADAV TO THE BPTP LTD 4. TRI-PARTE AGREEMENT & PERMISSION TO MORTGAGE TRI-PARTE AGREEMENT EXECUTED BETWEEN BPTP LTD., PINKY YADAV & BAJAJ HOUSING FINANCE LTD. & LETTER OF PERMISSION TO MORTGAGE THE PROPERTY, 5. NOC, NOC ISSUED TO PINKY YADAV TOWARDS THE LOAN CLOSURE & BALANCE TRANSFER BY ICICI BANK LTD, since been submitted as collateral security against loan to Bajaj Housing Finance Limited (BHFL) has been misplaced/lost from the custody of BHFL and duly reported vide LR No:536952/2020 dt. 02/09/2020 at CRIME BRANCH Police Station.

Any person having found the same or any bank, company, institution having the same deposited with them or anybody having any claim/object against the said property, please contact the undersigned with documents in proof thereof within 15 days from date of publication of this notice.

UDIT MEHRA, S/D/W/O SUNIL MEHRA, BAJAJ HOUSING FINANCE LTD, 14TH FLR, AGGARWAL METRO HEIGHTS, NETAJI SUBHASH PLACE DELHI 110034

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one female namely **Pooja Shukla W/o Sh. Sujeet Shukla** R/o Plot No.38, 1st Floor, Gali No. 12, C-Block Kamal Vihar, Kamalpur, Delhi, has been missing/ kidnapped from the area of P.S. Burari, Delhi since 25.08.2020. In this regard, a case **DD No. 155A dated 25.08.2020 has been registered at P.S. Burari, Delhi.** The description of the missing female is as under.

POOJA SHUKLA

Age: 28 Years, **Complexion:** Fair, **Height:** 4' 10", **Face:** Round, **Built:** Strong, **Wearing:** Red and Black colour printed Saree and sleeper in feet. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out her but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing/kidnapped female then please inform P.S. Burari, Delhi at following Tel No./ e-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in and Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641 Fax No. 011-24368639

Sd/- S.H.O. P.S. Burari, Delhi Ph: 011-2761 6845

DP/516/N/2020

MY MONEY SECURITIES LIMITED						
REGD. OFF : 10-A, UNDERHILL LANE, CIVIL LINES, DELHI-110054						
CIN : L67120DL1992PLC047890;						
Website : www.mymoneyviews.com; E-mail id : mymoneyviews@outlook.com;						
Tel. No.: 011-23937870; Tel. No.: 011-23937870;						
Extract of the Standalone Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter ended 30th June, 2020 (Rs. In Lacs)						
S. NO.	Particulars	Quarter Ended 30.06.2020 Unaudited	Quarter Ended 31.03.2020 Audited	Quarter Ended 30.06.2019 Unaudited	Quarter Ended 31.03.2020 Audited	Year Ended 31.03.2020
1	Total Income from operations (net)	19.65	(42.93)	(13.80)	(27.51)	
2	Net Profit/(Loss) from Ordinary Activities after tax	0.38	(84.94)	(36.77)	(147.18)	
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Extraordinary items)	0.38	(84.94)	(36.77)	(147.18)	
4	Total comprehensive Income for the period (comprising profit/(loss) for the period after tax and other comprehensive income after tax	0.38	(84.94)	(36.77)	(147.18)	
5	Equity Share Capital	1000.03	1000.03	1000.03	1000.03	
6	Earning per share (after extraordinary items) (of Rs. 10/- each) Basic Diluted	0.004 0.004	(0.849) (0.849)	(0.368) (0.368)	(1.471) (1.471)	
7	Earning per share (after extraordinary items) (of Rs. 10/- each) Basic Diluted	0.004 0.004	(0.849) (0.849)	(0.368) (0.368)	(1.471) (1.471)	
Note : The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange websites. (www.bseindia.com) and company website www.mymoneyviews.com For and on behalf of the Board of Directors						
Place : Delhi Dated : 15/09/2020						Sanjay Seth Whole Time Director DIN : 00350518

Trend
Blazer

‘Love the lockdown life’


Actor **SONAKSHI SINHA** says she is not fretting about getting back to work or how the industry will change in the COVID era.

The actor shared that she is loving the lockdown life for now.

“I am just going to admit that I am loving lockdown life. In the last 10 years, I haven’t gotten a break for so long where I have been able to spend time with myself, understand what I want from life, do the things I like to do and just be one with yourself, sort your head out, contemplate and understand what’s important and what’s not,” Sonakshi said.

“I am not worried about when work will start and how it will be,” added she.






‘In our younger years, the idea of a villain was rather limited. It was obviously by virtue of how the stories played out, but villains were a little over the top in their tonality. With Mirzapur and Gurgaon or even Sacred Games, I have been able to explore the dark side of the human psyche in greater depth. I choose the negative characters wisely.’

—Pankaj Tripathi

Actor **KANGANA RANAUT** says only people with strong spiritual core can recognise the delusion that is showbiz.

“Show business is absolutely intoxicating. It makes one believe in an alternate reality, a little bubble of their own, it takes a very strong spiritual core to recognise this delusion,” Kangana tweeted.

Earlier, she criticised Samajwadi Party MP and actor Jaya Bachchan for her remarks against people who are trying to tarnish the image of the film industry, and questioned whether her stance would change if her children were involved.




Kim freezes her Insta, FB account

Reality TV star **KIM KARDASHIAN WEST**, who has one of the biggest Instagram followings in the world — 188.8 million — decided to freeze her social media accounts to protest against the spread of ‘hate, propaganda and misinformation’.

Kim wrote: “I love that I can connect directly with you through Instagram and Facebook, but I can’t sit by and stay silent while these platforms continue to allow the spreading of hate, propaganda and misinformation.”

Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Lawrence, Orlando Bloom, Kerry Washington and Sacha Baron Cohen are among those who took part in the protest.





VOCAL FOR LOCAL

From import subsidisation to vendor development, creation of green supply chains, minimising carbon footprints, the Indian hospitality sector uses more than 90 per cent local resources, making it an embodiment of an *Atmanirbhar Bharat*. By AYUSHI SHARMA

The Indian tourism sector has had a long journey of growth and finding its place on the world map. The era after the economic liberalisation of the 90s in India sparked the growth of the sector and attained new heights. In 2018, tourism contributed more than nine per cent to India’s GDP and accounted for eight per cent of the country’s employment. As per the statistics, states like Sikkim, tourism helped increase its employment rate to 33 per cent. And the hospitality industry constitutes a majority share of the tourism sector. Hotels are a part of essential tourism infrastructure as providers of tourist accommodation in all categories. From providing basic facilities to a weary traveller who wants to break the journey to rest and refuel, wayside motels have come a long way and become centres for culinary delights, venues for events and destinations for leisure seekers.

PM Narendra Modi has advocated that the ongoing pandemic should be looked at as an opportunity and given a clarion call to the nation to build an *Atmanirbhar Bharat* (Self-reliant India). As per the Hotel Association of India (HAI), the hotel industry is proud to say that it is an embodiment of his cherished dream. Today, Indian hotels are among the best globally and have won accolades and awards for excellence in service by business and leisure tourists alike. And what is commendable is the fact that global recognition has come by practising the age-old Indian tradition of “*Atithi Devo*

Bhava” and by using local sources, be it money, material, machines or manpower. The Indian hospitality industry uses more than 90 per cent local resources.

Puneet Chhatwal, President of Hotel Association of India, explains that tourism is integral to any nation’s prosperity as it creates jobs, drives exports, enhances foreign exchange earnings and creates sustainable livelihoods. He says, “We all know that tourism is much more than what meets the eye. It is one of the fastest growing sectors of Indian economy over the past decade at a CAGR of 8.5 per cent. The sector employs close to 10-12 per cent of all workforce in the country, thereby contributing to building livelihood with a multiplier effect. In addition, the sector contributes to over ₹10,000 crores to the exchequer every year. Hotels are significant employers of unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers. The industry also promotes gender diversity and equal opportunity. From import subsidisation to vendor development, creation of green supply chains, minimising carbon footprints, the industry contributes richly to the economy.”

BEING SELF RELIANT

The industry’s endeavour has been to increase its focus on local sourcing of ingredients/components in its key pillars of food and beverage, infrastructure and engineering equipment. From about 65 per cent in the year 2000, there has been consistent efforts to increase the extent of local sourcing which rose to about 87



per cent in 2020.

Priya Paul, Chairperson of Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Limited and Executive Committee Member of Hotel Association of India, says, “THE Park Hotels as well as our social catalyst brand, Zone by THE Park, are a true reflection of contemporary India. Our DNA of creativity and innovation is expressed in distinctive ways. We work with numerous Indian designers, products as well as local artisans and even promote new Indian performing arts. For instance, at our Hyderabad branch, we worked with more than 25 designers for our various spaces. We commissioned local artisans and craftsmen to work on the dying art of *Kalamkari* and to recreate it in a con-

temporary way.”

She adds, “We have been promoting farm-to-fork concept for the last many years. We work closely with the local organic farmers and have been promoting sustainable food practices. Before the lockdown, our hotels in New Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata used to have weekly organic farmer markets. Our menus are also designed in a way where information on the source of food is also shared. For us, this has been a practice for a very long time.”

The industry aspires to increase this further to an overall 95 per cent and more by 2025. In certain value components such as DG sets, AC units, mechanical equipment and elevators, it would be closer to 100 per cent. However, the question is — despite seeing no guests at all for the past five months and currently not attracting many tourists due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, how does the self-reliant claim stand true? Puneet tells us, “The impact of the pandemic has definitely been severe. As per The Horwath HTL India Report, this is best reflected by the loss of demand and revenue. The aggregate loss for March to June 2020, compared to 2019, is ₹4,810 crore for the hospitality sector.”

“Even in the given bleak scenario, the sector has been able to hold its ground and is working hard to weather this storm. It is adapting to the new normal with enhanced safety and hygiene practices, moving swiftly towards

increased digitisation and rolling out new products and alternative revenue streams like online food delivery. However, due to a lack of uniform regulations across states, hotels are continuing to bear the brunt. While the Indian hospitality sector is very much self-reliant, it requires a few extraordinary measures, including the support from its stakeholders and the government,” adds he.

EXEMPLIFYING NATIONAL PRESTIGE

Indian hospitality has brought India on the world tourism map. From playing host to heads of states, celebrities, senior officials, industrialists and entrepreneurs, facilitating large and prestigious national as well as international conventions and events to providing a secure comfortable abode for people during disasters, Indian hotels have displayed their commitment to the nation.

“Hotels have always showcased India’s rich culture and diversity. They support local artistes and artisans by giving them a platform to exhibit their craft. They are the centres for the promotion of Indian heritage, textiles, cuisines, handicrafts, culture, art and artists. They have also introduced the world to our ancient practices of yoga and Ayurveda. And they will continue to carry forward this tradition,” shares Puneet.

The fact that some of the best hotels in the world are managed by Indians adds to the national pride.

PROVIDING LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Indian hospitality sector employs close to 4.5 crore people and livelihood to many more. It provides an opportunity for women and to the differently-abled. From the humble basic tourist accommodation tents and lodges, the industry has offerings also for the first-class traveller to those seeking ultra-luxury, thus, giving all Indians an opportunity to experience the country’s rich touristic treasures, undertake pilgrimages and much more.

Christie’s to sell Parton’s jewels

Christie’s announced an online-only charity auction — *NASHVILLE: An Auction to benefit ACM Lifting Lives COVID-19 Response Fund* — led by a Swarovski-crystal bedazzled four-string dulcimer, owned by Dolly Parton for 30 years. It’s accompanied by its original stand and used by the artist as she celebrated her 50th anniversary performing at the Grand Ole Opry in 2019. The dulcimer is estimated at \$50,000-1,00,000 and leads a sale featuring items generously donated by country music’s biggest names, including Reba McEntire, Tim McGraw, Marty Stuart, Bernie Taupin, and Trisha Yearwood.

The auction received a special mention during the live broadcast of the 55th Academy of Country Music Awards hosted by Keith Urban on Wednesday. ACM Lifting Lives is the philanthropic arm of the Academy of Country Music dedicated to improving lives through the power of music. The auction dates and additional lots will be announced at a later date.

Dolly Parton said, “Seeing my country music community suffer due to the pandemic has broken my heart. It was important to donate the dulcimer that was designed for my 50th Opry Anniversary so we can raise awareness and much needed funds to keep these folks on their feet before we can open the doors to our stages once again.”

Lyndsay Cruz, Executive Director, ACM Lifting Lives, said, “We are immensely grateful to the artists in the Nashville community and beyond who have generously donated items for this auction in collaboration with Christie’s. Every winning bid will go towards our COVID-19 Response Fund to support the workers of our country music community — the tour bus drivers, aspiring musicians, techs and venue workers — so many of whom have lost their livelihoods overnight during the course of this pandemic.



dem. So far, the fund has distributed \$1.5 million and we are hoping the sale of these iconic items will enable us to support more affected by this crisis.”

“Christie’s is honored to work with the music community in Nashville and partner with ACM Lifting Lives COVID-19 Response Fund to support the country music frontline workers who are in need at this time. We are particularly excited to be offering the first musical instrument ever to appear at a global auction from Dolly Parton,” said Nancy Valentino, Strategic Business and Client Development, Christie’s.

While the dulcimer is an ancient instrument, the Appalachian dulcimer is a cornerstone to the sound of country music, and one that Country Music Hall of Famer Dolly Parton has used throughout her career.



DISCOVERING INDIA

As a part of a new series — *Lost Essence of India* — singer, actor and avid photographer MEIYANG CHANG helps the audience uncover hidden gems that have been forgotten over time

As a part of the Discovery Channel’s latest series — *Lost Essence of India* — singer, actor and an avid photographer, Meiyang Chang, who is also the host of the show, takes viewers on an enchanting journey and helps them uncover hidden gems that have been forgotten over time.

In the first episode of this four-part series, Chang explores the Rivona Caves in Goa known to be creation of Buddhist monks around the 6th century, entering some of the remotest parts of the country, with roads that are not well-trodden.

The second episode witness-

es Chang relishing the Saraswat Brahmin cuisine that not many have been fortunate to enjoy. Moving on to the third episode, he explores the lost heart of Kashmir, Choharnag, which is surrounded by meadows all around. In the finale episode, Chang goes on to unveil another gem, Naranag Temple in Kashmir, one of the important archaeological sites of the country.

“India boasts of an immensely rich culture and architecture, and we only know about the popular and promoted aspects of it. There are a million more places, stories and experiences that are

yet to be discovered. And that’s what we set out to do with *Lost Essence of India*,” said Chang.

“I have been to Goa and Kashmir before and yet I was unaware of the existence of these experiences. It was a breath-taking, mindset-changing journey through lesser taken paths to discover the lost essence of some magnificent places in the country. I pray you love this and get to experience it someday while being a responsible tourist. Respect nature and nature will love you back. Also, I can’t wait to see where we head to next,” he added.



JUST A CLICK AWAY

Chhattisgarh CM BHUPESH BAGHEL launches CG-COP mobile app through which citizens will have access to at least 14 services online

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel recently launched CG-COP mobile app of Chhattisgarh Police, at his residence office. On the occasion, Baghel said that the app developed by Chhattisgarh Police will help in developing mutual trust between common

people and the police, bringing them closer. It will be now more comfortable for people to seek help from the police. The app will act as a bridge between the citizens and the police in the direction of crime control. Through the app, citizens will be able to give information about crime

or the information related to different cases with a single click. Citizens will be able to avail 14 types of services without having to go to the police stations. It has features that helps file civil FIR, online complaint about theft, missing, seized vehicle, unknown body, seized mobile, miss-

ing person, to share clue with police, search case status, police telephone directory, help centre, share details of the arrested person, locate nearest police station and access helpline services. On this occasion, Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu, Chief

Secretary RP Mandal, Additional Chief Secretary Subrat Sahu, Director General of Police DM Awasthi, Director General of Police, Jail, Sanjay Pillay, Special Director General of Police RK Vij and Ashok Juneja along with other senior officers of the police department were present.



WRWWO supports Corona warriors' widows

As a token of support, Tanuja Kansal, President of Western Railway Women's Welfare Organisation (WRWWO), recently distributed the 'Samvedna Rashi' to the widows of the Western Railway's 15 Corona Warriors of frontline staff.

According to Sumit Thakur, Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Kansal handed over an amount of ₹5,000 each to the 15 widows of the employees of frontline staff.

She said, "It is very disheartening and unfortunate that these employees lost their lives while performing their duty during the COVID-19 pandemic. These employees came from various fields like Ticket Checking, Ticket Booking, Loco Pilot, Guard, Fitter, Technician, Trackman etc."

The WRWWO salutes its sincere and dedicated employees. Kansal and the executive committee members encouraged railway employees to empower themselves and be confident to face adversities.

In her address on this occasion, Kansal said that it is during the COVID-19 pandemic, natural calamities or serious illness, WRWWO has always empathised with the employees and their families and is ready to reach out to them in difficult times. She said that our corona warriors without caring for their life have sincerely carried out their duty. "It is very unfortunate that while performing their duties, some of them got infected with the Coronavirus and lost their lives. There is no compensation to the lives lost. WRWWO and its members salute such brave employees and stand by their bereaved families," she added. Kansal said that the wives of these employees have always backed their husbands and stood by them with grit and determination.

The recipients of the amount were Sujata w/o Arun Tenbulkar — MCF, Lower Parel; Janki w/o Ramavadh Shastri — chief booking supervisor, Vasai Road; Jashuben w/o Jitendra Gamit, Chief Ticket Inspector, Ahmedabad; Mira Devi w/o Durga Lal Meena, Mail Guard, Surat; Devanti w/o Kapil Dev Bhagat, Fitter, Borivali; Namita w/o Nitin Gharat, Technician, Lower Parel; Shushma w/o Rajesh Mishra, ELE, Kandivali; Ruma w/o Ganeshchandra Mujkuri, Loco Pilot /Mail, Bandra Terminus; Nirmala w/o Vijay Bote, TCM, Mumbai Central; Sunita w/o Sunil Khandre, Chief Booking Supervisor, Santacruz; Leena w/o Vincent Fernandes, Head Constable, Kankariya; Chandrika w/o Tulsiibhai Vaghela, HKA, Chirai; Gayatridevi w/o Narendra Gosai, Tech, Diesel Shed, Sabarmati; Devendramma w/o Nagappa Agasur, Trackman, Borivali and Prabha w/o R S Sharma, Dy Chief Ticket Inspector, Rajdhani Express.

BHEL signs MoU with SwissRapid AG

To expand its footprint in the Urban Transportation Sector as a part of its diversification initiatives, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SwissRapid AG for Maglev Train projects in India.

To this effect, an MoU was signed

by SV Srinivasan, GM and Head (Transportation Business Group), BHEL and Niklaus H Koenig, President and CEO, SwissRapid AG.

Significantly, the agreement has been signed in the backdrop of the Prime Minister's 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives, and will enable BHEL to bring the latest,

world-class technology to India and manufacture state-of-the-art Maglev Trains indigenously.

The MoU sets out the foundation to cooperate and explore mutually beneficial business opportunities, and utilise both the companies' inherent capabilities, skills, knowledge and assets.

Notably, the Maglev Rail system hovers in the air instead of rolling, due to magnetic levitation, thus the vehicles have no physical contact with the guideway. This enables the system to be highly energy efficient, allow operating speeds of 500 km/h easily and significantly reduce the total cost of system ownership.

Port Blair airport to have a new terminal building

Veer Savarkar International Airport, Port Blair is soon going to have a new terminal building. The airport currently handles 18 lakh passengers annually. Considering the surge in the passenger traffic, Airports Authority of India has undertaken the construction of integrated terminal building there at ₹700 crore.

With total built up area of 40,837 sqm, the building will be capable to handle 1,200 passengers during peak hours and about 50 lakh passengers annually. The new passenger terminal building will have three levels comprising of lower ground, upper ground and first floor. The lower ground floor will be used as



remote arrival, departure and service area, the upper ground floor will have entry and exit gates and the first floor as awaiting lounge for interna-

tional passengers.

The building will be equipped with modern passenger's facilities with 28 check-in counters, three pas-

senger boarding bridges, five conveyor belts with in-line scan system and state-of-the-art firefighting and fire alarm system. City side area of the

Airport will also be developed with adequate parking facilities for car, taxi and buses along with the landscaping.

Inspired from nature, the design of the terminal is a shell shaped structure depicting sea and islands. It is a structural steel framed building provided with aluminum sheet roofing and cable net glazing all around. The entire terminal will also have 100 per cent natural lighting through skylights provided at roof level.

Curved shaped Cable Net Glazing will be provided all around the building. More than 65 per cent of the project is completed and the building is scheduled to be ready by mid-2021.

ALERT FOR PENSIONERS

In view of the ongoing pandemic and the vulnerability of elderly population to Coronavirus, the Government has relaxed the existing timeline for submission of Life Certificate. This year, all Central Government pensioners can submit Life Certificate from November 1 to December 31. The pensioners in the age group of 80 years and above, can submit their certificate from October 1. Earlier, this used to be only for the month of November.

During this extended period, the pension will be continued to be paid by the Pension Disbursing Authorities (PDAs) uninterrupted.

In addition to above, in the line of RBI notification no. RBI/2019-20/138, dated January 9 which permits Video based Customer Identification Process

(V-CIP) as a consent based alternate method of establishing the customer's identity, Pension Disbursing Banks have been also asked to explore the said methodology for obtaining a Life Certificate from the pensioner, to the extent permitted by RBI guidelines, in order to avoid rush at the branch-

es and maintain social distancing, while obtaining Life Certificates.

Pensioners can submit life certificate by visiting the bank branches. However, the department has been promoting the Digital Life Certificate which can be given from the comfort of one's home also.

ASHA schools go solar

Government-owned Power Finance Corporation (PFC), India's leading NBFC, has installed a stand-alone solar rooftop system at ASHA School, run by Indian Army Wives Welfare Association in the Delhi Cantonment area. The installation has been carried out as part of PFC's CSR initiative.

Ravinder Singh Dhillon, Chairman and Managing Director, PFC along with Lt General R K Anand inaugurated the stand alone solar



rooftop system of 5kWp capacity.

PK Singh, Director Commercial, R

Murahari, Executive Director-CSR and M Prabhakar Das, Chief General Manager

(CSR & SD), PFC also graced the occasion along with other Indian Army officials and school staff.

Under the CSR initiative, PFC is providing 5kWp standalone solar rooftop systems with battery backup in 37 Asha schools across the country.

PFC is also providing solar lanterns to Indian Army under its CSR initiative. Around 5,000 solar lanterns have already been supplied to Indian Army which is helping them in tough terrains and forward posts.

Kolkata metro resumes



Metro services in Kolkata have resumed. A total of 110 services are being run on North-South Metro corridor and 72 services are being run on East-West Metro corridor from 8 am to 8 pm.

It's being made sure that the commuters maintain social distancing and all other COVID-19 safety protocols inside Metro premises have been ensured. Metro staff at different stations are helping commuters to follow safety guidelines like sanitisation,

maintaining social distancing, wearing masks, etc. RPF staff checks e-pass of each commuter as well as screen his/her body temperature with thermal gun.

Frequent announcements are made inside the Metro premises requesting all to maintain distancing norms. Short-film on Do's and Don'ts is also being shown on Platform TVs to educate commuters how to stay secure and help others too.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved Haryana Orbital Rail Corridor Project from Palwal to Sonipat via Sohna-Manesar-Kharakhauda. The total length of the project is 121.7 km.

This will facilitate diversion of traffic not meant for Delhi and will help in developing multimodal logistics hubs in Haryana sub-region of NCR.

IMPLEMENTATION

The project will be implemented by Haryana Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (HRIDC), a joint venture company set up by Ministry of Railways with the Government of Haryana.

The estimated completion cost of the project is ₹5,617 crore and it is proposed to be completed in five years.

The line will start from Palwal and end at existing Harsana Kalan station (On Delhi-Ambala section). This will also give connectivity enroute to existing Patli Station (On Delhi-Rewari line), Sultanpur station (On Garhi Harsaru-Farukhnagar Line) and Asaudha Station (On Delhi Rohtak Line).

BENEFITS

The districts of Palwal, Nuh, Gurugram, Jhajjar and Sonipat districts of Haryana will be benefitted through this railway line.

It will provide high-speed seam-

Diverting routes

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved Haryana Orbital Rail Corridor Project from Palwal to Sonipat



faster commuter travel, long distance travel in different directions from Gurugram and the industrial regions of Manesar, Sohna, Farukhnagar, Kharakhauda and Sonipat.

Approximately 20,000 passengers each day will be travelling through this line and 50 Million Tonnes goods traffic would also be carried out every year.

BACKGROUND

The Orbital Rail Corridor from Palwal to Sonipat by passing Delhi is a crucial infrastructure project for sustainable development of the NCR and to de-congest existing Indian Railway network in Delhi area.

The alignment of this project is adjacent to the western peripheral (Kundli-Manesar-Palwal) Expressway and has been under consideration for some time. The project will have connectivity with all the existing railway routes originating from Delhi and passing through Haryana State as well as with the Dedicated Freight Corridor network.

IN SHORT



Metro Railway has upgraded several passenger amenities at different Metro stations maintaining social distancing and other COVID-19 protocols. A new escalator was commissioned at Chandni Chowk station on Monday by replacing the old one. With smooth co-operation of civil and electrical departments, the escalator has been commissioned in record time. Metro commuters will get the benefits.



From left to Right: Upender Pandey, Poet and Manjari Mishra, Poetess playing the role of Judges in MSME Hindi Poetry Competition held in Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi on Monday. Assistant Director (OL), Pankaj, is at extreme right.



As per the instructions from the Railway Board, the Swachhta Pakhwara is being organised at various locations at Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW), which will continue till September 30. All the necessary precautions have been ensured, keeping in mind the Coronavirus pandemic. Each day, Pakhwara will be associated with a particular theme related to cleanliness and sanitation. There will be workshops, online drawing competitions on the theme of Swachhta, Swachh Ahar to develop awareness and communication around better hygiene conditions. CLW staff, officers and volunteers of Bharat Scout & Guide are participating.



DDA is set to e-auction 25 functional sites for hosting marriages and other ceremonies. The 10th phase of Mega e-auction is scheduled to be launched soon by Delhi Development Authority which will also include 25 functional sites across Delhi. The allotment will be on License fee basis subject to compliances with all the clean, green protocols and Swachh Bharat Mission norms. DDA is also planning to e-auction Kiosks at various locations in addition to various other types of plots including industrial, institutional, commercial, residential, Expandable Housing Scheme plots, shops, etc., are also part of the forthcoming Mega e-auction.

General Manager, Northern & North Central Railways, Rajiv Chaudhry has released a booklet *Initiatives Taken by Northern Railway to Enhance Safety Standards During Lockdown*. It is a compilation of work done by the various departments and divisions of the zone focussing on safety during the lockdown period of COVID-19. It highlights the efforts put in by the Railway men to deep check, maintain and repair the track system and the rolling stock assets to meet all laid safety standards. The Northern Railway has been ceaselessly working throughout the lockdown period to support the nation fight the pandemic.

The time was effectively utilised by the zone for inspecting, maintaining and repairing its assets. The efforts have resulted in no consequential train accident during the period April to August 2020. Releasing the book, Chaudhry called upon the employees to keep up their good work. He added that as the nation's prime transporter, the Railways has a greater responsibility post-lockdown and it will leave no effort in contributing towards India's growth and development.



Eng nose ahead in series decider

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Jonny Bairstow struck 112 and under-pinned another innings rebuild with Sam Billings as England recovered from losing two wickets from the first two balls to set Australia a target of 303 in the deciding one-day international on Wednesday.

Mitchell Starc removed Jason Roy and Joe Root off successive deliveries to leave England in early turmoil on a glorious afternoon at Old Trafford, and both Eoin Morgan (23) and Jos Buttler (8) also departed cheaply.

From 96-4, Bairstow and Billings (57) put on 114 runs for the fifth wicket to bring England right back into the match — just as they did in the first ODI on Friday when sharing a stand of 113 in defeat.

Bairstow reached his 10th ODI century before some lusty hits by Chris Woakes (53 off 39 balls) lifted the hosts to 302-7, leaving Australia needing a record run chase at the Manchester venue. Fifty-three runs came from the last five overs.

The series is tied at 1-1.

England is looking to preserve its five-year unbeaten record in bilateral ODI series, and finish its international summer — during which all of its games have been played without fans — unbeaten in all formats against the West Indies, Ireland, Pakistan and Australia.

It is Australia's final match of its white-ball tour, with the team having already lost the Twenty20 series 2-1.

Steve Smith was again missing for the Australians after failing to fully recover from being hit on the head from a throwdown in the nets before the first match of the series. Australia captain Aaron Finch said Smith had a hit in the nets on Tuesday but "just did not pull up well" and felt "a bit groggy."

Boult's inclusion gives edge to MI: Gambhir



New Delhi: Former India opener Gautam Gambhir feels New Zealand pacer Trent Boult forms a formidable pair with Jasprit Bumrah, giving Mumbai Indians an edge over Chennai Super Kings in this IPL.

With Mumbai Indians taking on Chennai Super Kings in the tournament opener on Saturday in Abu Dhabi, Gambhir said he is waiting to see how Boult and Bumrah go about their business.

"I am really excited to watch how Trent Boult and Jasprit Bumrah will bowl with the new ball, because we all know Bumrah and Boult are world class bowlers, and in the T20 format both are wicket-taking options," Gambhir said on *Star Sports show Cricket Connected*.

"A left-arm seamer, who will bring the ball inside for a right hand batsman while Jasprit Bumrah believes in an unorthodox style of bowling."

A vital cog in CSK's wheel, Raina had pulled out of the IPL due to "personal reasons" and Gambhir feels it will be a challenge for CSK without him at number 3.

"There will be a challenge

for Chennai Super Kings considering they do not have Suresh Raina batting at No 3. Shane Watson has not played international cricket for a long time, so we would want to know who will open with him and how will these batsmen face these bowlers," the former Kolkata Knight Riders skipper said.

Gambhir, a two-time IPL-winning skipper, believes four-time champions Mumbai Indians will be favourites against Chennai considering the overall team balance and depth after the addition of Boult.

"I am skewed more towards Mumbai Indians for the opening match because if we notice the team balance and the depth of the squad while not forgetting the addition of Trent Boult in the squad can prove to be an excellent option," he said.

"Every team wants a bowler who will take wickets with a new ball and use Jasprit Bumrah in an experimental way. I would want to see how these two bowlers perform with the new ball not only in the first match but throughout the tournament." PTI

Bale close to Spurs return

AFP ■ LONDON

Gareth Bale's agent says the Real Madrid forward is "close" to a move back to Tottenham but admitted it is a complicated deal to thrash out.

The Wales international has been frozen out by Real manager Zinedine Zidane and said earlier this month that he was open to returning to the Premier League.

It has been reported that Spurs and Manchester United are interested in signing Bale but Jose Mourinho appears to be leading the race to land the 31-year-old.

"It's close but not done," Bale's agent Jonathan Barnett told *AFP*. "It's a complicated



deal." Bale has two years left on a contract that pays him a reported salary of about £600,000 (\$775,000) a week at

Real. It has been reported the Spanish club would be willing to pay some of that salary to finally move on from their troubled relationship with the forward.

Bale left Tottenham for Real in 2013 for a then world-record fee of £85 million.

He has won four Champions League titles and two La Liga crowns during his time in Spain, but his turbulent relationship with Zidane has left him a peripheral player.

The winger still has an emotional attachment to Tottenham after joining the club from Southampton as a teenager and developing into one of the world's most exciting forwards.

Novak remains perfect

Djokovic extends unbeaten run on court, behaves better in 1st match since US Open default

AP ■ ROME

Novak Djokovic expressed his relief there was no "mental or emotional blockages or drama" as he swept past Italian wild card entry Salvatore Caruso into the Italian Open third round on Wednesday in his first match since his US Open default.

"I was actually looking forward to get the official match as soon as possible after what happened in New York," said the world No 1.

The Serb was on his best behaviour after his dramatic last 16 disqualification on September 6 after he accidentally struck a line judge with a ball hit in frustration.

"I didn't feel that I had any mental or emotional blockages or any dramas playing a match today," he said.

Djokovic, who had said he had learned a "big lesson" from his first ever disqualification, was keen to move on in Rome.

The 33-year-old playfully greeted an imaginary crowd in an empty Central Court at the Foro Italico because of strict coronavirus measures.

Only some noisy workers managed to unnerve the 17-time Grand Slam winner after missing break points.

"It was very, very quiet, which is very unusual to what we are used to here in Rome, which has one of the loudest and most energetic crowd atmospheres on the tour.

Djokovic continued where he left off before his US Open exit, having won the Cincinnati Masters on the same Flushing Meadows courts.

"It was a very good test for me. I'm very pleased with the way I handled myself in important moments," said Djokovic, who was unbeaten in 2020 before his US Open default.

"I was in control of the match."

Djokovic, who has played nine finals



Novak Djokovic returns the ball to Salvatore Caruso, at the Italian Open tourney in Rome on Wednesday

in Rome, and won four titles, will meet either 29th-ranked compatriot Filip Krajinovic or Italian qualifier Marco Cecchinato, ranked 113th, for a place in the quarter-finals.

Nine-time Rome winner Rafael Nadal will make his return to competi-

tion later on Wednesday after a six-month hiatus linked to the coronavirus pandemic.

The number two seed plays fellow Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta, a recent semi-finalist at the US Open, for a place in the third round.



US Open champion Naomi Osaka took a direct swipe at critics of her recent activism saying the people who told her that sportspersons should stay out of politics inspired her to win her third Grand Slam title

Third seed Stefanos Tsitsipas fell to Italian teenager Jannik Sinner 6-1, 6-7 (9/11), 6-2, with sixth seeded Belgian David Goffin also exiting 6-2, 6-2 to Croatia's Marin Cilic.

HALEP, AZARENKA ADVANCE

Top women's seed Simona Halep returned a month after winning in Prague to ease past 99th-ranked Italian Jasmine Paolini 6-3, 6-4.

"It was a little bit difficult to get the rhythm and to get relaxed," said the 28-year-old Romanian, who skipped the US Open but is warming up for a bid for a second French Open title later this month.

The world No 2, a two-time Rome finalist, next meets either American Amanda Anisimova or Dayana Yastremska of Ukraine.

US Open finalist Victoria Azarenka shrugged off the move from hard court to the clay surface to beat American Venus Williams 7-6 (9/7), 6-2, in their first round match.

Belarusian Azarenka will play third seeded American Sofia Kenin, the reigning Australian Open champion, for a place in the third round.

Swiss sixth seed Belinda Bencic fell 6-3, 6-1 in her second round match to Montenegro's 86th-ranked Danka Kovinic.

Hardik looking to make strong comeback

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Back from a lengthy injury layoff, Mumbai Indians' star all-rounder Hardik Pandya said the set-back motivated him to work harder and he is now in good shape both physically and mentally for the IPL.

Pandya's form will be crucial for defending champions Mumbai Indians, who will take on Chennai Super Kings in the lung-opener of the cash-rich T20 league on September 19.

"The way I'm hitting the ball right now, the shape I'm in, the men-



tal space I'm in, it is just a matter of time that I go and spend some time on the ground and I think things will come out pretty well," Pandya said in a video posted by Mumbai Indians' official Twitter handle.

"No matter how far I go from the game, no matter how long I stay out, when I come back, it has to be worth it. I have prepared very well and I think, great things are coming ahead," the 26-year-old flamboyant all-rounder added.

Last year in November, Pandya had undergone a back surgery in London. He came back in the DY

Patil T20 tournament held in early March.

He was even selected for the ODI series against South Africa, but the Covid-19 pandemic, which forced the rubber to be abandoned, delayed his return. He is now looking forward to the IPL.

"IPL is something that I have enjoyed a lot and I would like to make a comeback very strong and I'm just looking forward to it," said Pandya. He also conceded that injuries would be a part of his crick-eting journey and motivate him to do better.

This year's IPL will be extra special: Sehwa

New Delhi: Former Indian opener Virender Sehwa expects this year's IPL to be "extra special" and a major reason for that is Mahendra Singh Dhoni getting back on the pitch after announcing his international retirement following a year-long sabbatical from the game.

"I think this tournament will be extra special for everyone — the players as well as the audience...Watching Dhoni back on the pitch is sure to be a delight. There's so much in store, need I say more?" Sehwa, who will be co-hosting a *Show Power Play with Champions* on *Flipkart Video*, said.

Sehwa said cricket is an integral part of an Indian's life and the fans have waited long for the sport to return.

"I've spent a lot of my time during the lockdown watching old matches. Cricket forms an important part of our DNA as Indians and we've waited with bated breath for it to return" he said. PNS

'Russell currently is world's best all-rounder'



PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Kolkata Knight Riders batsman Rinku Singh feels no one can match the big-hitting prowess of explosive all-rounder Andre Russell and he remains the World's best all-rounder at the moment.

The Jamaican allrounder, who joined KKR in 2014, has been in sensational form in the last two seasons and remains

the talk of the town ahead of the 13th edition which will get underway on Saturday.

"There is no one who can hit the ball better than him. He has a lot of life and strength in him," Singh said in an interview in KKR's website.

"His sizes are massive and I just don't see any batsman as a competition to him. He is the best all-rounder in the world at this moment," Singh added.

Will have better idea of conditions once IPL starts, says Amit

Dubai: The pitches in UAE are expected to aid spinners but Delhi Capitals leg-spinner Amit Mishra feels it is too early to predict that as the conditions have been "neutral" so far.

The 36-year-old Indian spinner said UAE pitches suit batsmen or bowlers more can only be ascertained once the tournament progress-

Adjusting to UAE heat biggest challenge: ABD

PTI ■ DUBAI

South African star AB de Villiers believes the biggest challenge for all teams in the upcoming Indian Premier League will be adjusting to the prevailing hot and humid conditions in the UAE.

Most games will be played in the night but the conditions would still be challenging.

"I am not really used to these kind of conditions to be honest. It's very hot, it reminds

me of a Test match we played in July in Chennai once where *Viru* (Virender Sehwa) scored 300. It was one the hottest weather conditions I have experience in my life," he said in an interview posted on RCB's Twitter handle.

"The humidity is similar to that, even at 10 at night. When I arrived here I checked the weather conditions of a few months and it

seems to be getting better. It is definitely going to play a part and you have to make sure you have the energy for the backend of the innings or last 5 overs of your bowling spell."

De Villiers said he would also miss playing in front of packed crowds in India with the event to be played behind closed doors in UAE due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

SINGLES

MOMENTUM WALKS OUT AS SA ODI SPONSOR

JOHANNESBURG: The ongoing governance catastrophe in Cricket South Africa has now resulted in them losing their biggest remaining sponsor with Momentum, its ODI sponsor, announcing that it will walk away once it's contract expires in April 2021. According to a report, Momentum has confirmed that it will not seek to renew its sponsorship of international ODIs, the franchise one-day cup, the national club championships. However, they will continue to sponsor the national women's team until 2023.

SPORTS MINISTRY TO UPGRADE 8 KISCE

NEW DELHI: The Sports Ministry is set to upgrade eight Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE) at an estimated cost of ₹95.19 crores with an aim to identify and groom future Olympic champions. The support will be in the form of infrastructure upgradation, setting up of sports science centre and also soft component in the form of quality coaches and sports science human resources like physiotherapists, strength and conditioning expert. High quality equipment will also be provided to the players.

BERNAL WITHDRAWS FROM TOUR DE FRANCE

GRENOBLE: Defending Tour de France champion Egan Bernal has pulled out of the race ahead of a mammoth stage in the Alps, his Ineos Grenadiers team said on Wednesday. Bernal had been struggling since last weekend's stage in the Jura mountains, where he dropped more than seven minutes on the main contenders and slipped out of contention. Hampered by back pain, the 23-year-old rider was in 16th place overall, 19 minutes and fours seconds behind race leader Primoz Roglic.

PIRLO EARNS UEFA COACHING QUALIFICATION

ROME: Juventus coach Andrea Pirlo had his coaching qualification approved by the Italian football federation on Wednesday. Pirlo completed his final exams and earned his UEFA Pro coaching badge on Monday. The qualification, following a year-long course, is required for a coach to lead a team in Serie A or B.

BAYERN WINGER COMAN IN ISOLATION

MUNICH: Bayern Munich forward Kingsley Coman is in isolation at home ahead of the new Bundesliga season after he had contact with a person infected with the coronavirus. Bayern didn't say how long the France winger would need to spend in quarantine, or whether he's available to play Schalke on Friday in the German champion's first league game of the new season.

HARIKRISHNA IN JOINT LEAD AFTER 3 ROUNDS

CHENNAI: Indian Grandmaster P Harikrishna claimed a share of the top position with Armenian GM Levon Aronian after posting two wins and a draw in three rounds of rapid competition in the St Louis Rapid and Blitz online chess tournament. The India No 2 started with a win over US Grandmaster Leinier Dominguez, before settling for a draw with Iranian Alireza Firouzja. In the third round, Harikrishna pulled off a victory over experienced Russian Alexander Grischuk in 41 moves.

STEVEN TAYLOR JOINS ODISHA FC

BHUBANESWAR: Odisha FC on Wednesday signed former Premier League defender Steven Taylor ahead of the seventh edition of the Hero ISL. The former Newcastle United centre-back has agreed for a one-year deal with an option to extend it for a second year.

PCB SIGNS 3-YEAR DEAL WITH PTV SPORTS

KARACHI: Pakistan Cricket Board on Wednesday signed a three-year broadcast deal worth \$200 million with PTV Sports and a cable distribution agreement with I-Media Communication Services. The broadcast agreement is for Pakistan only while PCB will be soon finalising the grant of its broadcast rights for international territories separately as well as launching a new structure for its digital media rights. AGENCIES

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
The General Manager/EXPOTECH, RITES Ltd. invites online bids in single packet system from the approved vendor of Indian Railways Production Units (PUs) for the following.
Item & Quantity: Supply, Installation, commissioning and testing of complete interior furnishing items including electricals for 60 (Sixty) nos. of Cape Gauge Passenger Coaches. **Tender Reference:** RITES/EX/PO/05/MOZ/COACH FUR/01. **Earnest Money Deposit (EMD):** Rs. 25,00,000/- (Indian Rupees Twenty Five Lakh only). **Completion Period:** 24 weeks. **Last date & time of submission of bid:** 29.09.2020 upto 11:00 hrs. IST
The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website <http://ritesltd.com/> and <http://cpportalhttps://tenders.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Addendum/Corrigendum, if any, shall be hosted online only.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, Bhawanipatna

NOTICE
FOR PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH "e"-Procurement
Bid identification No. BPT/Online-01/2020-21

The Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Bhawanipatna on behalf of Odisha State Rural Road Agency invites the percentage rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the districts of **Kalahandi for 02 Packages (Two)** number of packages with estimated cost totalling to **Rs.31.05 Cr (Approximate)** including their maintenance for five years from the eligible contractors registered with **State PWD / CPWD / MES / Railways**. The registered bidder of outside Odisha, can also participate in this process, but shall have to subsequently undergo registration with the appropriate authority of the State Govt. preferably within a month of the deadline for bid submission, but prior to signing of the contract

Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement. **Dtd.18.09.2020.**

Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and should be submitted online in www.pmgstenders.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have a valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities. The bidders are required to submit (a) original Demand Draft towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security in approved form and (c) original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 B (a) (ii) of ITB in the O/o the Engineer-In-Chief, Rural Works (PMGSY Branch), Odisha, Bhubaneswar/Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Bhawanipatna/ Concerned Executive Engineers, R.W.Division (as per Tender Call Notice), on a date not later than three working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the Bid, either by registered post or by hand, failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive.

Last Date/ Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement: 05.10.2020 up to 5.00 P.M
For further details and corrigendum/addendum (if any) please log on to www.pmgstenders.gov.in.

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer
R.W.Circle, Bhawanipatna

OIPR-25102/11/0001/2021