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BHUMI CELEBRATES SISTERHOOD 10 VIVACITY

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Harsimrat quits over farm Bills

With the resignation, SAD aims at consolidating its stronghold in Punjab's farming community

MONIKA MALIK/PNS CHANDIGARH/NEW DELHI

Faced with massive unrest among the farmers, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Thursday distanced itself from its alliance partner BJP on the issue of a set of agriculture Bills by "sacrificing" the Cabinet berth in the NDA-led Central Government.

Strongly opposing the farm Bills, Union Food Processing Minister and SAD's lone representative in the Union Cabinet Harsimrat Kaur Badal resigned from the Ministry "in protest against anti-farmer Ordinances and legislation". The three Bills — Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020, the Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, and the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020 — were passed by the Lok Sabha on Thursday night. Led by the Congress nearly all the Opposition parties opposed the Bill, calling it "anti-farmer".

"We stand with the farmers and will do anything for them. Next course of action will be taken by our party for which there will be a meeting shortly," said Shiromani Akali Dal



president Sukhbir Singh Badal, leaving open the possibility of walking out of the NDA.

The BJP has a few allies left after Shiv Sena walked out of the NDA.

"I have resigned from the Union Cabinet in protest against anti-farmer Ordinances and legislation. Proud to stand with farmers as their daughter & sister," Harsimrat tweeted ahead of the passage of the Bills in the Lok Sabha.

Farmers form a sizable chunk of the voting population in the agrarian State of Punjab and political parties have all along made attempts to have agriculturalists by their side. SAD's rivals, including the



Women raise slogan during a protest against three ordinances passed by the Centre at Badal village in Sri Muktsar Sahib on Thursday

Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), have all along been accusing the Badal family of indulging in "double speak". They have been targeting the SAD for opposing the farm Bills while enjoying the Cabinet berth at the same time.

The SAD has been at loggerheads with its ally BJP over the farm Bills, which has triggered massive protests in Punjab and the neighbouring Haryana by farmer organisations, apprehending that the new laws would bring to an end the assured minimum support price (MSP) regime for agri-

culture produce, and would also benefit the corporates.

The Badal husband-wife couple represents the SAD in the Lok Sabha, while the Upper House has three MPs. On Tuesday, Sukhbir voted against the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha, saying that the proposed legislation is against the interests of farmers. Later, it was passed by Parliament by voice vote.

Initially defending the Ordinances, and even persuading the farmers that it would have no bearing on

existing procurement policy and the MSP regime, SAD, in a complete volte-face, claimed that the party was "not consulted" over the controversial farm Ordinances, and it would "destroy the food grain procurement system establishment painstakingly over a period of 50 years".

With Harsimrat's resignation, the SAD would aim at consolidating its stronghold in the State's farming community in an apparent attempt to stage a comeback in the Assembly polls in 2022.

Continued on Page 2

No power can prevent Army patrols in Ladakh: Rajnath

India will not allow China to unilaterally change status quo on LAC, says Minister

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said "no power on the earth can prevent" the Indian Army from patrolling its area in Ladakh and India will not allow China to unilaterally change the status quo on the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The Minister made these observations while briefing the Rajya Sabha about the current situation on the volatile border where stand-offs are on for the past four months. Cutting across party lines, the entire House expressed solidarity with the Government and the armed forces in handling the ongoing tense situation at the border.

Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu said the entire House should send out a message that the country is united in this crisis. It will be an apt rebuff to "propaganda" in a section of the international media that there are differences in India on the LAC issue, he said. Naidu also said India for centuries has followed the path of peace and has never attacked another country.

Updating the House, Rajnath said India has asked China to refrain from making aggressive efforts to unilaterally change the LAC. He also referred to his recent meeting with his Chinese counterpart Wei Fenghe in Moscow where this point was conveyed. China was also asked to honour all the pacts to maintain peace and tranquility at the LAC and the Indian forces are determined to protect its territory



and sovereignty, the Minister said.

Repeatedly underlining New Delhi's stand that it wanted to solve the complex issue through political and military level dialogue, Rajnath cautioned "war can be started by anyone but no one is sure about the end result."

Replying to questions by the former Defence Minister and senior Congress leader AK Antony and his colleague Anand Sharma about China obstructing Indian patrols, he said "no power on earth can prevent the Indian patrols. The patrolling pattern is traditional and well-defined."

He also said the stand-offs take place as the Chinese try to stop the Indian patrols. The first face-off in May this year also started after the Chinese intruded five km into India in the north bank of the Pangong Tso (lake) and obstructed an Indian patrol near 'Finger 4'. This led to exchange of blows between the two sides leaving scores of soldiers injured.

The Defence Minister said he will not be able to share much more because these were sensitive operational issues. "I hope the House will under-

stand the sensitivity of the matter," he said.

Appreciating the issue, Naidu urged Rajnath to call select leaders for a separate meeting to address deeper issues and answer their questions. The meeting could be attended by senior defence officials, the chairman suggested.

Rajnath did not deviate much from his statement given in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday. In the Rajya Sabha, he said the LAC in the past too had seen face-offs and they were ultimately resolved through dialogue.

However, this time the situation is very different both in terms of the scale of troops involved and the number of friction points, the Minister said adding India remains committed to a peaceful resolution. "Starting war is in our hands but the end is not in our hands."

I am astonished at times that peace is compromised. I want to tell our 130 crore countrymen that we will not let the country down. Neither will we bow before anyone, nor is it our intention to make anyone bow before us," he said.

Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL CASES: 52,07,111
DEATHS: 84,376
RECOVERED: 41,02,138
ACTIVE: 10,19,861

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	11,45,840	31,351	8,12,354
Andhra Pradesh	6,01,462	5,177	5,08,088
Tamil Nadu	5,25,420	8,618	4,70,192
Karnataka	4,94,356	7,629	3,83,077
Uttar Pradesh	3,36,294	4,771	2,63,288
Delhi	2,34,701	4,877	1,98,103
West Bengal	2,15,580	4,183	1,87,061
Odisha	1,67,161	722	1,33,466
Telangana	1,65,003	1,005	1,33,555
Bihar	1,64,224	855	1,49,722
Assam	1,48,969	528	1,19,364
Kerala	1,22,216	490	87,341
Gujarat	1,19,088	3,271	99,908
Rajasthan	1,09,473	1,293	90,685
Haryana	1,03,773	1,069	81,690
Madhya Pradesh	97,906	1,877	74,398

Rich nations with just 13% global population to secure half of Covid-19 vaccines

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

A group of wealthy nations representing 13 per cent of the global population have already bought up more than half of the promised doses of future Covid-19 vaccines, according to a report by Oxfam on Wednesday.

The non-governmental organisation analysed deals struck by pharmaceuticals and vaccine producers for the five leading vaccine candidates currently in late-stage trials, based on data collected by the analytics company Airfinity.

"Access to a life-saving vaccine shouldn't depend on where you live or how much money you have," said Robert Silverman of Oxfam America.

"The development and approval of a safe and effective vaccine is crucial, but equally important is making sure the vaccines are available and affordable to everyone. Covid-19 anywhere is Covid-19 everywhere."

The five vaccines analysed were from AstraZeneca, Gamaleya/Sputnik, Moderna, Pfizer and Sinovac.

Oxfam calculated the combined production capacity of



these five vaccine candidates at 5.9 billion doses, enough for three billion people given that all five future vaccines will or are highly likely to require two doses. Supply deals have so far been agreed for 5.3 billion doses, of which 2.7 billion have been bought by developed countries/union like the US, the UK, EU, Australia, Hong Kong and Macau, Japan, Switzerland and Israel.

The remaining 2.6 billion doses have been bought by or promised to developing countries, including India, Bangladesh, China, Brazil, Indonesia and Mexico.

The non-profit added that one of the leading candidates, developed by Moderna, has received \$2.5 billion in committed taxpayers' money, but has said it intends to make a profit and has sold the options for all its supply to rich nations.

Flood loss: State seeks ₹1,100 cr from Centre

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government on Thursday presented an interim demand of Rs 1,100 crore before the Central team which visited the State to assess the damages caused by the recent floods.

While submitting its initial report to the five-member team, the State Government said mitigation measures are being worked out and would be indicated in a final memorandum to be submitted in 10 days.

Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy told the team that about 2.25 lakh hectares of agriculture and crop land have suffered more than 33% damage. Similarly about 1.20,000 houses have been damaged to various degrees. Embankments, roads and public infrastructure have also been damaged, he added. While

praising the efforts of the State Government, the Central team agreed to the suggestion to consider providing financial aid not only in response as per SDRF norm but also include mitigation measures like strengthening of embankments, construction of new embankments, disaster resilient housing support against damaged houses and other flood-resilient infrastructure.

Ministry of Home Affairs Joint Secretary Praveen Vasishth, the leader of the Central team, was accompanied by Virendra Singh, Amrpal Singh, Saswat Mohapatra and SS Modi during the two-day visit to the State.

Among others, State Development Commissioner Suresh Mohapatra, Special Relief Commissioner Pradeep Jena and the Water Resources Secretary were present in the meeting.

325 more Covid cases in BBSR

224 local contacts outnumber

urant nc cases

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As many as 325 persons tested Covid-19 positive in capital city Bhubaneswar on Thursday, taking the total tally to 17,620, out of which 4,426 are active cases.

Of the 325 new cases, 101 were from quarantine centres and all were linked with earlier positive cases. Besides, 224 were local contacts.

However, the recovery rate was higher as 420 persons recovered from the deadly disease on the day, taking the total recoveries to 13,114. "Further contact tracing are still continuing. Primary contacts and nearby houses are being quarantined, sanitised and will be under active surveillance."

All the new positive cases have been shifted to Covid Hospitals," said the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation.

13 more fatalities, State Covid toll 669

3,607 patients recover; total recoveries 1,33,466

4,241 new positives; total 1,67,161; day's highest 647 cases in Khordha again

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Covid-19 deaths continued rising with 13 more persons succumbing to the infections on Thursday in the State, taking the total death toll to 669.

Khordha and Puri districts reported four deaths each followed by Gajapati two and one each in Baleswar, Cuttack and Subarnapur. The deaths in Khordha were of a

70-year-old man, a 70-year-old woman and a 68-year-old man (all of Bhubaneswar) and a 65-year-old man of Khordha.

The fatalities in Puri were of 85-year-old man, a 62-year-old man, a 65-year-old man and a 54-year-old man.

The other deceased were a 43-year-old man of Baleswar, an 80-year-old man Cuttack, a 56-year-old man and a 50-year-old man of Gajapati and a 72-year-old man of Subarnapur.

Meanwhile on the day, the State reported 4,241 new positive cases, pushing the total tally to 1,67,161. Of the new cases reported from all 30 districts, 2,502 were from quarantine centres while 1,739

were local contact cases. Khordha reported the maximum number of 647 cases followed by

Cuttack 389, Puri 291, Sundargarh 154, Jajpur 150, Bargarh 149, Mayurbhanj 147, Baleswar 141, Subarnapur 129, Kandhamal 116, Kalahandi 114, Jagatsinghpur 126, Jharsuguda 111, Nabarangpur 107, Kendrapada 103, Nuapada 99, Koraput 98, Boudh and Nayagarh 94 each, Sambalpur 91, Dhenkanal 86, Angul 84, Keonjhar 77, Ganjam 75, Bhadrak 72, Rayagada 66, Balangir 44, Malkangiri 28, Gajapati 23 and Deogarh six.

Besides, 330 positives were recorded from the State

pool. However, another 3,607 patients recovered in the State, taking the total recoveries to 1,33,466.

The highest 1,037 recovered in Khordha district followed by Puri 415, Cuttack 299, Balangir 140, Mayurbhanj 128, Jajpur 127, Baleswar 112, Sundargarh 107, Jagatsinghpur 105, Nabarangpur 104, Subarnapur 100, Bargarh and Kendrapada 84 each, Jharsuguda 82, Rayagada 80, Ganjam and Koraput 70 each, Sambalpur 71, Nayagarh 55, Bhadrak 54, Nuapada 44, Keonjhar 43, Malkangiri 37, Boudh 30, Dhenkanal 28, Gajapati 26, Kalahandi 19, Deogarh 18, Kandhamal 16 and Angul 12.

4 Indian cities slip in Global Smart City rankings

Respondents from Indian cities highlight air pollution, road congestion as main problems

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Four Indian cities — Mumbai, New Delhi, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru — have seen a significant fall in the ranking of Global Smart City Index 2020 released on Thursday. Singapore is the top in the list, followed by Helsinki and Zurich in the second and third places respectively. Beijing is ranked 82 (down from 60 in 2019) while Lagos is at the bottom (109) in the list.

As per the Global Smart City Index 2020, Hyderabad was placed at the 85th position (down from 67 in 2019), New Delhi at 86 (down from 68 in 2019), Mumbai was at 93rd place (in 2019 it was at 78) and Bengaluru at 95th (79 in 2019).



The report said cities in India suffer significant drops this year due to the detrimental effect of the pandemic, where technological advancement was not up to date. Indian cities have suffered more from the pandemic because they were not prepared, the report added.

The report was prepared by

the Institute for Management Development (IMD), in collaboration with Singapore University for Technology and Design (SUTD).

Respondents from Indian cities highlighted air pollution, road congestion as main problems.

Others in the top 10 list include Auckland (4th), Oslo

(5th), Copenhagen (6th), Geneva (7th), Taipei City (8th), Amsterdam (9th) and New York at the 10th place. Dubai ranked 43th while Abu Dhabi 42th.

The IMD in collaboration with Singapore University for Technology and Design has released the 2020 Smart City Index, with key findings on how technology is playing a role in the Covid-19 era.

Hundreds of citizens from 109 cities were surveyed in April and May 2020 in the second edition of Global Smart City Index 2020 and asked questions on the technological provisions of their city across five key areas — health and safety, mobility, activities, opportunities, and governance.

Enforcement to be intensified in market areas

Growing Covid cases in twin city

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a bid to curb the rapid spread of Covid-19 in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, it has been decided to intensify the enforcement of the norms in the market areas of the twin city.

The decision was taken at a review meeting chaired by DGP Abhay in the presence of senior officers of the Twin City Commissionerate police on Thursday, a day after Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik expressed displeasure over the lax enforcement of Covid-19 norms in the two cities.

The enforcement would be carried out in the market areas and specified hotspots,



which keep changing from weekend to weekdays, official sources said. An additional 50 officers and five platoons of armed police would be engaged for the enforcement. Police would collect more PPE kits and face shields from State Minister Naveen Patnaik expressed displeasure over the lax enforcement of Covid-19 norms in the two cities.

Bhubaneswar would be divided into three zones for the purpose of enforcement with one DCP looking after each zone, the sources added.

BJP leader Sahu passes away



PNS ■ CUTTACK

Senior BJP leader and retired Assam-cadre IPS officer Ashok Sahu passed away at his residence in Pithapur here. He was 68. He breathed his last following prolonged illness, family sources said. Sahu had joined the saffron party after opting for voluntary retirement while serving as Additional DGP of Assam.

The BJP had fielded Sahu as its Lok Sabha candidate in Kandhamal and Puri constituencies in 2009 and 2014 elections, respectively, which he lost. He was, however, not nominated to contest 2019 polls. Political leaders cutting across party lines expressed deep grief over demise.

Varsha offers help to talented tribal girl singer

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Moved by the melodious voice of a teenage tribal girl from Chintaguda village of Koraput district, Ollywood actress Varsha Priyadarshini has volunteered to help her achieve her dreams.

Namita Meleka, from a tribal labourer family with a nightingale's voice, has become the latest internet sensation after a video of her singing Hindi song 'Chunar' from Bollywood movie 'ABCD 2' went viral on social media. Varsha stumbled upon the video and could not help but appreciate the girl's talent.

Varsha took to Twitter and shared Namita's singing video on the micro-blogging platform. She wrote, "What a magical voice she has, God gifted talent... My sincere prayers & blessings to dear little sister



Namita for her bright future ...

I would like to be a small part in her journey to help her & inspire her to achieve her dreams & be successful & set an example for all the young talents, who wish to fulfil their own dreams."

"I would like to take an initiative to start her career with a Jagannath Bhajan with Sangeet Guru's guidance," the actress added. Apart from her native language Kui, Namita can sing both Odia and Hindi songs. Recently, the Koraput Collector had paid a visit to Namita's family and provided

Puri MLA reported Covid +ve



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Puri BJP MLA Jayanta Kumar Sarangi has tested positive for Covid-19. He has kept himself in home isolation.

Earlier, several MLAs including Susant Rout (Bhubaneswar-North), Ananta Narayan Jena (Bhubaneswar-Central), Bikram Panda (Brahmapur), Byomakesh Ray (Chandbali), Soumya Ranjan Patnaik (Khandapada) and Pradeep Maharathy (Pipili) had already tested Covid positive. Several Ministers have also contracted viral infection.

BJP women seek justice for rape victim

Meet Rourkela SP

PNS ■ ROURKELA

Panposh Sangathanika Zilla BJP Mahila Morcha members on Thursday met Rourkela SP K Shiba Subramani and demanded justice to the September 15 gang-rape victim.

Notably, three youths had abducted the girl from Gurundia and after raping her they dumped her near the OMFED plant in Sector -13 and fled from the spot.

Later, locals spotted the girl in the morning and informed the police. The Chennid police reached the spot rescued the victim and sent her to hospital.

But they are yet to nab the accused. The Morcha team which was led by Pramila Das demanded patrolling to be intensified in the area to prevent such incidents.

Woman killed by minor sons in city

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a deeply shocking case of Parricide, a woman was beaten to death by her two minor sons at the Orchid Apartment in the Sundarpada area under the Airfield police station here on Wednesday night.

The deceased was identified as Binodini Mishra.

Sources said heated argument took place between Binodini and her sons over some family matter. However, it turned violent, when the boys aged 12 and 15 years hit her with an iron rod killing her on the spot. Then they went outside locking the house.

Seeing the door closed till late morning, the security guard of the apartment became suspicious and called up the Airfield police. Later, the cops found the body in the bathroom of the house. Though the exact motive behind the murder was yet to be ascertained, the police seized the body and sent it for postmortem.

K Stadium to get facelift under 'Khelo India'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Kalinga Stadium here has been chosen as one of the first eight Khelo India State Centres of Excellence (KISCs) to get facelift by the Sports Authority of India.

The stadium would be upgraded with a total budget of Rs12.02 crore in four years.

The support would 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. High quality equipment would also be provided to the players. The academy would also have a high performance manager to ensure quality sports science input and performance man-



agement. The Sports Ministry is upgrading existing sporting infrastructure in each State and UT to create a robust sporting ecosystem in the entire country.

Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju said, "These Khelo India State Centres of Excellence is yet another step towards building a robust sports ecosystem on one hand and India's pursuit of excellence in Olympics on the

No account of ₹15K-cr OMBADC fund

RTI activist counters CS review meeting data

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Noted RTI activist Pradip Pradhan on Thursday slammed the State Government stating that a review meeting held on sanction and utilisation of Odisha Mineral Bearing Area Development Corporation (OMBADC) funds didn't show investment of about Rs 15,000 crore out of a total receipt of Rs 16,562.27 crore.

Pradhan made this allegation on the basis of information obtained under the RTI. Pradhan said a Press release issued by the Chief Secretary's office, which was published in newspapers on Thursday, carries a lot of information except investment of Rs. 15,022.82 crore. Srikant Pakal, an RTI activist of Cuttack, had sought

information, he said. A reply of PIO dated August 28, 2020 revealed that a total of Rs 15,586.91 crore were received from December 1, 2017 to December 31, 2019 and interest received till December 31 was Rs 975.36 crore. Thus, total amount came to Rs 16,562.27. The PIO reply has also detailed about release of amount of funds to different line departments.

To another RTI query, the PIO, Director of Mines, has provided information dated January 31 of mining leaseholders with address who paid compensatory penalty as per order of Supreme Court during 2017. A total amount of Rs 15326,63,88,256 was collected as compensation and penalty as per direction of Supreme Court.

Plasma cases cross 1K-mark, health dept thanks donors

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a significant development in connection with the Covid-19 cure in the State, plasma has been administered to more than 1,000 patients so far, official sources said on Thursday.

The Health Department thanked the plasma donors and the team of plasma therapy who have a major role in the achievement.

Plasma therapy for Covid-19 treatment had been launched at the SCB Medical College Hospital, Cuttack by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on July 15.

It was later expanded to several other Government healthcare facilities in the State.

CUO to organise CUCET in 10 cities

For admission to UG, PG, Research Programmes

PNS ■ KORAPUT

As a Participating University (PU) in the CUCET-2020, the Central University of Odisha would organise the examination at 14 centres across 10 cities of Angul, Baleswar, Bhawanipatna, Keonjhar, Koraput, Malkangiri, Palasa, Paralakhemundi, Rourkela, and Srikakulam from September 18 to 20.

While there are four centres in Koraput, two in Baleswar and one centre each in other cities.

The Central Universities Common Entrance Test-2020 (CUCET-2020) is a Joint Entrance Examination for admission to different programmes in 14 Central Universities and four State

Universities all over the country. This examination would be conducted in two shifts, first from 10am to 12 pm and second from 3pm to 5 pm from September 18 to September 20, 2020.

The examination is meant for three categories of programmes, namely, UG Integrated Programmes (UI), Post-graduation Programmes (PG), Research Programmes (RP). The Central University of Odisha (CUO) is offering 30 programmes through 14 departments.

Examinations would be held amid strict implantation of Covid guidelines, said an official release. The CUCET-2020 envisages 100 per cent inclusive policy for accommodating all the candidates.

MASK MANDATE Violator misbehaves with woman cop, held

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Even though wearing of masks has been made compulsory where there is a risk of widespread community transmission and physical distancing is difficult, still there are many in Bhubaneswar who flout the rules and are not ready to cooperate with the enforcement agencies.

In an example, a youth was arrested on the charge of misbehaving with a woman police official after being fined for not wearing mask in the city. The accused was identified as Bikash Kumar Pradhan (25), son of Surendra Pradhan of Khairia area in Ganjam district, presently residing at at Kolathia under the Khandagiri police

station. Report said a team of Nayapalli police station caught Bikash without a mask near the OMFED stall in VIP Colony. A woman ASI Pratima Sahoo fined him Rs 100 for the violation.

But Bikash argued with the woman police official and misbehaved with her publicly. The youth followed Sahoo and tried to record activities of police on his mobile phone. When the team returned to the police station, Bikash reportedly abused her in filthy language as well as to other officers at the police station. The police registered a case under sections 341/294/353/354-(D)/506 of IPC and arrested the youth. He was forwarded to a local court later in the day

Angul firms urged to curb carbon emissions

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Celebrating the World Ozone Day on Wednesday, the Citizen Action Forum (CAF) called upon the industries to reduce their carbon emissions which are the leading cause for harm to the ozone layer.

Addressing a virtual meeting, organised by the CAF, environmentalist Dr Sudhi Ranjan Dash told, "This year we celebrate 35 years of global ozone layer protection with the slogan 'Ozone for Life'. This slogan reminds us of the importance of the ozone layer for life on earth to sustain and we must continue to protect the ozone layer for our future generations as well."

Addressing the meeting, environmentalist and lawyer RP Pattanaik said, "Angul-Talcher industrial area has been identified as one of the world's largest Nitrogen



Dioxide (NO2) emission hotspots. With coal the number one source of NO2 emissions, the Government needs to stress upon renewable technologies, than coal energy."

"Ozone-depleting substances are also very potent greenhouse gases, contributing to the phenomenon as other substances widely known to have a greenhouse effect like carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4) and nitrous oxide (N2O). Therefore, by reducing emissions of ozone-depleting substances, the Montreal Protocol has protected both the ozone layer and the climate at the same time," RN Sahu said.

Behera quits Congress Likely BJP candidate in Tirtol

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a blow to the Congress in the State, senior leader Raj Kishore Behera quit the party ahead of the bye-election for the Tirtol Assembly seat in Jagatsinghpur district.

Behera resigned from the party's primary membership, he informed in a Press meet on Thursday. He tendered his resignation to Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Niranjana Patnaik.

Speculations are rife that Behera is likely to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which would field him as its candidate in the upcoming Tirtol by-poll. Behera had fought elections between years 2009 and 2014 as Congress candidate from Tirtol.

KIIT gets Utkrisht Vishwakarma Award for excellence

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR



Education (AICTE) under the Ministry of Human Resource Development has given this award to the KIIT for post Covid-19 redevelopment / rehabilitation plan. The KIIT is the only one organisation in the country to get the award.

The AICTE recognised and honoured the innovative work of the KIIT for its social work during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Two die in Boudh road accident

PNS ■ BOUDH

Two persons were killed and another was critically injured in a collision between two two-wheelers near the Harbhanga panchayat office in Boudh district on Wednesday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Prashant Nayak from Harbhanga village and Sanu Nayak from Gandasara village.

Receiving information, Fire Service personnel reached the spot and rescued the injured. Prashant and Sanu succumbed to the injuries while undergoing treatment at the Purunakata Hospital.

When the condition of the other injured, Aji Bhokta deteriorated, he was shifted to the District Headquarters Hospital.

Covid times: Voluntary contributions spread smiles!



ACHYUTA SAMANTA

Alas! My line of work is mostly thankless. Be it in the education sector or the social service sector, my only reward is in the smiles of each and every person whose life I have been able to impact in a positive manner. With Covid-

19, humanity faces its most daunting task yet, probably, since the Second World War. However, it has also brought us closer to our friends, families and relatives. We learn everyday to value every single person who is important to us, not take people for granted and be nice to our fellow beings.

In these troubled times, people have come out from high and wide to help those who are most vulnerable. Voluntarily, they have contributed to the betterment of their fellow humans, be it through a financial contribution or actual support.

However small the voluntary act of kindness may be, it has a compounding potential as we learn from the kind acts of other people and often choose to contribute ourselves. The media has been publishing hundreds of stories on acts of

kindness and humanity, from people giving away entire salaries or pensions, children donating their pocket money to help us fight this war against Covid-19. With the rise in coronavirus cases, companies and large corporates have opened up their cheque books to help India manage the pandemic.

Big names such as Tata Sons and Tata Trusts (Rs 1,500 crore), Azim Premji Foundation (Rs 1,125 crore), L&T (Rs 650 crore), Reliance Industries (Rs 500 crore), PayTM (Rs 500 crore) and many Page 117 of 182 many more, including several government companies, insurers, financial companies like HDFC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank.

In fact, a recent report by the CRISIL suggests that India Inc spend nearly Rs 7,537 crore in a mix of donations to the

PM-CARES fund and other relief funds, ration donation, healthcare equipment donations and such similar fields to tackle Covid-19.

Apart from this, several have also taken individual voluntary pay cuts. Several large spiritual organisations have adopted methods to control stress and anxiety during the pandemic and the associated lockdown, and in doing so, strengthening our resolve in the fight against Covid-19.

In India, Bollywood celebrities are much admired and respected for their work on and off the screen. During Covid-19, though their work has been heavily impeded due to closure of movie sets, shutdown cinemas and theatres leading to massive loss in revenue, it has not dampened their spirits. Many are coming forward to help the fight

against Covid-19 in any way that they can, be it donating to the PM-CARES fund or to the fund set up by the Producers' Guild of India to support assistants and technicians and the thousands of people who work behind the scenes in the film industry.

Even, the Netflix has pledged 65 \$1 million to the Producers' Guild of India to help these people. Film stars have the dual role of entertaining people and spreading good messages amongst the citizens. Because of their large fan following, it is easier and often more relevant to disseminate information which help the people through them.

Key hygiene, #StayAtHome and social distancing aspects relating to Covid-19 have reached the corners of the country through the social media channels of the super-

stars and the Indian youths' frantic admiration for them. Live and fitness sessions, promotion of physical and emotional health, bringing in positivity and the message -- "This too shall pass".

Voluntary contribution, which I feel every person equipped to do so should regularly contribute, is the only way we can show the society that we care for them.

Across networks and countries, we have seen common people come up with such acts of kindness for their fellow beings that it brings tears to my eyes. The Covid-19 crisis has brought about the best in us, showed us how positive we can be and throw dark, pessimistic thoughts far away from our minds.

Raising voices against any form of stigma associated with Covid-19, distributing food,

ration and books, cooking and distributing food to health workers and police personnel, community focused initiatives and feeding strays and many, many more. I have been very touched and moved by the few episodes of "Some Good News" by John Krasinski collated and showing heartwarming moments around the world. Do check out the YouTube channel for "Some Good News".

We have to fight this virus and we cannot lose hope. Contributing and helping others can go a long way in alleviating the pain of those who are most vulnerable. We have to practise social distancing and prevent us from being carriers of the deadly virus.

In the words of the spiritual leader Sadhguru, "Right now, for some reason, nature has thrown a deadly virus at us.

Let us make the best out of it. It will go. Whether the summer will kill it, it will die by itself, or go some other way, we do not know.

But it will not last forever. In the meantime, because it is an invisible enemy, we just bow our heads and sit around for some time. Let it pass. If it was a big giant, we would have fought it.

Because the virus needs us for transportation, all we need to do right now is not provide the transportation. You must make this commitment. That way, you will ensure that you will not be the carrier who gives the virus to another human being. If the virus comes to you, it must stop with you. You must take care of this."

(Dr Samanta is MP, Kandhamal and founder, KIIT & KISSL)

Nod to Subarnarekha flyover brings cheer

Bhograi, Baliapal, Basta residents to get relief

UBACHAK MOHANTY ■ BALESWAR:

The people of Baleswar, particularly from Bhograi, Baliapal and Basta, expressed their happiness after their long cherished project, a bridge over river Subarnarekha, in between Jamkunda of Baliapal and Adangapantei of Bhograi received the Cabinet nod recently.

The bridge would lessen the distance between Bhograi and the district headquarters town of Baleswar, at least by 20 km and has been a long standing demand. The target date of

completion of the proposed bridge, estimated at about Rs 139 crore having 932 meter length and 62 metre width, is 30 months.

Former MP RK Jena during his tenure had aggressively pursued for the bridge and the foundation stone too was laid by the Chief Minister before last general elections.

"The bridge would not only lessen distance between Bhograi and the district headquarters town, it also would mitigate the travel pain and reduce time.

The patient, in need of emergency medical services, including delivery patients, would find a great relief.

Further, the bridge would promote and encourage tourism while Bhograi has unique beaches like Talseri, Udaipur and Bichitrapur, besides famous temples like Chandaneswar, Bhusundeswar

and Basuli etc," said Gautambudha Das, a resident of Bhograi. "I express my deep gratitude to the Chief Minister as well as the Union Surface Transport Minister besides former MP RK Jena and local MLA Ananta Das for their initiatives," he added.

Locals had been alleging that the Government had remained apathetic towards the issue. They maintained the bridge over the river would end problems related to communication, flood and economy.

"Commuters use ferry services to travel to Baliapal, Basata and Balasore town. They have to wait for hours for boats to arrive.

Moreover, they often ignore problems of overloading and carry motorcycles, cycles and other heavy accessories on the boats, in the absence of the bridge," observed Dillip Das, another resident.

Ganjam BJP celebrates PM Modi's birthday

Undertakes plantation drive, health checkup camps

PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR

The BJP Ganjam unit celebrated the 70th birthday of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, organising a plethora of social service programmes across the district, informed former district president Kanhu Charan Pati.

The party organised a massive tree plantation programme in the premises of the oldest Shiva Temple located in the Ramanagar area on Wednesday.

The plantation programme was undertaken under the guidance of district president Bibhuti Jena and Pati. Saplings of bel, amla, dalima and neem were planted.

Later the leaders discussed various public welfare programs being undertaken by the Union Government.



Party's Kamapalli mandal president Santosh Panigrahi and district functionary Shiba Sankar Adhikari coordinated.

Among others, Sarat Kumar Sahu, Prabhat Sadangi, Madan Mohan Patra, Sidhanta Gangdeo, Subhasini Pattnaik, S Rani, Reeta Pattnaik, Rinki Pattnaik, Siba Nayak, Santosh Patra and

Abhaya Panda participated in the event. It may be noted that the party is observing Seva Saptah to mark the birth week of Modi from September 14 to 20.

It conducted free health checkup camps across the city and distributed medicines through its "SahayaApp".

INBRIEF

AIPC CAMP IN PURI; 26 BLOOD UNITS COLLECTED



Puri: In a tribute to former President Pranab Mukhrjee, a blood donation camp was organised here on Monday under the aegis of the Puri Chapter of All India Professionals' Congress (AIPC). A total of 26 units of blood were collected by Blood Bank doctors. Puri AIPC vice-president Sourav Ranjan Pattnaik thanked the youths and functionaries for donating blood during the Covid pandemic. Premjit Mohanty, Rajesh Mishra, Sujit Mohapatra, Umapada Mishra, Dr Dipak Sahu and Dr Biranchi Narayan Biswal were present. City Youth Congress activist Swadhin Kumar Panda coordinated the camp.

K'PADA BLOCK CHAIRMAN DHAL PASSES AWAY

Kendrapada: Kendrapada Block Chairman Anam Bandhu Dhal (48) passed away late on Tuesday night. He complained of chest pain at his official residence, following which his family members rushed him to the District Headquarters Hospital, where a doctor declared him dead. Locals mourned the demise of Dhal as he was spearheading all developmental works.



102-KG GANJA SEIZED IN KANDHAMAL

Phulbani: The Phiringia police in Kandhamal district detected a Ganja near village Majhiapada and seized 102 kg of the contraband and a Maruti Suzuki SX4 car from the possession of the accused person Anamika Dighal (29) of Lendrigam Sadingia. He was transporting the ganja from interior pocket of Phiringia block to Bhubaneswar.



SENIOR B'NGIR POLICE OFFICER DIES OF CORONA

PNS ■ BALANGIR

Another Covid-19 warrior succumbed to the deadly virus in Balangir district on Thursday when Inspector of Police Bijayananda Karkara died while undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Vishakhapatnam. He was in charge of Corona Control Room at the Balangir SP office. Karkara worked as Inspector In-Charge at Kantabanji police station. Earlier, he had worked at



Balangir Town and Titilagarh police stations. He was a well-known police officer in district for his sincerity and dedication. He was also associated with several organisations doing social work.

NHRC gets complaint on Chikiti rape, murder

Petition seeks speedy probe, culprits' arrest

PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR

Social activist and BJP leader Srikanta Padhi moved the NHRC seeking justice to the deceased's family of Dekhali/Nuagaon village under Chikiti police circle, who was reportedly murdered after rape on May 10.

Padhi in his petition has alleged that even though four months have already been elapsed, no tangible and meaningful progress has yet been noticed as a result of which the

culprits are moving scot-free.

Padhi also demanded payment of compensation of Rs 25 lakh to the deceased's family and immediate arrest of the culprits. Padhi further alleged that, the police were not able to make any headway in the probe and unable reveal the name of the culprits in the investigation at the behest of the ruling BJD as some influential members of the ruling party were reportedly involved in the incident.

Surprisingly, the Nuagaon police IIC is yet to arrest the culprits involved in the incident, he alleged in the petition.

If the Police and the Government fail to give justice to the victim's family, the incident may lead to a public movement in the area in days ahead, Padhi cautioned.

GIMSAR's Covid ICUs still nonstarter

Patients losing lives as facility not extended

DINESH DAS ■ ATHAGARH

The five ICUs having ventilator facilities, opened since June 17, at the Athagarh based Gopabandhu Institute of Medical Science and Research (GIMSAR) by the Government of Odisha have not yet been functional for reasons best known to the Cuttack district administration.

In March this year, the Government of Odisha had selected GIMSAR, a philanthropic hospital raised by the Lok Sevak Mandal here at Madhapur of Athagarh, to turn it a Covid-19 health centre and as per the contract with the authority of the hospital, all the general patients admitted here were shifted to Sub-Divisional Hospital in Athagarh.

Rs 1 crore from LAD fund of Cuttack MP Bhartruhari Mahatab and



another Rs 40 lakh from Rajya Sabha MP Aswini Vaishnav's LAD fund were spent for development of infrastructure and purchase of furniture and machineries to start the Covid centre.

It was inaugurated by the State's Food Supply, Consumers Welfare and Co-operative Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain in presence of MP Mahatab, Cuttack DM Bhabani Shankar Chayani and other line department heads on June 17 with 150 general beds and five ICUs having ventilator facilities. Athagarh SDMO Dr Bijaya Kumar Mishra remained in charge of the Covid Centre.

Doctors, staff nurses and related staff were appointed as per the information supplied by the SDMO. The Covid hospital started admitting the Corona patients from the nearby areas. But subsequently, it was found that the doctors were seldom seen in the hospital and a doctor who worked here since its inauguration has been detected positive and remains in home isolation. As the ICUs from its inception has not been working, the serious patients are dying.

A patient named Tirthabasi Jethi (42) of Indrangapatna village of Badamba succumbed here on

September 2, due to lack of ICU facility as his condition became serious and only oxygen provision was not sufficient for treatment. On being asked as to why the ICUs were not functional, in-charge of the Covid Centre Dr Mishra said that the District Magistrate could better answer it. Asked, Collector Chayani, said that in rural areas, functioning of ICU had not been required yet.

Meanwhile, BJP leader Ramnarayan Mohanty alleged corruption in LAD fund and below par treatment facility available in the hospital. He demanded immediate steps to run the ICUs.

PPT organises Swachhhta Pakhwada With emphasis on corona eradication

PNS ■ PARADIP

Abiding by instructions of the Ministry of Shipping, the Paradip Port Trust (PPT) has started observing the "Swachhhta Pakhwada" with a Swachhhta pledge administered by Chairman Rinkesh Roy to Head of the Departments (HoDs) and Deputy HoDs in front of the administrative building here.

Due to Covid-19 guidelines, different HoDs and staff took pledge in their respective office premises maintaining social distancing norms.

On the occasion, Roy flagged off a mechanical road sweeping machine with Make in India concept. The machine would be plying on routes outside the harbour



area under the supervision of PPT Executive Engineer MR Sutar. The PPT has already drawn up a detailed action plan for holding awareness drive among workers and staff of all departments and putting up swachhhta awareness hoardings and digital display at

important locations in the township with special emphasis on the theme "Maintain cleanliness, Eradicate Corona".

Social distancing is being given special emphasis in various events to be undertaken during the Pakhwada period, informed an official release.

Woman, son die in Sundargarh dist

In-laws claim suicide; victim's kin allege murder

PNS ■ SUNDARGARH

A woman was found dead in her house at Govindpur village in the Bonai area of Sundargarh district on Thursday while her one-year-old son died at a hospital allegedly hours after a family feud.

The deceased was identified as Ashtami Kisan and her son. The woman had a heated altercation with her husband Damaru Kisan on Wednesday night while she was found dead in morning. Her son was rescued in a critical condition and admitted to Rourkela Government Hospital (RGH). The infant breathed his last while undergoing treatment at hospital. While woman's in-laws claimed that she died due to consumption of poison

Pharmacist axed after Covid patient dies on hosp verandah

PNS ■ DHENKANAL

A day after a video of indifference of staffs of the Dhenkanal District Headquarters Hospital to a man who collapsed on the hospital verandah had gone viral, the district administration on Wednesday dismissed a pharmacist for dereliction of duty.

The video showed a woman trying to resuscitate her husband by pumping on his chest on the verandah of the hospital while crying for help from doctors and nurses in vain.

Even though there were onlookers at the verandah, no one came forward to help her. Some others were busy shooting the entire episode. On September 14, Sushant Prusty of Nadhera village under Odapada block



along with wife Anupama visited the hospital for treatment as he was not keeping well.

He underwent Covid test at the hospital and waited for reports at the verandah.

When Sushant came to know that he tested Covid positive, he collapsed on the verandah and wretched in pain. His wife cried for help from doctors and nurses, but

no medical staff helped after knowing that Sushant tested positive for Covid.

Dhenkanal Collector Bhumesh Chandra Behera said a recommendation has been sent to the State Government to take action against the doctor on duty when the incident happened.

A contractual pharmacist has been disengaged from duty, he added.

Hit by train, jumbo dies in S'garh

PNS ■ SUNDARGARH

A female elephant was killed after reportedly being hit by a freight train between Jareikela and Manoharpur in the Bisra area of Sundargarh district on Wednesday evening.

The incident took place around 9 pm, following which irate locals staged a Rail Roko. The loco pilot and guard of the train fled the spot after the incident.

The locals later withdrew the protest when railway officials reached the place and pacified them.

Normalcy in movement of trains in the route, which was affected due to the incident, was restored after around three hours.

Forest officials recovered the jumbo's carcass for autopsy and started an investigation.

SOCIAL CANVAS

Manual scavengers still looked down upon

As protective laws not properly executed



MANAS JENA

The State Housing and Urban Development Department has announced a scheme named GARIMA for the wellbeing of the sanitary workers engaged under urban local bodies (ULBs), with technical backing from Urban Management Centre,

Ahmadabad supported by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. After the JAGA Mission with collaboration of TATA Trust for providing land to the landless slum dwellers, this scheme is for the urban poor but primarily it is targeted to a small section of the sanitation workers who have been engaged in cleaning toilets, septic tanks, sewers, garbage pits and other waste treatment works.

The sanitation workers are also called by different names such as Safai Karmacharies, Mehentaras, Beheras, and sweepers and their habitations are known as Harijan Sahi and Mehentar Basti or slums in urban areas. They all belong to a particular community who have been treated as untouchable in social life by all other

social groups and identified as most vulnerable community among the Scheduled Castes of the State.

Historically, manual scavenging has been practiced as a hereditary caste based occupation and forcibly imposed upon this community which they have been bearing since generations.

Along with the whole family, women are engaged in large numbers with this occupation as they customarily clean roads, colonies, drains, hospitals, educational institutions, offices and almost all public and private places.

They have been working in most hazardous environment, without protective equipment and devices such as mask, gloves, boots etc. Many of

them die in roadside manholes, sock pits, waste pits while on job but many of such cases though reported in media but remain unrecorded officially and never discussed in public domain.

They are found as prone to TB, skin and varieties of water borne diseases due to long time exposure to dust, human waste and unhygienic working condition and usually they are being paid less wage without social security benefits.

In recent days, the privatisation of sanitation work in the cities has further reduced these poor workers' status from regular Government employees to private casual workers. Whatever benefit was available earlier has been withdrawn. Now almost all the urban local

bodies in the State have employed them through contractual appointment by private contractors violating all labour laws. A sizable section of the sanitation workers are manual scavengers. Manual scavenging is violation of the right to human dignity. But still this inhuman practice has been going on in various parts.

The most important concern is not just the economic development of sanitation workers but about their social dignity. The dreams of makers of modern India was in favour of abolition of caste based occupations and uphold the idea of dignity of labour.

As part of national commitment in line with the Constitution of India along with National Commission for Scheduled Caste, there has been a special panel, the National Commission for Safai

Karmacharies since 1993 and also the National Safai Karmacharies Finance and Development Corporation since 1997 with a share capital of Rs600 crore specially to look into the very specific issues of the people engaged in sanitation work.

The NSKFDC has dedicated schemes for skill development, study loan and rehabilitation programme for self-employment with loan facilities with lower rate of interest and subsidy.

The NSKFDC has pulled resources from a number of sources including, Government, PSU, private and CSR funds. The Odisha SCs and STs Development Finance Cooperative Corporation is the nodal agency in the State for implementation of such schemes. But there has been no visible impact on the wellbeing

of sanitation workers which needs a serious review by available statutory bodies. The Central Government under the National Action Plan for total eradication of manual scavengers and their rehabilitation, implemented by the Ministry of Urban Development, is looking after these issues.

The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act 2013 is in place for abolition of manual scavenging as a correction of historical injustice against the community and it has given them an opportunity to live with dignity as fellow citizens of the country under the protection of the Constitution.

There is provision in the section 13(1)(c) of the Act for allocation of residential plots and financial assistance for the

construction of houses but unfortunately this has not been implemented by the State Government though a majority of sanitary workers are landless. As per the rules, there must be a State level and district level survey committee under the chairmanship of the District Magistrate to identify the workers but the State Government has no data about these workers.

Why in spite of constitutional mandate, laws, programmes and dedicated institutions, their condition has not improved to the desired extent is a moot question.

The fact is there is no need of new schemes for economic benefits but what is required is the effective implementation of the already existing laws and schemes.

(manasbbsr15@gmail.com)

India can get Covid vaccine by early '21, Parliament told



Harshvardhan said the PM has handled Covid-19 "meticulously." "History will remember Prime Minister Narendra Modi for meticulously monitoring the entire situation himself," he said.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Thursday informed the Parliament that the COVID-19 vaccine will be made available in India by the beginning of 2021.

Addressing the Rajya Sabha over the coronavirus situation in the country, Health Minister Dr. Harshvardhan said that India is also making efforts like other nations and three vaccine candidates are in different phases of clinical trials.

Three vaccine candidates (Zydus Cadila, Bharat Biotech, and the Serum Institute of India) are in different phases. Under Prime Minister's guidance, an expert group is looking at it and there is advanced planning in place. We are hopeful that by the start of next year a vaccine will be available in India," the Health Minister informed the upper

house after a total of four hours of debate during the last three days in the Rajya Sabha.

Harshvardhan's remarks come at a time when India has reported over 50 lakh cases and people are expecting a vaccine at the earliest.

On the criticism that Government made no effort to tackle the pandemic menace at early signals, Harshvardhan stated that the PM, the ministers, and state health ministers have been addressing the situation since January 8 fighting this battle together.

He said that detailed advisories had been circulated even before the first COVID-19 case was detected in India on January 30.

The Union Minister further noted that "extensive contact-tracing was undertaken" with 162 contacts being traced to the first case.

Responding to Congress MP Anand Sharma's query on how large number of people was prevented from being infected, Harshvardhan said that six scientific agencies gave scientific data on the basis of which it was stated the 14-29 lakh cases were prevented by the coronavirus lockdown.

While the vaccine candidates undertaken by Zydus Cadila and Bharat Biotech have completed phase 1 of human tests, SII has resumed its trials after getting clearance from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).

SII is the manufacturing partner of the vaccine candidate being developed jointly by UK-based pharma giant AstraZeneca and University of Oxford's Jenner Institute.

The Pune-based company is looking after the human tests being conducted at 17 trial sites across the country.

IMA flays Govt over hiding data on Covid fatalities among healthcare staff

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has slammed the Government for failing to reveal the data on the number of healthcare staff who have been affected and who died from Covid-19, when the Parliament debated the issue.

It said that at least 382 doctors across the country have lost their lives in the line of duty so far, but Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan could not come up with the number of fatalities occurred in the medical fraternity when asked by MP Binoy Viswam in Parliament recently.

Besides, the IMA, which represents a battery of private doctors from across the country, also released the data of the doctors who died due to

Covid-19.

"Health is a state subject. Such data is not maintained at Central level," Vardhan had told Viswam in a written reply.

In a reaction to Vardhan's statement, the IMA said, "If a government does not maintain the statistics of total number of doctors and health care workers infected by Covid-19 and the statistics of how many of them sacrificed their life due to the pandemic, it loses the moral authority to administer the Epidemic Act 1897 and the Disaster Management Act."

The IMA also stated that the reply by the Union Minister also exposes the hypocrisy of calling the healthcare workers 'corona warriors' while denying them and their families the status and benefits of martyrdom.

The IMA also expressed concerns at the huge number

of deaths of doctors and health care workers.

"Doctors suffered four times mortality of ordinary citizens, and private practitioners suffered eight times mortality on the same scale. To feign that this information does not merit the attention of the nation is abominable," said the IMA.

The doctors' body also objected to the statement made by Ashwini Kumar Chaubey, Minister of State (MoS) for Health, that insurance compensation data is not available with the Union Government in Parliament.

"IMA finds it strange that after having formulated an unfriendly partial insurance scheme for the bereaved families to struggle with the ignominy of the Government disowning them altogether stares at them," it added.

Amit Shah recuperates, discharged from AIIMS



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah was on Thursday discharged from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). Earlier in the day, Shah attended the inauguration of a water work scheme under smart city programme for his Gandhinagar constituency through video conferencing from the Hospital. He also spoke for more than 10 minutes.

Shah was admitted in the hospital on Saturday night fol-

lowing breathing trouble. The AIIMS bulletin said that Shah was admitted for a "complete medical checkup before the Parliament Session for 1-2 days." On August 2, he was admitted to Medanta Hospital for Covid-19 treatment and discharged on August 13. But on August 17, he was admitted to AIIMS following post Covid-19 ailments and discharged on August 30.

The Home Minister is expected to attend the Parliament Session in the coming days.

CBI files case against software cos for sending pop-up malwares on PCs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered a case against six private companies based at New Delhi, Jaipur (Rajasthan), Noida (UP) and Gurugram (Haryana) and other unknown persons on a complaint alleging that these companies have transmitted pop ups to the victims' personal computers with warnings/bogus messages about serious technical problems including malware infection in their Microsoft Windows Systems.

The agency on Thursday conducted searches at 10 locations including Jaipur, Delhi, Noida, Gurugram, Faridabad and Mainpuri (Uttar Pradesh)

at the premises of the accused companies and the residential premises of other related persons.

"The employees of these companies allegedly advised the victims to install certain anti-malwares or anti-virus, which are essentially PUPs (Potentially Unwanted Programs). The victims were allegedly given the option to activate PUPs by paying the fee online or by calling a support number advertised in the interface of the program. The victims are fraudulently influenced in this manner and allegedly fall in their trap to maintain their systems properly," the CBI said in a statement.

It was also alleged that the victims were made to pay online by clicking the link on the interface for resolving the non-existent problem or when they ask the call centres to seek resolution of the fake problems, it further said.

The accused firms are Softwill Infotech Private Limited, New Delhi, Innovana Thinklabs Limited, Jaipur, Benovient Technologies Private Limited, Noida, Systwek Software Private Limited, Jaipur, Saburi TLC Worldwide Services Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi and Saburi Global Services Pvt Ltd, Gurugram. Some other unknown persons have also been mentioned as accused in the FIR.

India rejects Pak's 'Absurd Assertions' In orchestrated map

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Two days after National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval walked out of a virtual meeting when his Pakistani counterpart showed a wrong political map of India, the Government on Thursday told the Parliament that these maps have no legal and international validity.

Making this observation in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha, minister of state for external affairs V Muraleedharan said, a so-called 'political map' of Pakistan was unveiled by its Prime Minister on August 4. It made absurd assertions and laid untenable claims to territories in Gujarat and the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, the minister said.

The Government has rejected Pakistan's obsession with territorial aggrandisement supported by cross border terrorism.

It has also been emphasized that Pakistan should desist from laying untenable claims to Indian territories, which have neither legal validity nor international credibility.

The Minister also said the government continues to respond appropriately to Pakistan's malicious actions and propaganda, including on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, at various international fora. The question was asked by BJP MP Jyotiraditya Scindia.

Taking strong exception to the provocative act by Pakistan, India had on Tuesday walked out of a meeting of the National Security Advisors (NSA) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

The Ministry of External Affairs said what Pakistan did was in "blatant disregard to host Russia's advisory".

Delhi Metro incurs ₹1,609 revenue loss during lockdown

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro incurred a loss of ₹1,609 crore due to the lockdown followed by Bangalore metro with ₹170 crore. Lucknow, Chennai and Kochi metros have incurred losses of ₹ 90 crore, ₹80 crore and ₹34 crore respectively.

As per the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs' data tabled in the Upper House on Thursday, a total loss of ₹1,983 crore was incurred in five cities due to closure of metro rail services amid the coronavirus pandemic. Metro services, which were shut on March 22 to contain the spread of novel coronavirus, resumed on September 7 in a phased manner. Full-fledged normal operations resumed on September 12.

Replying to impact on loan repayment by various metro



rail networks due to the lockdown, Union Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri said that loan was paid as per their schedule. During the lockdown period, he said, preparatory work like detailed designing, preparation of tender schedule and finalisation of tenders, among other things, had been carried out by the Delhi metro.

According to metro rail officials, metro projects have two sources of steady revenue - farebox, which accounts for almost 80 to 90 per cent of the revenue- ticketing, passes, sales,

35 judges in SC, 557 new judges & 483 addl judges made permanent in 2014 to 2020, Govt informs RS

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 35 judges were appointed to the Supreme Court while 557 new judges were appointed and 483 additional judges made permanent in various High Courts in the country between 2014 to 2020, the government informed the Rajya Sabha.

In a written reply to a question, Minister for Law and Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad said the number of computerized District and Subordinate courts has increased from 13,672 in 2014 to 16,845 as on September 14, 2020, registering an increase of 3,173.

He said a new and user-friendly version of Case Information Software has been developed and deployed at all the computerized District and Subordinate Courts.

All stakeholders including Judicial Officers can access information relating to judicial proceedings/decisions of computerized District & Subordinate Courts and High Courts on the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) as on September 14, 2020.

The minister informed

that eCourt services such as details of case registration, cause lists, case status, daily orders and final judgments are available to litigants and advocates through the eCourts web portal, Judicial Service Centres (JSC) in all computerized courts, eCourts Mobile App, email service, SMS push and pull services.

"Video conferencing facility has been enabled between 3,240 court complexes and 1,272 corresponding jails," he said.

"From May 1, 2014 to September 14, 2020, 35 Judges were appointed in Supreme Court. 557 new Judges were appointed and 483 Additional Judges were made permanent in the High Courts. Sanctioned strength of Judges of High Courts has been increased from 906 in May, 2014 to 1079 currently," he said.

The sanctioned and working strength of Judicial Officers in District and Subordinate Courts has increased from 19,518 and 15,115 respectively as on December 31, 2013, while the sanctioned strength of judges on September 15, 2020 is 24,203 and the working strength is 19,171.

Bangladesh seeks lifting of ban on onion export by Modi Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Worried over skyrocketing onion prices in the retail market, Bangladesh has requested the Modi Government to withdraw the ban imposed on its export as soon as possible.

The Government had on Monday banned the export of all varieties of onions with immediate effect to increase availability and curb prices of the commodity in the domestic market. Onion prices in Bangladesh have touched 200 taka per kg while it is being sold at ₹40-45 per kg across India.

Onion traders and political parties including Congress and NCP are demanding reversal of the ban order while retailers expect a ₹2-5 per kg drop in the rate due to the export ban.

Expressing deep concern over the sudden ban on the

export of onions as it directly affects the supply of essential food items in market, the Bangladesh government in a letter dated September 15, requested the Indian High Commission to convey the message to authorities in New Delhi and take necessary measures to resume onion exports taking into consideration the excellent ties between the neighbours.

It pointed out that a secretary-level meeting between the commerce ministries of the two countries held on January 15-16, 2020 in Dhaka requested India not to impose export restriction on essential food items required by Bangladesh. The letter said the Bangladesh side also requested India to inform Dhaka ahead of time in case of any event necessitating such a restriction.

During April-June period,

onion exports to Bangladesh, India's largest overseas market for the key kitchen ingredient, shot up 147.5% to 1.9 lakh metric tonne. Overall, onion exports grew 23% during the same period to 6.8 lakh metric tonne.

During her visit to India in October last year after the onion export ban, Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina had said, "We are facing some issues because of the ban on onion exports from India. I don't know why you banned export of onions. It would have been better if you had alerted us in advance so that we could have sourced onions from other countries. You banned it suddenly and it became a problem for us."

Hasina had then said in jest that she had asked her cook not to use onions in the kitchen.

KVIC employment gifts on PM's birthday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) extended the benefits of various employment generation schemes to nearly 1,500 persons in 10 Indian cities to celebrate "Sewa Diwas" on Thursday, marking the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

From Arunachal Pradesh on the North Eastern Frontier to Bikaner on the Western Border and from Chandigarh and New Delhi in the North to Madurai and Coimbatore down South, KVIC organised 14 programs to expand the

ambit of its welfare projects to create local employment.

Minister of State for MSME Pratap Chandra Sarangi inaugurated a SFURTI Cluster of 500 artisans for making hand-knotted carpets in Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh. Sarangi lauded the initiatives of KVIC for empowering artisans and said this would help realise the dream of resurgent India. He said Khadi is playing a big role in making India "Aatmanirbhar".

KVIC Chairman VK Saxena launched six different programs in Varanasi, the Parliamentary constituency of the Prime Minister. These

include the first Footwear Training cum Production Center in Varanasi for leather artisans (Mochi) in collaboration with Central Footwear Training Institute (CFTI), Agra.

Saxena distributed electric potter wheels to 300 Kumhar families under Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana and 200 bee boxes to 20 farmers families under Honey Mission. The KVIC Chairman also distributed six hand-operated Agarbatti making machines at Sewapuri Block in Varanasi under the Khadi Agarbatti Aatmanirbhar Mission while also launching the plantation

of 100 saplings of Bambusa Tulda, a bamboo species used for making Agarbatti sticks. This will lead to local availability of raw material for Agarbatti.

In Delhi, Rajya Sabha MP and BJP General Secretary Arun Singh, and MP from New Delhi Meenakshi Lekhi distributed six innovative cycle-mounted Tea/Coffee Selling units under Project DigniTEA of the KVIC. The KVIC Chairman said these cycle-mounted tea/coffee selling units will enable tea-sellers to earn a respectable livelihood while selling the beverages hygienically.

Regulate digital media first, Centre tells SC

NEW DELHI: The Centre has said that if the Supreme Court decides on the issue of media regulation then such an exercise should be undertaken with the digital media first as it has faster reach and information has the potential to go viral due to applications like WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook.

The Government told the apex court that sufficient framework and judicial pronouncements exist for the electronic and the print media.

"Considering the serious impact and the potential, it is desirable that if this court decides to undertake the exercise, it should first be undertaken with regard to digital media as there already exists sufficient framework and judicial pronouncements with regard to electronic media and print media," said the counter affidavit, filed by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. **PTI**

Cong holds protest on Modi's 70th b'day

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and Shashi Tharoor wished Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his birthday on Thursday but at the same time their party also launched a scathing attack on the PM over the growing unemployment in India and held protests over the issue at several places across the country.

The Congress celebrated the day as 'National Unemployment Day' to highlight the jobs lost since the COVID-19 struck the country earlier this year.

Youth Congress workers in Bhopal demonstrated by frying fritters and holding banners such as 'I am a young unemployed'. In the national capital, party workers waved huge banners with Modi's

image and mentioning 'Berojgar Divas'.

"Massive unemployment has forced the youth to call today #NationalUnemploymentDay. Employment is dignity. For how long will the Govt deny it?," Rahul, who is currently out of the country for treatment of his mother and Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, tweeted.

Priyanka said the youth of the country wants that the Government must hold exams for Government jobs on time and the results should be declared in a fix time frame.

She added that the Government must create more job opportunities and if the Centre will fail to address the concerns of the youth then they will change the Government.



Women make rangoli from flower petals on the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 70th birthday at a school in Ahmedabad on Thursday **PTI**

Me Ustra Sarkar."

This is not the first time that the Congress has made derogatory statements against PM Modi. Congress leader Arjun Modwadia had also once compared Modi to a monkey.

SC AGROTECH LIMITED
(FORMERLY KNOWN AS SHEEL INTERNATIONAL LIMITED)
CIN: L01122DL1990PLC042207
Regd Address: RZ-1484/28, Ground Floor, Tughlakabad Ext. New Delhi-110019
Email: sheel102@gmail.com, Web: www.scagrotech.com Ph: 9654056648

EXTRACT FROM THE STANDALONE UN-AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED ON 30.06.2020 (Rs. in Lakhs)

S. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended			
		30.06.2020	30.06.2019	31.03.2020	31.03.2020
		Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited
I	Revenue from operations	12.42	-	-	-
II	Other income	18.03	18.00	18.10	72.10
III	Total Income	30.45	18.00	18.10	72.10
IV	Expenses				
a)	Cost of materials consumed	-	-	-	-
b)	Purchases of stock-in-trade	-	-	-	-
c)	Changes in inventories of finished goods, work-in-progress and stock-in-trade	12.25	-	-	-
d)	Employee benefit expense	4.69	4.58	5.81	19.29
e)	Finance costs	0.01	-	0.01	0.04
f)	Depreciation and amortisation expense	0.35	0.35	0.35	1.41
g)	Other Expenditure	11.76	11.53	11.37	46.28
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE (IV)	29.06	16.46	17.54	67.02
V	Profit before Exceptional Items and Tax (III-IV)	1.39	1.54	0.56	5.08
VI	Exceptional Items	-	-	-	-
VII	Profit before tax (V-VI)	1.39	1.54	0.56	5.08
XI	Total Comprehensive Income For the period	1.39	1.54	0.56	5.08
XII	Paid up equity share capital	599.50	599.50	599.50	599.50
	(face value of INR 10/- per equity share capital)				
a)	Basic				
b)	Diluted	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01

Note: The above is an Extract of the detailed format of Quarterly financial result filed with Stock Exchange under reg 33 of the SEBI Iodr 2015. The full format of the Quarterly and half yearly financial result are available on the website of the Stock Exchange (s) viz www.bseindia.com and the listed entity (www.scagrotech.com)

By order of the Board FOR SC AGROTECH Limited
Sd/-
(Nitin Maheshwari)
Executive Director

Place: New Delhi
Date: 15.09.2020

3 TERRORISTS KILLED IN J&K

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Three terrorists belonging to a pro Pakistan terror outfit Hizbul Mujahideen were neutralised by the joint teams of security forces in the congested area of Batmaloo in Srinagar early Thursday morning.

Two CRPF personnel, including a Deputy commandant identified as Rahul Mathur leading one of the search parties, received bullet injuries during initial exchange of fire while one civilian woman was also killed in the crossfire. So far 16 terrorists have been neutralised in seven different operations in Srinagar this year.

Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbagh Singh said that

all the three terrorists were locals from South Kashmir and were heavily armed.

Since January 1, a total number of 177 terrorists have been neutralised in 72 operations across J&K. Out of these 22 were foreign terrorists from Pakistan.

DGP termed the killing of a 45-year-old kousar Jan in "cross firing" as unfortunate and expressed sympathy with the bereaved family

Addressing a Press conference at Police Control Room (PCR) Srinagar, DGP Singh said, "the operations were launched during wee hours in the Batmaloo area after receiving a tip off about the presence of heavily armed terrorists in the area."

In a separate statement a police spokesman said, "The killed terrorists have been identified as Zakir Ahmad Paul son of Nisar Ahmad resident of Aloora Imam Sahib Shopian, Ubair Mushtaq Bhat son of Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat resident of Badragund Kulgam and Adil Hussain Bhat son of Abdul Rashid Bhat resident of Batapora Chersoo Awantipora, all affiliated with proscribed terror outfit HM. They were involved in several attacks in Srinagar City and South Kashmir.

Responding to a question related to frequent encounters taking place in and around Srinagar DGP said, "terrorists from other districts of South and north Kashmir keep on

visiting Srinagar to carry out attacks on security forces". "On August 14, they targeted our party and killed two policemen at Nowgam. Before that, they had killed two BSF men at Pandach on city outskirts. And then they made another attempt at Pantha Chowk where we lost a brave SoG man," the DGP Singh said.

He said police and CRPF teams are alert and whenever they get a lead about presence of terrorists in Srinagar, efforts are always put in to ensure zero collateral damage. "Today's operation was seventh one in Srinagar in the recent past, but biggest success was the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Junaid Sehrai," the J&K Police chief said.

Another Pulwama-type terror strike averted

PNS ■ JAMMU

Another Pulwama type terror strike was averted by the joint teams of security forces after they stumbled upon 52 kgs of explosive material which included over 400 packets of explosives weighing 125 gm and 50 detonators during search operations near Karewa forest area of Gadikhil in Awantipora on Thursday.

According to official sources, during a joint search operation in the Karewa forest area security forces spotted a syntax tank. "On detailed search, a total of 52 Kgs of explosives were recovered. There were 416 pkts of explosives with each pkt of 125gm. In another such syntax tank 50 detonators were also recovered".



The Karewa is located very close to the National Highway, 9 km South east of Lethpora, and in general area where Pulwama attack happened.

According to a police spokesman, "acting on tip off about the presence of Jem terrorists, police along with 42 RR and 130 BN CRPF conducted a joint search of the nursery area near forests of village Gadikhil Awantipora. During search of the said forest area, 02

explosive dumps were found which were concealed underground in 02 different 250 litres plastic tanks".

In one plastic tank, 416 high explosive gelatine sticks have been recovered while in another plastic tank, 50 detonators were recovered, a police spokesman said.

"The detonators were

destroyed by the Bomb Disposal Squad on the spot, due to their risk of carrying/transporting," the spokesman added.

Meanwhile, a case FIR number 126/2020 under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Awantipora and investigation has been taken up.

Chief of Army Staff takes stock of LoC situation



PNS ■ JAMMU

The Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General MM Naravane Thursday conducted first hand assessment of the prevailing security situation along the Line of Control (LoC) in north Kashmir.

Immediately after landing in Srinagar General Naravane proceeded to the forward areas along with top brass of the Northern Command.

Later in the day, the COAS reviewed the overall security situation along with the Northern Army Commander and Chinar Corps Commander. He was also briefed by the commanders in the hinterland.

Defence Spokesman in Srinagar Col Rajesh Kalia said,

"During his interaction with the soldiers deployed in high altitude areas, General MM Naravane appreciated their high morale and complimented them on their response to Pakistan ceasefire violations."

He also commended use of technology to ensure effective day and night surveillance across the LoC which has resulted in many successful operations to foil infiltration bids from POK in the recent past.

The COAS reinforced the need to extend all possible support to civilians residing in the border areas who are victims of targeted ceasefire violations by Pakistan Army and are facing hardships due to the pandemic.

Political disaster stares at CPM: Kerala watchers

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The gold smuggling scam, the LIFE Mission corruption charges and the drug trafficking case with its origin in Bangalore in which the CPI(M) ministers and leaders stand accused have rejuvenated the opposition BJP and to a certain extent the Muslim League in Kerala.

"The resignation or sacking of K T Jaleel, the higher education minister and E P Jayarajan, the industries minister from the council of ministers will not solve the political impasse in the State. Things have gone out of control and there is no guarantee that the name of a third minister would not crop up in the next two-three days," said Jayashankar, Kerala's leading political commentator who says that the situation looks like a political disaster for the CPI(M).

He said there was no guarantee that Jaleel would not be summoned by the Customs and CBI in days to come. "It is a blot on the face of the Government led by Pinarayi Vijayan. The Government is facing a three-pronged attack from the BJP, its women's wing and the Muslim League. Though the CPI(M) tried to communalize the Quran import scam, it didn't materialize because of the intervention of a section of Muslim League led by its youthful leader P K Feroze," Jayashankar told The Pioneer.

Jayashankar said Vijayan stands exposed in front of the people of Kerala. "The links his secretary had with gold smuggling syndicates in Kerala and minister Jaleel's liaison with

Swapna Suresh has been well established. Same is the case with Jayarajan and his son Jaishon. What I see is total darkness at the end of the tunnel. A section of the CPI(M) leaders are also upset with the actions of Vijayan and they remain incommunicado," said Jayashankar.

P Rajan, septuagenarian journalist and former senior editor of Mathrubhumi said Jaleel could be dropped by the Chief Minister in the backdrop of Thursday morning's questioning of the minister by the NIA. "As such there is no situation mandating the dismissal of this government. It is true that the opposition is staging rallies and marches. These are all part of a democratic system but the Government is not on a strong wicket as things stand today," said Rajan.

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Minister Jaleel grilled by NIA for 8 hrs

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Higher Education, was interrogated by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Thursday for almost eight hours in connection with the Quran import scam, gold smuggling and violation of protocol guidelines by the former. Jaleel did not speak to the media.

This is being seen as the continuation of his interrogation last week by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with these cases. Sources in NIA said there were contradictions in the statements given by Jaleel to the ED and they needed clarifications. It has been alleged that Jaleel smuggled in gold through diplomatic channels masquerading as Qurans and dates.

The Muslim religious leaders are up in arms against the minister for insulting the holy book for illegal activities.

Activists of the BJP, its front organizations like Mahila Morcha, BJYM and ABVP and the Congress workers staged demonstrations and rallies across the State. Most of these rallies saw the demonstrators clashing with the police resulting in use of water cannon and lathi charge. Many BJP leaders were injured in police action.

The Opposition upped the ante with K Surendran, BJP State chief demanding the immediate resignation of the Pinarayi Vijayan-led Government. "This is the first time in the history of Kerala a minister is being interrogated by an investigation agency in connection with anti-national

activities. The NIA has clear evidence about the role of the minister in smuggling activities. There is no way out for Jaleel other than resignation. The attitude of Chief Minister Vijayan is also ridiculous. Vijayan knows that if Jaleel is asked to quit, other ministers too have to quit because they too are involved in smuggling and other anti-national activities," said Surendran.

Leaders of Muslim League P K Kunhalikutty MP and TPA Majeed, took strong objection to Jaleel dragging the name of party chief Hyder Ali Shihab Thangal into the case and warned the minister to desist from such actions. Kunhalikutty said that the minister has no moral rights to be in the government as all the premier investigation agencies are probing him.

ED files Prosecution Complaint against Shabir Shah's wife

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a Prosecution Complaint (chargesheet in police parlance) under Prevention of Money Laundering Act against Bilquesha Shah, wife of Shabir Ahmad Shah, before a Special Court here in a terror funding case.

This is a Supplementary Prosecution Complaint to an earlier one filed against Shabir Ahmad Shah and Mohammad Aslam Wani on September 23, 2017.

"In this complaint, Dr. Bilquesha Shah has been accused for her role in the commission of offence of money laundering in terms of Section 3 of PMLA. ED had attached the proceeds of crime in the form of property, located in posh area of Srinagar, belonging to Shabir Ahmad Shah being held in the name of his wife and daughters. Shabir

Shah has been found to be carrying out illicit activities along with his accomplice Mohammad Aslam Wani, who is an activist of banned terror organisation JeM (Jaish-e-Mohammad). He was using Aslam Wani as a carrier for collecting Hawala money sent by his Pakistan-based outfits through Hawala operators to deliver the same to him and his wife Dr Bilquesha Shah in Srinagar for carrying out illegal activities," the ED said in a statement.

Investigation under PMLA revealed that Shabir Shah, without having any legitimate sources of income, had received money for carrying out separatist activities in Jammu & Kashmir and had acquired various properties through a maze of dubious transactions. Bilquesha Shah has also received illegitimate money from Mohammad Aslam Wani (carrier of Shabir Shah) on various occasions, it said.

TN SEES 5,560 NEW PATIENTS

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu is limping back to normalcy as the number of Covid-19 patients is coming down gradually in all districts barring Chennai and Coimbatore. On Thursday the State diagnosed 5,560 positive cases while 59 persons succumbed to the pandemic. The death toll in the State reached 8,618 on Thursday.

There were 46,610 patients all over the State by Thursday evening. Chennai district had 992 new cases while Coimbatore had 530 patients. The three cluster districts Chengalpet (283), Kancheepuram (187) and Thiruvallur (239) showed considerable decrease in the number of new persons identified with Covid-19.

Kerala registers 4,351 cases on single day, CM blames Opp

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Thursday blamed the Opposition parties for the steep hike in Covid-19 patients seen in Kerala over the last few days. On Thursday, the State diagnosed 4,351 Covid-19 cases, the highest number of patients identified on a single day till date, said Vijayan in his daily media briefing.

The chief minister said that the National Institute of Virology at Alappuzha had confirmed the deaths of ten persons due to the pandemic.

This has taken the tally till date to 489.

While Thiruvananthapuram topped the table of 14 districts with 820 positive cases, Idukki, the hilly district in the Western Ghats recorded the lowest figure with 104 new cases.

Vijayan blamed the opposition for the steep hike in the number of patients in the State. "They are bent upon derailing all the good works being done by the government with the sole aim of increasing the transmission of the disease," said the Chief Minister.

1,467 fresh coronavirus cases in J&K

Jammu: Nineteen patients died in Jammu & Kashmir while 1,467 fresh cases of coronavirus were detected taking the tally of active positive cases to over 20,000 on Thursday.

With constant increase in number of cases the health care machinery especially in Government Medical College, Jammu is crumbling.

Patients and their caretakers have been raising hue and cry for past several days as the hospital authorities have failed to ensure uninterrupted supply of oxygen to the patients admitted in the isolation ward. In the absence of adequate health care workers several patients

have been left unattended in the wards.

A video footage shot by one of the patients attendant went viral late Thursday evening on various social media platforms painting the grim picture of medical facilities. Some of the doctors and other staff members were seen jumping from the windows to avoid getting filmed.

Meanwhile, a high-level team of doctors from the Union Health Ministry is expected to visit Jammu to review the measures being adopted to contain the spread of the virus and improve health care delivery in the Covid hospitals. PNS

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PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI, A PUBLIC SERVANT DEDICATED TO PUBLIC SENTIMENT

ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY, UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

It is the responsibility of any Government to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of the people and bring positive changes in the lives of the poor. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been efficiently discharging this responsibility through his hard work for the

last six years. On September 17, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is going to complete 70 years of his life. This is the best time to observe his great personality and the many works of public welfare that are taking place under his leadership.

Since independence, governments have formulated their own policy from time to time on basic amenities like health and education in India.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the 40th Annual General Meeting of the Company will be held on Friday, 09th October, 2020 at 12:00 Noon at the Registered office of the Company at 14 Kms, Pataudi Road, Village Jhund Sarai Veeran, Sector-95 Gurugram, Haryana, to transact the businesses as set out in the Notice of the AGM.

Members are hereby informed that the Notice of the Meeting and aforesaid documents are available on the Company's Website (www.rfltd.com) and the copies of the said documents are also available for inspection at the Registered Office of the Company on all working days (except Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays) during business hours up to the date of the Meeting.

A member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote on a poll instead of him and the proxy need not be the member of the Company. The Instrument appointing the proxy should however be deposited at the Registered Office of the Company not less than 48 hours before the Commencement of Meeting.

Members are informed that pursuant to the provisions of Section 108 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 20 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014, as amended, and Regulation 44 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the Company is providing to its members facility to exercise their right to vote by electronic means on Resolutions proposed to be passed at the meeting.

The Register of Members and Share Transfer Book in respect of Equity Shares of the Company will remain closed from 03rd October, 2020 to 09th October, 2020 (both days inclusive) for the purpose of the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

The e-voting will be open from 9.00 a.m. (IST) on 06th October, 2020 to 5.00 p.m. (IST) on 08th October, 2020 in terms of Rule 20(3)(VI) of Companies (Management and Administrative Rules) 2014. During this period shareholders of the Company, holding shares either in physical form or in dematerialized form, as on the cut-off date (record date) of 02nd October, 2020, may cast their vote electronically.

Shareholders are requested to visit <https://instavote.linkintime.co.in> for E-voting and the manner for casting vote through E-voting is prescribed in the Notice of AGM.

By order of the Board
RFL Limited
Sd/-
Ginni Chhabra
Company Secretary & Compliance Officer

Place: Gurugram, Haryana
Date: 17/09/2020

NORTHERN RAILWAY	
NOTICE INVITING TENDER	
Name of work and its location	30-Elect-16-T-R1-20-21-E3 Removing and commissioning of submersible pumps over Delhi Division.
Approx cost of the works in	Rs. 31.58 lacs
Address of the office	Sr. Divil Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.
Earnest Money	Rs. 63200.00
Date & time of submission of tender	15.10.2020, 12.00 Hrs.
Opening of tender	15.10.2020, 12.00 Hrs.
Website & notice board	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divil. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi. 2020/2020

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PUBLIC NOTICE

TAKE NOTICE THAT in view of our client, we are investigating title of Mr. Sayavir Sharma (Borrower) for Property No. C-198/15-B, 100 Sq.Yds., Kharsa No. 4162, Village Ghonda Gurjan Khadar, in the abadi of C Block, N-8, Shyam Park, Jaga Shikara, Delhi ("Said Property") who intends to avail loan from our client Fullerton India Home Finance Company Ltd. by creating a mortgage against said property. Original Will executed by Mr. Jagjit Banwar Singh in favour of Mr. Rakesh Kumar Jain & Original Sale Deed dated 03.06.2005 executed by Mrs. Renu Jain in favour of Mrs. Renu Jain with respect of Said Property are missing. Any person having any claims or rights in respect of the Said Property are hereby requested to make the same known in writing to the undersigned within a period of 7 (Seven) days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents, failing which, it will be assumed that there are no claims or issues in respect of Said Property & the transaction, if any shall be completed without reference to the claims, if any.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants) 201, Second Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Woli Nagar, N Delhi-15 Ph: 011-41122127-28 kumarassociatesadvocates@gmail.com

Babasaheb memorial: Uddhav to lay foundation stone of 350 ft tall Ambedkar statue today

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will lay the foundation stone for the 350 ft statue of late Babasaheb Ambedkar raised as part of the grand memorial for the late architect of Indian Constitution being developed at the Indu Mills compound at Dadar in north-central Mumbai, on Friday.

Five years after Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid foundation stone of late Ambedkar's grand memorial, Uddhav will kick-start the work on building of a statue of the iconic Dalit leader.

Friday's will be the biggest

state government programme to be held during the lockdown period. Apart from Uddhav and deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar, many of the ministers in his Cabinet will attend the programme which will be as per various social distancing norms.

The work on the construction of the Ambedkar had been hanging fire for the first four years. To be developed by the state-run Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA), the memorial will cost Rs 1,089 crore as per the revised estimates.

On its part, the MMRDA has already started the

construction.

Excavation and piling work has been completed, while the work on the auditorium basement comprising two-floors below its framework has been completed.

The height of Dr Ambedkar's statue, which was earlier proposed to be of the height of 250 feet, will now be 350 feet. The statue will be erected on a pedestal of the height of 100 feet. In essence, the collective height of the bronze statue will be 450 feet.

There will be elements of the Buddhist architecture in the Ambedkar memorial, which is coming up on a 12 acre plot of land.

PARADIP PORT TRUST

e-TENDER CALL NOTICE

TD/TM/GEN-225(Vol-III)/20/2519
dt. 14.09.2020

Name of the work: "Allotment of 10 (Ten) nos. of Manual Iron Ore/Iron Pellet plots."

License Fees: Rs. 2,32,93,908/-
Wharfrage Fees: Rs. 6,13,707/-
Last date & time of submission of bid: 05.10.20 up to 17:00 hrs
Date and time of opening (technical bid): 06.10.2020 up to 16:00 hrs
Refer our website for details <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.
PPT/PR/216/20-21 Date 14.09.2020 Traffic Manager

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 and <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

Sr. No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Amount	Tender Publication
1.	13/Advt./ (Tehsildar)/ 2020-21	Advertising Rights on unipole on Sector-51, 52, 71 & 72 crossing (For one year), Noida	25,92,000.00	Third Time

Which can be uploaded by date 24.09.2020 upto 5.00 PM. pre-qualification shall be opened/ downloaded on date 25.09.2020 at 11.00 AM.

(R.M. Saxena)
Tehsildar, Noida

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Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)
www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in

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Asking for help is not a sign of weakness!
Davp 38117/11/0016/2021

Who will regulate TV?

If the SC has to intervene every time on mala fide content on channels, it will be flooded with petitions. We need a neutral code



It is sad that the fourth estate, which ought to be a thriving institution in its own right — showing a mirror to society and advocating rights and issues that politics ignores — now needs regulation or correction by other institutions. Weaponised as a tool of governance and propaganda for long, it took the Supreme Court to stop it from destroying the social fabric instead of mending it. The top court restrained a channel from telecasting a controversial programme that sought to “expose” a “conspiracy and jihad to infiltrate Muslims” into the Indian civil services. The court was right to see through the agenda to vilify a certain community on the pretext

of an investigation and perpetuate a narrative suited to the political climate of the day. It had to halt broadcast that would have aggravated an already prejudiced sentiment in the country and, as it said, challenged the constitutionally mandated plurality of India. But then how many broadcasts will it stop given the partisan nature of the hundreds of news channels in India today, some of them owned and funded by political parties themselves? How will it manage the whataboutery and a slew of counter-petitions of why a certain programme doesn't deserve to be aired while others do? What is divisive and what is not? The court also deliberated on national debates on television channels, which the bench felt required regulation. To bolster its argument, it cited parallel investigations being carried out in criminal investigations, quite clearly implying how motivated interests were manufacturing a national mindset that would go by a heave of emotion rather than facts. Given these observations, the court would then have to become a media watchdog, too, stretching its resources no end. As it is, the Government, a day after the verdict on the channel perceived as friendly to it, filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court, arguing that if the latter desired to undertake the exercise to regulate the media, then it should first do so for digital media, and not electronic media, because social platforms have a faster and wider reach. That is indeed another problem, as given their dependence on open traffic, digital platforms have often been the purveyors of hate speeches and campaigns that have fuelled unrest on the ground. There are more than 50 documented cases of mob violence triggered by misinformation spread over social media in India over the last two years. Many platforms, including Facebook and YouTube, have only to upload an uncensored clip that swiftly becomes credible headlines when picked up by TV media. Facebook and Twitter are too big and have become influencers in their own right, embedding themselves in policies of the regime that is crucial to their business plans in respective countries. Facebook, with over 2.3 billion monthly users across its family of networks, has become too much of a behemoth to be democratic. But its subsidiary messaging board, WhatsApp, is by far the most popular of the platforms. With India accounting for 400 million of its global base of 1.5 billion users, it ends up being the focus of discussions on the spread of misinformation. It has become as much an information propagator as it has a disseminator.

The court mentioned setting up a committee of five citizens who can come up with standards for electronic media but what about existing frameworks, which are toothless at the moment? There is no statutory regulatory mechanism but self-regulatory bodies like the News Broadcasters' Association (NBA), Broadcast Editors' Association and News Broadcasters' Federation have failed to rise to the occasion and ensure a modicum of professionalism. Besides, this multiplicity of authorities generates its own politics and lobbies. The NBA does take up broadcast complaints seriously and has a code of ethics but because it is in the nature of just guidelines and not mandatory, there is no bold, punitive action. Usually, errands are let off with an apology or a minor rap on the knuckles. Besides, members of the NBA are from channels themselves and their hands are somewhat tied up by the prevalent business model of journalism, the kind that links coverage and pitches to revenue and funding. Till we have a singular code that's trustworthy, neutral or effective or till we have a legally empowered regulatory body, there will always be conflict of interest. Of course, the best regulation would be if broadcast media stuck to sensible rather than sensational journalism. Our Constitution has guaranteed the right to freedom but it implies we follow our duties, too. In a democracy, the media is as much accountable to citizens as are other institutions. It cannot be a self-serving clique but has to call out its own and self-cleanse in the interest of holding up its institutional integrity. Or it could content itself with scripting doggerel.

No country for children

The World Bank's human capital index shows the potential development of kids slid to 50 per cent in pandemic times



As expected, the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic has not just been on health and global economies; its multi-pronged effect is now threatening to erase the gains made in improving child education and health in the years before the outbreak. This fallout of the contagion is the most evident in the poor and Third World nations, the World Bank said while commenting on the Human Capital Index for 2020, which ranks countries on how well children are prepared for the future, with an emphasis on factors like schooling and healthcare. Despite the fact that most countries made steady gains in improving health and education prior to

the pandemic, the virus has dealt a body blow to all these efforts. Children in a low-income country will likely achieve only 56 per cent of their human capital compared to ones with access to a complete education and full healthcare. This is alarming as human capital is absolutely vital to the financial and economic future of any country as well as its social well-being. And as World Bank President David Malpass has warned, “inequalities among children are set to increase” and as “more than one billion children have been out of school due to COVID, they could lose as much as \$10 trillion in lifetime earnings.” In our case, the girl child would be the first victim as her education is the first casualty in poor households forced to choose between feeding the family and reserving knowledge pursuit as a rare privilege. Besides, while the education of children from well-heeled families will not face so much disruption, students from marginalised families and in rural areas will suffer, both due to lack of smartphones, computers, laptops and the lack of infrastructure and knowhow on how to use these enablers. Though both teachers and students have adapted to online classes to a large extent in urban areas, teachers themselves are not satisfied because they feel that the learning experience can never compete with brick and mortar classrooms. In an online setting, students may have more distractions and less supervision, which can reduce their motivation to do well academically. First there is the issue of keeping them engaged. Then how do you teach subjects which require live experiments and demonstrations? What of personal attention to struggling students? Research shows that students who struggle in physical classes are likely to struggle even more online. Also, being in school/college in person with teachers and friends creates social pressures and benefits that can help motivate the young to engage.

On the health front, too, there is cause for concern as the lockdown impacted programmes tackling malnutrition. With schools closed, children from impoverished families have been deprived of their one, daily nutritious food in the form of free mid-day meals. Immunisation programmes have been hit by the lockdown as has the community vigilance by the ASHAs and ANMs, who were the first point of contact for parents with sick children. If the world had to work hard to provide an equitable world for children, it will have to work doubly hard to mend the damage caused by the contagion in the years to come.

The tale of two IPLs

IPL is one of the rarest sports spectacles which completely subverts otherwise ubiquitous nationalist and parochial discourses



SUMANYU SATPATHY

After months of uncertainty and speculation, the Indian Premier League (IPL) is all set to start; outside the country of its origin and minus the shrieking fans. Everyone, even its critics and detractors, admits to its stupendous popularity. For most of its supporters and fans, it is an event almost of national importance, no less than the General Elections. In fact, a year ago, a large majority of Indians were simultaneously subjected to two kinds of spectacles: one in the sports arena and the other in the political playing field. The dates for both overlapped for a period of one month as the grand spectacle of the IPL (March 23-May 12, 2019) coincided with the heat and dust generated by the General Elections. The Code of Conduct was immediately effective after the dates for the elections were announced on March 10, 2019. In between the elections, the din over the IPL rose to a crescendo and climaxed with the final in which the Mumbai Indians defeated Chennai Super Kings at a “neutral” venue in Hyderabad. As the great excitement over IPL subsided, all hell broke loose over the no-holds-barred election campaigns. There is no doubt about the ephemerality and inconsequentiality of the first, nor about the epochal nature of the second. And yet, many cricket fans think otherwise.

With the pandemic and economy playing havoc, and none of the venues in India playing host, the event may have already lost its usual sheen. Also, the forthcoming elections in Bihar are no match for the national polls last year. Yet, now that both the events are round the corner, it is a good time to reflect on how both affect the public psyche. For cricket has always been seen, at least in the former colonies, as a weapon for political dominance or even as an instrument to fight back dominance; any reader of CLR James' *Beyond the Boundary* would know that. Until the advent of IPL, cricket was about national teams and races. As James says, “Cricket... had plunged” him “into politics long before [he] was aware of it. When [he] did turn to politics, [he] did not have too much to learn.” What lessons in politics does the IPL proffer?

The Election Commission lays down the rules of the game in the Model Code of Conduct. The IPL



follows most of the rules laid down by the International Cricket Council (ICC). During the IPL and also the General Elections, many of these rules were flouted, decidedly or allegedly. The IPL cricketers, drawn from across cricket-playing nations, were bought and sold much before the event. Apparently, inconsequent to the followers of the game, the prices, sometimes incommensurate with the reputation of many players, were headlined. Many high profile players and erstwhile heroes were left unsold or sold late. Political parties also tried to highlight names of politicians who crossed over from their rivals' party. There seemed to be a competition of sorts to rope in glamorous cricketers or film stars from Chennai and Mumbai, from Bhojpuri to Tamil stars. Many of them even floated new parties for the cause of democracy, freedom of expression and so on.

In a certain sense, they were engaged in completely different practices; in another sense, they shared certain commonalities, especially in the visual space of the electronic media. The high octane media coverage, with experts in both “fields” crying themselves hoarse regarding the current performances, strategies and forecasts, was common to both the arenas. A few IPL specialists like Gautam Gambhir, who until last year were commenting both on cricket and political matters, jumped into the fray, hoping to prove their political prowess.

But, of course, the man in the street took a keen interest in both, while the satellite channels

“
 THE ONE PUZZLE THAT SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGISTS NEED TO SORT OUT AND EXPLAIN IS HOW THE SAME PEOPLE CAN BE SO DEEPLY INVOLVED IN TWO KINDS OF SPECTACLES, ONE ENTRENCHED IN RABID NATIONALIST DISCOURSE AND ANOTHER WHICH IS AGGRESSIVELY INTERNATIONALIST. SOME OF THESE QUESTIONS WILL BE TESTED AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF BIHAR POLLS
 ”

made merry with increased TRPs and phenomenal commercial gains. In the background of both, the Balakot airstrikes fed the emotions directly and indirectly; directly in the political arena of elections, and indirectly by the absence of cricketers from Pakistan.

For one thing, the IPL is not about national teams. No one cares which country the players come from. The jerseys are of individual franchises and one looks in vain for the nationality behind the jersey in case the player happens to be one of the lesser-known. No, IPL is not about nations and nationalism. Nor is it about parochialism. The teams are named after cities but even the Indian players are not from these cities. They could well be from the city of the rival team. Sourav Ganguly can be the coach of Delhi Daredevils playing against the Kolkata Knight Riders for whom he had earlier played and whose coach he had eventually become. Shah Rukh Khan (a Delhiite) living in Mumbai is the owner of Kolkata Knight Riders. The same kind of fuzzing of identities is seen even among spectators.

Talking of Shah Rukh Khan brings to mind the two sets of affiliation leading to a triangular bonding. Politics and Bollywood, politics and cricket, and cricket and Bollywood. For decades, Prime Ministers have made it a point to pose with winning cricket teams and cricketing heroes. But these are about winning international tournaments like the World Cup. Seldom does one see politicians in IPL events. Last year, around the time of the General

Elections, many actors posed with major politicians. One of the X-factors in popularising IPL was that popular film stars like Shah Rukh Khan and Preity Zinta owned franchises.

Whereas communal-based politics is the order of the day, cricket and Bollywood, at least superficially seen, symbolise communal amity. Last year, exactly at a time when communal identities were dominating electoral arithmetic, and politicians were busy dividing and stereotyping people with a certain kind of facial hair, Indian cricketers had broken down this identity divide by almost all of them flaunting facial hair.

Such is the privileging of cricket over other sports. The one cricketing spectacle that the spectators in the subcontinent look forward to is the Indo-Pak encounter during which rabid nationalism rises to the fore. IPL, in contrast, is one of the rarest sports spectacles which completely subverts otherwise ubiquitous nationalist and parochial discourses. The one puzzle that social psychologists need to sort out and explain is how the same people can be so deeply involved in two kinds of spectacles, one entrenched in rabid nationalist discourse and another which is aggressively internationalist. This year, some of these questions will be tested against the backdrop of the Assembly elections in Bihar.

(The writer is a well-known scholar; he is the former head of Dept. Of English, Delhi University and author of books such as Tenth Rasa and The Will to Argue)

SOUNDBITE

We must show unity like never before to overcome today's emergency, get the world moving and working and prospering again, and uphold the vision of the Charter.

UN Secretary-General —Antonio Guterres



Three vaccine candidates are in different phases. We are hopeful that by the start of next year, a vaccine will be available in India.

Union Health Minister —Harsh Vardhan



It's an absolute delight to welcome back Indian cricket with the Dream11 IPL and I hope this tournament can infuse positive energy into the lives of millions.

Former cricketer —Sunil Gavaskar



Our biggest threat to this election is Governors from opposing parties controlling ballots, millions of ballots. To me, that's a much bigger threat than foreign countries.

US President —Donald Trump



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Export agro-produce

Sir — India must prepare to export agricultural products to accomplish the two aspirational goals set by Prime Minister Narendra Modi: double the income of farmers and achieve the aim of a \$5 trillion economy, which seem rather far-fetched now. Indian traders encounter several hurdles in exporting agricultural products and we need the Government's diligent intervention and support. India needs to chalk out a strategic plan and ensure increased percentage from 2.2 per cent to 5 per cent in global trade before 2025.

Rahul Chouhan Ujjain

The five million mark

Sir — The rapid progression of COVID-19 has sent India's confirmed cases beyond the sombre five million mark. It now accounts for about one-sixth of the total global cases. This also means that one in every 260 people in India is infected with the virus. The exponential growth is borne out by the fact that it has taken just 11 days for the cases to rise from four to five million.

Pakistan violates norms of NSAs' meeting

After Nepal's Cabinet endorsed a new political map showing Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura under its territory, amidst a border dispute with India, Pakistan has come out with a new map of its own. The new political map includes territories of Jammu and Kashmir and a part of Ladakh, claiming these territories as belonging to Pakistan. The map also claims Junagadh, Manavadar and Sir Creek in Gujarat as part of Pakistan.

At the online meeting of the National Security Advisers (NSA) at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Pakistan used the map as a backdrop for its representative. Indian NSA Ajit Doval raised strong objection to Pakistan using the illegal map and walked out of the meeting, saying such an act was a blatant violation of the SCO Charter.

Despite the fact that for a like SCO do not allow bilateral issues to be brought to the table, Pakistan tried to use the platform to internationalise the Kashmir issue. The provocative action of Pakistan is in violation of the



norms of the NSAs meeting. Pakistan seems to be emboldened by China's attempt to alter the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Instead of showing the territories of other countries as its own, Pakistan needs to save Balochistan and stop violating human rights in these areas.

KV Seetharamaiah Hassan, Karnataka

Voice of dissent

Sir — Member of Parliament and veteran actor Jaya Bachchan was praised by many in Bollywood for raising her voice against those defaming the Hindi film industry. Her remarks came a day after BJP's Lok Sabha MP and Bhojpuri actor Ravi Kishan said that there was a problem of drug addiction in the film indus-

try. Bachchan disagreed with these claims. She said that the film industry had been ridiculed by social media and the Central Government must protect and support it. While many within the industry praised the actor for speaking up against the negativity surrounding the industry since Sushant Singh Rajput's death, fact is they didn't collectively campaign against mindless vilification or try to restore their credibility. Had not Bachchan raised her voice, the industry would have kept silent.

Bhagwan Thadani Mumbai

Irresponsible media

Sir — The Supreme Court has strictly prohibited showing the remaining episodes of *Sudarshan TV's Bindas Bol* programme as its objective was to “vilify Muslims.” The claims made by the channel also question the credibility of UPSC examinations. The media must be responsible and take appropriate measures to not promote oligarchy.

M N Alam Saharanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

G David Milton Maruthancode

FIRST COLUMN

The intelligent future is here

Events of 2020 have hugely accelerated the human civilisation's race towards finding an alternative to its own organic intelligent brain



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Now that most of us are becoming video-conferencing experts, innovating on every call with a new virtual background, while also ordering groceries online and keeping an eye on the latest news updates popping up on our phone and computer screen, will it be too early to crystal gaze into a not-so-distant future, say 2021? Yes, it may be too early to call 2020 a "gap year", specially when each new day has its own set of surprises. But there is no harm in peeping a little into next year's trends. First, there is no escaping the fact that technology will tremendously impact the way we live, work, exercise, eat or buy next year, too. If the pandemic has thrown us into an ocean of uncertainties, if we look around carefully, it is an ocean of data. Those that learn to swim through pretty quickly and get a raft or something to latch on to will soon realise the potential of this ocean of opportunities. It has already started happening but a new technology called Artificial Intelligence (AI) will take over most of what is today relegated to a digital world.

To start with, algorithms would be put to use for early detection or even prediction of pandemics, assessment and even solutions for traffic patterns in a city, incremental/severe weather forecasts, health-care, care for the most vulnerable and so on. But soon, like everything else, it will be all-pervasive in every little life decision. I am not sticking my neck out to say it will happen by next year but events of 2020 have hugely accelerated the human civilisation's race towards finding an alternative to its own organic intelligent brains. The world is already flush with examples on how AI will have multiples of applications from that which is already available across the web. In short, we are on the verge of entering a new technological era which is predictive, sophisticated and has an eerie inorganic intelligence almost running into infinity (it is not enough to cut the cord and think that an AI system has switched off, remember there are thousands of machines crunching data points from multiple sources to predict simple buying behaviour). This will definitely have a deep impact on the human race.

Next will come an age of extreme speeds of data access over the air or 5G. The world would have already been piloting cutting-edge 5G or fifth-generation mobile technology across large geographies and would have been near phase-wise national rollouts, had the pandemic not hit. India definitely has lost a year in the 5G race. However, the protocols and network vendor partner solutions may have been made more secure as a result of the delay.

In fact, 5G is likely to see the first level of deployment in urban areas (where the revenues are) and besides helping you download (at say five times the speeds of your current streaming action) social media videos/your favourite films and cricket matches, will also prove to be a great tool for remote and risky jobs. If some of the arterial sewer lines in a city are fitted with 5G chips, there could be a possibility of completely eradicating the need for human intervention in maintenance of a city's drainage system. If the data coming in and also fed into the chips are analysed at the back-end by smart machines (think AI), who, then takes decisions to deploy little machine worms into the sludge to clean a choke or fix a leakage or even defuse a toxic gas emission, it would mean saving a few thousand precious lives each year. Together with this will come the ultra-smart homes (the protocols for which are already in advanced stages of negotiation by big tech companies) where perhaps your cooking burner will decide the menu and your bar may order itself a few of your favorite wines in case you aren't stocked for the weekend. While robotic surgeries performed over the network specially for remote terrains (read rural) are already happening outside India, a self-driving car in Chandni Chowk may be further away.

Now that the all-pervasive technology has started to co-exist with us in our altered carbon realities, the threats to humanity will also increase. These threats would be increasingly cyber and 2021 will likely see more cyber security attacks (small, big, macro) than all of these years of digital revolution put together. The tell-tale volumes of these cyber security attacks (think SIM cloning, phishing attacks, stealing of bank passwords and OTPs) are already giving consumers and lawmakers a nightmare with increased adoption of the digital world during these work from home times. Think of the manifold increase of these forces as the technology world starts getting more complex with evolving protocols and appendages. You are more likely to hear the word cyber security in almost every important public forum and ministerial dialogues than you have ever heard in your life. Along with these, and one can only wish, multilateral solutions to tackling emerging threats will also emerge, which prevent anti-State forces from manipulating users of emerging technology. There will be new policy regimes, language and grammar for embracing these brave new islands we are heading towards, but let's keep those for a later piece.

(The writer is a policy analyst)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

SHE (URMILA) WAS MAKING A MOCKERY OUT OF MY STRUGGLES. SHE IS JUST A SOFT PORN STAR NOT KNOWN FOR HER ACTING SKILLS FOR SURE

—ACTOR
KANGANA RANAUT



IT'S DISHEARTENING TO SEE SOMEONE TALKING ILL NOT ONLY ABOUT ME, BUT ALSO JAYA JI, WHO IS AN MP AND HAS RAISED HER VOICE ON SO MANY ISSUES.

—ACTOR
URMILA MATONDKAR

Spare a thought for our kids

Let our children, including those at the margins of territory, identity, services, social and economic interventions, find themselves future-ready



SUMITRA MISHRA

Infants and children — naked, hungry, crying, sleeping in overcrowded trucks, on the shoulders of their tired parents and caretakers. These were some of the heart-breaking pictures that emerged as everyday lives were disrupted following the COVID lockdown put in place in March across India. The multiple fault lines of our societal order were more visible than ever as migrant workers and their families were seen out on the roads across major cities, while the rest of us took to working from home. This was not "a long walk to freedom". It was a walk back home through a terrain that was as indifferent as it was strange. It was reverse migration, a story of lost livelihoods and ever-increasing struggles. For some, it was a walk to their deaths.

As we battle the Coronavirus and its varied impacts on our lives, it is important that we do not lose sight of these fault lines. It has especially hit the families of workers in the unorganised sector, who do not have adequate social protection, support and additionally find it hard to provide adequate care to their children.

One of the casualties of the lockdown was the slew of programmes tackling malnutrition. As per the National Family Health Survey-4 (2015-16), 21 per cent children below the age of five in India were undernourished, 91.4 per cent of the children aged six to 23 months did not receive an adequate diet, one in three (38 per cent) of children under five years of age was stunted, one in five (21 per cent) of the children was wasted, 36 per cent were underweight. The lockdown resulted in a more dire situation where the resulting socio-economic impacts, the closing down of anganwadi centres and the resource crunch minimised the likelihood of availability of food to counter malnutrition.

These intersecting impacts of poverty, gender discrimination, caste and class differences, violence, issues of availability and accessibility of services to the young child and lack of professionalisation of childcare workers are brought to the fore in the *State of the Young Child in India* (SOYC) report, that Mobile Creches, an organisation working for early childhood development (ECD), released recently. While the report was finalised before the pandemic hit the world, it nevertheless offers important insights into the status of India's children under six years of age — who form over 13 per cent of the country's population — in addition to a critical examination of legislative frameworks designed to address their needs. The report also goes beyond a homogenising understanding of the child, as it emphasises various disadvantaged categories within this age group and the dire situation they are in. It calls for specific interventions for each vulnerable category, otherwise it results in a risk of lifelong consequences of deprivation.

The results emerging from the indexing can be used to draw out good practices from top performers like Kerala and Goa and turning more attention towards the poor-performing regions and States like Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. With recommendations stemming from exhaustive analysis, it can also enable in envisioning a post-pandemic world where the issues of marginalisation and neglect receive due attention and policy intervention.

The Integrated Child Development Services

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THE PER CHILD EXPENDITURE IN THE COUNTRY FOR 2018-19 WAS AN ABYSMALLY LOW FIGURE OF ₹1,723. THIS MUST BE ENHANCED TO ₹1.25 TRILLION ANNUALLY TO COVER FUNDING GAPS AND ENSURE HOLISTIC INTERVENTIONS. THIS APPROACH HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BRING IN RETURNS THAT WOULD EXCEED BUDGETARY SPENDS ON ANY ALTERNATIVE WELFARE PROGRAMME
 ”



scheme (ICDS), the world's largest programme catering to children, requires recalibration for it suffers from design and capacity deficits, does not adequately address the components of care and early education and is still a long way from reaching the most marginalised in an effective and equitable manner.

The youngest child is often the most invisible and exceptionally vulnerable. This calls for tapping development opportunities in this young age that can set a healthy foundation for life. Investment in ECD not only has the potential to enhance individual capacity and economic growth, it also provides an opening for women empowerment by recognising the overlapping rights of women and children and bringing in State interventions and increased budgetary allocations.

The SOYC report recognises the biological role in care-giving yet questions the gendered stereotypes that result in an undue burden on the mother. In the unorganised sector especially, women are bogged down by a triple burden — the responsibility of childcare, work outside the home that mostly entails unequal access to the market, longer working hours, unhealthy working environment and lesser wages, and the household work as well. Often, young children are seen lying or roaming around these unsafe work sites since these women are deprived of maternity or childcare benefits. This weak support system compromises their ability to provide quality care to the infant/child. Therefore, it is important that where families are unable to pro-

vide due childcare, compounded by their multiple issues, the State steps in as an enabler. As the sole scheme to cater to the needs of children of women engaged in the informal sector, the Government-sponsored National Crèche Scheme has actually seen a reduction in the number of creches, with only 7,930 of them functional across the country in 2019, which translates into one creche per 21,000 children. The scheme needs to be re-imagined and strengthened with serious revision of the budget, and this can also be supplemented by a phased conversion of anganwadis into anganwadi-cum-creches.

The pandemic-induced lockdown witnessed a rare visibility of anganwadi and ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) workers as they emerged to be the first line of defence in dealing with the contagion. However, as the SOYC report notes, they are otherwise marginalised — not seen as a professional cadre, treated as part-time workers, paid well below the minimum wages in most States. There is a pressing need for their critical role in the childcare ecosystem to be recognised, acknowledged, professionalised and for their remuneration to be in line with their responsibilities. The professionalisation of this service will also mean adequate training of these workers and can strengthen the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) component, which remains a weak focus of the ICDS.

All children in the ages of three to six should have a right to quality ECCE, irrespective of whether they are located at anganwadi centres, pre-

primary sections of Government, private schools or any other pre-school centres.

For the country, prioritising ECD can translate into fulfilment of Sustainable Development Goals and its international commitment towards child rights. While data paucity on multiple dimensions of child well-being hampered the indexing process and a more accurate insight in certain areas, the budgetary analysis through national-level data and allocations to States brings forth issues of inadequate allocation, under-utilisation, lack of management capacity to cater to the needs of children.

The per child expenditure in the country for 2018-19 was an abysmally low figure of ₹1,723. This must be enhanced to ₹1.25 trillion annually to cover funding gaps and ensure holistic interventions. This approach has the potential to bring in returns that would exceed budgetary spends on any alternative welfare programme.

Coronavirus has significantly altered the way we thought of our lives, our work and our very support systems. It has taught us lessons, tragic ones at that.

Yet, it is in this moment that we must recognise the deprivations, neglect and exclusion that mar equitable access of various vulnerable groups, including children, to essential services. Let our children, including those at the margins of territory, identity, services, social and economic interventions, find themselves capable for the future.

(The writer is Executive Director at Mobile Creches and an early childhood development activist)

We are being sucked into an ash pond

Fly ash is inevitable while producing thermal power. However, leaving it to pollute the environment is not desirable



KOTA SRIRAJ

Fly ash, a by-product of coal-fired electricity-generating power plants, has always been a predominant challenge for the environment, as its unsafe disposal or ineffective recycling can pose a direct threat to the quality of the air we breathe. Such is our dependence on thermal power plants for energy that apart from the air pollution caused by these behemoths, the fly ash is also compromising other aspects of our environment.

For instance, the breach of the fly ash dyke at the Vindhyachal NTPC Super Thermal Power Station in Singrauli district of Madhya Pradesh in October 2019 led to the seeping of nearly 35 lakh metric tonnes of fly ash into the Govind Vallabh Pant Sagar, popularly known as the Rihand water reservoir. The Essar power plant at Mahan

in the same district, too, saw breaches in its fly ash dykes leading to its seepage into the environment.

The huge level of water pollution triggered by the seepage of fly ash into the Rihand reservoir raised a red flag and the National Green Tribunal (NGT) imposed an interim penalty of ₹10 crore on the NTPC and Essar after reviewing the ground report filed by its committee. Additionally, the NGT also rapped the Lanco-Anpara power plant to stem the excess ash pond flow into the reservoir. The fly ash caused soil pollution, too, due to which agricultural land became infertile and standing crops suffered.

Thanks to the fly ash pollution, the levels of mercury in the soil, air and water spiked besides causing health complications for local communities as the Rihand reservoir is a source of drinking water for many. All these adverse developments took place despite the existence of statutory notifications from the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) under the Environment Protection Act (EPA) that mandates a 100 per cent utilisation of fly ash.



However, the full extent of the damage caused by the fly ash pond breach has come to light now thanks to a new report submitted recently by the joint committee comprising the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee. The report estimated that the fly ash breach by Essar Power Limited caused damages worth ₹7.35 crore while the damage inflicted by the fly ash dyke breach at the NTPC plant was pegged at a whopping ₹104 crore. The committee based its damage estimations on two parameters: One was the Green House

Gas (GHG) emissions caused by the clean-up operations and two the extent of water pollution due to ash overflow.

The use of diesel during the clean-up operations caused the carbon footprint to spike, leading to the damage estimation spiking as well. Similarly, the fly ash infusion into the water bodies led to heavy metals and suspended solids leaching into the water. This, too, was translated into cost and added to the damages.

Thermal power stations are still the mainstay of our power sector with renewable sources of energy being nowhere near the required potential to take over as primary sources of our needs. Moreover, the opening up of the coal sector for mining to private players, besides nixing of the mandatory coal-washing requirements, is set to increase the production of fly ash in the future.

Already the ash ponds are overflowing across the nation due to increasing output and decreasing utilisation. As a result, the dykes are frequently breaking, leading to the ash polluting the nearby fields and water bodies.

The last 10 years saw the ash ponds

contain a humongous 627 million tonnes of unused material. This is three times the fly ash being generated per year today, which is 200 million tonnes per annum. The close of 2019 saw an unused fly ash stock quantity of 1,647 million tonnes in India, which is eight times the annual generation quantity.

This is despite the fact that India has the regulations in place that mandate 100 per cent usage of fly ash and there is technology available to put this into action. Yet we are still far from a "full utilisation status."

The Government-driven initiative to promote the use of fly ash in the construction material industry has not been a spectacular success as red bricks continue to be sold and used in open violation of the Government's rules that ban them. Bricks are made out of top soil which is a precious part of our environment. An inch of top soil takes 500,000 years to form as it essentially involves the breaking down and erosion of rock.

If the Government cannot shut the countless red brick kilns that can be seen dotting the countryside, it cannot promote the use of fly ash in the building material industry. The buyer will

have no option but to continue with the traditional red brick, which is easily available. Once the red brick production and supply chain is broken, it will not only save the top soil but also stem the pollution caused by these kilns as they use diesel and sugarcane waste as fuel.

Fly ash can be successfully used to produce bricks in combination with gypsum or lime. The resultant brick is not only eco-friendly but lighter and stronger. Technologies are available today that use compressed natural gas (CNG), an eco-friendly fuel, to fire autoclaves or huge ovens to manufacture fly ash bricks. Each autoclave can manufacture 22,000 fly-ash-lime bricks in an eight-hour span.

So, if the thermal power plants in the country were mandated with a target to produce a certain quantity of bricks using the autoclave technology, then the problem of excess fly ash would disappear. There are ways to ensure full utilisation of fly ash; only a strong political will is required to implement the rules that have been put in place for this.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)



FOREIGN EYE



LANKA NO THREAT TO INDIA

Sri Lanka's 'India First' strategic security policy, outlined by the new Foreign Secretary, Colombage, is a timely reiteration of a policy of past 20 plus years, but seldom understood in the northern neighbourhood. In doing so, Colombage, a former Navy chief, becomes the first Sri Lankan official or politician to articulate the nation's foreign policy so comprehensively and cogently, that too in a well-articulated manner, publicly. *(Ceylon Today editorial)*

US envoy begins second high-level visit to Taiwan

China condemns US visit, warns of retaliation

Taipei: US Undersecretary of State Keith Krach arrived in Taiwan on Thursday for the second visit by a high-level American official in two months, prompting a stern warning and threat of possible retaliation from China.

Beijing considers Taiwan its own and opposes all official contacts between other countries and the self-governing island.

Krach arrived at an air force base in Taipei, the capital, for a three-day visit. Wearing a face mask, he bumped elbows in greetings with Taiwanese Deputy Foreign Minister Harry Ho-Jen Tseng. Krach, the highest-level



US Under Secretary of State Keith Krach, centre, gestures after disembarking from a plane upon arrival at the air force base airport in Taipei, Taiwan on Thursday. AP

State Department official to visit the island in decades, is to meet Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen and other senior officials, the island's foreign ministry said.

The visit by Krach, who is undersecretary for economic growth, energy and the envi-

ronment, follows a high-profile trip in August by U.S. Health Secretary Alex Azar, the highest-level U.S. Cabinet official to visit since the U.S. Switched formal relations from Taiwan to China in 1979.

However, the U.S. Has maintained unofficial ties with

Taiwan since the official diplomatic break and is the island's most important ally and provider of defense equipment.

Ahead of Krach's arrival, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Kelly Craft, had lunch Wednesday with Taiwan's top official in New York, a meeting she called historic and a further step in the Trump administration's campaign to strengthen relations with Taiwan.

Craft said her lunch with James K.J. Lee, director of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in New York, was the first meeting between a top Taiwan official and a U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations since 1971, when the China seat at the U.N. Was passed from Taipei to Beijing.

"I'm looking to do the right thing by my president, and I feel that he has sought to

strengthen and deepen this bilateral relationship with Taiwan and I want to continue that on behalf of the administration," she told The Associated Press.

In Taiwan, Krach is to attend a banquet hosted by Tsai on Friday and hold discussions on the creation of a new economic and commercial dialogue, according to Taiwan's de facto ambassador in the U.S., Hsiao Bi-khim. He will also attend a memorial service for former President Lee Teng-hui, who led the island's transition to democracy and died at age 97 in July.

Krach's visit and Craft's lunch with Lee are certain to exacerbate mounting tensions between Washington and Beijing over the coronavirus pandemic, trade, technology, Hong Kong and the South China Sea.

China condemned the visit on Thursday and warned it could retaliate.

At a daily briefing Thursday, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said Krach's visit violates U.S. Commitments to China and "bolsters the separatist forces of Taiwan independence and undermines China-U.S. Relations and peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait," adding that Beijing had "lodged solemn complaints" with Washington over the matter.

"We urge the U.S. To fully recognize the high sensitivity of the Taiwan issue... Immediately stop official exchanges and actions of improving substantive relations with Taiwan, and handle Taiwan-related issues cautiously," Wang said. "China will make necessary responses in accordance with the development of the situation." AP

Poison was on water bottle in Navalny's hotel room: His team

Moscow: The nerve agent used to poison Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny was detected on an empty water bottle from his hotel room in the Siberian city of Tomsk, suggesting he was poisoned there and not at the airport as previously thought, his team said on Thursday.

Navalny fell violently ill on a domestic flight in Russia last month and was subsequently airlifted to Berlin for treatment. Germany says he was poisoned by a Novichok nerve agent. Russia says it has seen no evidence he was poisoned.

A video posted on Navalny's Instagram account showed members of his team searching the room he had just left in the Xander Hotel in Tomsk on Aug. 20, an hour after they learned he had fallen sick in suspicious circumstances.

"It was decided to gather up everything that could even hypothetically be useful and hand it to the doctors in Germany. The fact that the case would not be investigated in Russia was quite obvious," the post said.

It showed his team bagging



several empty bottles of "Holy Spring" mineral water, among other items, while wearing protective gloves.

"Two weeks later, a German laboratory found traces of Novichok precisely on the bottle of water from the Tomsk hotel room," the post said.

"And then more laboratories that took analyses from Alexei confirmed that that was what poisoned Navalny. Now we understand: it was done before he left his hotel room to go to the airport."

Russia has carried out pre-investigation checks, but said it needs to see more medical analysis before it can open a formal criminal investigation into the case. AFP

Outgoing US ambassador to China to help Republican campaigns

Beijing: Outgoing U.S. Ambassador to China Terry Branstad said he will help out Republicans campaigning in his native Iowa after returning home next month.

Branstad also told Hong Kong's Phoenix TV that he considered the phase one trade deal between China and the U.S. As the biggest achievement of his three years in China. Branstad, 73, said he would be working on behalf of President Donald Trump, Senator Joni Ernst and others, but not in any official role.

"My son is very involved in (Trump's) campaign, and I will be a volunteer to help him, to help Joni Ernst and other friends for the election in Iowa. But I will strictly be a volunteer," Branstad told the station in a report broadcast Thursday.

Ernst, the state's junior

senator, is locked in a tight race, with Democrats hoping to capture her seat on the way to flipping the Senate.

As Iowa's governor, Branstad was an early Trump supporter and has served as his top envoy to China during the most tempestuous period in relations since diplomatic ties were established in 1979.

Branstad was governor of the major farming state for 22 years over two spans, from 1983 to 1999 and 2011 to 2017. Early in his first term, he met Xi Jinping, now China's leader, when the then county-level Communist Party official visited Iowa on a 1985 trade trip.

The phase one trade deal reached between the U.S. and China in January amid the ongoing tariff war between the sides represented a truce but did not address the more fundamental complaints of the

American side.

Still, Branstad said he believed it was ultimately in the best interests of both sides to follow-through with it.

"This was a long and difficult process," Branstad said. "They worked long and hard to reach an agreement that I think is fair and reciprocal. And it's going to make a difference for both of our countries."

Branstad will leave at time when tensions between the sides are also running high over Taiwan, the South China Sea, the coronavirus pandemic and allegations of spying and technology theft. In July, the U.S. Ordered the closure of China's consulate in Houston, calling it a "center of malign activity." China retaliated by ordering the shuttering of the U.S. Consulate in the southwestern city of Chengdu. AP

Spain court considers removal of Catalan chief from office

AP ■ MADRID

Spain's Supreme Court is hearing lawyers' closing arguments over whether to bar Catalonia's separatist-minded regional leader from public office.

Catalan regional president Quim Torra is attending the final hearing of his appeal of a ruling by a lower court last year. That court, in Barcelona, ruled that Torra was unfit to hold public office for 18 months for having violated electoral law.

Torra had refused to remove a banner reading "Free Political Prisoners and Exiles" during an official election campaign period, during which public officials are prohibited from using public buildings to display political propaganda.

Former model accuses Trump of sexually assaulting her in 1997

Washington: A former model has accused US President Donald Trump of groping and forcibly kissing her in 1997 — the latest allegation made against the Republican incumbent just weeks before he seeks reelection.

Amy Dorris told Britain's The Guardian that Trump sexually assaulted her in his VIP suite at the US Open tennis tournament in New York — claims he denied via his lawyers.

"He just shoved his tongue down my throat and I was pushing him off. And then that's when his grip became tighter and his hands were very gropely and all over my butt, my breasts, my back, everything," Ms Dorris said in an interview.

"I was in his grip, and I couldn't get out of it," she added.

Trump has faced more than a dozen allegations of sexual misconduct, including a claim by prominent American columnist E. Jean Carroll that he raped her in a department store changing room in the mid-1990s.

But he brushed them aside in his run for the White House. Shortly before the 2016 election, a tape recording emerged from 2005 in which he was heard boasting about how his fame allowed him to "grab" women by the genitals when he wanted.

Trump dismissed this as "locker room banter" but subsequently apologised. AFP

Poland's president appoints daughter as unpaid advisor

AP ■ WARSAW

Poland's president, Andrzej Duda, has appointed his 25-year-old daughter, Kinga, to be an unpaid adviser on social issues.

The president stressed on Twitter late Wednesday that his daughter was working as a volunteer and "does not receive any remuneration," he appointment nonetheless raised some allegations of nepotism by critics of Duda and the ruling right-wing party that backs him, Law and Justice.

Kinga Duda, a lawyer, has already been dubbed by presi-

dential critics as "Poland's Ivanka Trump," a reference to President Donald Trump's daughter, who plays a key role in the U.S. Administration.

Kinga Duda has for the most part not played a visible role in the presidency of her father, who won his first five-year term in 2015 and was re-elected in July.

However she seized the nation's attention with an election night speech in July in which she called for all people in society to be respected despite their differences. It was seen as an attempt to soften her father's image.

Belarus activists make list of police from protest crackdown

Kyiv: The main opposition candidate in Belarus' disputed presidential election said Thursday that activists are compiling a list of law enforcement officers who were allegedly involved in violence against protesters denouncing the results of the vote.

Nearly 7,000 people were detained and hundreds were brutally beaten by police during the first several days of post-election protests in Belarus that are now in their sixth week. Opposition supporters claim the Aug. 9 vote was rigged to reelect President Alexander Lukashenko to a

sixth term and are demanding his resignation.

Lukashenko's main challenger in the election, former English teacher and political novice Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, said on Thursday that the opposition was drawing up a list of individual officers involved in the police crackdown.

"We have been given the names of those who were beating and torturing people," she said in a statement.

"We are preparing a list of officials and law enforcement officers who have taken part in lawless repressions." Human

rights groups are working with opposition activists to identify the officers and officials, Tsikhanouskaya said, adding that the list will be shared with the United States, the European Union and Russia.

Tsikhanouskaya, who left for Lithuania in the wake of the election under pressure from Belarusian authorities, said the opposition will name the list in honor of Alexander Tarakovsky, a protester who died in Minsk the day after the election as police dispersed peaceful demonstrators.

Authorities initially said an explosive device Tarakovsky intended to throw at police blew up in his hands and killed him. AP

No, we do not live in forests, Austrians after Trump forest remark

Berlin: The Austrian government has spoken up to correct US President Donald Trump's claim that people in its country live in "forest cities."

Trump recently cited Austria and other European countries as models of good forest management that US states like California, which has seen devastating wildfires lately, should learn from.

Calling in to Fox News on Tuesday, Trump said that "you look at countries, Austria, you look at so many countries. They live in the forest, they're considered forest cities. So many of them. And they don't have fires

like this. And they have more explosive trees."

In an article Thursday for the London-based Independent, Austria's agriculture minister sought to set the record straight.

"There have been both serious and humorous conversations on social media about the 'exploding trees' (Trump) mentioned, as well as the fact that he claimed we live within 'forest cities' which never catch fire," Elisabeth Koestinger wrote.

"As Austrians, fortunately blessed with a healthy sense of humour, we normally take such clichés about our country in our stride." AP

Pak to introduce legislation to curb rape, child abuse

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that his Government will soon introduce a three-tier legislation providing for registration of sex offenders, exemplary punishment for rape and child abuse and effective policing.

Khan made the announcement while addressing a joint sitting of parliament after passage of a number of Financial Action Task Force-related bills on Wednesday. "Such incidents ruin the lives of victims and their families also have to suffer," he was quoted as saying by the Dawn newspaper. Khan was referring to the gangrape of a French-Pakistani woman in front of her three children in Lahore on Sept 9 which sparked widespread outrage. PTI

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that a female namely **Jayanti Swanji W/o Deepak Kumar R/o H.No. RZ-134, Sayad Goan, Delhi, Age: 34 years, Height: 5'1", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Wearing: Navy blue Kurta-legging and sandal in her feet is missing/kidnapped since 16.08.2020 from the area of P.S. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi.** In this regard a vide case DD No. 40A dated 17.08.2020 has been registered at P.S. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi.

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

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in SHO
Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641 P.S. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi. Ph. 25268394
Fax : 011-24368639 DP/367/OD/2020 Ph. : 011-25268394, 25280980

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPAD

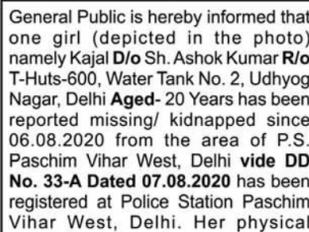


General Public is hereby informed that one man namely **Sedu Ram Mahavar S/o Nathu Ram Mahavar, R/o Gali No-6, Harijan Basti, Ghewra, Delhi. Age - 58 Years, Height 5'5", Complexion- Wheatish, Face: Round, Wearing: Sky blue Shirt, Blue Pant and Blue Shoes in Feet has been missing/ kidnappad since 18.07.2020 from the area of PS Paschim Vihar West.** In this regard a vide DD No. 41A dated 25.07.2020 has been registered at PS Paschim Vihar, West

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

Web-site <http://cbi.nic.in> SHO
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in P.S. Paschim Vihar, West
Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641 Ph. 25268394
Fax : 011-24368639 DP/339/OD/2020 25280980

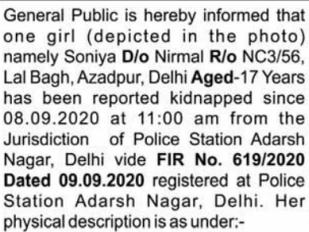
SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED GIRL



General Public is hereby informed that one girl (depicted in the photo) namely **Kajal D/o Sh. Ashok Kumar R/o T-Huts-600, Water Tank No. 2, Udhvyog Nagar, Delhi Aged- 20 Years** has been reported missing/ kidnappad since 06.08.2020 from the area of P.S. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi vide DD No. 33-A Dated 07.08.2020 has been registered at Police Station Paschim Vihar West, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-

Complexion: Fair, Height: 5'0", Face: Round, Wearing: Black coloured shirt, blue coloured jeans and slipper in feet. Any person having any information/Clue about this missing/kidnapped girl, please inform SHO, Paschim Vihar West, Delhi at E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in>
Tele No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641 Sd/-
FAX No. : 011-24368639 SHO, Paschim Vihar West, Delhi
DP/340/OD/2020 Tel. : 011-25268394, 25280980

SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED GIRL



General Public is hereby informed that one girl (depicted in the photo) namely **Soniya D/o Nirmal R/o NC3/56, Lal Bagh, Azadpur, Delhi Aged-17 Years** has been reported kidnapped since 08.09.2020 at 11:00 am from the Jurisdiction of Police Station Adarsh Nagar, Delhi vide FIR No. 619/2020 Dated 09.09.2020 registered at Police Station Adarsh Nagar, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-

Complexion: Fair, Height: 5'2", Face: Round, Built: Slim, Clothing: Black coloured frock, black coloured pajama and pink coloured slippers in feet. Any person having any information/Clue about this kidnapped girl, may inform SHO, Adarsh Nagar, Delhi at E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in>
Sd/-
Tele No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641 SHO, Adarsh Nagar, Delhi
FAX No. : 011-24368639 Tel. : 011-27674452, 27672452
DP/380/NW/2020 Mob. : 8750870229

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Sonika, D/o: Kailash, R/o Jhuggi C-4, Railway Line, Keshav Puram, Delhi, Age: 17 years, Height: 4'6", Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Built: Normal, wearing Firozi colour Kurti, Black Leggi and chappal, has been missing/kidnapped since 29.01.2020. In this regard a FIR. No. 516/20 u/s 363 IPC, dated 25.08.2020 has been registered at P.S. Keshav Puram, Delhi.**

Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform undersigned.
Website : <http://cbi.nic.in> SHO
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in P.S. Keshav Puram, Delhi
Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641 Ph. : 011-27181325, 27156090
DP/385/NW/2020

Ukraine urges Jewish pilgrims stuck at border to turn back

Kyiv: Ukraine on Thursday strongly warned thousands of Hasidic Jewish pilgrims who have been stuck on its border for days that it won't allow them into the country due to coronavirus restrictions.

Ukrainian authorities said about 2,000 people have gathered at the border with Belarus, in hope of traveling to the Ukrainian city of Uman to visit the grave of an important Hasidic rabbi who died in 1810, Nachman of Breslov.

Thousands of the ultra-Orthodox Jews visit the city each September for Rosh Hashana,

the Jewish new year. It's celebrated Sept. 18-20 this year, and some pilgrims had managed to get to Uman before Ukraine closed its borders in late August amid a surge in COVID-19 infections. Thousands of others traveled via Belarus, which hasn't barred foreign visitors from entering. On Thursday, Ukraine official Mykhailo Apostol reaffirmed that the pilgrims will not be allowed to cross the border.

"Ukraine has shut its borders to foreigners, and no exclusions will be made for the Hasidic pilgrims," Apostol told reporters. AP

WESTERN RAILWAY

STORES DEPARTMENT

E- AUCTION SALE DURING OCTOBER, 2020 FOR P-WAY & OTHER VARIOUS SCRAP

SPECIAL ATTENTION: ALL STEEL PURCHASERS & RE-ROLLERS

Public e-auction for disposal of P. way scrap, Rail scrap & other various scrap material will be held in **October, 2020** as per program given below:

1st Round	2nd Round	Depot / Division	Depot/Divisional Officer in Charge	Contact No.
13/10/2020	27/10/2020	MX	Deputy Chief Materials Manager-MX.	022-24929571 09004495750

For detailed information please contact the concerned Depot/Divisional Officers.
Note :- (1) Railway reserves the right to withdraw any lot from e-Auction (2) e-Auction will start at as per scheduled time. (3) e-Auction catalogues will be available on site www.ireps.gov.in e-Auction portal. (4) In case of any assistance required regarding e-Auction, digital signatures, registration procedure and participation, please contact above mentioned depot/Divisional Officer. (5) All payment transactions shall be done through the online payment gateway.
(No. SIII/Auction Programme-2/October-2020 Dated 14/09/2020)
Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly) Follow us on: twitter.com/WesternRly

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of **UDAY BHARATAM PARTY**. The office of the party is located at C-310, Sigma-II, Greater Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, U.P.-201308. This Party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951- Name/address of the office-bearers of the Party are as follows:

President : Dr. Rajendra Prasad, R/O : 6-1, Adusumili Vari Veedhi, Siripuram, Medikonduru Mandal, Guntur DT, A.P.-522401
General Secretary : Mr. Alok Kumar, R/O : P-166, Sanjay Nagar, Ghaziabad, U.P.-201002
Treasurer : Mr. P. Sureshan, R/O : B 1107, OXY Homez, Near Koyal Enclave, Ghaziabad-201102

If any one has any objection to the registration of **UDAY BHARATAM PARTY** they may send their Objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

Primary markets see revival in second half of 2020

New Delhi: The sharp turnaround in the secondary markets with the broader market also participating in the rally, has enlivened the primary markets once again with a slew of initial public offerings (IPOs) from a diverse range of companies set to hit the street in the second half of the 2020 calendar year. Market

analysts tracking the development said that a host of promoters are once again rushing to the primary market to make the most of the opportunity where recent IPOs have not only been oversubscribed by several times but it has also brought back retail investors into the market who hold the key to maintain the rally for IPOs.

So in the pipeline now are more IPOs like CAMS, UTI AMC, Angel Broking, Chemcon Speciality Chemicals, etc. that are likely to open in September. Besides, Kalyan Jewellers, NCDEX, Barbeque Nation, Burger King, Bajaj Energy,

Lodha Developers are some of the names likely to hit the market in CY20. Of this CAMS and UTI AMC will be big ticket size IPOs.

LIC could also join the bandwagon later this year and could be one of the largest IPO in the country ever -- going by the company's size. The government is looking at offloading 25 per cent stake in LIC in tranches, as it is falling short of its divestment target of Rs 2.1 lakh crore this fiscal. For this, it is likely to incentivise the participation of retail investors/employees/policy holders by providing some discount. **IANS**

Sensex tumbles 323 pts as global markets reel on Fed outlook

Mumbai: Equity indices snapped a two-session rising streak to close with sharp losses on Thursday, in lockstep with global markets which recoiled after sobering economic assessment by the US Federal Reserve.

A weakening rupee and lack of fresh buying triggers further weighed on market mood, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex opened lower and stayed in the negative zone throughout the session. It finally finished at 38,979.85, down by 323 points or 0.82 per cent.

Similarly, the NSE Nifty shed 88.45 points or 0.76 per cent to close at 11,516.10.

Bajaj Finserv was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, slipping 2.23 per cent, followed by PowerGrid, L&T, TCS, ICICI Bank, Kotak Bank, Tata Steel and Bajaj Finance.

On the other hand, HCL Tech, Infosys and Maruti finished with gains of up to 2.36 per cent. **PTI**

Rollout of SAROD-Ports credit for sector

Mumbai: The rollout of SAROD-Ports for affordable and timely resolution of maritime-related disputes is a credit positive for the sector even as its success remains to be seen, ratings agency Icrs said on Thursday.

Launched on September 10, 'SAROD-PORTS' (Society for Affordable Redressal of Disputes - Ports) for dispute resolution in maritime sector, comprising of major ports, the PPP players operating at these ports as well as non-major ports, the initiative is targeted towards attracting more private sector investments, Icrs stated. "The launch of 'SAROD-Ports' is a step to address such disputes through an alternative route to ensure faster resolution and in a cost effective manner and should be positive for the sector," Icrs said. **PTI**

India's electronic component imports for 2019-20 stand at ₹ 1.15 lakh cr: Dhotre

New Delhi: The country imported electronic components worth Rs 1.15 lakh crore in 2019-20, out of which, 37 per cent came from China, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Sanjay Dhotre said on Thursday. The data was shared by the minister on the impact on the electronics sector due to shutting down of factories in China. "As per data available from the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI&S), the total electronic component imports in the country in FY 2019-20 was Rs 1,15,558 crore, out of which the import from China was Rs 42,983 crore, which amounts to about 37 per cent," Dhotre said in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha. **PTI**

Advance tax mop-up falls 25.5% in Q2, led by plunge in corporate tax: Source

Mumbai: Advance tax collection fell 25.5 per cent to Rs 1,59,057 crore in the second quarter of the fiscal, an income tax official said on Thursday.

However, there was improvement over the first quarter ended June, when advance tax revenue had plunged 76 per cent to a tepid Rs 11,714 crore as the whole economy was under a stringent lockdown.

During the year-ago period to September 15, 2019, total advance tax collection had stood at Rs 2,12,889 crore, down from Rs 3,70,652 crore a year ago.

"Total advance tax collection in the second quarter fell by 25.5 per cent to Rs 1,59,057 crore from Rs 2,12,889 crore y-o-y. While corporates paid only Rs 1,29,619.6 crore in advance tax, down by 27.3 per cent in the reporting quarter, personal income tax collection stood at Rs 29,437.5 crore, down 15 per cent from Rs 34,632.9 crore.

"However, TDS (tax deducted at source) fared better at Rs 1,38,605.2 crore, down by 5.6 per cent from Rs 1,46,792.4 crore," a senior income tax official from the Mumbai zone told **PTI**. **PTI**

BSNL's 44 pc mobile network equipment from ZTE, 9 pc from Huawei

New Delhi: More than 44% mobile network equipment of state-run BSNL is sourced from Chinese firm ZTE and 9 per cent from Huawei, Parliament was informed on Thursday. While replying to a question on the market share of Chinese companies ZTE and Huawei in India, Minister of State for Communications Sanjay Dhotre said that the government maintains no data of Chinese telecom gear makers. **PTI**

3.2 lakh households remain un-electrified till August-end under Saubhagya scheme

New Delhi: The number of un-electrified households stood at 3,20,422 till August-end this year under the Saubhagya Scheme, which is meant for achieving 100 per cent universal electrification of homes in the country, Parliament was informed on Thursday.

These un-electrified households are in Chhattisgarh, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand. Power Minister R K Singh said in the Lok Sabha, replying to a question, that the

number of un-electrified households identified under the Saubhagya scheme was 3,20,422 as on August 31, 2020. Among the four states with un-electrified households, Uttar Pradesh tops the chart with 2,53,785 households followed by Jharkhand at 60,925, Chhattisgarh at 3,519 and Assam at 2,193 as on August 31, 2020. As per the reply, as many as 2,62,84,350 families were provided electricity connection under the Saubhagya scheme. **PTI**

GST rate on cars lower than pre-GST regime; auto cost should cut royalty payments: Fin Min sources

New Delhi: Auto companies should cut costs by reducing royalty payments to their parent companies abroad instead of asking the government to reduce GST, finance ministry sources said on Thursday, responding to criticism on high taxes in India.

Most globally established companies in the sector have flourished in the current taxation and regulatory regime, which is evident from the huge royalty payouts made by Indian partners to their foreign parent firms, they added. Toyota Motor Corp is not looking at further expansion in India due to the country's high

taxes, the firm's vice chairman of India unit Shekar Viswanathan had reportedly said in an interview earlier this week.

Finance ministry sources said India's tax policy regarding the automobile sector has been quite consistent for the last three decades now in the form of allowing foreign investment and incentivising domestic manufacturing. GST rates on automobiles are less than what VAT and excise duty rates used to be in the pre-GST times. All of a sudden, dissent in some quarters on tax rates on automobiles is surprising, they added.

"In fact, these companies should cut down their costs of manufacturing by cutting down the royalty payments to their parent companies abroad instead of asking the government to reduce GST," a source said. Taxes on automobiles are in the highest bracket across the globe without much exception, the sources said. Japan currently has three types of taxes on automobiles - once on the purchase, then an annual automobile tax based on engine size, and finally a weight tax at inspections required once every two years. **PTI**

Priority plan row: VIL drops faster speed claim in RedX offering, files revised plan with Trai

New Delhi: Faced with regulatory heat on its controversial plan, Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) has dropped faster data speed claims, which formed a prominent part of its pay-more-for-priority-treatment offering, and has filed a revised plan with Trai, a source said.

The move assumes significance as the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) late last month slapped a showcause notice on VIL over its priority mobile plan, saying the tariff offer lacked transparency, was "misleading" and not in compliance with regulatory framework.

The source told **PTI** that the company has now submitted a new RedX plan with Trai and claims of faster data speeds — a major bone of contention

— has been done away with. The company's website is also no longer touting claims of faster speeds for RedX plan, which had been under Trai's scanner over the past few weeks. Instead, VIL's website is talking of benefits purely in terms of entertainment privileges (Netflix and Amazon Prime), travel privileges, mobility benefits and other privileges. **PTI**

US company to pay USD 345,000 to resolve H-1B violations

Washington: A New Jersey-based staffing company has agreed to pay USD 345,000 to settle allegations that it has violated immigration and employment regulations concerning continuous employment and wage requirements of workers it had brought to the US on H-1B visas. The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. H-1B visas are most sought-after among Indian IT professionals.

The US Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the Department of Labour and the US Attorney for the District of New Jersey ordered Savantis Solutions to pay USD 345,000 to resolve allegations against H-1B related violations.

Savantis, formerly known as Vedicsoft Solutions, has a presence in India as well. The company is involved in consulting, technology and staffing, utilising primarily foreign nationals in the US pursuant to H-1B visas. **PTI**

Passage of agri bills to empower farmers: Niti VC

New Delhi: Welcoming the passage of two bills related to the farm sector in the Lok Sabha on Thursday, Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar said the legislation will empower farmers and have a colossal impact on the future of agriculture in the country.

The Farmers' Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill and the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill were passed by voice vote. **PTI**

State ownership helps deposit franchise of PSBs, divesting majority stakes a 'credit negative': Icrs

Mumbai: Divesting majority stake in state-run lenders by the government will be "credit negative" for such public sector banks (PSBs), a domestic ratings agency warned on Thursday.

Many of the entities where the government is mulling selling off majority stake as per reports have a weak credit profile, Icrs Ratings said, adding a move to reduce the public ownership will be hurtful.

These six lenders are primarily supported by sovereign ownership and the ensuing stable deposit base, the agency said. **PTI**

India ranks 116 in World Bank's human capital index

Washington: India has been ranked at the 116th position in the latest edition of the World Bank's annual Human Capital Index that benchmarks key components of human capital across countries.

However, India's score increased to 0.49 from 0.44 in 2018, as per the Human Capital Index report released by the World Bank on Wednesday.

The 2020 Human Capital Index update includes health and education data for 174 countries — covering 98 per cent of the world's population — up to March 2020, providing a pre-pandemic baseline on the

health and education of children, with the biggest strides made in low-income countries.

The analysis shows that pre-pandemic, most countries had made steady progress in building human capital of children, with the biggest strides made in low-income countries.

Despite this progress, and even before the effects of the pandemic, a child born in a typical country could expect to achieve just 56 per cent of their potential human capital, relative to a benchmark of complete education and full health, the Bank said. **PTI**

Relief for Anil Ambani as SC dismisses SBI plea

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday dismissed a plea by the State Bank of India (SBI) seeking a vacation of the stay granted by Delhi High Court on personal bankruptcy proceedings against Anil Ambani, chairman of Reliance Group.

The Supreme Court bench, headed by Justice L. Nageswara Rao, directed the Delhi High Court to consider the issue on 6. The bench, also comprising Justices Hemant Gupta and S. Ravindra Bhat, gave liberty to SBI to seek modification of the stay order passed by the High Court on August 27. The three-judge bench said, "Why don't you go back to high court to argue the Anil Ambani case?"

On August 27, the High Court's division bench had passed an interim order staying the Mumbai bankruptcy tribunal's order. The bench had said proceedings against corporate debtors will continue and issued notice to the central government, SBI and others. **IANS**

Rupee declines by 14 paise on strong dollar after US Fed guidance

Mumbai: The rupee depreciated by 14 paise to end at 73.66 against the US dollar on Thursday tracking muted domestic equities and stronger greenback in the global markets.

Asian currencies weakened after the US Federal Reserve's new forward guidance, analysts said.

The Federal Reserve after its two-day policy meeting on Wednesday signalled to keep interest rates near to zero till 2023 sighting slower economic recovery. **PTI**

NLC India Ltd celebrates PM's birthday

Neyveli: NLC India Limited celebrated the 70th Birth Day of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, by organizing Blood Donation Camp, Mass Tree Plantation, and COVID-19 Screening Campaign in Neyveli. R. Vikraman, Director/Human Resources, NLCIL while inaugurating a Blood Donation Camp at Jawahar Science College, Neyveli on Thursday (17-09-2020) said that the CSR Cell of NLCIL has organized Blood Donation Camp in Neyveli.

'Mithuna' adjudged world 3rd finest whisky

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian brand 'Mithuna', single malt whiskey has been adjudged 'third finest whiskey' in the world by "Jim Murray's Whisky Bible 2021", making it the first Indian liquor brand to win this coveted recognition.

Describing 'Mithuna' by Paul John Distilleries Pvt Ltd as "a whisky to devour", whisky reviewer Jim Murray says: "If Mithuna means 'Ultimate', then it is the perfect name. Or maybe Mithuna means 'Perfect', then it is pretty close. It is that very rarest of things. And, if nothing else, announces Paul John Distillery on the world stage of truly great distilleries." Set to be released worldwide in November 2020, Mithuna by Paul John is the second expression of the Zodiac series of Paul John Indian Single Malt from JDPL.

MSME lays out new guidelines for pottery, beekeeping activities

New Delhi: The Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) ministry on Thursday said it has come out with new guidelines for two schemes - pottery and beekeeping activities. It said that for pottery activity, the government will provide assistance of pottery wheel, clay blunger, and granulator.

"It will also provide wheel pottery training for traditional pottery artisans and Press Pottery training for pottery as well as non-pottery artisans in Self Help Groups," it added.

This is being done to enhance the production, technical knowhow of pottery artisans and to develop new products at reduced costs; and to enhance the income of pottery artisans through training and modern / automated equipment. **PTI**

Petrol demand returns to pre-COVID-19 levels, diesel demand still down

New Delhi: India's petrol sales rose for the first time in the first half of September since the country's lockdown in late March, signalling demand may have returned to pre-COVID-19 levels.

Petrol sales between September 1 and 15 rose 2.2 per cent year-on-year and were up 7 per cent over the previous month, according to preliminary industry data. Diesel sales continue to be in negative territory, with demand falling 6 per cent year-on-year. But the demand was 19.3 per cent higher over August 2020.

This is the first time that petrol sales in the world's third-largest oil importer have risen since the March 25 nationwide lockdown crippled economic activity and sent demand plummeting. **PTI**

Hindi Day organised by Indian Bank

New Delhi: Hindi Day was organised by Indian Bank, Zonal Zone, South Delhi. On the occasion of Hindi Day, Area General Manager Vikas Kumar and Rakesh Kumar Agarwal, Zonal Manager, Zonal Office, Delhi, and Himanshu Kasat, Zonal Manager, South Delhi were presented by Home Minister, Government of India and Finance Minister, Government of India and Chairman of the Bank and addressing all the staff members from the text of messages sent on the occasion of Hindi Day of the Managing Director. The bank organised various competitions Yaksha — Hindi poetry recitation, Hindi story writing Hindi song Antakshari, Hindi memoir writing and Hindi Suetch competition to encourage staffs. members to work in Hindi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Ramjas Co-operative Group Housing Society Ltd. 10/155, Geeta Colony, New Delhi-110031

1. In pursuance to rule 19(2) of DCS rules 2007, it is to inform publicly that Membership of Late Ram Dulari(M.No. 323) and Smt. Usha Gupta(M.No.41) have been terminated by the Ramjas Co-operative GH Society Ltd. and their deposits have also been refunded. If anyone has any objections he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the RCS, Parliament Street, New Delhi or at society office 1c, 10/155 Geeta Colony, New Delhi-31 within 7 days from the date of publication of the public notice.

2. Sh. Pritpal Singh Sehgal(M.No.288) is hereby informed through this public notice to contact the society office within 15 days to confirm his resignation. As during scrutiny of records his resignation was found in the records of the society, but his resignation was not put up before the management committee for acceptance till date. Now we request you through this public notice to contact the society office within 15 days for confirmation of his resignation, otherwise his resignation will be accepted by the Management Committee.

Sd/- President
Ramjas CGHS Ltd.

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-Tenders NOTICE
E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firm 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.

Re-Tender work.
A) The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 24.09.2020 upto 5.00 PM. shall be opened/downloaded on dated 25.09.2020 at 11.00 AM.

S. No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1.	47/GM(R)/Sr.M (E/M)-II/2020-21/ET	Annual Maintenance and Strengthening of street light at FNG road, Noida (Parthla Choke to Village-Chajarsi NH-24), Noida.	37.75
2.	48/GM(R)/Sr.M (E/M)-II/2020-21/ET	Annual Maintenance of Traffic Signals at Various Sectors in Noida. (Zone-2)	44.90
3.	94/GM(R)/Sr.M (E/M)-III/2020-21	M/o Authority Building (AMC of different type of A.C.'s installed in different offices in Main Administrative Office sector-6) Noida.	45.75

General Manager
Noida

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON

General public is hereby informed that one person namely **Raj Kumar S/o Sh. Ram Lal R/o H.No. R-1/31, Budh Vihar Phase-1, Delhi.** Age 62 years, Height 5'5", Complexion shallow, Face round, Built thin, wearing Green colour shirt and Black colour pant has been missing since 29.08.2020 from his house. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out this person, but no clue has come to light so far. In this regard a DD No. 79-A dated 02.09.2020 has been lodged at PS Vijay Vihar, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing person may kindly inform to the undersigned at the address or telephone nos. given below.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-23011334
Ph: 011-23014046, 23015218
DP/389/RD/2020

SHO
PS Vijay Vihar, Delhi
Ph. 011-27061294, 27061295

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one lady namely **Rekha W/o Ramsanhi R/o Bhagwan Singh Ka Makan Pipl Wali Gali Village Rajapur Sec. 9 Rohini, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped since 11.07.2020 from the area of P.S. Prashant Vihar, Delhi. In this regard, a case DD No. 28A dated 17.07.2019 has been registered at P.S. Prashant Vihar, Delhi. The description of the missing lady is as under.

Age: 22 Years, Complexion: Shallow, Height: 5', Face: Round, Built: Medium, Wearing: Yellow Colour Saree and Red Blouse. 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 lady then please inform P.S. Prashant Vihar, 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
DP/390/RD/2020

Sd/- S.H.O.
P.S. Prashant Vihar Delhi
Phone: 011-27561877

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Shivani Kumari D/o Dinesh Kumar, R/o H. No. 17 Ganja Mohalla Jonapur, New Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped since 05.05.2017 from the area of P.S. Fatehpur Beri, Delhi. In this regard, a case FIR No. 207/17, dated 05.05.2017 U/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Fatehpur Beri, Delhi. The description of the missing girl is as under.

Age: 15 Years, Complexion: Shallow, Height: 4' 6" Face: Long, Built: Thin, Hair: Black, Wearing : Orange colour T-Shirt and Black Pant. 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 person then please inform P.S. Fatehpur Beri, 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
DP/202/SD/2020

Sd/- S.H.O.
P.S. Fatehpur Beri, Delhi
Ph: 011-26659611, 26659511

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED BOY

General public is hereby informed that this boy namely **Sudhanshu S/o Sunil Kumar R/o Y-1196, Gali No. 1, Prem Nagar-II, Delhi** Age : 14 years, Height : 4', Complexion : Fair, Face : Round, wearing sky blue colour T-shirt and black colour lower, Sudhanshu Dubey has been missing/kidnapped since 09.09.2020. In this regard FIR No. 420/20 dated 10.09.2020 u/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing/kidnapped boy may kindly inform to the following.

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

SHO : P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi
Ph. : 011-25489080

Trend Glazer

Bhumi celebrates sisterhood

Actor **BHUMI PEDNEKAR** plans to watch her new film, *Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitare*, with her sister **Samiksha Pednekar**, and calls it a special sister screening.

"Samiksha and I will watch the film together once it releases this week. We watched the film together at Busan the first time and for me the film's journey literally started with my sister by my side. We had the best time together there. We've now made a plan to watch the film again and it will be our special sister screening!" she said.



'Completing the film, *The Wife* was a challenge during this pandemic as

we were shooting out of Mumbai. There the major concern was that if someone from the team contracts COVID, then we would need at least 21 days quarantine and keep the shoot on hold. The cycle would keep going if the number of cases increased.'

—Gurmeet Choudhary

Superstar **RANVEER SINGH** has been urging authorities to consider and declare Indian Sign Language (ISL) as the 23rd official language of India.



He recently signed a petition to aware people on this cause. Ranveer's independent record label Inckn, which he has formed with Navzar Eranee, also released sign language music videos.

For the actor's efforts, the deaf community in India wholeheartedly appreciated him by putting out a heartfelt thank you video for him.

Takes a lot to be a star: Ellie

ELLIE GOULDING is a globally popular singer, who won two BRIT Awards and has been nominated for Grammy and Golden Globe awards in the past. The road to stardom has not been

easy for the singer, who admits not always having a huge amount of confidence.

"I wanted to be a singer when I was 14. I think I was always singing, playing the guitar, writing music and imagining myself performing. But I didn't have huge amount of confidence so that was something I had to build and work on. It takes a lot of work on yourself to eventually get used to that kind of attention and spotlight," Ellie said.



Tourism boards are hopeful that MICE events will be among the early segments to rebound and spur tourism globally, says **SAKSHI SHARMA**

History is evidence of how epidemics have had a direct and an immediate impact on airlines, travel aggregators and agencies. And undoubtedly, the travel and tourism sector is the first and worst hit due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These unprecedented times have forced the tourism boards to re-think radically. Nevertheless, their sight is fixed firmly on the future. Ideas are being floated as to how they will be able to function under such chaotic situations.

Recently, it was demonstrated that events can be held to everyone's satisfaction even under these conditions. Gradually, some progress is being made to hold some exchange events and economic activities as the travel restrictions are being relaxed and participant numbers are increasing.

Alexandra Kaszay, managing director, Vienna's The Hofburg Congress Centre, tells us that meeting one another and communicating face-to-face will come again. "The longing for that is huge, that's the message we're getting from most conversations. People will have to adjust to events with fewer guests on site and instead more participants joining in externally," she says.

In line with the safe and gradual resumption of events, the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) is starting to accept applications for organisers to pilot Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) events of up to 250 attendees from October 1. There will be pilot events taking place under this arrangement such as the Singapore International Energy Week (SIEW) Conference, in October.

The move takes into account the importance of the MICE sector and its interest in the business events, and, in turn, a ray of hope for a fresh beginning of travel. This resumption will help MICE retain critical capabilities, while safeguarding jobs and livelihood in the industry and other related sectors. It is a major part of the tourism ecosystem and that of the economy as a whole, as it supports numerous ancillary businesses, thus, contributing to jobs and growth.



Mice on the go

Opening up bidding processes for MICE now will help build liquidity across the travel supply chain. It can, hence, spur tourism in India and at large.

Raymond LIM, area director, India & South Asia, STB, says, "Overall, visitor arrivals from India to Singapore have seen good growth in the past few years. This can be attributed to the increased air connectivity between Singapore and India. There is a healthy flow of business travel at both sides due to the well-connected economic exchanges. The leisure destination position that Singapore enjoys among the Indian consumers are also other reasons why it is one of the top MICE source markets for Singapore, particularly for meeting and incentive travel. This is a key sector with quality visitors providing high tourism yield."

He adds, "The evolved Indian MICE traveller tends to seek out more unique experiences. In this aspect, we are home to a diverse range of events and MICE venues, including unconventional destinations, which can provide creative solutions for event owners. Beyond the meeting room, business travellers and delegates can enjoy a wide range of unique and interactive leisure experiences."

Neliswa Nkani, hub head — MEISEA,



South African Tourism, believes that MICE is soon going to be consumer-centric. She says, "Companies and destinations will need to incentivise both corporates and suppliers. We have collaborated with policy-makers, industry leaders and media to educate about travel trade."

According to organisations like

UNWTO, WTTC and others, MICE events have wider implications for destinations as wherever events go wider, tourism activities follow attracting a lot more leisure tourists in the ensuing months and years. Prashant Chaudhary, Representative of Russian Union of Travel Industry in India believes that Russian

Tourism will emerge stronger from the COVID-crisis and these events will lead the way. "It has already begun," says he.

It is noteworthy that the country recently hosted one of the leisure shows ODYKH in its original physical format in Moscow. Prashant shares, "The MICE sector of tourism is being opened. It impacted the larger domestic, inbound and outbound of the tourism markets. Russian charter flights are already seeking permissions and landing slots to Goa, probably the most popular destination for Russians in India."

Arzan Khambatta, head, Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) India, tells us that the convention and exhibition industry has been one of the fastest-growing emerging sectors in the recent years. "Rich cultural background and tourism resources help us meet the needs of different events," he says.

Well, given the current situation, COVID-19 has definitely impacted the industry in many ways. But the tourism boards are hopeful that MICE will be among the early segments to rebound and spur tourism globally. In the coming months, they plan to work extensively with MICE agents and corporates in India to facilitate arrivals once travel restrictions are lifted completely.



KUSHAN MITRA



A CLASS APART

The Kia Sonet blows the competition out of the water. No, really it does!



In a chat with Kia Motor's chief designer Karim Habib at the Auto Expo, he spoke about the Kia Sonet whose concept had just been unveiled at the show. While the Sonet retained the brand's signature and smart 'Tiger Nose' grille design, Habib indicated that it had been inspired by a baby elephant for the Sonet's design. After spending a day with the new car from the Korean carmaker, let me assure you of two things. One, it is an elephant because it is going to trample the competition. Two, it certainly doesn't handle like an elephant on the roads.

Why? Because it is saying a lot when you compare a car, whose highest spec variants would cost around 12 lakh rupees to a luxury car that costs four times as much. But in terms of trim and cabin refinement, particularly on the GT-line cars, the Sonet is unbelievably good. You really have to start nitpicking to find a flaw in the cabin of the Sonet. You could argue that it is a bit busy and that the plastic on the bezel of the screen is a bit shiny, but overall in terms of how nice the Sonet feels inside, it really blows the competition away. Possibly the Hyundai Venue, the Sonet's mechanical brother from another mother can face up to it because the engine and gearboxes are the same. But I prefer the Sonet's cabin. Over here, there is a case to be made that the vehicle that is launched later has superior interiors, I feel the Creta is better than the Seltos for example. But as far as sub-compact SUV-design cars go, the Sonet leads the pack.

Some say that I can prattle on about plastics, the metal feel, the quality of the infotainment system and the seats more than I do about the extreme speeds and handling characteristics of cars. But the Sonet will for 99 per cent of owners be a daily commuter. While you might want your daily commuter to be able to go very fast and stick to a corner like industrial glue, most importantly, you want it to be comfortable. After spending four hours driving around Delhi and Gurugram, the Sonet's cabin is one that I really would not mind being stuck in. Given its sub-four meter length, it isn't the most spacious car but has more space than most competitors.

Another aspect of this car where it literally beats the competition is in its choice of kit, starting with a huge high-quality 26-centimetre widescreen. With Apple Play enabled, you can use the split screen mode to get other bits of information. On Android Auto, there is an option to use the entire screen. You do not get such screens in cars that cost 50 lakh and you do not get a branded sound system as well unless you are paying 60-70 lakh. The GTX+

specification of the Sonet doesn't just have wireless charger, ventilated seats and a panoramic sunroof but also a BOSE sound system. Then there is an air purifier that Kia claims has a virus shield. You sit inside and you really get amazed at just the level of kit you get on the Sonet. Maybe the top-spec cars will cost a lot, but even if they touch 15 lakh, it is impossible to argue that they are not good value.

But how is it to drive? Quite nice actually! I drove the 1-litre 120PS turbocharged petrol with the intelligent manual transmission and well, my thoughts on the IMT aside, I'm still not quite used to the concept of a clutchless manual. The engine did its job well and once you do figure out the IMT, you realise that the ability to control the torque makes a difference to an AMT gearbox car. This turbo petrol engine puts the Sonet (and venue) at the top of the performance charts for sub 4-metre cars, and it comes with the IMT as well as a seven-speed Dual-Clutch automatic. The Sonet also comes with a naturally aspirated 83PS 1.2 petrol engine available with a five-speed manual transmission as well as a 1.5 CRDi diesel in two power levels, 100PS for the six-speed manual and 115PS for the six-speed automatic. I also got to drive the diesel automatic, but let us get to that later.

The 120PS turbo engine is plenty fast and once you get the hang of it, that is how to ride the turbocharger. It can be extremely great fun to drive since it is a small and relatively light car. Also,



A Golf in all but name

It is very hard to make a case for the Volkswagen T-Roc but it is a really nice car

There is a myth out there, actually a partial fallacy, that it was the Beetle that created the colossus of German manufacturing, the Volkswagen Group. Yes, the Beetle laid the foundations for the post-World War II creation of the German carmaker. Some of us know the story really well, that it was British Army engineering corps officer Ivan Hirst, who realised that the British invasion force needed vehicles to move about. He also felt the need to employ the local population. After seeing the production die and tooling at Wolfsburg, he put together a production for the car we know, and some love, as the Beetle. Millions were produced in post-War Germany. In the 60s, along with the Volkswagen Van, the Beetle became a symbol of counterculture in the United States. Now, Germany and even the United States moved on from the Beetle by the 70s but the car remained a best-seller in Mexico through the 90s. Over 21 million were produced giving birth to a popular quiz question of the Beetle being the most sold car in the world.

First, we need to correct that fallacy. If a single brand is considered, it is the Toyota Corolla with over 44 million sold that is the most sold single car brand of all time. Second, a lot of the Beetle's spectacular numbers were thanks to its popularity in Brazil and Mexico. It was not the Beetle that created the Volkswagen hegemony that we know and we love today, the corporate overlords of Audi, Bentley, Bugatti, Ducati, Lamborghini, MAN, Porsche, SEAT, Scania and Skoda. But the car that gave it the financial wherewithal to create such an empire was the Golf. And it is the Golf, which through its eight generations, the latest being launched last year, that is the biggest selling Volkswagen of all time with 35 million sold until last year.

The Golf is the car that formed the basis of so many other Volkswagen cars as the carmaker moved to its platform architecture. Even the new MQB architecture that the Group bases its small and mid-sized cars on was essentially designed for the Golf. Many Volkswagen fans I know in India have always

been disappointed that Volkswagen India never brought the Golf into the country. Yes, there was the Jetta, the sedan based on the Golf, a few variants of the new Beetle that was the Golf in a dress as well as other models based on the Golf from Audi and Skoda. But the Golf itself as well as the legendary Golf GTI hot hatchback never made it to India even as an import.

But now we have the Volkswagen T-Roc, a twenty lakh crossover-y car from the German carmaker. Frankly, the T-Roc is the purest expression of the Golf to have ever come to India. While it is nicely kitted out, with twin-tone upholstery and a virtual cockpit display, if you have been in a Golf in the recent past, you know you are somewhere familiar. When you would see the sticker price of the T-Roc, you would understand why Volkswagen never brought the Golf to India. With an ex-showroom price just under twenty lakh, it is very difficult to make a use-case for this car, no matter how nice it is to drive. While I should write another column on Volkswagen India's dramatic shift away from Diesels — they say it is to do with the government policy. Although I believe it is more of a perception thing since Diesels became equated with Volkswagen, the 150PS 1.5TSI petrol engine on the T-Roc is quite smooth particularly mated to the seven-speed DSG gearbox on the car.

Frankly, if you do not need the extra rear space afforded by the likes of the Creta and Seltos, say if you are single or a young couple, the T-Roc has more than enough boot space to carry the luggage for a week-long getaway and drives way nicer than the competition. The interior feel with its usage of light and dark tones is bright and the cabin genuinely feels cheerful. If it is the Golf you have been waiting for, this is as close to one you will get in India for now. I believe the T-Roc will have limited sales but serves a statement. If the forthcoming Taigun in 2021 is built and drives as well as the T-Roc, I will finally believe that the Skoda-Volkswagen group will have a winner on their hands.

Disinfect most-touched spots, stay aware on how to protect yourselves and others around, follow physical distancing, wash hands and sanitise frequently, wear masks, step out only when necessary — these are some of the norms which became mandatory in 2020. However, no matter how much precautions we take at our end, there are certain external contacts which can't be avoided. For example, packaged food products, given the fact that footfalls at restaurants have seen a sharp dip and online deliveries are becoming the new and more convenient dine-out. And when the mainstream selling channel went down, delivery did become the only option for food outlets to work on their businesses. And to survive in this competitive market, packaging is one thing food industry has been focussing upon with more creative ideas to build the trust of consumer.

And undeniably, the world of packaging has seen a prominent change. Following the best of safety measures, packaging food properly has become the most important segment in the food industry. However, the fear still lingers that the Coronavirus could reach our homes through home deliveries.

Well, a lack of complete awareness can be an issue here. Recently, a delivery boy tested positive in Delhi, who had delivered food packages to around 70 households. However, the families did not report any cases. It proved how the virus cannot be transferred through food unless one comes directly in contact with an infected person. As the World Health Organisation (WHO), it is highly unlikely that the virus can be transmitted through food.

Lack of this knowledge has impacted several businesses, making it tougher for the industry to survive. While this certainly came as big relief for the industry but it needed to reassure customers of the same. And hence, the process of packaging has become very important. The factors that are given utmost importance are:

PERSONAL HYGIENE

Food handlers' personal hygiene is critical to keep food safe for which hygiene measures like washing hands with soap or alcohol-based sanitisers, monitoring of body temperatures are being regularised. Workers are equipped with masks and gloves. Sanitisation norms are being stressed upon in kitchens and grocery stores strictly. It's made sure that cooked food is not touched by bare hands. Right usage and discarding of PPE is being implemented strictly to ensure the safety of food packages. After the food is put into the container, all risks of attracting the virus are eliminated. The packet is sanitised and then put in the carry bag, which is also sanitised.

The cooked food and groceries are packed in an extra outer bag apart from the primary carry bag, which contains the items to add another layer of protection as and when they are dispatched. The delivery personnel's temperature is being monitored regularly as a key measure. Downloading Arogya Setu app and marking the personnel green is helping keep a



IT'S A PACK-UP!

While home deliveries may have seen a surge due to dine-ins seeing sharp dips, **AMIT BAGGA** points out how innovative and safer food packaging methods are winning the trust of consumers



better track. The order payment is now preferably not collected via cash on delivery but is online or prepaid. As the delivery personnel reaches a customer's home, it is man-

dated that there will be no close contact. Many food delivery apps have also enabled an option for people to choose if they want their package to be left at their doorstep to avoid any contact with the delivery boy. If

they don't choose it, he will have to maintain a healthy seven meter distance. The customers are also given instructions on how to open a package. This is a very important piece of infor-

mation as it means building consumer faith to accept packaging without any doubts or fear. The customers are informed that their package has reached their doorstep and are advised to use disposable gloves while receiving it. The outer packaging to be discarded right outside. The customer should wear the gloves rightly and discard them after taking the cooked food out of the inner packaging and then sanitise hands to avoid any cross-contamination. It is important to reheat the food, which results in complete elimination of the risk to attract the virus.

Through these steps, customers are being educated. Any packaging would fail if these simple measures were not adopted to build customer trust back.

This is how restaurants and grocery store brands are now changing their positioning and getting more aligned towards safer food packaging and delivery. Social media has become the main channel of this communication. Perception and misinformation is changing the consumer behaviour but soon elimination of the virus transmission fear from packaging will bring a revolution in packaging and a much-needed positive change in the industry.

LOOK AND FEEL

The focus is also on the nice, good-looking appearance of the packaging so that it provides a positive feel to the customer.

TASTE AND TEXTURE

For restaurants, the material used to prepare food that can retain a dish's taste and texture is equally important. A customer that's used to experience food at a dine-in now has to be given closest experience on delivery. A good and safe packaging will all lose their marks if the food doesn't taste well.

ECO-FRIENDLY PACKAGING

One-time use and Coronavirus-resistant packaging have become the new essentials. While over the last few years, eco-friendly has been the focus in packaging but today, the one-time use packaging is contradicting this concept of sustainability. So keeping this in mind, new eco-friendly, bamboo paper, non-toxic packaging containers are being worked upon. Customers are becoming more aware than before about anything that impacts immunity or raises health and environmental concerns.

For instance, Maharashtra has already banned packaging, which wasn't eco-friendly. The new packaging material contain 51 microns, the ideal quantity. For safety, glass jars for condiments are also helpful as they're eco-friendly, washable and can be brought to use in homes again. And remember, *mitti-handis* (mud containers)?

Thus, while the packaging industry has been evolving, material related to packaging are also finding a new face. Even a few healthcare companies are coming up with sanitisers specifically to be sprayed on delivery packages to ensure the disinfection of the packaged material. Well, one could say, packaging is only getting better! (The author is co-founder, Daryaganji.)

R E C I P E S

DRIED ROSE SLAB WITH NUTTY DELIGHT

WHAT YOU NEED

- Dried fig, chopped: 1/2 cup
- Dates, chopped: 1 cup
- Mamra almonds: 1/3 cup
- Cashew nuts: 1/3 cup
- Walnuts: 1/3 cup
- Pistachios: 1/3 cup
- Raisins: 1/3 cup
- Gulkand: 2 tbsp
- Nutmeg powder: 1/4 tsp
- Desi ghee: 2 tbsp
- Rose jam: 2 tbsp

- Fennel powder: 1/4 tsp
- Cardamom powder: 1/4 cup
- Rose water: 1/2 cup
- Dried rose petals: 1 cup

METHOD

- To prepare the nutty delight, soak the chopped figs in warm water for four hours, strain water and pat dry well.
- Granulate figs along with the dates and raisins to smooth paste with the help of rose water.
- Chop mamra almonds, cashew nuts, walnut and

pistachios. Heat desi ghee in a heavy bottomed pan, add gulkand stir well and saute for a minute.

- Add chopped dates, nut mixture, nutmeg powder, rose water, fig mixture and stir to combine well.
- Cook for a couple of minutes.
- In a bowl, mix rose jam, fennel powder and cardamom powder.
- Take a tray with a height of four inches, grease it with desi ghee and rose jam mixture.

- Sprinkle dried rose over it and pour nutty delight mixture into the tray.
- Level it well with a spatula.
- On the top side of nutty delight, again grease some desi ghee and a thin layer of rose jam mixture generously sprinkle with dried rose petals and allow it to get set.
- Once set, spray desi ghee on knife and cut neatly into slabs.

Courtesy: Saffron Gourmet Food.



TANDOORI CHICKEN

WHAT YOU NEED

- Chicken (whole): 2
- Hung yoghurt: 1 kg
- Kashmiri red chilli powder: 80 gm
- Salt to taste
- Garam masala: 15 gm
- Cumin powder: 5 gm
- Lemon juice: 5 ml

- Ginger garlic paste: 20 gm
- Kebab masala to taste
- Marinate the chicken with salt, ginger garlic paste, red chilli powder, beaten curd, cumin powder, and garam masala.
- Keep aside for one

- hour. Place on seekh and cook till done. Take out the chicken from the seekh and sprinkle with kebab masala and lemon juice. Serve hot.
- Courtesy: Zoheb Ali Qureshi, Executive Chef, Cross Border Kitchens.

COTTAGE CHEESE WALNUT CAPRESE TOAST

WHAT YOU NEED

- Walnuts, chopped: 1/2 cup
- Whole-grain toast: 4
- Cottage cheese: 1/3 cup
- Multi-coloured cherry tomatoes, halved: 1 cup
- Thinly-sliced basil: 1 tbsp
- Freshly-ground black pepper to taste
- Balsamic syrup: 1 tbsp

- degree C and arrange walnuts evenly on a small baking sheet. Bake for eight to 10 minutes. Check frequently until toasted. Spread cottage cheese evenly over each slice of toast. Layer with tomatoes, roasted walnuts, fresh basil, black pepper, and a drizzle of balsamic syrup. Serve and enjoy.

Courtesy: Chef Sabyasachi Gorai.



CHEESY VADA PAV

WHAT YOU NEED

- Pav/bread: 2
- Butter: 2 tbsp
- Paneer: 1/2 cup
- Potato: 1/8 cup
- Jeera powder: 1 tbsp
- Britannia Cheese slice
- Salt to taste
- Chilli powder: 1 tbsp
- Coriander powder: 1 tbsp
- Chaat masala: 1

- In a bowl, add besan, all the powders to prepare the batter. Dip the patty in the oil and fry till it turns golden brown. Assemble the vada pav. On the bun, spread mint chutney, place the patty and then the cheese slice. Serve with ketchup/tomato sauce.
- Courtesy: Britannia Cheese Starchef.



MAXWELL CAREY OZ TO SERIES WIN



Glenn Maxwell and Alex Carey pose with Royal London ODI series trophy after the duo helped Australia win third game AP

AP ■ MANCHESTER
Glenn Maxwell and Alex Carey struck centuries in a 212-run stand to help Australia reach a record target of 303 at Old Trafford with two balls remaining and secure a ODI series win over England. Mitchell Starc started the third and deciding game on Wednesday by taking wickets from the first two balls of the match, and ended it by sweeping a four for the winning runs under lights as the Australians consigned England to its first loss in a bilateral ODI series at home since 2015.

It was a record ODI chase at the Manchester venue — bettering England's 286-4 against New Zealand in 1986 in a 60-over match — and gave Australia a famous series win over the world champions to take back Down Under from their white-ball tour that also included a 2-1 loss in a T20 series. Replying to 302-7, Australia slumped to 73-5 only for Carey and Maxwell to produce Australia's highest sixth-wicket partnership in ODIs and turn the tide. While Carey was the steadier of the pair with his 106 off 114 balls, Maxwell delivered some trademark big hits — he had seven sixes, all over the short boundary on one side of the ground — for his 90-ball 108. "Maxy is in the team to do a specific role, and that's to be able to take the game away from opposition but also be that guy to counterattack and swing momentum in changing rooms," Australia captain Aaron Finch said. "What makes him so damaging is he can play all around the ground. I don't think there're many bowlers in the world that can trouble him when he is having one of those days. The way he navigated that innings and took it deeper and deeper... He did that perfectly." Maxwell eventually fell with 15 balls left and Australia needed 14 off the last two overs. Carey couldn't see the tourists

home, either, departing for 106 to a fabulous diving catch by Mark Wood off the seventh-to-last ball. "It probably wasn't the ideal situation when I came in but being the last batter, I suppose I had a bit of license to go for it right from the start," Maxwell told Sky Sports. "We thought if we could take it as deep as we could, myself and Alex, we might be a chance at the back end." Starc entered, with Australia needing 10 off the last over bowled by legspinner Adil Rashid, and smashed his first

ball down the ground for six. After two singles, Starc swept Rashid round the corner and the ball sped to the boundary rope, sealing a three-wicket win and sparking cheers from his teammates on the balcony. England captain Eoin Morgan said Australia were "too good for us", adding: "To lose two wickets for no runs and then post over 300 is a huge positive for us. I think Jonny Bairstow was outstanding today. Carey and Maxwell played outstandingly well." Playing without Steve Smith for the third straight game this series after the star batsman failed to recover from a knock to the head, the Aussies looked in big trouble after Marnus Labuschagne's sloppy run-out left them five down, with just bowlers to follow Maxwell. England will regret a no-ball by Archer — his first in ODI cricket — off which he had Carey caught at third man when on 9. Wicketkeeper Jos Buttler also dropped a tough chance off a nick by Maxwell when 44. "Small opportunities that we might have taken advantage of might have changed the game," Morgan said, "but when you've been beaten by a better side, you have to put your hand up." It was England's only series loss of its international summer — during which all of its games have been played in a bio-secure bubble without fans — after taking on the West Indies, Ireland, Pakistan and Australia in various formats. **Brief scores:** England 302/7 (Jonny Bairstow 112, Sam Billings 57; Adam Zampa 3/51) lose to Australia 305/7

36-hour quarantine for Eng, Aus players

New Delhi: The Indian Premier League franchises will be heaving a sigh of relief as all the 21 Australian and English players arriving to the UAE from the United Kingdom will have to undergo just 36 hours of quarantine instead of the earlier prescribed six days. All the franchises which have English and Australian players arriving after the white ball series in the UK had appealed for reducing the quarantine period and the BCCI under Sourav Ganguly's leadership has been able to successfully sort the issue out with local authorities in the UAE. "Yes, I can confirm that all the English and Australian players have to now undergo 36-hour quarantine instead of six days. The matter has been sorted and most of the teams will now have their big stars available from the first game itself," a senior IPL functionary privy to development told PTI. The likes of Steve Smith, David Warner, Jofra Archer, Jos Buttler will arrive in the UAE late on Thursday night (UAE time) and on arrival will undergo RT-PCR test for Covid-19. "The BCCI did a great job in reducing the quarantine period to 36 hours. This means teams like Chennai Super Kings (Josh Hazlewood and Tom Curran), Rajasthan Royals (Smith, Buttler, Archer) will have all their players available from their first game. Ditto for Kings XI Punjab that has Glenn Maxwell in its roster and Delhi Capitals that has Alex Carry," a franchise official said. **PTI**

MI will miss Malinga's experience: Rohit

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Mumbai Indians captain Rohit Sharma on Thursday conceded that "incomparable" Sri Lankan pace legend Lasith Malinga, who has opted out of this year's IPL, will be severely missed by his defending champion team given his "unbelievable" past performances. The 37-year-old Malinga, who is IPL's highest wicket-taker with 170 scalps to his credit, has pulled out citing personal reasons in a major blow to the four-time champions. "I don't think it is easy to come and fill his boots. He has been a match-winner for Mumbai. I have said it many times, whenever we sort of find ourselves in trouble, Malinga was the one to bail us out from that," Rohit said in a pre-season online press conference. "His experience will be missed, what he did with MI is unbelievable and it is unfortunate that he is not a part of the team this year. "We have got likes — (James) Pattinson, Dhawal Kulkarni, Mohsin (Khan) and these are the names that we are looking to replace Malinga with. But obviously what Malinga did for Mumbai, it is not just comparable," he added. Talking about his own role, Rohit said he will continue to open. "I opened the entire tournament last year and I will continue to do that. Again I keep all the options open, whatever the team wants, happy to do that. "Even when I play for India, message from my side to the management has always been the same 'do not close any doors' keep all the options open and I will do the same here as well," he said. India's white-ball vice-captain also felt that correct reading of conditions would be crucial to his team's fortunes. "The challenge for us will be



to adapt to these conditions here which probably none of us are used to, because not a lot of cricketers from our group have

played here," Rohit said. "I think mentally it is about going out there and understanding what the pitch is doing, and based on that, you need to plan your game — whether it is your batting or bowling. So we have had a good chat around the group about that," he elaborated. Talking about the opening match against the Chennai Super Kings, he said Mumbai is ready for the challenge. "CSK are probably one of the successful IPL teams and you can't take them for granted... They will come out all guns blazing. None of us have played cricket for months now, so obviously everybody wants to start on a high. "So, we will be expecting a great contest between the two and we need to focus on what we need to do as team and all our bases are covered," Rohit signed off.

Need to be mindful of Hardik's workload: Jayawardene

Abu Dhabi: Monitoring comeback man Hardik Pandya's workload is paramount for Mumbai Indians coach Mahela Jayawardene as he intends to groom a "few more finishers" for the upcoming edition of IPL. Hardik will play his first game in a year on Saturday having undergone back surgery for stress fracture last year. "Hardik is coming back from an injury. So we will have to be mindful of that but he is looking very good in the nets. Both the players (Pandya brothers) have been fantastic for MI over the last three or four years. It brings a lot of energy to the group," Jayawardene said during

MI's virtual media conference. The Sri Lankan legend was asked whether Hardik will again be assigned the finisher's job. "We have used him (Hardik) in different roles in the past and we will look into that. We will have quite a number of other players who can fit into that role as well, so whenever the opportunity is there we ask anyone to finish the game off," said the former Sri Lanka captain. "It doesn't just fall on his responsibilities, so we want to try and challenge players in different ways in this camp, so we will continue to do that," he said. **PTI**



Nitish hopes to learn from Morgan's leadership qualities

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Kolkata Knight Riders left-handed batsman Nitish Rana is excited to play alongside Eoin Morgan and hopes that he will imbibe some of reigning World Cup-winning skipper's leadership qualities. The England limited-overs skipper was bought at the auction for ₹5.25 crore as he's set to reunite with the franchise after his stint from 2011-2013. The 34-year-old will be joining the side after leading England to their maiden World Cup glory in 2019 and Rana, who led Delhi at domestic level, is excited. "I hope I also have that sort of leadership quality so that it helps in my domestic team and I grow as a player," Rana said in a media interaction. "He is one such rare left-handed batsman who dominates white ball cricket. He's a World Cup-winning captain of a successful country. I'm looking forward to learning many things from him." On the slow pitches in the UAE, a pace-heavy KKR line-up will have

limited spin resources in Sunil Narine and Kuldeep Yadav. Rana, who bowls part-time offspin, is also looking forward to get some more overs under his belt this time. "Bowling is not a new thing to me. I've been bowling in domestic cricket. It's good that spinners will get an advantage here so that I also will get some grip. I've improved as a player and a bowler. Hope I get more overs and help the team." The left-hander said he does not have a fixed batting slot and is ready to serve the team at any position. "I will bat as per team demand. I don't have a fixed batting slot. I'm available to serve the team at any spot." Having served long injury lay-offs respectively, the 2018 U-19 World Cup winning duo of Kamlesh Nagarkoti and Shivam Mavi are back in full throttle, Rana said. "Nagarkoti was unfortunate to be injured for two years. He's back strong. But this time, both of them are back in full rhythm and clocking 140kph-plus consistently. It will be challenging for any batsman. I hope they will do well," he added.

Virat not fazed by empty stands at IPL

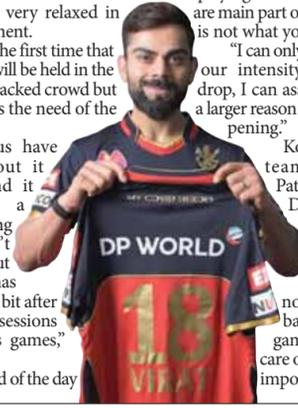
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Virat Kohli on Thursday said his teammates have become "accepting" of living in the IPL bio-bubble and there is no "desperation" for a change of environment as they approach the tournament proper from September 19. RCB landed in Dubai on August 21 and have been training for more than two weeks, including some intra-squad practice games. "To be honest we have become more accepting of the situation around us. Acceptance is the biggest change I have experienced (since day 1 here)," said Kohli in a virtual media conference organised to honour citizens who have become "COVID Heroes" amid the pandemic. "When we spoke of the bio-bu-

ble for the first time, we discussed about appreciating the things we have and the situation. All of us have become very relaxed in that environment. It will be the first time that IPL matches will be held in the absence of a packed crowd but Kohli said it is the need of the hour. "All of us have thought about it (initially) and it would be a strange feeling and I won't deny that. But the feeling has changed little bit after the training sessions and practices games," he said. "At the end of the day

you just need to understand why you started playing the game, you started playing for the love of it. Crowds are main part of the game but that is not what you play for. "I can only say one thing that our intensity levels will not drop, I can assure you. There is a larger reason why all this is happening." Kohli was joined by teammates Parthiv Patel and the young Devdutt Padikal in the interaction. "It has sunk in (staying in bio-bubble). We did not put saliva on the ball during practice games and are taking care of ourself. It is very important to be safe,"

RCB to honour Covid heroes by wearing tribute jersey **New Delhi:** Royal Challengers Bangalore players will sport the jerseys with the "My COVID Heroes" written on them all through the IPL to pay tribute to all those on the frontline in the battle against the pandemic. The slogan honouring the "COVID Heroes" will be printed on the back of the playing as well as the training jerseys, the team announced on Thursday. **PNS**



Messi nets 2 in friendly win

AP ■ BARCELONA

Lionel Messi scored his first goals of Barcelona's pre-season as coach Ronald Koeman left Luis Suárez and Arturo Vidal off his team for a second friendly match. Messi netted two goals and set up one more in a 3-1 victory over second-tier Girona, Barcelona's second training match since Koeman took over as coach. The goals were also Messi's first since his failed attempt to leave the club this offseason. Barcelona posted a photo on Twitter of Messi and Koeman clapping hands when the star forward was substituted along with most of his teammates with half an hour to go. It

seemed meant to deliver a message of unity between the player and manager amid one of the most tumultuous periods in the club's recent history. Girona offered little resistance to Barcelona's attack, formed by new signing Francisco Trincao, Philippe Coutinho, Antoine Griezmann and Messi. Messi's perfectly placed pass sent Trincao clear for the Portugal forward to square the ball to Coutinho, who only had to scoop in the 20th-minute opener. Messi doubled the lead in the 45th with a shot from outside the area that went in off the upright. Samuel Saiz got Girona on the scoreboard after half-time before Messi got his brace with a shot that took a deflection off a defender to fool the Girona goalkeeper.

CA working in tandem with Royals over Smith's concussion

PTI ■ DUBAI

Crickets Australia on Thursday revealed that Steve Smith is following "concussion protocols" which are crucial for his return to cricket in the IPL and asserted that it is "not willing" to compromise with the fitness of the Rajasthan Royals skipper. CA said it is working in tandem with RR to ensure his smooth return to competitive action after missing the entire England ODI

series due to the concussion suffered during training. "Crickets Australia has strict protocols when it comes to head impacts and concussions and, as we've seen over the last 12 months, we're not willing to compromise on those," CA's head of sports science Alex Kountouris said in a statement. "Steve is making progress and working with our medical team through the concussion protocols required to return to play," he added.

Smith was hit on the head during a net session prior to the first ODI in Manchester and since then recovered well but not enough to play a competitive cricket. Kountouris said the franchise and CA will be working together to monitor Smith's fitness upon his arrival in the UAE. Smith had also endured a concussion during last year's Ashes game at the Lord's and subsequently missed a Test match.

Draxler wins for PSG at the death

AP ■ PARIS

Julian Draxler's header deep into stoppage time gave Paris Saint-Germain a 1-0 home win against Metz and spared the defending champion a fourth straight match without scoring. After losing the Champions League final 1-0 to Bayern Munich last month, PSG opened its league campaign with a 1-0 defeat at Lens followed by a 1-0 loss at home to Marseille on Sunday in which three PSG players were sent off. PSG finished this game with nine men after center half Abdou Diallo was red carded for a second yellow midway through the second half and left back Juan Bernat limped

off injured near the end. After missing a host of chances, another embarrassing setback looked likely for PSG until Metz goalkeeper Alexander Okukidja failed to properly clear Angel Di Maria's cross from the left. The opportunist Draxler headed home in the 93rd minute to save coach Thomas Tuchel from more pressure. "We had chances to score in the first half, but we missed all of our good chances," Tuchel said. Key midfielder Marco Verratti was sidelined with a minor injury, while striker Kylian Mbappé was also absent as he continues his recovery from the coronavirus. Mbappé could return for Sunday's difficult match

away to coach Patrick Vieira's Nice. PSG was also missing Neymar, left back Layvin Kurzawa and midfielder Leandro Paredes against Metz. They were suspended after being sent off following a stoppage-time brawl against Marseille. Neymar claims he was racially abused during the game by Marseille defender Alvaro Gonzalez. But the league's disciplinary commission said on Wednesday night that so far there is not enough evidence to summon the players for a hearing. The disciplinary commission suspended Kurzawa for six games, while Neymar and Paredes each got a three-game ban plus one game suspended.



Rafael Nadal returns the ball to Pablo Carreno Busta during their second round match, at the Italian Open tournament AP

SINGLES

INDIA DROP TO 109 IN FIFA RANKINGS
ZURICH: The Indian men's football team have dropped by one place and are placed at the 109th position in the latest FIFA rankings. India have 1187 points and have not lost or gained any since the last update which took place in July. Meanwhile, Belgium remain at the summit ahead of France and Brazil, while England continue to occupy fourth place. Portugal (5th,+2) have moved into the top five thanks to victories over Croatia (8th,-2) and Sweden (18th,-1). **LEEDS, SOUTHAMPTON ELIMINATED IN CUP**
LONDON: Premier League teams Leeds and Southampton lost to lower-tier opposition in the second round of the League Cup. While a second-string Leeds team lost a penalty shootout 9-8 to third-tier Hull after a 1-1 draw in regulation, Southampton fielded a full-strength lineup but still lost 2-0 at home to second-tier Brentford. Everton eased past fourth-tier Salford 3-0 thanks to goals by Michael Keane, Gylfi Sigurdsson and Moise Kean, while Aleksandar Mitrovic scored Fulham's goal in a 1-0 win at Ipswich. **FANS BARRED FROM BUNDESLIGA OPENER**
MUNICH: Fans will not be allowed into the stadium when Bayern Munich hosts the opening game of the Bundesliga season because of a local spike in coronavirus cases, the mayor of Munich said on Thursday. But games in other cities scheduled to proceed with fans on Saturday and Sunday. **HARIKRISHNA SLIPS WITH 2 LOSSES**
CHENNAI: Indian Grandmaster P Harikrishna slipped to fifth spot from a share of lead after a win-less day at the Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz online chess tourney, where he lost to Lev Nepomniachtchi and world number one Magnus Carlsen. Harikrishna, who shared the lead with Lev Aronian after three rounds, lost the fourth round of the Rapid event to Nepomniachtchi, then drew with Armenian Aronian before losing the sixth to Carlsen. **BAIRSTOW ENTERS TOP-10 IN ODI RANKINGS**
DUBAI: Englishman Jonny Bairstow broke into the top-10 following a string of good performances against Australia. Bairstow topped the series aggregate with 196 runs to re-enter the top 10. The previous best for him was ninth position in October 2018. **Agencies**

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit before in the Court of Shri T.Samal, Executive Magistrate, Bhubaneswar, I Suprakash Das, S/O Satya Singha Das, At-Near Health Point, M.S.Das Street, Gopalgaon, P.S-Town, Dist- Balasore, now I want to modify the spelling of my name from Suprakash Das to Suprakkash Daas due to my belief in Astrological/Numerological advices.

FC Bayern München @FCBayern
Hansi Flick over @Thiago6: "Thiago is an exceptional player who had huge success here for seven years. He's a great person and an exceptional professional. It was very emotional today when he said goodbye."

5:20 pm · 17 Sep 20

Liverpool edged closer to landing the services of their coveted asset as on Bayern Munich officials on Thursday said the club has agreed a transfer for Spain midfielder Thiago Alcantara. Bayern Munich coach Hansi Flick praised Thiago while confirming he has bid goodbye **FC Bayern/Twitter**