

OPINION 6
CONGRESS
SPLIT INEVITABLE

WORLD 8
ANYONE CHALLENGING ONE-CHINA
POLICY WILL PAY HEAVY PRICE: FM

SPORT 12
ROOT RETURNS FOR AUS
ODIS BUT MISSES T20S

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THE PM WHO NEVER BECAME THE PM

By Chandan Mitra

Pranab Mukherjee was never a domineering presence in Bengal politics; in fact, he was hardly a political presence in his home State at all. But his endearing persona and magnificent erudition made him, notwithstanding his strong rural Bengali accent, a highly respected *bhadralok*, a semi-lit pipe hanging loose from his lips being a cartoonists' delight till he kicked the habit nearly 30 years back.

degree skills, she reinducted him into the Cabinet and party hierarchy.

Very soon, ditto with Rajiv Gandhi who unceremoniously sacked him from his first Cabinet, only to reinstate him with full dignity a few months later. By the time he was reinducted, he had risen to a stature befitting none else. Having held the External Affairs portfolio for close to a decade, and widely reputed for his knowledge of international trade and finance, Pranab Mukherjee was the acknowledged don of complex matters on global economic matters.

Many were initially surprised that a man who rose from the ranks of a school-teacher in Midnapore, West Bengal, to stand shoulder to shoulder at the first UNCTAD in New Delhi alongside Cuban legend Fidel Castro. But over the years, he made all Indians proud of his deft handling of economy and politics. It was said that it was not possible for anyone to negotiate with a tiger to part with its skin but Pranab would achieve that and leave the tiger smiling in the end.

A people's leader, he loved adda (idle talk) which Bengalis enjoy for hours at end. This was a daily source of inspiration and provided an opportunity to rummage through his phenomenal memory, which stunned friend and foe alike.

On a personal note, I recall when he called me to the Rashtrapati Bhawan at the relatively late hour of 10 pm, prefacing his invitation by saying

that a journalist was not supposed to sleep, or even have dinner, by 10 pm, he said he normally came home around this hour, had a bath, did puja for an hour, before sitting down for dinner. He walked me to the sitting area and over two cups of coffee we resumed our adda.

A few weeks later, I got a call from him requesting me to launch the second volume of his memoirs. Addressing a dis-

tinguished gathering seated overlooking the Mogul Gardens was an honour I will probably never get again. While leaving I asked, "Why me?" He said, "How many Oxford-educated journalists do we have in

India? I have called the only one I know. I hope you groom some others after you."



The nation mourns one of its worthiest sons. Sad to hear that former President Pranab Mukherjee is no more, his demise is passing of an era. **President Ram Nath Kovind**

The country has lost an elder statesman in his death. He rose from humble beginnings to occupy the country's highest constitutional position through hard work, discipline and dedication. **Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu**

I was new to Delhi in 2014. From day 1, I was blessed to have the guidance, support and blessings of Shri Pranab Mukherjee. I will always cherish my interactions with him. Condolences to his family, friends, admirers and supporters across India. Om Shanti. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**

It is hard to imagine how we can do without his wisdom, experience, advice and deep understanding of so many subjects. He brought distinction to every post, established a genuine rapport with colleagues across the political spectrum and served our country with the utmost dedication. **Congress chief Sonia Gandhi**

PRANAB MUKHERJEE
December 11, 1935 — August 31, 2020

'Citizen Mukherjee' no more

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former President Pranab Mukherjee breathed his last on Monday after battling various ailments, including coronavirus, for almost 20 days. His son Abhijit Mukherjee announced the demise of the 84-year-old Mukherjee who was admitted to Army hospital in the national Capital on August 10.

A people's person till the end, "Citizen Mukherjee" tweeted that he had tested positive for Covid-19 on August 10. It was his last post and his last words to the public.

"With a heavy heart, this is to inform you that my father Shri Pranab Mukherjee has just passed away in spite of the best efforts of doctors of RR Hospital and prayers, duas and prarthanas from people throughout India. I thank all of you folded hands," Abhijit Mukherjee tweeted.

The late President was operated for the removal of a

clot in his brain and later developed a lung infection. Pranab Mukherjee was the 13th President of India from 2012 to 2017 and was conferred with the highest civilian award, Bharat Ratna, by the Narendra Modi Government.

President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, former VP Hamid Ansari, Union Ministers, UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and several others led the nation in condoling the death of the former President saying the country has lost a statesman.

While Pranab Mukherjee's house in Birbhum's Mirati village in West Beny wore a sad, forlorn look after the passing away of the former President, sources in Government said he will be cremated in the national Capital. The Centre announced a seven-day national mourning period — August 31 to September 6.

A quintessential party loy-

alist and the trusted Man Friday of three Congress Prime Ministers, Pranab Mukherjee's climb up the political ladder stopped just short of his ambition to occupy the PM's post in 2004, and instead fortunes sent him to the highest office Rashtrapati Bhavan as the country's first citizen.

Though he had many facets in his over five decades of a political career, he was Congress' troubleshooter through the decades and one of the country's most respected politicians. Demonstrating his ability to quickly adapt to situations as they arose, Mukherjee was at ease with the new mode of communication.

A politician of the past era, Mukherjee realised the significance of social media tool and used Twitter a platform to reach out to people and always expressed his condolences on the death of leaders and friends, great people on festivals or wish them on their birthdays.

Continued on Page 2

Army foils China's intrusion bid at LAC

Beijing rejects claim, says India violated its territorial integrity

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tension flared up at the already volatile Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh when the Chinese troops tried to intrude into India at the Pangong Tso (lake) on the intervening night of August 29-30. The alert Indian troops foiled the aggression.

Not willing to let things go out of hand, the two sides held Brigadier-level meeting on Monday and decided to maintain peace and abide by pacts to de-escalate.

Denying that its troops crossed the LAC, China claimed that India violated its territorial integrity. China also demanded that India immediately withdraw its troops to maintain peace.

Given the situation at the LAC in the region where stand-off is on for the last more than three months and the latest "provocative" step on the southern side of the Pangong Tso by the Chinese, the Indian Army has rushed more troops to the region, sources said.

Also, movement for general traffic was restricted on the nearly 400-km long Srinagar-



Army trucks move towards Ladakh via Leh-Manali Highway in Manali on Monday. PTI

Leh highway to enable the military convoys to move fast. The Chinese have also deployed additional troops there leading to surcharged atmosphere in the region.

Both sides have enhanced vigil all along the 4,000 km long LAC from Ladakh in the west to Arunachal Pradesh in the east. Moreover, the Indian armed forces are now on alert mode to meet any challenge, sources said.

A three-month face-off is already on the northern bank of the Pangong Tso between "Finger 4" and "Finger 8" sector. Despite agreeing to disengage in the several rounds of military-level talks, the Chinese have refused to withdraw their troops from there. They also have of late erected more tents and built bunkers indicating their intent.

Continued on Page 2

China building helipads, bunkers along border

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Keeping the LAC bristling with tension, China has undertaken construction of helipads and bunkers at war-footing all along the border.

Satellite imagery from open sources said China has built a heliport near Doklam, which lies on the tri-junction of India, China and Bhutan near Sikkim in the east.

Besides this, China is also building at least two helipads in eastern Ladakh — one in Tianshuihai, which is near the Galwan Valley and the Aksai Chin region, and the other in Rutog County, near the northern bank of Pangong Tso.

CAPSULE

LOCKDOWN IN BENGAL ON SEPT 7, 11, 12

Kolkata: Complete lockdown will be imposed across West Bengal on September 7, 11 and 12 to contain the spread of Covid-19, Chief Secretary Rajiva Sinha said on Monday. The State Government had earlier announced these dates for complete lockdown in September, but the Centre had made it clear that States cannot enforce local lockdown without prior consultation.

CBI, ED MOVE HC AGAINST ACQUITTAL IN 2G SCAM

New Delhi: The CBI and ED Monday approached the Delhi High Court seeking early hearing on their appeals challenging the acquittal of former Union Telecom Minister A Raja and others in the 2G spectrum scam.

GDP contracts by 23.9%, biggest fall in 40 yrs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a virtual freefall, India's GDP collapsed 23.9 per cent in the April-June quarter year-on-year, the biggest shrinkage in 40 years, as the coronavirus lockdowns battered an already slowing economy. Most rating agencies and RBI had projected a sharp contraction in India's GDP for the first quarter of 2020-21.

Even before the coronavirus outbreak, India's GDP started to shrink. The GDP had grown at 3.1 per cent in the January-March quarter, which was the slowest growth in at least eight years.

Sensex tanks 1,615 points from day's high, closes at 839 points lower

Ahead of GDP data, the fresh clash at LAC with China spooked the market, which was also apprehensive about a poor growth data.

The news of Chinese aggression turned the sentiments negative and BSE flagship Sensex plunged over 1,615 points from its day's high. At close, the index ended down 839 points for the day to 38,628. Nifty closed 260 points to 11,387.

Agriculture was the only

outlier as all other sectors, including manufacturing, construction and services, suffered steep declines.

India's economy had grown by 5.2 per cent in the same quarter of last fiscal, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).

The Government had imposed a nationwide lockdown from March 25, 2020 to curb the spread of Covid-19 infections which adversely impacted all sectors of the

economy. According to the data, gross value added (GVA) growth in the manufacturing sector contracted by 39.3 per cent in the first quarter of 2020-21, from 3 per cent expansion a year ago.

However, farm sector GVA grew at 3.4 per cent, compared to 3 per cent in the corresponding period of 2019-20.

Construction sector GVA contracted by a whopping 50.3 per cent from 5.2 per cent expansion earlier. Mining sector output declined at 23.3 per cent, as against a growth of 4.7 per cent a year ago.

Continued on Page 2

CBI grills Rhea for 9 hours on fourth consecutive day

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Actress Rhea Chakraborty was grilled for nine more hours on the fourth-consecutive day on Monday in the Sushant Singh death case, even as Messenger messages emerged that Sushant's family was very much in the know of his depression.

In a day of multiple developments that saw officials questioning her brother Showik Chakraborty for the fifth consecutive day, also grilling the actor's ex-manager Shruti Modi

and the ED questioning hotelier from Goa Gaurav Arya. The CBI questioned Rhea

about circumstances leading to Sushant's tragic death. **Continued on Page 2**

SSR AUDIO SURFACES, HE WAS PLANNING TO QUIT BOLLYWOOD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing investigations by multiple agencies into the mysterious death of film star Sushant Singh Rajput, audio tapes purported to be in

his voice have emerged suggesting that the late actor was battling bipolar disorder and was concerned about managing his wealth and quitting Bollywood. **Continued on Page 2**

SC lets Prashant off hook with ₹1 fine, Bhushan to pay penalty

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday imposed a "nominal fine" of ₹1 on activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan after he was convicted of criminal contempt for his two tweets against the judiciary, observing it was "showing magnanimity" instead of handing out any severe punishment.

Bhushan later said he will submit the token fine of ₹1. **Continued on Page 2**



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SSR AUDIO...

From Page 1
The audio tapes relate to conversations between Sushant Singh Rajput, Rhea Chakraborty, his wealth managers as well as his private managers. The tapes refer to conversations from the first week of January 2020 to the few months preceding his mysterious death on June 14.

In one of the conversations, Rajput is reported to have said, "This bipolar disorder. In that state, firstly, I don't think acting is something I will be able to do. Second, I don't know which economic structure I can get into. So, in some ways, I am in 50-50 mind. It's not like I can be confident about coming back."

In another reported recording, the voices of Rajput, Chakraborty and an unidentified man can be heard in which the actor can be heard saying, "At this point of time, I just want to ask for a favour." Chakraborty responds with a "yes" and Rajput goes on to ask, "How can we save all the money?" To this, the unidentified man says, "We talked about our worst case scenario yesterday."

In what could be his possible admission of the illness, Rajput retorts saying, "Yeah! Here, I am fighting with my mind. So, this is probably the worst case I will ever see."

The unknown man in the tape advises that a private trust can be set up to ensure that his needs are taken care of. "All decisions are with the pool of people who are trustees," the man's voice elaborates to which Chakraborty concurred.

Rajput sought to know how to go about the setting up of the trust to which Chakraborty commented, "Isn't that a little extreme?" to which the man's

voice asserts, "This is the worst case scenario, right?"

To this, Chakraborty agreed and Rajput commented saying, "I think, yes."

The man's voice can then be heard saying, "Sushant had this insistence yesterday" to which Sushant responds by saying, "Trust me."

In another conversation between Rajput, actress Chakraborty, her father Indranil Chakraborty and her former manager Shruti Modi, the group can be heard discussing the actor's financial future with fund managers. In this conversation, Rajput also expresses his desire to shift base from Mumbai.

The conversations in the tapes purportedly suggest that Chakraborty was actively engaged in consulting fund managers about managing Rajput's funds ostensibly to ensure a secure future for him.

Army foils...

From Page 1
Giving details of the latest move on August 29-30 (Saturday last), sources said here on Monday the Chinese troops carried out "provocative" military movements to change the status quo near Pangong Tso.

Timely intelligence reports enabled the Indian troops to block the Chinese patrol of more than 300 soldiers, they said. The failed bid took place on the south bank of the Pangong Tso, which is of huge significance as it is a new area, officials said. This area falls in the Chushul sector.

In an official statement, the Army said, "On the night of August 29/30, PLA troops violated the previous consensus

Centre calls meeting with Metro Corporations to finalise rules

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

UNLOCK4

In a move to finalise the standard operating procedures (SOPs) the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry will hold a meeting with all managing directors of metro rail corporations on Tuesday for the functioning of metro trains allowed under

the Unlock4 guidelines. There are 17 metro corporations in the country. Once the detailed SOPs are issued by the ministry, they can issue their details keeping in mind local requirements. Officials said that metro

rail corporations are ready to start operation in a gradual manner in view of surging of coronavirus. Modalities for running the services will be finalized on Tuesday and it will be vary state by state. The SOPs for Chennai metro will be differ from the Delhi Metro.

The SOPs already circu-

lated with all metro corporations and each metro corporations will discuss with local requirements or modifications. Limiting number of people in lifts and longer halting time for trains at stations to allow commuters to board and alight with social distancing norms, are among the measures the Delhi Metro

intends to put in place to ensure safer travel for its passengers.

Wearing of masks will be mandatory and social distancing norms will be followed as per government guidelines inside the stations. Demarcation of queuing area shall be made at the security point.

2 meters distance shall be maintained between the frisking and line up points. one-meter distance shall be maintained between passengers waiting at the security point. Passengers shall remove all metallic items from their body and place them inside their own bag and further present them at X-BIS.

CBI grills...

From Page 1
The CBI also asked her about her relationship with the late actor, his mental condition, and whether she - as a stay-in friend -- was giving medicines to Sushant, whether she had either given directly or administered drugs to Sushant, whether she had received money

Rhea has now been called on Tuesday for the fifth round of questioning.

In the ongoing electronic media trial, some more WhatsApp messages emerged on the mental condition of Sushant's death in the run-up to the actor's death and the fact that the actor's family was very much in the know of the actor suffering from depression and

Sushant's sister Meethu and his ex-manager Shruti Modi on November 26, 2019, revealed that Shruti had sent to the actor's sister medicines prescribed by the doctor's prescription for her brother, Messenger messages emerged - in which the actor's another sister Priyanka was advising Sushant to take the medicines in the event of anxiety attacks.

Prinyaka, in which it emerged the latter offered to get prescriptions from a Delhi-based doctor for getting anti-depressant tablets for treatment of his condition. Among other things, Priyanka told him to have Librium capsules for a week and then start taking Nexito 10 mg once every day after breakfast. The medicines mentioned by Priyanka for Sushant were Librium, Nexito 10 mg and Lonazep.

On his part, Rhea's lawyer Satish Maneshinde alleged that the actor's Sushant had obtained anti-depressant tablets for her brother without proper prescription. "Rhea in her statements to the CBI and ED said on June 8, Priyanka had chatted with Sushant. She asked Sushant to take three different medicines without prescription. Rhea protested as she said he was already taking medicines prescribed by Sushant's doctors. Rhea had an argument with Sushant regarding the same and then Sushant asked her to leave. Rhea then called her brother, Shovik Chakraborty, to take her home, Maneshinde told India Today.

Among other things, Maneshinde said while the family of Sushant had maintained that the late actor was not depressed, Rhea left Sushant's home on June 8 because Priyanka asked Sushant to change his medicines without

doctor's prescription. He claimed that Sushant's family had known about the late actor's health. "The family denied and made a false statement with the CBI, the SC and Mumbai Police that it was Rhea who was giving drugs/medicines to Sushant," Rhea's lawyer said.

In a related development, the CBI questioned four staffers of the Waterstone Resort where the actor stayed for one and a half to two months to undergo spiritual healing.

Meanwhile, Goa-based hotelier Gaurav Arya, whose name has figured in drug-related issues involving Sushant, Rhea and others, was on Monday questioned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for nine hours in an alleged money laundering case-linked to Sushant's death.

Arya, who had arrived in Mumbai on Sunday, appeared before the ED officials at 11 am. His questioning finished at 8 pm.

Accompanied by Delhi-based lawyer Manu Sharma, arrived in Mumbai from Goa. It may be recalled that on Friday, the ED officials had visited Hotel Tamarind at Goa's coastal village Anjuna. Seeing the hotel shut, they pasted the summons paper on the door of the hotel. Hotel Tamarind has been shut since March this year, because of the lockdown restrictions.

GDP contracts...

From Page 1
Electricity, gas, water supply and other utility services segment too shrank by 7 per cent in the first quarter of 2020-21, against 8.8 per cent growth a year ago.

Similarly, trade, hotel, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting declined 47 per cent in the first quarter from 3.5 per cent growth earlier.

Financial, real estate and professional services fell by 5.3 per cent in Q1 FY21 from 6 per cent growth in same period last fiscal. Public administration, defence and other services too saw a decline of 10.3 per cent during the quarter under review, from 7.7 per cent growth a year earlier.

"GDP at Constant (2011-12) Prices in Q1 of 2020-21 is estimated at Rs 26.90 lakh crore, as against Rs 35.35 lakh crore in Q1 of 2019-20, showing a contraction of 23.9 per cent as compared to 5.2 per cent growth in Q1 2019-20," the NSO said in a statement.

"With a view to contain spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, restrictions were imposed on the economic activities not deemed essential, as also on the movement of people from 25 March, 2020.

"Though the restrictions have been gradually lifted, there has been an impact on the economic activities as well as on the data collection mechanisms," it added.

It also said the timelines for filing statutory returns were extended by most regulatory bodies.

own party. But the falling out was brief and Mukherjee rejoined the Congress six years later.

With his vast knowledge of post-independence political history and governance, Mukherjee remained a key figure and active participant in shaping the course of India's development.

He served as member of the Congress Working Committee, the highest decision-making body of the party, for 23 years until becoming president in 2012 and was often called in to troubleshoot for the party.

arrived at during military and diplomatic engagements during the ongoing standoff in Eastern Ladakh and carried out provocative military movements to change the status quo. "Indian troops preempted this PLA activity on the southern bank of Pangong Tso lake, undertook measures to strengthen our positions and thwart Chinese intentions to unilaterally change facts on ground," it said.

The Indian Army is committed to maintaining peace and tranquility through dialogue but is also equally determined to protect its territorial integrity. A Brigade Commander level Flag Meeting is in progress at Chushul to resolve the issues," the statement said.

Top level officials also said

there were no physical skirmishes and as the Army was aware of the Chinese move, the troops established themselves in a move to block the Chinese advance.

The Pangong Tso is one of the four friction points on the LAC in eastern Ladakh.

Denying that its troops acted aggressively and crossed the LAC on August 29-30, China instead claimed India was the transgressor and asked it to withdraw its troops from the Chinese territory.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said, "Chinese border troops always strictly abide by the LAC. They never cross the line. Border troops on the two sides have been in close communication regarding the issues on the

ground".
Asked about any meeting going on to resolve the issue, he said, "What I said is that the two sides through diplomatic and military channels maintain close communication. As to specific meetings and talks, if there is anything we will release it in timely manner."

Meanwhile, the Western Theatre Command of the Chinese army said the Indian troops have violated the consensus reached at the multi-level talks between India and China and again crossed the LAC at the border on Monday and purposefully launched provocations. China strongly opposes the acts and urges India to immediately withdraw the troops that have illegally crossed the LAC.

from the actor and whether she was taking financial and career decisions for the deceased actor.

Schizophrenia.
A day after some WhatsApp messages exchanged between

Before Rhea left Sushant's flat on June 8, Sushant was communicating with his sister

'Citizen...

From Page 1
He remained a presence to contend even after he demitted the office of President, often making headlines as he attended book launches and delivered lectures. It was a life of many firsts and accomplishments for the West Bengal-born politician, famed for his encyclopaedic memory, razor-sharp intellect and deep insights into issues.

In 1982, he became India's youngest Finance Minister when he was just 47. In the years that followed, he served as India's Minister for External Affairs, Defence, Finance, and Commerce and was the first Indian President to have done so.

Mukherjee managed the rare distinction of serving three Prime Ministers as a Minister -- Indira Gandhi, P V Narasimha Rao and

Manmohan Singh- ever the Congress' trusted Man Friday as it evolved over the decades. Mukherjee was also India's only non-Prime minister who was the leader of the Lok Sabha for eight years. He was also the leader of the Rajya Sabha from 1980-85.

There were other landmarks in a remarkable political career, which started in 1969 as a Rajya Sabha member for the Bangla Congress which subsequently merged with the Congress.

When he became president in 2012, Mukherjee was heading 24 of 39 GOMs (Groups of Ministers). Between 2004 and 2012, he chaired 95 GOMs. Mukherjee was famous in political circles as a consensus builder.

He inspired trust among leaders across the political spectrum, an asset that proved handy at the time of his election as President.
In his book released after

demitting the highest office "The Coalition Years", Mukherjee acknowledged that he had hoped to get the post in May 2004 after then Congress president Sonia Gandhi herself declined the position.

"Finally she named Dr Manmohan Singh as her choice and he accepted. The prevalent expectation was that I would be the next choice for prime minister after Sonia Gandhi declined," Mukherjee wrote, admitting that he had initially refused to join the Cabinet of Manmohan Singh who had been his junior in the past but agreed when Sonia Gandhi insisted.

Mukherjee remained the UPA's chief crisis manager through its tumultuous years, starting 2004 until he became president on July 25, 2012.

Born on December 11, 1935 in the small village of Mirati in West Bengal's Birbhum district, Mukherjee received early lessons in life

from his freedom fighter parents. His father, a Congress leader, endured great financial hardship and was sent to jail several times for his role in the freedom struggle.

The roots were strong and never forgotten, taking him back often from the corridors of power to his village during Durga Puja, even when he became president. Photographs of Mukherjee, performing prayers in a traditional dhoti, made it to the public domain through his years as minister and president.

In 2015, he lost his wife Suvera Mukherjee. He is survived by his two sons Indrajit and Abhijit, and daughter Sharmistha, who was by his side during important events of his presidential years. Abhijit and Sharmistha are members of Congress now.

Mukherjee, who served in the Rajya Sabha for five terms and in the Lok Sabha twice and was one of India's longest-

serving Parliamentarians became a member of the Congress Parliamentary Party when the Bangla Congress merged with the Congress in 1971.

Though he occupied various positions in the Government, Mukherjee was elected to the Lok Sabha for the first time only in 2004 when he won from West Bengal's Jangipur constituency. He had lost the previous two Lok Sabha contests -- from Malda in 1977 and Bolpur in 1980.

Mukherjee, who rose to prominence as a Minister in Indira Gandhi's Cabinet, was known for his deep understanding of Indian politics, economic policies as well as strategic issues.

But after the assassination of Indira Gandhi, the man considered by many to be a candidate for the Prime Minister's post had fallen out of favour with Rajiv Gandhi. Expelled In 1986, he formed his

SC lets...

From Page 1
However, he also indicated he would file a review plea against the order.

Holding that Bhushan has attempted to "denigrate the reputation of the institution of administration of justice", a bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra ordered that the fine be deposited with the apex court registry by September 15, failing which he would undergo a simple imprisonment of three months and debarred from practising in the apex court for three years.

The lawyer told reporters he has the greatest respect for the institution of the Supreme Court and judiciary and that his tweets were not intended to disrespect the apex court.

In its 82-page verdict on the contempt case sentencing, the court said Bhushan's conduct "reflects adamance and ego" which has no place to exist in the system of administration of justice and noble profession, and "no remorse is shown for the harm done to the institution to which he belongs".

"At the same time, we cannot retaliate merely because the contemnor has made a statement that he is neither invoking the magnanimity or the mercy of this court and he is ready to submit to the penalty that can be lawfully be inflicted upon him for what the court has determined to be an

offence," it added.

The apex court said there is no doubt that while exercising the right of freedom of speech, fair criticism of system is welcome and judges cannot be hyper sensitive even when distortions and criticism overstep the limit.

"However, the same cannot be stretched to permit to make malicious and scandalous statement. The court has to act only in the case where the attack is beyond a permissible limit, the strong arm of the law strikes a blow on him who challenges the supremacy of the rule of law by fouling its source and stream," it said.

Pronounced by Justice Mishra, who is due to demit office on September 2, the judgement by the three-member bench does not contain the name of the author-judge.

"In our considered view, the act committed by the contemnor (Bhushan) is a very serious one. He has attempted to denigrate the reputation of the institution of administration of justice of which he himself is a part," said the bench, also comprising Justices B R Gavai and Krishna Murari.

"At the cost of repetition, we have to state that the faith of the citizens of the country in the institution of justice is the foundation for rule of law which is an essential factor in the democratic set up."

The apex court on August 14 held Bhushan guilty of criminal contempt for his two derogatory tweets against the

judiciary and maintained that they cannot be said to be a fair criticism of the functioning of the judiciary made in public interest.

In its verdict delivered on Monday, the bench noted that on several occasions it had not only given opportunity but also directly or indirectly persuaded Bhushan to express regret in the matter.

It said that Attorney General K K Venugopal had also suggested that "it was in the fitness of things that a contemnor expresses regret and withdraws the allegation made in the affidavit in reply, which request was not heeded to by the contemnor (Bhushan)."

"The contemnor not only gave wide publicity to the second statement submitted before this court on August 24, 2020 prior to the same being tendered to the court, but also gave various interviews with regard to sub judice matter, thereby further attempting to bring down the reputation of this court," the court said.

"If we do not take cognizance of such conduct it will give a wrong message to the lawyers and litigants throughout the country."

"However, by showing magnanimity, instead of imposing any severe punishment, we are sentencing the contemnor with a nominal fine of Re 1," it added.

It said that from the very beginning, the apex court was desirous of giving directly or

indirectly, Bhushan was persuaded to end this matter by tendering an apology and "save the grace of the institution as well as the individual, who is an officer of the court".

"However, for the reasons best known to him he has neither shown regret in spite of our persuasion or the advice of the Attorney General. Thus, we have to consider imposing an appropriate sentence upon him," it said.

"We are not afraid of sentencing the contemnor either with imprisonment or from debarring him from the practice." The bench said it cannot accede to the request made by senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan, who appeared for Bhushan, that the August 14 judgement should be withdrawn or recalled.

The bench also noted that Bhushan had tried to justify the averments made on the basis of the unprecedented January 12, 2018 press conference of the four most senior judges of the apex court.

"We hope it was the first and the last occasion that the judges have gone to press, and God gives wisdom to protect its dignity by internal mechanism, particularly, when allegations made, if any, publicly cannot be met by sufferer judges. It would cause suffering to them till eternity," it said.

"Truth can be the defence to the judges also, but they are bound by their judicial norms, ethics, and code of conduct," it said.

The court said the defence of Bhushan in the matter cannot be said to be either in public interest or bona fide.

At a press conference organised by CJAR (Campaign for Judicial Accountability & Reforms) and Swaraj Abhiyan, Bhushan said his tweets were not intended in any way to disrespect the Supreme Court or the judiciary as a whole, but were merely meant to express his anguish which he felt, "was a deviation from its sterling past record".

The issue was never about "me versus the Judges, much less about me versus the Supreme Court", he added.

"While I reserve the right to seek a review of the conviction and sentencing, by way of an appropriate legal remedy, I propose to submit myself to this order and will respectfully pay the fine, just as I would have submitted to any other lawful punishment," he said.

"I have had the greatest respect for the institution of the Supreme Court. I have always believed it to be the last bastion of hope, particularly for the weak and the oppressed who knock at its door for the protection of their rights, often against a powerful executive," he added.

"What is very heartening is that this case has become a watershed moment for freedom of speech and seems to have encouraged many people to stand up and speak out against the injustices in our society." PTI

डा० शकुन्तला मिश्रा राष्ट्रीय पुनर्वास विश्वविद्यालय
मोहान रोड, लखनऊ-226 017
वेबसाइट <http://dsmrु.up.nic.in>

निविदा संख्या :- 44 **ई० निविदा सूचना** 31 अगस्त, 2020

विश्वविद्यालय में ब्रेल पुस्तकों की छपाई हेतु (Heavy Duty and High Speed Braille Embosser) ब्रेल मशीन क्रय किये जाने हेतु अर्ह फर्मों से मुहक्कन्द निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।

बिड डोक्यूमेंट वेबसाइट <http://dsmrु.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध एवं <http://etender.up.nic.in> पर दिनांक-21/09/2020 को अपराह्न 02.00 बजे तक अपलोड किये जा सकते हैं। इसकी तकनीकी बिड दिनांक-22/09/2020 को अपराह्न 02.00 बजे खोली जायेगी। निविदा प्रपत्र की शर्तें एवं अन्य विवरण विश्वविद्यालय की वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध है।

कुलसचिव

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

E-TENDER NOTICE

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

(A) 1. **48/GM/SM(WC-5)/2019-20, Name of Work:- Strengthening of Road (Providing and Laying D.B.M. and B.C. work on Internal roads in 5% Abadi Sector-121) Noida**
Cost = Rs. 52.09 Lacs

Which can be uploaded by date 15.09.2020 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 16.09.2020 at 11.00 AM.

(B) 1. **17/GM/(R)SM(WC-5)/2019-20, Name of Work:- Boundary wall/Barbed Wire Fencing (C/o RCC Boundary wall between Sector-53 and Village Gijhore) Noida**
Cost = Rs. 44.96 Lacs

Which can be uploaded by date 08.09.2020 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 09.09.2020 at 11.00 AM.

General Manager
Noida

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH,
WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER
MAHANADI PROJECT: WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT RAIPUR (CHHATTISGARH)
e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
eProcurement Portal: <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>
(FIRST CALL)

System Tender No. 67265 / NIT No.: 05/SAC/20-21
Raipur Dated: 28.08.2020

Online Tenders are invited for the following works up to 18.09.2020 at 17.30 Hour

Name of work: Remodelling, Cement Concrete Lining and Construction of 12 Nos. Structures of Dy. No. 8 from R.D. 0 m to 5185 m of Mandhar Branch Canal.

Probable Amount of Contract- Rs. 391.25 Lakhs

The details can be viewed and downloaded online directly from the Government of Chhattisgarh Integrated e-Procurement Portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) from Date 04.09.2020, at 17.31 Hours. (IST) onwards.

NOTE- All eligible/interested contractors/bidders are mandated to get enrolled on the Integrated e-procurement portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) and get approval on specific vendor class from PWD under Centralized Contractor/Supplier Registration in order to download the tender documents and participate in the subsequent bidding process.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Water Management Division No. 1, Raipur
For, Chief Engineer, Mahanadi Project
Raipur (C.G.)

R.O No:- 83365/5
R.O Dated:- 29/08/2020

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Ananga Kumar Gouda S/o Shri Peetabas Gouda R/o SF-2, 9/2/29, Sector-9, Judge Colony, Vaishali, Ghaziabad, U.P-201010, have changed my name A.K. Gouda to Ananga Kumar Gouda for all future purposes.

PD(8731)A

Public notice

My client Kailash Chandra Agarwal S/o Late S.L. Agarwal R/o 2344, First Floor Hudson Line, Delhi-110009, has severed all relations with his son Tarun Agarwal, daughter-in-law Swati Agarwal and their child due to disobedience and he debarred them from his entire immovable/movable properties. Anybody dealing with them, will do so at own risks.

HARVINDER SINGH (ADVOCATE)

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is informed to general public that Mrs. Meena Jain W/o Late Sh. Rajeev Jain R/o H. No. F-59, 3rd, Floor, Kamla Nagar, Delhi-110007, has disowned and disinherited her real son Varun Jain S/o Late Sh. Rajeev Jain from all their movable/immovable properties and severed all their relations both legal & social due to his disrespectful behavior. Any person dealing with him, they shall be doing so at their own risk, and me and my family will not be responsible for the same.

Advocate : Sanjeev Dwivedi
48, Gajanan Block, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-54

Peace and Harmony Committee finds FB complicit in Delhi riots

Committee to issue summons for FB officials

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Assembly's Peace and Harmony Committee has found Facebook complicit in Delhi riots that took place this year. The Committee has decid-

ed to issue summons for the appearance of Facebook officials before the committee on the basis of the aforesaid material and the scathing deposition.

The witnesses submitted incriminating material on record before the committee as well as made scathing depositions against Facebook Inc, Prima facie reflecting the complicity of the Social Media giant of aggravating Delhi riots. The deposition and the

evidence tendered to the Committee reveals that there have been major lapses by Facebook India in applying their community standards.

Witness Awesh Tiwari, a Senior Journalist based in Chhattisgarh who lodged FIR against Ankh das, has claimed that a riot like situation was planned to be executed before Delhi assembly elections. He also asserted that Facebook deliberately reduces the visi-

bility and reach of content which aims at highlighting the unity and amity between the communities. The witnesses have alleged strong complicity on the part of Facebook in aggravation of Delhi Riots.

The committee took the decision on the premise of incriminatory material produced on record by the witnesses as well as their scathing depositions before the Committee, and thus deciding



to summon the Facebook officials in its next meeting in order to examine them on oath and determine on their culpability.

Further, the committee has also urged the need of an independent investigation leading to the filing of a supplementary charge sheet in the ongoing cases related to Delhi riots on the basis of supportive and corroborative material during the course of purported investiga-

tion. On Monday, three witnesses were examined by the committee namely Awesh Tiwari: Journalist from Chhattisgarh who had lodged FIR against Ankh Das, Kunal Purohit, independent journalist and researcher, Subhash Gatade, an independent journalist.

The committee had earlier called upon other expert witnesses who deposed before the committee and contributed some valuable insights.

GST COUNCIL MEETING

Sisodia talks with States' FMs shortfall in economy due to Covid-19 outbreak

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday reiterated his stand against the options given by the Government of India during a meeting with the Finance Ministers of West Bengal, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and Telangana in reference to the GST council meeting convened by the Finance Minister of India on August 27.

Sisodia discussed viable options with the Finance Ministers of other states regarding the shortfall in the economy due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Ministry of Finance, Government of India circulated GST compensation options through an arbitrary division of shortfall arising out of GST implementation and shortfall arising out on account of COVID pandemic.

While Finance Ministry estimated the total shortfall for the year 2020-21 is expected to be around Rs.2.3 lakh crore, out of which Rs.96,477 crore is on account of implementation of GST and the remaining on account of COVID-19, the options given by the Union government were the shortfall arising out of GST implementation (calculated at Rs.97,000 crores approximately) will be borrowed by States through the issue of debt under a Special Window coordinated by the Ministry of Finance.

Moreover, the interest on the borrowing under the Special Window will be paid from the Cess as and when it arises until the end of the transition period.

According to the Union Finance Ministry, "After the transition period, principal and interest will also be paid from the proceeds of the Cess, by extending the Cess beyond the transition period for such period as may be required. The State will not be required to service the debt or to repay it from any other source".

Borrowing under the Special Window will not be



treated as a debt of the State for any norms which may be prescribed by the Finance Commission. It said.

However in option -II, the entire shortfall of Rs.2,35,000 crores (including the COVID-impact portion) may be borrowed by States through the issue of market debt. The GOI will issue an OM committing to the repayment of the principal on such debt from Cess.

In the first meeting of GST, it was further discussed that the interest shall be paid by the States from their resources and to elaborate on the options provided by the Government of India and to arrive at a considered opinion on this complicated issue, Finance Ministers of West Bengal, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Telangana, and Delhi had a detailed discussion through Video Conference this afternoon and unanimously decided to reject both the options given by the Government of India since these options are against the letter and spirit of the GST Compensation Act and the Constitution (101st Amendment) Act

However, these states resolved that the only legally tenable option is the entire estimated shortfall of Rs.2,35,000 crores in the compensation cess fund may be borrowed by the Government of India through RBI/any other suitable mechanism.

According to Delhi government, Finance Ministers agreed to take up the above as the only viable option before the Nation and the same will be

brought before the GST Council

The repayment of the principal and the interest liability should start w.e.f. 2022 and should be entirely serviced out of the receipt from the cess for which the GST Council should extend the period of levy of cess beyond 5 years or till the time it is required to repay the debt.

This will obviate the need for borrowing by individual States, which has complications in terms of the borrowing capacities of the State, and also differential interest rates for different States especially in Option No.2. This will also be a clean mechanism as the entire borrowing has to be routed through the "Goods and Services Tax Compensation Fund as mandated by Section 10 of the Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Act, 2017."

"GST Council to authorize the Government of India to borrow the said amount and to make suitable amendments in the Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Act, 2017 to extend the levy and collection of Cess under the Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Act, 2017 for the purpose of meeting the repayment liabilities arising out of the borrowing by the Government of India, and Under this option, the Central Government will also not be required to make the relaxations in the borrowing limits of the State and or provide for special borrowing permissions in respect of States/Union Territories", it said.

Physical training session for Govt teachers begins

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday inaugurated a five days physical training programme for physical education teachers of the Delhi Government schools.

Around 1300 teachers will be trained by the ELMS sports foundation through the online sessions in a span of three weeks. Addressing the teachers,

Sisodia said, "In the last few years, you all have played an important role in shaping our students. During these COVID-19 times, your role has become even more crucial because our students are confined to their rooms. This is hampering the physical growth of all the students."

Taking the conversation forward, Pullela Gopichand said, "My coach, Hamid Hussain sir did not teach me much about

the sport but he taught me how to love the sport." He said, "I do not know how much we apply Physics and Chemistry in our daily lives but a strong foundation in Physical Education will make a difference."

The deputy Chief Minister further said, "Physical education is something which will be needed 24X7 throughout our life. Physical and Mental development are interlinked. Today, when our children are not able

to step out, it has become the need of the hour to introduce the concept of Physical Literacy. It will help in making every individual cognizant of their body and engage in the physical activities for their overall well-being."

"We need to multiply this spirit of sports. All the teachers will have to utilize their time, resources, and opportunity in an optimum manner. If every physical education

teacher joins this program with a curiosity to learn something new, they will be able to contribute a lot," he said.

While emphasizing the importance of unorganized sports, Gopichand said, "Adaptation, learning to abide by the rules, you making others your leader and following them. These are all developed while playing an unstructured sport. It helps in teaching several life skills."

30% non-Delhiites Covid-19 patients in Capital hospitals

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Thirty per cent non-resident Covid patients are being treated in Delhi as per the data shared by the State (Delhi) Health Department, Delhi administration. The number of other States' Covid-19 patients have been increased in Government and private hospitals both.

According to a database having total number of patients between July 26 to August 28, the admission percentage of outside patients in Delhi has increased drastically from 19.5 percent to 30.8 percent.

It is important to mention here that the percentage of outside patients fluctuated from 19 percent on July 27 th, 40.6 percent on August 10th to nearly 31 percent till August 28th.

It implies that the average percentage of outside corona infected patients in Delhi is 30 percent.

The Covid -19 hospital data of corona patients admitted in city hospitals further illustrated that patients from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Rajasthan also admitted for the treatment.

Instance - in Delhi's BLK hospital total 98 patients have been admitted while 47 belong to Delhi, 51 patients are from outside.

In Apollo, out of total 158 patients, 111 patients who get Corona treatment are from outside while only 47 from Delhi.



In Max, Saket out of total 175 patients, 95 are non-residents of Delhi while in Patparganj branch - 73 patients are from Delhi however 61 are from outside.

In Sir Ganga Ram hospital out of total 100 corona patients, only 44 are from Delhi and 66 patients outsiders.

If one analyse the overall data of almost one month span from July 26 to August 28th, the total admission of Corona patients have been increasing.

As per government data, on July 26, 241 Covid patients were admitted in city hospitals, on July 27, the number of corona patients was 273.

In percentage wise, the outside admission in Delhi government was 32.3 percent on August 8, 34.1 percent on August 21 with total number of patients admitted 340, 28.8 percent on August 25 with 458 covid registration.

Further, if death data of span from August 3 till August 29th, 293 people outside have been died against 397 of Delhi. Earlier, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had invited suggestions from Delhiites on whether corona patients outside Delhi should get treatment in private hospitals and Delhi government hospitals or not.

113 new corona cases reported in G'gram, toll 133

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

The district health department has detected 113 fresh Covid-19 cases on Monday, taking the total number of cases to 11,917. Of this, 10,790 people have recovered. The Covid-19 toll has reached 133 in the district.

"Gurugram now has 994 active cases, including 858 in-home isolation. Remaining 136 patients are admitted in private, government and Covid care centers in the district while 84 patients were recovered on Monday," Gurugram Civil Surgeon Dr. Virender Yadav said.

The health department said out of 133 deaths 93 died due to comorbidities and the remaining 40 without comorbidities.

Meanwhile the district recovery rate from Covid-19 has increased to 91 percent while the death rate has come down to 1.15 according to data shared by the district administration.

"Covid testing has been increased in the district to prevent the spread of corona infection. Also an intensive testing campaign is being conducted in Gurugram to control the corona infection. Under this campaign, area wise camps are being set up in 22 Urban Primary Health Centre

(UPHC) areas of the district, where anyone can get their test without any charge," Yadav said.

The health official also informed that a rate of Rs 1,600 has been set for RT-PCR Test from the earlier Rs 2,400 and Rs 8,500 for the plasma. So far, 40 persons had come forward to donate plasma in it, out of which 19 persons were donated plasma.

These produced 80 units of plasma, of which 34 units of plasma have been given to the needy.

Gurugram has 21 such containment zones where infection rate was high. "We have initiated door to door screening in these zones to identify suspects. We are using the rapid antigen kit to test suspects," he said.

He further informed that another initiative has been adopted by the district administration in view of the facility of Plasma Donor.

"The administration has contacted 4,000 recovered patients and so far, over 60 have confirmed donations. Plasma Donor is being provided with a pick and drop facility. Under this procedure antibodies are tested in the body of the person who donates the plasma. If antibodies have formed in a person's body, the plasma is taken only after it is confirmed," said Yadav.

DELHI RIOTS CASE ED arrests suspended AAP leader Tahir Hussain under PMLA

Gets six-day custody from special court

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested suspended Aam Admi Party (AAP) Councillor Tahir Hussain under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and has secured a six-day custodial remand from a special court here.

Hussain is being probed by the ED in connection with his role in money laundering and funding of anti-CAA protests and allegedly organizing riots in North-East Delhi during February, 2020.

The ED probe is based on multiple FIRs registered by Crime Branch and Dayalpur Police Station of Delhi Police under IPC Sections relating to murder, attempt to murder, extortion and criminal conspiracy which are scheduled offences under PMLA.

"Investigation conducted under PMLA have revealed

that companies owned/controlled by Hussain and his relatives transferred huge amounts of money to dubious entities / entry operators which were returned by them in cash. The cash received by Hussain through entry operators was used to fuel the anti-CAA protests and Delhi riots. Investigations also reveal involvement of Hussain and his companies in illegal laundering of money in the past too," the ED said in a statement.

Searches were conducted by the ED at the residential and business premises of Hussain and his relatives / associates in Delhi and Noida/Greater Noida on June 23 this year. These search operations had led to the recovery of incriminating documents and evidence including fake invoices which were used for the alleged fraudulent transfer of money, the agency said.

Over the past few days, the accused Hussain was interrogated by ED officers in Tihar Jail while under arrest in connection with the Delhi Police case. Subsequently, he was arrested under PMLA for his role in money laundering.

After getting remand, Hussain was brought to the ED office for custodial interrogation, it added.

Pay salaries within a week or resign: AAP leader to MCDs

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aam Admi Party senior leader and MCD in-charge Durgesh Pathak on Monday warned the Bharatiya Janata Party ruled MCDs to pay the pending salaries of their employees within a week or to resign immediately.

The AAP leader criticised the BJP saying that the all three BJP-ruled MCDs failed to pay even salaries to its staff even after its combined budget is around Rs 18,000 crores. He said that if 20% of this Rs 18,000 crore budget

was used properly, the situation would have been different.

"Today a nurse from the Hindu Rao hospital wrote a letter to the North Corporation mayor demanding her salary and a group of doctors from the Kasturba Gandhi Hospital wrote to the BJP ruled MCD and said that if they do not get their salary, then they will give mass resignations," he said.

Nearly 8000 MCD teachers have threatened to go on strike if they do not get their salaries, Pathak said, adding that doctors have not received salary for three

months and have written to Home Minister Amit Shah.

"Safai karamcharis, security guards and other officials of the Civic Centre and even the people who do small works under the wards have also not received their dues," Pathak alleged.

Vikas Goel, Leader of Opposition in north MCD said that being local councilors, we receive lot of complaints from the people regarding various issues but when we take up the matter with officials they always complain that they have not received their salaries, Goel added.

Teen shot at over parking brawl

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 18-year-old boy was shot twice in his leg after he asked another man to park his car properly in South Delhi's Chattarpur area. The incident occurred on Sunday night.

The victim has been identified as Prabh Preet Singh, a resident of Chattarpur. Police said that he is out of danger and his parameters are stable.

According to Atul Kumar Thakur, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South district, on August 30, a police control room (PCR) call regarding gunshot injuries to a person

was received following which Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV) was dispatched to the spot.

"On reaching the spot, the police team found that the injured had been shifted to AIIMS. He had received two bullet injuries in his right leg" said the DCP.

"The injured youth told the police that he alongwith his friends Raman and Sujal were eating snacks near the election office in Chattarpur when Prabh asked the accused persons to park their car properly. On hearing this, the accused persons got angry and one of them fired upon him," said the

DCP. "One of the accused identified as Chetan was known to the complainant and after firing, both the accused persons had run away. A case under section 307/34 of Indian Penal Code and 27 Arms Act has been registered," said the DCP.

"During investigation, the car used in the crime has been recovered and one of the accused Chetan has been arrested. A manhunt has been initiated to nab the other accused identified as Manoj (40), who has been also found involved in three other cases," said a senior police official.

69 fresh cases of vector-borne diseases reported in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Sixty nine fresh cases of vector-borne diseases were reported in the National Capital in the last one week, taking the total number of people infected with dengue, malaria and chikungunya to 276 this year till August 29.

According to the municipal report 24 fresh cases of dengue, 38 cases of malaria and seven cases of chikungunya reported in Delhi.

The total number of dengue cases has reached 105 this year while 128 people have been infected with malaria till 29 August. The number for chikungunya is 43.

"Mosquito-breeding has been reported in at least 44259 households and 35103 legal notices have been issued this year. The dengue breeding checkers have checked 1266665 houses and also issued challans to 1512 numbers of office and residential premises," according to the latest report by the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), which compiles infections data after taking inputs from three other corporations: south Delhi, East Delhi and North Delhi municipal corporations.

"Malaria can occur throughout the year but peaks during rain and post rainy



season. The on and off rains have made these areas waterlogged, which becomes the suitable breeding ground for mosquitoes. We have to be very careful about our surroundings

and keep it dry and clean so that mosquitoes don't breed there. We have to use mosquito nets/repellent to keep mosquitoes away. Not only malaria but also dengue is quite com-

mon in this season," said Dr Ramani Ranjan, Consultant Pediatrician and Neonatologist at Motherhood Hospital.

"Fogging and area sprays must be properly timed to coincide with the time of peak of adult mosquito activity, because resting mosquitoes are often found in areas that are difficult for the insecticide to reach. These diseases may require prolonged hospital stay and in the times of COVID-19, it also increases our health burden," he said.

The SDMC and Northern Railways on Friday flagged off a mosquito terminator train from New Delhi Railway Station to insecticide from a

power sprayer mounted on a truck placed over the train to substantially mitigate the threat of vector borne diseases including Chikungunya and Dengue in 50 to 60 meter area on both sides of railway tracks.

This year, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in his address on 'Independence Day' announced that the government will launch a mega dengue prevention awareness campaign from next month to combat vector borne diseases. Kejriwal had launched a similar campaign last year which garnered massive support from the public and several other well-known personalities across the country.

Centre to rush teams to hotspot States amid Covid spike

UP, J'khand, C'garh, Odisha report surge in cases



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Even as Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are already contributing around 43 per cent of the total Covid-19 caseload in India, four populous States Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha have started giving nightmares to the Government with a sudden surge in the number of infections and some of them even reporting high mortality.

On Monday, an alarmed Union Health Ministry decided to deploy high-level Central teams comprising of an epidemiologist and a public health expert to these States to help the authorities there in strengthening containment, surveillance, testing

and efficient clinical management mechanisms.

Of these four States, Uttar Pradesh has the maximum number of active cases pegged at 54,666, followed by Odisha (27,219), Chhattisgarh (13,520) and Jharkhand which has 11,577 active cases.

In terms of total/cumulative cases till date, Uttar Pradesh has 2,25,632, Odisha (1,00,934), Jharkhand (38,435) and Chhattisgarh has 30,092 cases. The most number of deaths are reported in Uttar Pradesh (3,423) while Odisha, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are reporting 482, 410 and 269 deaths cumulatively.

A senior official from the Ministry said that each of the multi-sectoral teams will also guide the States in effectively

Int'l passenger flights suspended till Sept 30

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The ongoing suspension of scheduled international passenger flights has been extended till September 30. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday announced its decision to extend the suspension of international flight operations. This ban will not apply to international all-cargo and international scheduled flights approved by the DGCA.

The circular, dated August 31, stated that travel and visa restrictions have been further extended. But the DGCA stated that it may allow international scheduled flights on



selected routes on case-to-case-basis.

DGCA had first issued a circular suspending both international and domestic flights on March 26 when the nationwide lockdown was announced in order to curtail the spread of coronavirus pandemic. After

managing the challenges related to timely diagnosis and follow up.

The ministry also said that seven states have contributed to 70 per cent of the new cases in the last 24 hours. Of these, Maharashtra has contributed the maximum caseload amounting to almost 21 per cent, followed by

Karnataka 11.27 per cent and Tamil Nadu with 8.27 per cent.

Of the total number of cases, around 43 per cent were recorded in just three states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, it said.

Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka also account for about 50 per cent of the deaths added in the last

two months of a complete ban on flights, India resumed its flight operations on May 25. While domestic travel has been allowed, international flights are operational only under Vande Bharat Mission to bring back Indians stranded overseas.

24 hours due to COVID-19, with Maharashtra leading with 30.48 per cent, the ministry said.

The coronavirus tally in India crossed 36 lakh on Monday with 78,512 new cases, while the number of recoveries surged to 27,74,801, pushing the recovery rate to 76.62 per cent, according to the Health Ministry data. The

India's Covid count will be under control by Diwali: Harsh Vardhan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Unfazed by the continuous rise in the Covid-19 cases, particularly in the last few days when the infection crossed 60,000 mark daily, Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan on Monday expressed confidence that the country's coronavirus count will be "under control" by Diwali (which falls in mid November) this year. Vardhan also expressed hope about having a vaccine against Covid-19 by the year-end.

Inaugurating the 'Nation First' webinar series, organised by the Anathkumar Foundation, he pointed out that the country was much ahead in tackling the pandemic.

"The Covid-19 will significantly come under control by the Deepavali this year. The leaders and common



people effectively worked together to fight the pandemic," the Minister said.

"But, the virus has taught us a certain lesson, it has taught us there has to be a new normal and we need to be more diligent about, more cautious about our lifestyle..." Dr Vardhan added.

"We are not lagging behind anyone else in the whole world in our efforts to contribute towards the vaccine against COVID... In India we have about 7-8 vaccine candidates, three of them

in the clinical trial phases and rest in the pre-clinical trials and by the end of this year we hope to be able to get a vaccine against COVID," he said.

The Minister said there was only one lab in February which has now increased to 1,583 nationwide, and out of this more than 1,000 are government labs.

The country is conducting about 1 million tests per day which is way ahead of the target, he said.

He observed that compared to earlier there is no scarcity of PPE kits, ventilators, and N 95 masks now.

"The scarcity of PPE kits, ventilators, and N 95 masks is no more now. Every day, five lakh PPE kits are produced in the country while 10 manufacturers are producing N95 masks. 25 producers are manufacturing ventilators," the Minister added.

death toll climbed to 64,469 with 971 more people succumbing to the infection in 24 hours.

The daily testing capacity has been scaled up to more than 10 lakh in August 2020 while the cumulative tests

have crossed 4.23 crore with 8,46,278 tests conducted in the past 24 hours, said the official.

Suspend approvals, licences of Facebook, Whatsapp: Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday demanded from the Centre the suspension of pending approvals and licences of Facebook and Whatsapp and announced that it will raise the matter in the Parliament's upcoming Monsoon Session.

The party claimed that in a span of just two weeks, three separate articles in credible international media publications have revealed how Facebook and WhatsApp have colluded with the ruling BJP to tarnish India's democracy and tear India's social harmony.

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Choudhary said the issue is an example of Digital Imperialism' by the social media.

"There was a time when the Britishers were an imperialist power, now we are going to witness digital imperialism where social media will run amok in our country," Choudhary said at AICC Press briefing. He was joined by AICC social media experts Praveen Chakraborty who head the party Data Department and Rohan Gupta Chairman of Social Media, AICC.

He said he will be raising the issue in the floor of the House in the upcoming monsoon session of the Parliament.

"But there cannot be a discussion if the Government doesn't allow it, and if their intention is to save the Facebook

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Choudhary said the issue is an example of digital imperialism'

then they will do so", he added.

"This is the tip of the iceberg, Facebook India executives and their top bosses in the US are hand in glove," he alleged.

Sharpening its attack against the social media giant Facebook and its popular messaging service Whatsapp, the Congress has already demanded that a Joint Parliamentary Committee investigation should be ordered immediately and also a criminal investigation into the affairs of Facebook India and the people named should be carried out.

The party demanded that all pending approvals and licenses for Facebook and WhatsApp be put on hold until the investigations are completed and suspension of Facebook India's leadership team with immediate effect until the conclusion of the investigations.

It also said that an inquiry by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology into the activities

Rahul accuses Govt of ruining informal sector of economy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi on Monday accused the Modi Government of destroying the informal sector of the economy and charged the BJP-led NDA Government with making attempts to break this sector.

Citing "demonetisation, erratic GST and the improper pandemic related lockdown" as three examples of government's attempt to destroy the informal sector that provides 90 per cent jobs to people, Rahul called upon the entire country to unite and fight against this.

"The BJP Government has attacked the informal structure. There is an attempt to turn you into a slave. The government has been attacking the informal sector over the past six years. I am giving you



three massive examples right now- Demonetisation, wrong GST and Lockdown," Rahul said in a new video series on the economy.

"Don't think the lockdown was unplanned. Don't think it was done at the last minute. The aim of these three decisions was to destroy our informal sector," he alleged.

He said the informal sector, which comprises the poor, farmers and small traders, has a lot of money which the Government cannot touch. "They want to break this sector and extort this money from them," he charged.

Rahul, who has earlier done a series of talk shows

with leading economists, said the effects of this attack on the informal sector will be seen soon. "You are the ones who run this country, You take us forward and there is a conspiracy against you. You are being cheated and there is an attempt to turn you into slaves. We have to understand this attack and the entire country has to unite to fight against this," he said in the 4-minute video "Let's talk economy".

The former Congress president said in 2008, the world was hit by an economic storm and it affected the entire world, the US, Japan, China and everywhere. He said in the US banks fell, corporations fell and companies shut down and banks also fell in Europe, but India was unaffected and the UPA Government was in power at the time.

of all Heads of Public Policy teams of foreign technology companies operating in India and establishing a code of conduct should be held.

Adhir Ranjan alleged that in the IT Standing Committee Chairman Shashi Tharoor had said that Facebook officials will

be summoned, but BJP members have tried best to stall it since they are in majority in the committee.

Adhir Ranjan Choudhary said, "Skeletons from Facebook India's cupboard are tumbling out faster than our monsoon rains."

"The article reveals how despite questions raised by other employees in Facebook India and the company's claims of neutrality, Ankhil Das, Head of Facebook India's public policy team and her leadership team were arrogant and blatant in their biases," he added.

Naidu takes stock of preparedness ahead of Monsoon Session

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the Monsoon Session, Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Monday took stock of the preparedness against the backdrop of Covid-19.

Naidu said the MPs should ensure testing is done in their own interest. The Parliamentarians will have to use face masks for 12 hours and also whenever they speak in the House.

While a Covid awareness video clip will be shared to MPs, the DRDO will provide a range of sanitisation services in the Parliament.

Regarding quarantine requirements in different States on return of members after attending the Session, Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla assured Naidu that the matter will be taken up with States/UTs to enable travel of MPs without any difficulty. This issue was discussed in the context of Government employees on duty not being required to undergo quarantine in the States/UTs.

Bhalla suggested that members will have to undergo COVID test within 72 hours of the commencement of the Session and those coming from different parts of the country will have to wait for the results before undertaking travel. "Those getting positive on



arrival in Delhi should quarantine themselves and those testing positive during the session should not attend the House," Bhalla suggested.

Responding to the query of the Chairman on the consequences of members wearing masks for the full duration of the session each day, Dr. Balaram Bhargava, DG, Indian Council of Medical Research clarified that wearing masks continuously for 12 hours is absolutely safe. He further suggested that MPs may speak while wearing masks to minimize the spread of virus.

Dr. Bhargava said that though the seating arrangements in Rajya Sabha chamber and galleries have been made complying with physical distancing norms, the MPs should speak seated to avoid dispersal

of aerosols. Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan suggested that movement of MPs in the chambers of both the Houses may be made unidirectional to avoid face to face interactions.

Naidu directed the Secretariat officials to ensure only minimum movement of people in the Parliament House premises in consultation with the Lok Sabha Secretariat. He also suggested that entry into the Central Hall of Parliament should be limited to members of Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha and that too, only when the respective House is in session.

Secretary, Defence Research and Chairman DRDO Dr. Satish Reddy gave a detailed account of the sanitization services to be provided by DRDO.

NOTICE

APPLICATION INVITED FOR SELECTION OF SOCIAL WORKER MEMBERS OF JUVENILE JUSTICE BOARDS AND CHAIRPERSON & MEMBERS OF CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEES.

As per provision of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016, Social Welfare & Social Education Department, Government of Tripura, applications are invited from the eligible candidates for selection of Social Worker Members of Juvenile Justice Board for South Tripura District, Sepahijala District, West Tripura District, Khowai District and Dhalai District and Chairperson & Members of Child Welfare Committee for South Tripura District, Sepahijala District, West Tripura District and Khowai District of Tripura.

Applications should be submitted directly in this directorate in person or by post or through e-mail at dsw_eagt@yahoo.com, addressed to the Member-Secretary, Selection Committee (Director, Social Welfare and Social Education Department), Directorate of Social Welfare & Social Education, Ujan Abhoynagar, Agartala, Tripura, Pin - 799005 in the prescribed proforma which is available in the website of the Social Welfare and Social Education Department www.socialwelfare.tripura.gov.in. The detailed eligibility criteria and terms & conditions of service for the above positions are also given in the cited website.

Application will be received from 04-09-2020 to 18-09-2020, during office hours of all working days. Incomplete & defective application and without passport size color photograph, self-attested copies of relevant necessary documents shall not be accepted for selection. Applicant may be called for personal interaction, if necessary.

Interested persons may visit www.wcd.nic.in or www.socialwelfare.tripura.gov.in for details about the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016.

Sd/-
Member Secretary,
Selection Committee
(Director, Social Welfare & Social Education Department) Tripura.

15% of region around Mussoorie highly susceptible to landslide

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Popularly known as The Queen of the Hills, Mussoorie in Uttarakhand is facing environmental hazards with a survey pointing out that about 15 per cent of the region around the popular tourist hotspot is highly susceptible to landslides.

Like most hill townships, Mussoorie has witnessed several landslides, resulting from an increased spate of developmental activities, prompting the scientists to map the landslide susceptibility of the area.

Scientists from Dehradun-based Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) - an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology - carried out the study in Mussoorie township and its surroundings covering 84 square km in the Lesser Himalayas.

The study could help initiate a large scale landslide hazard, risk, and vulnerability assessment of the hilly townships in different parts of India, the Ministry of Science and Technology said on Monday.

The scientists found that dominant part of the area falling under very high and high landslide susceptible zone lies in several settlement areas

and popular spots like Kemptay Falls. These are covered by highly fractured Krol limestone exhibiting slope more than 60 degrees.

The Landslide Susceptibility Mapping (LSM) published in the Journal of Earth System Science also showed that about 29 per cent of the area falls in the moderate landslide susceptible zone and 56 per cent falls in low to very low landslide susceptible zone.

The researchers from the WIHG carried out the study using Geographic Information System (GIS) and high-resolution satellite imageries.

According to the researchers, various possible causative factors of landslides in the study area include lithology, landuse-landcover, slope, aspect, curvature, elevation, road-cut drainage, and lineament.

The WIHG team obtained Landslide Occurrence Favourability Score (LOFS) for a particular class of the causal factor of landslide and subsequently calculated the weight of each factor of landslide to finally generate Landslide Susceptible Index (LSI) in GIS platform.

This has been reclassified into five zones using natural break criteria.

'Not warranted': Moily on SC punishing Prashant Bhushan

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The Supreme Court on Monday Punishing activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan was unwarranted, former Union Law Minister M Veerappa Moily said and felt that the case against him could have been referred to the Bar Council of India.

The senior Congress leader said that Attorney General K K Venugopal and many jurists and lawyers had urged the Supreme Court not to punish him.

Moily expressed the view that judges should not take upon themselves to punish a person who makes allegations against them.

"It looks as if it was not warranted," he said on the Supreme Court imposing a token fine of one rupee against Bhushan as punishment in the contempt case against him.

"It's not in keeping with the question of natural justice. It's not in keeping with the high standards of judiciary," he said. Bhushan, who has been convicted for two tweets against the judiciary, has to deposit the fine with the Supreme Court registry by September 15, said a bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra.

Mallya asked to appear before SC on Oct 5 in contempt case; review plea dismissed

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday (August 31) directed fugitive businessman Vijay Mallya to be present in person before it on October 5 at 2 pm, directing the Union Ministry of Home Affairs to ensure his presence in the courtroom on that day. The top court also dismissed his plea seeking review of the

2017 verdict which held him guilty of contempt for transferring USD 40 million to his children in violation of court orders.

Mallya, an accused in a bank loan default case of over ₹9,000 crore involving his defunct Kingfisher Airlines, is in the United Kingdom.

Agencies

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

E-TENDER 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://tender.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 07.09.2020 upto 5.00 PM shall be opened/downloaded on dated 08.09.2020 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



The last Indra Cong's man who lived life king size

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

A consensus builder, trouble shooter and a consummate politician, former President of India Pranab Mukherjee, 85, the real engine of many a Congress Government, particularly the last two UPA dispensations, was perhaps the last of the old India Congressmen who lived a life larger than life.

In his 51-year-old political career, Mukherjee held several of key portfolios including the finance, commerce, foreign and defence before attaining the highest Constitutional post of president of India (2012-2017) when he used his vast political experience to do the fine balancing as the regimes changed hands from Manmohan Singh to Narendra Modi.

It is no less a compliment to Mukherjee who was a great admirer of Indira Gandhi that he was described by Modi as his father figure in 2017 when

the former demitted office of President of India.

The political and administrative skills of diminutive politician from Bengal, however, missed his ultimate ambition of becoming Prime Minister twice - first in 1984 after the assassination of Indira Gandhi and thereafter 2004 when Congress returned to power with the unexpected defeat of an 'aspiring' Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

In the first instance, he was seen as the senior most to succeed late Prime Minister but young Rajiv Gandhi stepped in and in 2004 his junior in politics Manmohan Singh got the spotlight with Congress President favouring the latter - a rather docile politician - who remained Prime Minister for a decade.

Interestingly, Mukherjee was Finance Minister in his first stint in 1982 under Indira and had signed the letter appointing Singh as Governor of Reserve Bank of India in the

same year!

After becoming Prime Minister Singh had acknowledged the pre-eminence and "better qualifications of Mukherjee" to be the PM saying "but he also knew that I have no choice in the matter."

The son of freedom fighters, Mukherjee was Born in Mirati, a village in West Bengal's Birbhum district and made his entry into the Parliament in 1969, as a member of the Rajya Sabha

A parliamentarian for 37 years, Mukherjee was known as a consensus-builder and played deft role in cementing coalitions Governments before 2014 were built on coalitions.

Mukherjee joined the Congress in the 1960s during the tenure of then Prime Minister Indira who he had always admired as his mentor and whose photo always adorned his office and home. He was often heard referring Indira's farsightedness when-

ever he would feel Government(s) are run with a sloppy hand, even if they are of his own party. He did not like many ministers receiving Yoga Guru at the Delhi airport to court him to the Congress during UPA-2 and reportedly said "this would not happen if it were Indira."

In 1986, he fell out with the Congress leadership and started his own political party, but returned home two years later to rise in the ranks.

The political rivalry between him as Finance Minister and then home Minister P Chidambaram made news when the latter was accused of bugging former's office in Finance Ministry in 2011.

A workaholic minister with an encyclopedic memory, the indispensability of the late leader could be gauged by the fact that in the UPA-1 and UPA-2 he headed as many as 102 Groups of Minister (GOMs) and committees

(GOM). As he looked after these GOMs and Committees, he also shouldered responsibilities of leader of the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha.

As a President, Mukherjee rejected 18 Bills that were sent to him for assent. His Presidency also saw him being the President dismissing the highest number of 30 mercy petitions of those facing death sentence, including that of Afzal Guru, Yakub Menon and Ajmal Kasab.

Mukherjee has also had a seat at the table of various international organisations, with memberships in the IMF, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. He also presided over the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation on various occasions. A voracious reader, he also authored several books during his lifetime. In 2019, he was awarded India's highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, by President Ram Nath

Kovind. The hectic schedule of Mukherjee — an out and out politician — would never deter him from a good discussion on politics even a late night hour. Soft spoken but lost his temper easily if conversation was not of his level.

Mukherjee remained quintessentially a Bengali till his last days and never lost his touch with his village in West Bengal where he would go for "Kali Puja" in his traditional attire.

Less than a Week before he went to ventilator he asked his son Abhijit to bring jackfruit from his home. "I went to our village, Mirati (in West Bengal's Birbhum district)...It was a ripe 25kg fruit. Gave to Baba and he was so happy", said his son. Mukherjee is survived by his son and daughter Sharmistha Mukherjee, also a politician.

Mukherjee lived his life full stretch and died full of years, honours and full of laurels.



Tributes pour in for Bharat Ratna

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tributes poured in for Bharat Ratna and former President Pranab Mukherjee after the news of his demise came in. Leaders across the political spectrum, celebrities and countless others paid their tribute to the leader on twitter.

Pranab Mukherjee made Rashtrapati Bhavan accessible to common citizens, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday as he paid his tribute to the former President -- the "scholar par excellence and a towering statesman".

"India grieves the passing away of Bharat Ratna Shri Pranab Mukherjee. He has left an indelible mark on the development trajectory of our nation. A scholar par excellence, a towering statesman, he was admired across the political spectrum and by all sections of society," tweeted PM Modi.

"Hon. Doctorate in Political Science by University of Jordan on 11 October 2015

"Hon. Doctorate by Al-Quds University of Ramallah, Palestine on 13 October 2015

"Hon. Doctorate by Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel on 15 October 2015

"I was new to Delhi in 2014. From Day 1, I was blessed to have the guidance, support and blessings of Shri Pranab Mukherjee. I will always cherish my interactions with him. Condolences to his family, friends, admirers and supporters across India. Om Shanti," he tweeted.

Remembering the former Congress leader, President Ram Nath Kovind said the Bharat Ratna awardee combined tradition and modernity. "Sad to hear that former President Shri Pranab Mukherjee is no more. His demise is passing of an era. A colossus in public life, he served Mother India with the spirit of a sage. The nation mourns losing one of its worthiest sons. Condolences to

his family, friends and all citizens", President Kovind tweeted.

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu condoled the death, saying the country has lost a statesman. "Deeply saddened by the passing away of former President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. The country has lost an elder statesman in his death. He rose from humble beginnings to occupy the country's highest constitutional position through hard work, discipline and dedication," Naidu said.

Congress' interim chief Sonia Gandhi wrote to Sharmistha Mukherjee on the passing away of her father Pranab Mukherjee, saying it was "hard to imagine how we can do without his wisdom, experience, sage advice and deep understanding on so many subjects".

"His life over the past 50 years mirrored 50 years of the history of India, for he played a crucial role both in shaping the course of events as well as actively participating in them whether as a cabinet minister, parliamentarian or president of India. I personally have so many warm memories of my working with him. Pranab had now been released from his suffering. May his soul rest in peace," she said.

Home Minister Amit Shah condoled the death, saying that his demise has left a huge void in the Indian polity. "Deeply anguished on the passing away of former President of India, Bharat Ratna Shri Pranab Mukherjee ji. He was a vastly experienced leader who served the nation with utmost devotion. Pranab da's distinguished career is a matter of great pride for the entire country," the Home Minister tweeted.

Remembering Mukherjee, veteran BJP leader LK Advani said: "To me personally, he was more than a colleague and we

have shared valuable moments both inside and outside our public lives, which extended to our families. Memories of various shared lunches will always be special in my heart".

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi also expressed his grief at the passing of Pranab Mukherjee. Gandhi said in a tweet, "I join the country in paying homage to him. My deepest condolences to the bereaved family and friends".

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh expressed grief over Mukherjee's demise. In a tweet, Singh said, "His demise is a personal loss. He had tremendous knowledge of India's history, diplomacy, public policy and also defence." Expressing grief, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said, "I am deeply saddened by the death of former President of India, Bharat Ratna Pranab Mukherjee. His death is a great loss for the country. Pranab da was a rich and good friend of the great personality." He always gave priority to the country, rising above party politics. In this hour of grief, I express my deepest condolences to his family members. God bless his departed soul, he added in his tweet.

Remembering Mukherjee, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said Pranab Mukherjee kept national interest supreme, didn't believe in political untouchability.

The Congress remembered Mukherjee for his "integrity and compassion". "We are deeply pained by the passing of Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Former President of India and one of the tallest leaders of the Congress," the party said in a tweet. "Shri Pranab Mukherjee will always be remembered for his integrity & compassion. Our prayers are with his family, followers and the nation." In a tribute to her father,

Sharmistha Mukherjee has posted an emotional tweet, quoting his favourite poet Rabindranath Tagore. She said, "Baba...I feel blessed to have been born as your daughter".

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee expressed deep sorrow over the death of former president and said with his demise "an era has come to an end". "It is with deep sorrow I write this. Bharat Ratna Pranab Mukherjee has left us. An era has ended. For decades he was a father figure. From my first win as MP, to being my senior Cabinet colleague, to his becoming President while I was CM," Banerjee said in a statement released from the state secretariat.

Odisha Chief Minister and Biju Janata Dal President Naveen Patnaik said Mukherjee will always be remembered for his capability to bring about a consensus on national issues. "Deeply saddened to know about the demise of former President Pranab Mukherjee," he said in a tweet. "Pranab Da was a prolific reader, powerful orator, scholar & had an unparalleled experience in governance. He will always be remembered for his exceptional ability to forge consensus on national issues."

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, his deputy Sushil Kumar Modi and a host of prominent leaders of the state mourned the death of former president. Expressing his grief over Mukherjee's death, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in his condolence message called the former president "Ajatshatru of politics" who was equally respected by both ruling and opposition.

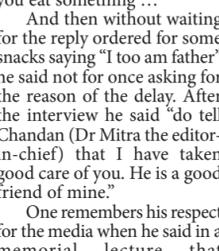
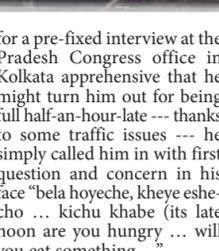
Senior Congress leaders Anand Sharma, Shashi Tharoor, Amarinder Singh (Punjab), Yogi Adityanath (Uttar Pradesh), Hemant Soren (Jharkhand), Biplob Kumar Deb (Tripura), Shivraj Singh

Chouhan (Madhya Pradesh), N Biren Singh (Manipur), Arvind Kejriwal (Delhi), Manohar Lal (Haryana), Vijay Rupani (Gujarat) and Sarbananda Sonowal (Assam) also expressed condolences.

Union Minister and Lok Janshakti Party patron Ram Vilas Paswan paid fond tributes to former president remembering him as a stalwart with deep grasp of Indian polity who guided politicians across the ideological spectrum.

Union Ministers Narendra Singh Tomar, Prakash Javadekar, Piyush Goyal, Ravi Shankar Prasad, Arjun Munda, Mansukh Mandaviya, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Nirmala Sitharaman, Pralhad Joshi, Sadananda Gowda, Dharmendra Pradhan, Ramesh Pokhriyal, Ashwini Choubey, Giriraj Singh, Jitendra Singh, Smriti Irani, Dr Harsh Vardhan, Dharmendra Pradhan, Thawarchand Gehlot, and Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi also expressed their shock at and said India lost a great leader with Mukherjee's demise.

Former Prime Minister and Janata Dal (Secular) leader HD Deve Gowda remembered his long association with Mukherjee.



POLITICAL PROFILE

13TH PRESIDENT OF INDIA

In Office: July 25, 2012 — July 25, 2017

MINISTER OF FINANCE

In Office: January 24, 2009 — July 24, 2012

In Office: January 5, 1982 — December 31, 1984

MINISTER OF DEFENCE

In Office: May 22, 2004 — October 26, 2006

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

In Office: October 24, 2006 — May 22, 2009

In Office: February 10, 1995 — May 16, 1996

LEADER OF THE LOK SABHA

In Office: May 22, 2004 — June 26, 2012

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

In Office: June 24, 1991 — May 15, 1996

LEADER OF THE RAJYA SABHA

In Office: January 1980 — December 31, 1984

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, LOK SABHA

In Office: May 10, 2004 — June 26, 2012

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, RAJYA SABHA

In Office: January 1, 1969 — February 1, 2002

HONOURS

NATIONAL HONOURS

*IND Padma Vibhushan BAR.png

Padma Vibhushan, India's second highest civilian award in 2008

*Bharat Ratna Ribbon.svg

Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award in 2019

FOREIGN HONOURS

*Bangladesh Liberation War Honour (Bangladesh Muktiyudho Sanmanona), (5 March 2013; Bangladesh)

*Cote d'Ivoire Ordre national GC ribbon.svg

Grand Cross of National Order of the

Ivory Coast (June 2016; Ivory Coast)

*Order of Makarios III (Cyprus) - ribbon bar.gif

Grand Collar of the Order of Makarios III (28 April 2017; Cyprus)

ACADEMIC HONOURS

*Hon. Doctor of Letters degree by the University of Wolverhampton, UK in 2011

*Hon. D.Litt by Assam University in March 2012

*Hon. D.Litt. by Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belgaum, Karnataka in 2012

*Hon. LL.D. by President of Bangladesh and Chancellor Md. Zillur Rahman at University of Dhaka on 4 March 2013

*DCL (Doctor of Civil Law) (honoris causa) by University of Mauritius on 13 March 2013

*Hon. Doctorate by Istanbul University on 5 October 2013

*Honorary Doctorate from the University of Calcutta in on 28 November 2014

*Hon. Doctorate in Political Science by University of Jordan on 11 October 2015

*Hon. Doctorate by Al-Quds University of Ramallah, Palestine on 13 October 2015

*Hon. Doctorate by Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel on 15 October 2015

OTHER RECOGNITION

*Best Finance Minister in World (1984), according to survey of Euromoney magazine

*Finance Minister of Year for Asia (2010), by Emerging Markets, daily newspaper of record for World Bank and IMF

*Finance Minister of Year (2010), by The Banker

*Honorary Citizenship of Abidjan, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on 15 June 2016



BEST PM INDIA NEVER HAD: PRANAB PEERS

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Had I been with him at that time I would never have let him meddle in Sri Lankan politics which finally led to his untimely death" at the hands of the LTTE. This is what departed former President of India Pranab Mukherjee had told one of his closest associates Sukhendu Shekhar Roy currently a Trinamool Congress Member of Parliament.

Reminiscing Mukherjee's memories Roy also said, "it was unfortunate that he could not get the opportunity of serving India as its Prime Minister...ruling further "when we talk of Bangladesh's Nobel Laureate Md Younis and his micro-banking policy we forget the story of Pranab da's contribution towards carrying the banks to the villagers' doorsteps after the nationalization of banks...he went totally unsung there."

He also remembered how

at the instance of then Censor Board Chairperson Sharmila Tagore he had watched his last Hindi film Rangde Basanti alongside the three services chief before giving his clearance overruling certain issues. "He was never unduly dogmatic and respected the truth that was speakable."

"True," another former colleague and Congress MP Pradipt Bhattacharjee said, "like Jyoti Basu, Pranab da was perhaps the, another best Prime Minister India never had."

Even as condolences poured in as did an assortment of memories Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said she had lost a "father figure" in the former President. Soon after his demise she wrote "It is with deep sorrow I write this. Bharat Ratna Pranab Mukherjee has left us. An era has ended. For decades he was a father figure. From my first win as MP, to being my senior

Cabinet colleague, to his becoming President while I was CM."

She added, "So many memories. A visit to Delhi without Pranab da is unimaginable. He is a legend in all subjects from politics to economics. Will be forever grateful. Shall miss him immensely. My condolences to Abhijit and Sharmistha."

From Miriti in Birbhum district a close friend (refusing to share his name) said "never will see him again coming to perform Durga Puja every year... never will see him coming back to Miriti... I saw his father who was a Congress leader and a freedom fighter... I saw him throughout his career... a perfect modest gentleman and a perfect villager in whom the heart of India resided."

Atypical Bengali Bhadrolok who spoke his flawless English the Bengali Mukherjee's par-



liamentary life spanned 37 years, starting from 1969. At 34, he was handpicked by Indira Gandhi who brought a socialist element in the Congress. Though Mukherjee tended to retain the socialist streak he hardly converted it into a dogma.

A school teacher and a college lecturer in Howrah he went on to become the President of India in 2012. Earlier he held all major ministries - finance, defense, exter-

nal affairs and commerce - besides serving as deputy chairman of the Planning Commission. With his profound knowledge of history, economics society, polity and not least the scriptures he could silence the Opposition most often than not.

He admitted of having learnt his art from the likes of Chitta Basu, Hiren Mukherjee, Madhu Limaye, Indrajit Gupta, Atal Behari Vajpayee, Pilo Modi, LK Advani and others.

Picked by Ms Gandhi in the 1970s and dropped by Rajiv Gandhi in 1985 he formed his own party with Dr Sisir Bose the grand nephew of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Later he rejoined the Congress and the rest is history. His strong memory earned him the appellation of "computer" from none other than Indira Gandhi.

Cut to his residence at Dhakuria at South Kolkata. A veteran colleague Deboprosad

Mukherjee said how "a galaxy of leaders and who's who would visit him when he was in Kolkata. Even Bangladesh Prime Minister SK Hasina was his close friend and took his advice on a number of issues we have seen then Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee spending time discussing important issues... and not least present Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee...He continued to do good to others without bragging about that... one day he told me how even Indira Gandhi once told him that 'you ask anything and nothing comes out of Pranab's mouth save some smoke'."

Amal Mukherjee a friend and a former Principal of the Presidency College reminisced how "he was a man of word and very much freedom-loving. So much so that in his bid to become self-reliant he had stopped taking money from his

father while he was doing his masters... and to keep going he gave private tuitions and one of his earliest students Subhra became his wife."

Talking about his magnanimity former CPI(M) MP Samik Lahiri said, "nothing from big to small would evade his eyes. I was a first time MP in Parliament and in 2004 and he walked up to me on the very first day... I was surprised. Later whenever I went up to him for any work he would call me at his residence in the night and listened to me patiently... Once during a flight to Delhi I was reading a book and hand not noticed him. But he saw me and walked up to me. Looking at the book he said 'even I am reading the same book! He was a generation that will never come back'."

True perhaps. The generation that cared for all and sundry around. When your correspondent once visited him

for a pre-fixed interview at the Pradesh Congress office in Kolkata apprehensive that he might turn him out for being full half-an-hour-late --- thanks to some traffic issues --- he simply called him in with first question and concern in his face "bela hoyeche, keye eshecho... kichu khabe (its late noon are you hungry... will you eat something...)"

And then without waiting for the reply ordered for some snacks saying "I too am father" he said not for once asking for the reason of the delay. After the interview he said "do tell Chandan (Dr Mitra the editor-in-chief) that I have taken good care of you. He is a good friend of mine."

One remembers his respect for the media when he said in a memorial lecture that "Democracy without a free Press is like a blank piece of paper." True! With Pranab Mukherjee a generation has gone.

Face-off again

It's going to be a long haul with periodic flare-ups as China is not going to back down from strategic heights in Ladakh



Its Foreign Ministry statement following a fresh flare-up at Pangong-Tso, where the People's Liberation Army (PLA) once again tried to cross the border, is indication enough that China is never going to back down. And it is going to provoke and exasperate India till it extracts something in return. It said its troops "never cross the Line of Actual Control (LAC)", a familiar trope to justify its border claims — considering it is unmarked on the ground — and appropriate geological features to redefine it time and again according to its convenience. In its book, salami-slicing is a perfect geo-political art where it plays on perceptual differences of what is implied and gets its way by heaving down militarily. Is the latest attempt to change the status quo at Pangong Tso the result of India quietly sending warships in the South China Sea post-Galwan, along with those of the US, to flex some muscle? So far, China had stared India down but now that there is a robustness of response from our side, the tension is only expected to aggravate. India should be prepared for the long haul. And though a Siachenisation at the heights would mean a waste of man and resources on both sides, China seems to be preparing for a stakeout this winter and beyond. For all the diplomacy around eastern Ladakh, it is just a diversionary tactic as the Chinese will not forfeit what they have gained in Pangong Lake and Depsang areas. That's because this geographical wedge between Gilgit-Baltistan in the west (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir), where China is heavily invested in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and Aksai Chin in the east, is an irritant to its regional supremacy, strategically and economically. And it wants an unhindered run of the highway from Xinjiang to Tibet, 179 km of which is under Indian shadow. So far, its contiguous hold on Central Asia, Pakistan and beyond was a low-cost, undemanding exercise, playing as it did on interpreting its version of the LAC on the ground. But now that we have ramped up our border infrastructure, China is extremely uncomfortable about the proximity of the Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) Road to sensitive areas and strategic highways to the north of the Karakoram Pass. And as Galwan has shown, our troops are more than capable in high altitude warfare. So China simply won't give up the spurs it has now because it doesn't want to compromise its edge in the Karakoram. Already, it has browbeaten India at the talks table by calling for a buffer zone, which means our forces cannot patrol up to the points they used to because of the Chinese insistence of a no man's land. This would allow it to build resources on its side unmonitored and reverse any disengagement move at a short notice. This clause also makes Indian vigilance difficult besides stretching our alertness at all times. China is hoping that it will be able to renegotiate the status quo on Pangong Tso by wearing out our troops and patience, particularly during a long, hard winter. We should be wary of the fact that the PLA, which has been pitching tents, building roads and marking territories since 2013 and which takes orders from Chinese President Xi Jinping himself, may lie low but not go silent.

India, which has now empowered troops to counteract any infringement on the LAC, has to focus on a multi-pronged approach to hold off the dragon's territorial and economic imperialism. It can challenge China in the Indian Ocean region, get more active in the Quad initiative with US and Japan and use its international goodwill as a nation that respects "rule-based order" to build a case against China's "wolf warrior" tactics. And it must now confront the boundary question, insist on marking the LAC. For years of denial and yielding to the Chinese template of working around the boundary dispute have only left us with trade dependencies and a deficit. Today, it is eastern Ladakh but if the territorial push in Bhutan is any indication, China may very well push its claim lines in Arunachal Pradesh now. Fortunately, we have begun ramping up the naval strategy around the Malacca Straits, which happens to be China's trade and strategic corridor. India has deployed its vessels to keep a check on any activity of the Chinese Navy and is planning to maintain hawkish patrols through autonomous underwater vessels, unmanned systems and sensors. Diplomatically, India should be transactional in its approach to China and lay down in no uncertain terms that the latter's avarice for global domination would not come at the cost of the second largest Asian entity tilting towards the US. In fact, we have to be overt about our strategic partnership with the US. At the same time, we must use every multi-national forum, alliance and bilateral ties to make enough noise about the asymmetric relationship with China. And reclaim our neighbourhood which China has debt-trapped into subservience.

Retail wars

With Reliance buying out Kishore Biyani, how will the retail market in India play out and compete with online majors?



Say what you will about Mukesh Ambani, one can certainly not accuse India's richest man of chilling out during the lockdown. While millions of Indians have been contemplating their lives, Mr Ambani has been on an overdrive. First, he got a host of investors onto his Jio telecommunications platform, and now having secured his group's future in that industry, he is pivoting to retail. By picking up the assets of India's largest home-grown retail chain, Future Group, Reliance Industries is doubling down on its already ambitious retail play. What will this mean for retail wars in the future? Whether consumers will benefit as more of them choose to buy products online is something that remains to be seen. However, it is the end of a dream that Kishore Biyani had set himself. Saddled with debt and ill-advised expansions over the years, the man, whom business magazines called the "Rajah of Retail", will use much of the money he gets to pay off his loans.

The Future Group might have brought in the big discount sales on national holidays but unable to pivot to the increasingly online world of consumers, it was swamped by the likes of Amazon, Flipkart (now Walmart) and other start-ups such as BigBasket and Grofers. The question remains if Reliance Industries will be able to make that shift as well or will it need to shop around a little more. Much has slipped between the lip and the cup when it comes to Reliance and its operations, as ground realities and the customer experience seem disconnected from the grand ambition of the promoters and management. The integrated telecommunications and services play that is being aimed for might work on paper but will the notoriously fickle Indian consumer bite? With incomes devastated by the pandemic, the consumer might ditch brand loyalty for the cheapest prices. That said, by buying a ready group with an established front-end network of stores, often in high-footfall areas and a clockwork back-end logistics chain, Reliance Retail has certainly not done itself any disservice. As for Kishore Biyani, unfortunately he had to sell his kingdom, but he did create a tremendous network and several high-profile brands and left his mark in Indian corporate history.

Congress split inevitable

The demand for collective leadership is an indictment of the opaque micro-management that has distanced the leadership from the party and public opinion on a range of issues



SANDHYA JAIN

A split in the Congress party seems inevitable. Despite formal genuflections before the Rae Bareilly MP, Sonia Gandhi is now only an interim president and neither offspring is acceptable as future president. Indeed, the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting of August 24, 2020, called to address an explosive letter by 23 top leaders, could not quash the dissent. The shareholders announced that the Congress will not be allowed to run like a family firm.

Far from urging the Wayanad MP to return to the helm, the seven-hour debate declared temporary status quo over interim president. The Gandhi family exposed its reluctance to relinquish control of the party but could not deflect the charge that it has lost appeal with voters. The process of electing a non-Gandhi president may trigger a split as the Gandhis will not work with, or under, a non-protégé.

The situation is vastly different from May 1999 when Sharad Pawar, PA Sangma and Tariq Anwar questioned Sonia Gandhi's foreign origins and her plan to stake claim to the Prime Minister's office without discussion within the party. Although the trio quit, their contention that a foreigner would not be able to head a coalition was vindicated when Gandhi selected Manmohan Singh in 2004. For a decade, she wielded enormous power over the Government via her unelected National Advisory Council, but Narendra Modi's victory in 2014 and 2019 convinced even die-hard loyalists that the present leadership is a political liability. Rahul Gandhi's flight to Wayanad, Kerala, and Priyanka Gandhi's failure to make a dent in Uttar Pradesh exposed the futility of banking on non-charismatic heirs. Even Rahul Gandhi's re-election from Wayanad seems difficult in 2024.

Having spoken up because of the Congress's descent to electoral irrelevance, the veterans will not tolerate the imposition of effete leaders (read Manmohan Singh or AK Antony). They are demanding elections to the CWC and the party's parliamentary board. There is anger that the party is run by a tiny coterie comprising the Gandhi family, general secretary KC Venugopal and national spokesperson Randeep Surjewala. The unilateral appointments of Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury (leader, Lok Sabha), Ajay Maken (general secretary, Rajasthan in-charge), Rajya Sabha nomination for Mallikarjun Kharge and Hardik Patel as working president of the Gujarat unit shocked the rank and file.

Former spokesperson Sanjay Jha, whose analyses of the rot in the party brought the crisis into the open, tweeted that under Art 18 (H) of the party constitution, "only a freshly elected AICC can elect the next Congress President. The CWC has already discharged its responsibilities by appointing an Interim Congress President last year."



As the veterans reiterated their concerns in the media, Sonia Gandhi opted for confrontation. On August 27, former Union Minister Jairam Ramesh was appointed chief whip (Rajya Sabha), Gaurav Gogoi deputy leader and Ravneet Singh Bittu whip (Lok Sabha), sidelining seniors like Shashi Tharoor and Manish Tewari. The inclusion of Ahmad Patel and KC Venugopal in the 10-member committee appointed to decide the party's stand on key issues in Parliament was a snub to veterans like Ghulam Nabi Azad and Anand Sharma. Now the battle is joined and there is no going back for either side.

Sonia Gandhi must have been enraged by the demand for unity with Opposition parties headed by those who had left the Congress in the past. This obviously alludes to a certain strongman whom some believe has choreographed the current revolt. If true, this suggests that the epistle was planned with leaders outside Congress, with the aim of dislodging the once unchallengeable Gandhis.

At the CWC, the Gandhis siblings antagonised the seniors instead of discussing the issues raised by them. The Wayanad MP said the letter was sent to Sonia Gandhi at a time when she was unwell and the "party is fighting the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan". This false emotionalism reflected lack of polit-

SONIA GANDHI MUST HAVE BEEN ENRAGED BY THE DEMAND FOR UNITY WITH OPPOSITION PARTIES HEADED BY THOSE WHO HAD LEFT THE CONGRESS IN THE PAST. THIS OBVIOUSLY ALLUDES TO A CERTAIN STRONGMAN WHOM SOME BELIEVE HAS CHOREOGRAPHED THE CURRENT REVOLT

ical gravitas. Moreover, the BJP had seized Madhya Pradesh in March itself and Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot had saved his government by August 7, when the letter was written.

Worse, Rahul Gandhi accused the seniors of penning the missive in collusion with the ruling BJP. Taken aback, Ghulam Nabi Azad, leader of Opposition, Rajya Sabha, offered to resign his post if he was "in any manner doing this to help the BJP or doing it at its behest", only to be rebuked by Priyanka Vadra. "What you are saying is opposite of what you have written," she countered. Later, former Union minister and senior advocate Kapil Sibal said he had defended the party in the Rajasthan High Court and helped it bring down the BJP government in Manipur, and yet "we are colluding with the BJP". The sharp and articulate Sibal has become the face of the dissidents.

Currently, the strongest support for Gandhi leadership comes from Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh (who needs them against rival Partap Singh Bajwa), former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (who has never fought an election in his life), and former Union minister AK Antony (who cannot bring Kerala back to the Congress kitty). Madhya Pradesh stalwart Kamal Nath has been silent; he could emerge as the rebels' choice of leader.

It is undeniable that all the dissidents owe their political

ascend to Gandhi family patronage: former Union ministers Ghulam Nabi Azad, Anand Sharma, Kapil Sibal, Manish Tewari, Shashi Tharoor, Mukul Wasnik, Renuka Chaudhary, Milind Deora and Jitin Prasad; former Chief Ministers Bhupinder Singh Hooda (Haryana), Rajender Kaur Bhattal (Punjab), M Veerappa Moily (Karnataka), and Prithviraj Chavan (Maharashtra); PJ Kurian (former deputy chairman, Rajya Sabha), MP Vivek Tankha; former PCC chiefs Raj Babbar (UP), Arvinder Singh Lovely (Delhi) and Kaul Singh Thakur (Himachal); current Bihar campaign chief Akhilesh Prasad Singh, former Haryana Speaker Kuldeep Sharma; former Delhi Speaker Yoganand Shastri and former MP Sandeep Dixit.

Few of them have an assured electoral base. But the issues they have raised are a political audit of the leadership and suggest wider consultations within and outside the Congress. The high command is being held responsible for the party's downfall in State after State. The demand for collective leadership is an indictment of the opaque micro-management that has distanced the leadership from the party and public opinion on a range of issues. The quest for an "effective" leader suggests the compulsory retirement of the reigning dynasty — a bloodless coup.

(The author is a senior journalist. Views are personal.)

SOUNDBITE

Ticket distribution is an extremely secret operation within the party. Even I do not know from which constituency I would be fielded.



RJD leader —Tej Pratap Yadav

Let the games begin! Be it virtual games or the sector of toys in the self-reliant India campaign, all have to play an important role, and therein lies an opportunity.



Prime Minister —Narendra Modi

By participating in the panel's proceedings, we will be lending credence to the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019. We are fighting this Act, there is no question of participation.



NC leader —Omar Abdullah

I am mad to be going into the wild. I am just a reel hero, he (Bear Grylls) is a real hero. This whole adventure, I'll remember for the rest of my life.



Actor —Akshay Kumar

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dangerous choice

Sir — The spike in COVID-19 cases has not only shrunk the space for non-COVID patients but also forced many people to postpone their elective and semi-emergency operations. Doctors have said that elective surgeries like hernia, asymptomatic kidney stones, appendicitis, gall bladder and prostate can be postponed by up to three months while semi-emergency cases cannot be postponed and patients would be deferring them at their own peril. However, hundreds of operations have been postponed as patients are scared of undergoing surgeries or taking treatments in any hospital where Coronavirus patients are housed. This has resulted in severe health complications for many of them. Giving an example of how dangerous deferring a much-needed operation can be, Dr Jagadish Hiremath, CEO, Ace Suhas Hospital, revealed that a patient who had postponed a gall bladder surgery had to undergo an emergency procedure for sepsis after the gall bladder ruptured. An elective surgery in this particular case turned into a com-

Protecting the Andamanese a priority

It is sad to learn that 12 members of the Great Andamanese tribe tested positive for COVID-19 in the coral-reef-fringed archipelago. This is one of the five tribes categorised as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG), the others being the Jarawas, Onges and Sentinelese of Negrito descent and Shompens of Mongoloid origins.

All these tribes are numerically so small that they are regarded as endangered indigenous peoples. Altogether their population does not reach a four-digit number. The Great Andamanese tribe has an incredibly low population, 59 to be precise. Its clans usually reside in Strait Island but travel to Port Blair to eke out a living by doing odd jobs.

Those infected among them may have contracted the virus from coming in contact with the non-tribal population in the capital city. The Union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands has seen over 3,000 Coronavirus cases among non-tribals. The possibility of someone with the infection visiting the Strait Island undetected by the authorities has not been ruled out as a route of the virus.

The populations of these tribes have dwindled over the decades and centuries due to the diseases and development brought in by the settlers. The scenic archipelago has been the home of the indigenous tribes for 40,000 to 60,000 years. No wonder they are an anthro-



pologist's delight. Understanding their genetic make-up, details of physical features, culture, customs, languages, social structure, taboos and dietary habits would be enriching. But far more important than their anthropological value is their inalienable right independent of everything else to survive and continue their evolutionary journey in the inexorable march of time. The aborigines are particularly susceptible to infectious diseases like the Coronavirus. As such they need special protection during this pandemic and providing it is the duty of the Government.

G.David Milton
Maruthanad, Tamil Nadu

licated emergency procedure to save the patient. Hence, there is a major need to address the concerns of patients as they are afraid of undergoing

surgery/treatments. The Government needs to provide or create more COVID-19 patient-free hospitals or set up dedicated wings in existing ones so that

other patients can take treatment and undergo surgeries and not put their lives at risk.

KV Seetharamaiah
Hassan, Karnataka

Oh God, Nirmala!

Sir — The shocking statement made by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman that God is responsible for the Coronavirus and the collapse of the Indian economy is most irresponsible. It is a great insult to the intelligence of the entire country. The people, through their hard work and contribution towards the progress and development of the country, made India a \$2 trillion economy during the UPA rule from 2005 to 2014, under the leadership of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

The economic problems that the country is facing now are due to the inefficiency and incompetence of the Central Government. Growth was sputtering even before the pandemic broke out and there has been no big bang reform so to speak. It is high time the Finance Minister stops trying to cover her Government's failures in all sectors, including COVID-19 management.

Bhagwan Thadani
Mumbai

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Storm expected amid a crisis

In view of the seriousness of the pandemic, both the Government and the Opposition must ensure smooth functioning of the Parliament



KALYANI SHANKAR

The forthcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament is indeed historic, as since 1952, the Parliament has never deviated from its traditions. This brief session from September 14 to October 1, will see many firsts, including staggered seating, different timings for both the Houses, no breaks during the session and social distancing. Prior to this, the Budget Session was curtailed on March 23 due to the pandemic. Despite the fact that the outbreak is still continuing, the Parliament was required to meet to fulfil the Constitutional stipulations. For the first time, the two Houses will meet at different times and for just four hours. The Members of Parliament (MPs) have to comply with social distancing norms and will be spread out throughout the House, chambers and even lobbies. They will be tested for COVID-19. As far as possible it will be a paperless session with just 18 sittings. Members will not be allowed to return to their constituencies during the session.

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu and the Speaker Om Birla had arrived at these decisions after several meetings. It is indeed a big challenge for both of them to run the House amid all these restrictions. The two presiding officers have gone out of their way to make preparations for the upcoming session. After several meetings, they have decided to stick to traditions as far as possible and overcome difficulties for the hybrid (a mix of digital and physical) session. They have even gone for dress rehearsals to ensure safe and smooth functioning of the Parliament.

Going by the indications from the Opposition and the Treasury Benches, the session is likely to be a stormy one. There is a proposal to curtail the Question Hour in view of the short duration of the daily sessions. The members may find it difficult to run to the Well of the House or stage a walkout. There are 11 Ordinances, 20 Bills, which need the Parliament's nod.

The Opposition is sharpening its knives to attack Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the handling of the contagion. The pandemic continues unabated despite several measures undertaken by both the Centre and the States and the issue needs to be addressed.

The second is the economy. It was already in the doldrums before the pandemic began. Now it has worsened further due to the Corona lockdowns. The job losses are too many and millions of migrant labourers are yet to come back to the cities to take up the work they did before the lockdowns began. Experts say it might take two years for the economy to come back to normal, despite the Government announcing relief measures.

The third is the India-China stand-off at the Galwan Valley. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has demanded transparency on the China front. The Congress plans to demand a statement from the Prime Minister on the issue. And to make matters worse for the Modi dispensation, on August 29 night, Chinese troops "carried out provocative military movements to change the status quo" near Pangong Tso. Fortunately they were blocked by Indian soldiers, but this shows that military and diplomatic talks are not making any headway. The Chinese are not backing down.

The fourth is the Kashmir issue. Even after a year, normalcy is yet to return to the State. Development work has been hit due to the lockdown. The new Governor Manoj Sinha, the second in a year, has the task of reviving political discourse, conducting Assembly polls and delimitation. This amid a demand for *status quo ante* from local and national parties in the State.

The fifth is the latest controversy on Facebook's alleged nexus with the BJP. The standing committee on Information Technology, headed by Congress leader Dr Shashi Tharoor, wants to summon the Facebook chief executive while the BJP is objecting to it. The sixth is the sale of 32 Public Sector Undertakings and handing over of parts of Railways operations and airports to private parties.

The BJP, too, is getting ready to face the onslaught of the Opposition and is firm in its resolve to counter it. The important question is whether the weak Opposition plans to have a joint floor strategy. So far, no meetings have been held. The Congress itself is facing internal turmoil after 23 senior Congress leaders wrote a letter to the party president stressing on the need to reform the party. As long as the Opposition is divided, it is advantage Modi Government.

For decades now, Parliament has seen noisy scenes and walkouts. In view of the seriousness of the pandemic, both the Treasury Benches and the Opposition have a responsibility to ensure smooth functioning of the Parliament. While the Government should reach out to the Opposition, the latter should play a constructive role.

All this is easier said than done. This is indeed an opportunity for members of all parties to show that they are truly the representatives of the people by putting aside all differences. The million-dollar question is will they?

(The writer is a senior journalist)

(MAYOR MURIEL BOWSER) CLEAN UP WASHINGTON DC OR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL DO IT FOR YOU. ENOUGH!!!
—US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

POINT COUNTERPOINT



THE PRESIDENT'S JOB IS TO LOWER THE TEMPERATURE AND TRUMP'S FAILURE TO CALL ON HIS SUPPORTERS TO STOP SEEKING CONFLICT SHOWS HOW WEAK HE IS.
—US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE JOE BIDEN

Bite the BIC bullet

The ailments afflicting PSBs won't go away so long as majority ownership and control remain with the Government. There is a dire need to unshackle them and grant autonomy to the management



UTTAM GUPTA

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recommended to the Centre a reduction in shareholding of the latter in six top Public Sector Banks (PSBs), namely the State Bank of India (SBI), Punjab National Bank (PNB), Bank of Baroda (BOB), Canara Bank, Union Bank of India (UBI) and Bank of India (BOI) to 51 per cent in the next 12-18 months. At a recent meeting with the Ministry of Finance (MOF), the RBI had argued for reduction in stake to 26 per cent. But, observing that this might not be possible in the near term for now, it has settled for lowering the Government's shareholding to 51 per cent. Given its precarious financial position and looking for all possible avenues for increasing revenue, the Narendra Modi Government has promptly latched on to the idea. It is aiming to garner about ₹25,000 crore by shedding its stake in the six banks which could even go up to ₹43,000 crore (according to an estimate).

The PSBs in question have already started gearing up for this as they have decided not to take any lumpy credit exposure and are taking steps to reduce their non-performing assets (NPAs) by one-third by the end of the current financial year March 31, 2021 — all aimed at improving their valuation and getting a good price from the sale. The Centre (besides, the RBI) is closely monitoring the situation. At the end of the day, it may re-fill its denuded coffers somewhat. But the larger question still remains unanswered.

Is the Modi Government really serious about bringing down its stake in PSBs to as low as 26 per cent? Is it committed to their privatisation? Does it have anything credible to show? The idea was first mooted by the NDA dispensation under the then Prime Minister AB Vajpayee (1999-2004). It had proposed reduction in the Government's shareholding in PSBs to less than 50 per cent initially and eventually to 33 per cent. That remained on paper.

In 2015, a RBI committee headed by P Nayak made sweeping recommendations to bring about structural reforms of PSBs in sync with the requirements of an economy on an accelerated growth trajectory and to make it globally competitive. It recommended (i) setting up of an autonomous Bank Boards Bureau (BBB) with a mandate to select the top management; (ii) setting up of a bank investment company (BIC) where all Government shares in PSBs will be vested and (iii) divestment of its shareholding in all PSBs to below 50 per cent.

The committee had contemplated the Board as an interim arrangement — to serve as a precursor to the BIC. In 2016, the Government approved the constitution of the BBB as a body of eminent professionals and officials to make recommendations for appointment of whole-time directors and non-executive chairpersons of PSBs and State-owned financial institutions (FIs). The BBB was also mandated to engage with the board of directors of all PSBs to formulate appropriate strategies for their growth and development besides, encouraging them to restructure their business strategy and suggest ways for their consolidation and merger with other banks based on requirement. Initially headed by Vinod Rai, former Comptroller and Auditor-General (CAG) till April 2018, the BBB has been under a part-time chairman (a retired bureaucrat) and other part-time members. Recently, the term of the BBB was extended for a period of two years beyond April 11 or until further orders, whichever is earlier. How much importance does the Government give to the BBB?

“ DURING 2014-15 AND 2015-16, THE VALUE OF BANK FRAUDS WAS ₹17,000 CRORE EACH. DURING 2016-17 AND 2017-18, THIS WENT UP TO ₹20,500 CRORE AND ₹22,500 CRORE RESPECTIVELY. THEREAFTER, THE VALUE GALLOPPED TO ₹64,000 CRORE DURING 2018-19 AND FURTHER TO ₹1,10,000 CRORE DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 2019-20 ”



Being headed by a part-time chairman and part-time members, this by itself conveys a lot. On the other two recommendations, while (ii) is not even on the radar, as regards (iii), the only action seen thus far is the Government's decision to divest its majority stake in IDBI Bank.

But things didn't work out as planned and during 2018-19, the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) was roped in to acquire 51 per cent controlling stake in IDBI Bank. The acquisition was completed on January 21, 2019 with LIC being reclassified as promoter of the bank with management control and the Centre continuing to be the co-promoter without management control. While it is normal to see LIC in the role of a financial investor, for it to be owning and running a business enterprise is anomalous.

Meanwhile, most of the ills that go with majority ownership of the Government continue to afflict PSBs. The political brass appoints the CMD/MD and deposes bureaucrats as its nominee on the bank board. For appointment of directors, until last year, the nomination and remuneration committee (NRC) included the Centre's nominee. In August, 2019, the RBI tightened the fit-and-proper criteria to exclude him/her. But, this is only cosmetic with CMD and MOF nominee — both handpicked by the Government — calling the shots when it comes to taking policy decisions or even in its day-to-day running.

In the past, meddling in the affairs of the PSBs took the form of what came to be known as the cult of "crony capitalism." The businessmen patronised by the ruling establishment managed loans on considerations other than merit and got them ever-greened (taking a new loan to pay back the earlier one). Neither the banks insisted on repayment, nor the

defaulters had any sense of fear as those who were expected to take action chose not to act. The political brass also rides piggyback on PSBs for absorbing liabilities created by populist policies such as supplying power to farmers and households at subsidised rates (or even free in some States).

Be it a spate of bailout packages given to power distribution companies (four bailouts have been granted so far) or loan waiver given to farmers and now moratorium on loan repayment extended to all and sundry, all have inflicted heavy losses on PSBs.

No wonder the country is grappling with high NPAs. In March 2018, gross NPAs (GNPAs) had reached a high 11.5 per cent (14.5 per cent for PSBs). These declined to 8.5 per cent as of March, courtesy a number of measures, including resolution of accounts under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). But the ratio may worsen to 12.5 per cent by March 2021 under the optimistic baseline scenario (14.7 per cent under a severely-stressed one). For PSBs, it would be much higher at 15.2 per cent (16.3 per cent under severely-stressed).

The Government has put investigation and prosecution agencies in top gear to nab fraudsters and the Prime Minister is allegedly against "crony capitalism." But these exhortations and central agencies seen in action mode do not seem to be yielding the desired result. The proof of the pudding is in eating. To get a sense, we only need to look at the value of bank frauds in recent years. During 2014-15 and 2015-16, the value of bank frauds was ₹17,000 crore each. During 2016-17 and 2017-18, this went up to ₹20,500 crore and ₹22,500 crore respectively. Thereafter, the value galloped to ₹64,000 crore during 2018-19 and further to ₹110,000 crore

during the first six months of 2019-20. The message is loud and clear. The ailments afflicting PSBs won't go away so long as majority ownership and control remain with the Government. There is a dire need to unshackle them and grant autonomy to the management. The RBI's recommendation that the Government's stake in six PSBs be reduced to 51 per cent won't achieve the desired objective. To get the intended results, the Nayak Committee's prescription should be adopted in totality.

The Government should set up a BIC with eminent professionals as members. While the position of chairman should go to a professional, the member-secretary can be drawn from the bureaucracy. All of the shareholding of the Centre in all PSBs should be transferred to the BIC.

The company should be given necessary authority to take all decisions on behalf of the sovereign Government and allowed to work with full autonomy — at arm's length from the latter.

The BIC should guide the management of individual banks to improve their working, prepare the roadmap for divestment of majority ownership and control and see through its execution. It should determine the timing of sale so as to realise maximum value. The shares should be so distributed as to avoid concentration in a few hands and ensure greater accountability to the public.

It is also crucial for the RBI to strengthen its "supervision" over banks to guard against irregularities and mismanagement to prevent the fiasco of the kind we have seen in the case of Yes Bank — a private bank. It should maintain strict vigil over the auditors to ensure that they do their job diligently.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst)

The spirit of federalism is being crushed

The three Ordinances on agriculture brought in by the Centre have encroached upon State subjects



AMIT JAISWAL

is a State subject. Markets and fairs are also a State subject as per Entry 28 of the State list.

In its characteristic "shock and awe" style, the Centre has promulgated three Ordinances *viz.* The Farmer's Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Ordinance, The Farmer's (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Ordinance and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance.

Prima facie the first two ordinances do not seem to come under the domain of the Union Government. It is Entry number 33 of the Concurrent List which is presumably put to use by the Union Government for promulgating them. Entry 33 is being reproduced below for better understanding of the issue: "Trade and commerce in, and the production, supply and distribution of the products of any industry where the control of such industry by the Union is declared by Parliament by law to be expedient in the public interest, and imported goods of the same kind as such products; foodstuffs, including edible oil seeds and oils; cattle fodder, including oilcakes and other concen-

trates; raw cotton whether ginned or unginned, and cotton seeds; and raw jute."

The sub-entries on foodstuff right up till raw jute were introduced by way of a third amendment to the Constitution in 1955. There is a history and background to the third amendment by which the scope of Entry 33 of List III was enlarged. Trade and commerce within the State and production, supply and distribution of goods were the matters enumerated in the provincial list as per the Government of India Act, 1935. Even now these matters are in the State list under Entry 26 and 27. Therefore, it is needless to say that they are essentially State subjects.

However, due to the World War-II, emergency was declared and the Central legislature acquired the power to legislate on these matters. When the emergency was lifted, the power to legislate on these matters was sought to be retained by the Dominion Government due to the prevailing circumstances and scarcity of essential items. The Dominion Government also enacted The Essential Supplies (Temporary) Powers Act, 1946 (hereinafter referred to as Act of 1946) to handle the situation. The Constituent Assembly, with

a view to carry on with the arrangement, inserted Article 369 as a temporary provision in the Constitution for a period of five years from the date of commencement of the Constitution. Article 369 and the Act of 1946 were to expire on January 26, 1955.

However, the situation of food articles and other essential supplies in the country was still precarious and the menace of hoarding and black marketing was still there. So, with a view to continue the arrangement allowing the Centre to legislate on trade, commerce and production, supply and distribution of essential commodities, four sub-entries were introduced in Entry 33 by way of the third amendment to the Constitution.

Alongside, The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 was also enacted. Therefore, it was the space ceded by Article 369 of the Constitution and Act of 1946, which in fact came to be occupied by the amended Entry 33 in List III and The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 (ECA). The amended Entry 33 and ECA principally equipped the Union Government to tackle the scarcity of essential articles, hoarding, black-marketing, irrational price rise and such situations in the country and were never

meant to be used generally. With the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Ordinance, the Union Government has taken control of the entire intra-State sale and purchase of all the agricultural produce and has actually trampled upon the matters which are State subjects.

So far as the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Ordinance is concerned, which basically provides legal structure for contract farming, the same in effect directly deals with the production in the agriculture sector which, in every respect, is a State subject. The interpretation, which the Centre has given to sub-entries of Entry 33 of List III, is novel. The Union has tried to use Entry 33 as a standalone provision and it conveniently ignored the context, object and background of the sub-entries for the reasons which are other than unintended. The Ordinance route makes the intentions of the Centre only more suspect.

An observation made by the Supreme Court in the case of SR Bommai Vs Centre is a compelling reminder for respecting the federal

structure of the Constitution and which reads as thus: "The fact that under the scheme of our Constitution, great power is conferred upon the Centre *vis-à-vis* the States does not mean that States are mere appendages of the Centre. With the sphere allotted to them, States are supreme. The Centre cannot tamper with their powers. More particularly, the courts should not adopt an approach, an interpretation, which has the effect of or tends to have the effect of whittling down the powers reserved to the States."

Consequently, the first two of the three Ordinances mentioned above have certainly encroached upon the State subjects and it is a colourable exercise of jurisdiction by the Union Government.

It is not a case where a Central legislation incidentally trenches upon a subject in the State list but a case where the Centre has blatantly usurped subjects which are essentially State matters. The action by the Union Government is surely not in the spirit of federalism, which has been held to be one of the basic features of the Constitution by the Supreme Court.

(The writer is a practising advocate in Punjab and Haryana High Court)



FOREIGN EYE



SECURE THE PRESIDENT

The absence of the security regalia, including the lead and backup cars and horses, may be a welcome sight, but the majority in Sri Lanka would definitely not approve of President Gotabaya throwing caution to the winds, depending solely on his bullet-proof vehicle and divine forces to protect him. The State has a duty to protect him. He needs to remind himself of the near miss at Flower Road when he was the Defence Secretary and not take risks. (The Island editorial)

BARAMULLA

Grenade hurled at Army convoy injures 6 civilians

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

After suffering huge losses during the recent anti-terrorist operations in the Kashmir valley, 'unidentified' terrorists on Monday targeted an army convoy moving from Baramulla towards Srinagar but failed to hit the target.

At least seven civilians passing through the area received injuries after the grenade hurled by the terrorists missed the target and exploded in the middle of the road near Azadgunj Bridge area of Baramulla.

CCTV footage of the spot revealed the grenade had exploded seconds after the last vehicle of an army convoy was passing through the bridge. Large number of civilians were

also seen running in different directions after the grenade blast.

It is after a long gap, terrorist handlers have attempted to directly target an army convoy in Baramulla.

All the recent strikes were aimed at either CRPF or Jammu & Kashmir police personnel.

According to a Jammu & Kashmir police spokesman, "the grenade attack on an Army convoy was reported in Baramulla around 1.15 pm in which seven civilians received injuries on Monday".

All the injured were shifted to the hospital for the treatment of their injuries, the spokesman added. In another important development, the joint teams of Jammu and Kashmir police

and Army RR unit in Reasi claimed to have busted a LET revival plan in Mahore area.

So far three Over ground workers including a government teacher have been arrested by the police and interrogated by various other intelligence agencies at a Joint Interrogation centre. Addressing a press conference on Monday, SSP Reasi Rashmi Wazir said, we have busted a plan of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) based in Pakistan to revive its network in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district and have arrested its three OGW's.

SSP Reasi said, these "over-ground workers" were in contact with their Pakistani handler (LeT) Mohd Qasim of Mahore who had exfiltrated to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in 2002.

Neighbours provide all helps to Covid patients

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

During this corona pandemic, infected patients are getting commendable help from their neighbours. Neighbours are not only providing moral strength to patients but also providing all the necessary items of daily living because the administration's approach in meeting the daily needs of home-isolated patients is disappointing.

The most dangerous situation is that the health department has neither provided any emergency numbers nor the essential medicines to covid patients to prevent infection.

Communicable disease specialist Dr. Devendra Kumar has been sent from Lucknow to Aligarh to take some additional steps towards the prevention of covid infection. Dr. Devendra Kumar visited the homes of the

corona-infected patients to inspect the arrangements done for corona prevention. A few days ago, after thoroughly inspecting the condition and arrangements in the house of six patients, he had submitted his report to the Director-General, Medical Health Services, Lucknow, and CMO.

He said that we inspected on various criteria including Presence of Isolation Poster - Posters found on 5 out of 6 houses and a poster of one house was torn down, Emergency number to patients - the emergency number was not provided to 3 out of 6 houses, Number of close contact and status of their health - different numbers in all houses, Medicine for prevention of infection (HCQS / ivermectin) - No medicine was given in any house for the prevention of infection.

Mamata to go ahead with lockdowns in September

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Deciding to look right through the Centre's directive depriving the States the power to impose lockdown post August, the Bengal Government has decided to continue with its pre-announced lockdown schedules in the month of September.

A senior Home Ministry official on Monday said that "there is no change in the lockdown schedules and the State will go ahead with it in the month of September."

Before the Centre's announcement taking back the power of declaring lockdowns from the State Governments during Unlock 4, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had declared that the State will have lockdowns - to break the corona chain - on September



7, 11 and 12.

"The Government is sticking to the decision and everything will be closed as decided," the official said adding the Metro Railways which was scheduled to start running from September 7 will now run from September 8.

The Chief Public Relation Officer of the Kolkata Metro Railways Indrani Banerjee, however, said that "all decisions will be taken after we receive guidelines from the Union Home Ministry".

The State Government, however, has decided to help facilitate transportation of students appearing for the JEE/NEET examinations on the specific dates in September. "The respective department have been directed to run maximum possible buses and other transports including autos and taxis to ferry the students," a Transport Department official said.

ISRAEL-UAE RELATIONS

First direct flight lands in Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi/Jerusalem: In a historic step towards peace in the Middle East, the first commercial direct flight between Israel and the UAE landed in Abu Dhabi on Monday after both countries announced normalisation of relations.

The flight carried a top level Israeli delegation led by National Security Adviser Meir Ben Shabbat while the US delegation was headed by US President Donald Trump's adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner and US National Security Adviser Robert

O'Brien.

The delegation left aboard the commercial El Al flight 971 that took off from Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv at 11.21am local time. The word peace was painted on it in Arabic, English and Hebrew above a cockpit window.

"We just completed a truly historic flight. This hopefully will be the first of many," Kushner said after disembarking from the flight.

He thanked leadership on both sides on the occasion. Saudi Arabia granted permis-



Trump's Senior Adviser Jared Kushner, centre, speaks as Israeli NSA Meir Ben-Shabbat, left, and US NSA Robert O'Brien stand by after an El Al plane from Israel landed in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates on Monday

sion for the use of its air space.

"Peace overwhelmingly desired by the people, except by those who exploit misery to remain in power. Future belongs to industrious people of the region," Kushner said.

Israel and the UAE announced on August 13 that they were establishing full diplomatic relations, in a US-brokered deal that required Israel to suspend its plan to annex parts of the West Bank.

UAE is only the third Arab country to establish diplomatic ties with the Jewish state. Israel's neighbours, Egypt and Jordan, being the other two Arab states to recognise the Jewish state.

Anyone challenging one-China policy will pay heavy price: FM

Beijing: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Monday warned that anyone challenging the 'one-China' policy will pay a heavy price as he termed a top Czech Republic official's visit to Taiwan as a provocation and short-sighted move.

The Chinese government is under increased pressure over Taiwan after the recent visit of US Health Service Secretary Alex Azar to Taipei, the first high-ranking American official to visit the estranged island which China claims as part of its mainland.

Azar, who is the highest-ranking Cabinet member to visit Taiwan since the US switched diplomatic recognition to Beijing from Taipei in 1979, visited Taiwan in the second week of this month and met Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen, a staunch proponent of Taiwan's independence from China.

Azar's visit was regarded as the major diplomatic setback for Beijing which asserts that the 'one-China' policy constitutes the core of its foreign policy recognised by all the countries which have established diplomatic relations with it.

After Azar, Czech Republic Senate Speaker Milos Vystrcil started his visit to Taiwan from Sunday, ignoring Beijing's prior warnings and met top Taiwanese officials.

China's state-run Global Times said Vystrcil went ahead with the visit despite the opposition from the Czech president Milos Zeman.

Wang, who was in Germany on Monday as part of his visit to the European Union countries, said Beijing will not tolerate the violation of its one-China policy. He said that anyone who challenges the one-China principle will pay a heavy price, referring to the Czech senate speak-

er's Taiwan visit, the report said.

Wang said Taiwan is an inalienable part of the Chinese territory, noting that to challenge the one-China principle over the Taiwan issue is to make an enemy of 1.4 billion Chinese people and is a violation of international trust and conduct.

Calling Vystrcil's visit to Taiwan a provocation, Wang stressed that the Chinese government and people will not sit idly when challenged by the anti-China power and will let him pay a heavy price for the short-sighted move and political speculation.

Responding to questions on Wang's remarks, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing here on Monday that the anti-China forces in the Czech republic deliberately impinge upon China's sovereignty and blatantly interfere in China's internal affairs.

Baltic states impose sanctions against Belarus ahead of EU

Vilnius (Lithuania): The three Baltic countries on Monday slapped their own travel sanctions on 30 top officials in Belarus, including President Alexander Lukashenko, in response to a brutal crackdown against protesters who say the Aug. 9 presidential election in Belarus was rigged.

Those on the list are banned from entering Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, according to the document signed by the three Baltic nations' interior ministers. "New people will be added to the list in the future," said Lithuanian President Gitanas Nauseda.

The move comes as the EU is planning its own sanctions list of up to 20 senior Belarus officials suspected of election fraud and the crackdown on protesters and is likely to put Lukashenko on that list at some point. All three Baltic nations are members of the EU.

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
(Regd. Office PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala)
Corporate Identity No. U40109PB2010SGC033813
(www.pspcl.in)

Notice Inviting Tender (Pres Note)

Enquiry No. 93/SE/Th.Op./CD-28-Vol-IX/O&M/GHTP/2020 Dated: 28/08/2020

Scope Description: To provide assistance to staff working under Chemical Department GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat, in general & shift duty round the clock, for operation of water treatment plant and Coal & Environment Laboratory Stage-I&II.

EMD: The tenders shall be required to submit fixed earnest money of Rupees Two Lakhs Sixty-Six thousands only (i.e. Rs. 2.66 Lakhs) online on the website <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>.

Date & Time upto which tender shall be submission: 28-09-2020 up to 11:30 Hrs.

Date & Time of opening of tender: 30-09-2020 at 12:00 Hrs.

Tender specification can only be downloaded from PSPCL website <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>.

Note:

- The prospective bidders can obtain clarification regarding tender specifications from this office. For registration of digital signatures and uploading of tender information may be sought from M/S E-procure Technologies Ltd., Contact No. 0172-2970263.
- It is informed that in case the tender process is not completed due to any reason, no corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Detail regarding corrigendum may be seen on website <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>.

Superintending Engineer,
Thermal Operation Circle,
GHTP, PSPCL, Lehra Mohabbat,
Distt. Bathinda-151111 (Punjab).
Email ID: se-th-op-lehra@pspcpl.in
Mobile No: 96461-17603

GHTP-43/2020
DPR/31AUG20/ 70596 Dt. 31-08-2020

KOVALAM INVESTMENT AND TRADING COMPANY LIMITED
CIN : L65910PB1981PLC023058
Regd. Office : Premises Oswal Woolen Mills Ltd., G. T. Road, Sherpur, Ludhiana-141003
Email : kovalam@owmnamhar.com, Phone : 0161-5066605

NOTICE OF THE 38TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM), BOOK CLOSURE AND E-VOTING INFORMATION

Notice is hereby given that the 38th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Kovalam Investment and Trading Company Limited (the Company) will be held on Friday, the 25th day of September, 2020 at 04:00 P.M. through Video Conferencing (VC) / Other Audio Visual Means (OAVM) to transact the businesses, as set out in the Notice convening the 38th AGM of the Company.

In view of the continuing Covid-19 pandemic, the 38th Annual General Meeting (AGM) is convened through Video Conferencing (VC) / Other Audio Visual Means (OAVM) in accordance with the General Circular numbers 14/2020, 17/2020 and 20/2020, dated April 08, 2020, April 13, 2020 and May 05, 2020 respectively, issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) and Circular number SEBI/CFD/CMD1/CIR/P/2020/79 dated May 12, 2020 issued by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) (hereinafter collectively referred to as 'Circulars') which allow the companies to hold AGM through VC/OAVM, which does not require physical presence of members at a common venue. The deemed venue for the 38th AGM shall be the Registered Office of the Company i.e. Premises Oswal Woolen Mills Limited, G.T. Road, Sherpur, Ludhiana-141003, Punjab.

In compliance with aforesaid circulars, the Notice of 38th AGM and the Annual Report for the financial year 2019-2020 has been electronically sent on Monday, August 31, 2020, to the shareholders whose Email IDs are registered with the Company's Registrar and Transfer Agent, Alankit Assignments Limited; Depository Participants (DPs) and the same are also available on the Company's website at www.owmnamhar.com, website of Stock Exchange i.e. BSE Limited at www.bseindia.com and the said notice is also available at the CDSL's website at www.evotingindia.com.

Book Closure : Notice is also hereby given that pursuant to the provisions of Section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with rules made thereunder and Regulation 42 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, that the Register of Members and the Share Transfer Books of the Company will remain closed from Saturday, September 19, 2020 to Friday, September 25, 2020 (both days inclusive) for the purpose of 38th AGM. Shareholders holding shares in physical form and who have not updated their email addresses with the Company are requested to update their email addresses to Registrar and Transfer Agents of the Company, Alankit Assignments Limited and Members holding shares in dematerialized form are requested to register/update their email addresses with the relevant Depository Participants along with documents as mentioned in the Notice of AGM for updation of email address.

Member of joining the AGM : A facility to join the AGM through VC/OAVM is available through CDSL e-voting platform at www.evotingindia.com. Instructions for attending the AGM through VC/OAVM are provided in the Notice of 38th AGM.

Remote E-Voting and E-Voting during the AGM : In compliance with 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 SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, read with MCA Circulars and SEBI Circulars, the Company has engaged the services of Central Depository Services (India) Limited (CDSL) for providing to its members the facility for casting their vote through remote e-voting as well as the e-voting system during the AGM. The EVSN (E-voting sequence number) is allotted to Company by CDSL as 200819021.

The details are required to be given under the act and rules made thereunder are as follows:

- The remote e-voting shall commence on Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 09:00 A.M. (IST) and ends on Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 05:00 P.M. (IST). The e-voting module shall be disabled by CDSL for voting thereafter and Members will not be allowed to vote electronically beyond the said date and time and once the vote on a resolution is cast by a member, he/she shall not be allowed to change it subsequently. E-Voting shall also be made available at the 38th AGM and the members who have not cast their vote through remote e-voting shall be able to vote at the 38th AGM.
- The members of the Company holding shares as on cut-off date i.e. Friday, September 18, 2020 (EOD). The voting rights of the members shall be in proportion to their shares of the paid-up equity share capital of the Company as on cut-off date. A person whose name is recorded in the Register of Members or in the Register of Beneficial Owners maintained by the Depositories as on the cut-off date only shall be entitled to avail the facility of remote e-voting, participation in the AGM through VC/OAVM facility and e-voting during the AGM.
- Any person who acquires shares of the Company and becomes member of the Company after the notice is sent and holds shares as on the cut-off date, i.e. September 18, 2020, may follow the same instructions as mentioned in the Notice of AGM or may obtain the User ID and password by sending a request at helpdesk.evoting@cdslindia.com. However, if a person is already registered with CDSL for e-voting then existing user ID and password can be used to attend the AGM as well as e-voting.
- Members attending the Meeting, who have not already cast their vote by remote e-voting shall be eligible to cast their vote through e-voting during the AGM. Members can attend the AGM even after exercising their right to vote through remote e-voting but shall not be allowed to vote again at the AGM.
- The detailed instructions for remote e-voting and e-voting during the AGM have been given in the Notice of 38th AGM of the Company.
- Members who have any queries or issues regarding attending AGM & e-voting from the e-Voting System, you may refer the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and e-voting manual available at www.evotingindia.com, under help section or write an email to helpdesk.evoting@cdslindia.com or contact Mr. Nitesh Kumar (022-23058738) or Mr. Mehboob Lakhani (022-23058543) or Mr. Rakesh Dalvi (022-23058542) or Toll Free No.: 1800-200-5533. All grievances connected with the facility for remote e-voting may be addressed to Mr. Rakesh Dalvi, Manager, (CDSL), Central Depository Services (India) Limited, A Wing, 25th Floor, Marathon Futurex, Mafalati Mill Compounds, N. Joshi Marg, Lower Pareil (East), Mumbai - 400013 or send an email to helpdesk.evoting@cdslindia.com or call on 022-23058542/3 or contact Ms. Jyoti Sud, Company Secretary and Compliance Officer, Premises Oswal Woolen Mills Ltd., G.T. Road, Sherpur, Ludhiana-141003, Punjab, Ph. 0161-5066605, E-mail id: kovalam@owmnamhar.com.

By order of the Board of Directors
For Kovalam Investment and Trading Company Limited
Place : Ludhiana Sd./ (Jyoti Sud)
Date : August 31, 2020 Company Secretary

Diplomat poised to become PM-designate in Lebanon

Beirut: Lebanon's president is holding consultations with heads of parliamentary blocs to designate a new prime minister for the crisis-stricken country, with a career diplomat poised to win the job on Monday.

Lebanon's ambassador to Germany, Mustapha Adib, was expected to be named as prime minister-designate and asked to

form a new government after winning the backing of major parties, including the crucial support of senior politicians from his own Sunni Muslim community.

The consultations were being held hours before French President Emmanuel Macron was due to arrive for a two day-visit.

Thai Govt delays purchase of submarines from China

AP ■ BANGKOK

Thailand's government has decided to delay the purchase of two submarines from China, withdrawing its request to parliament to include the sum for an initial payment in the fiscal year 2021 national budget.

Government spokesman Anucha Burapachaisri announced on Monday that

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, who concurrently serves as defence minister, had told the navy to delay the 22.5 billion baht (USD 723 million) purchase until fiscal year 2022.

The government had sought to have 3.375 billion baht (USD 108 million) included in the 2021 budget to cover the first of seven annual installment payments.

THE BATALA CO-OP. SUGAR MILLS LTD.
G.T. Road, Batala, District Gurdaspur-143505
Website: www.smbatala.com E-Mail: batalacsm@rediffmail.com

TENDER NOTICE

Ref. No. BCSM/SUGAREXP/2020-21/01 Dated: 31.08.2020
The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Food and Public Distribution) Govt. of India has vide its circular F.No. 1 (14)/2019-SP-1 dated 23rd July 2020 has decided to allow export of all grades of sugar named raw, plantation white as well as refined sugar under MAEQ (Maximum Admissible Export Quota). Further, in terms of Circular No. F. No. 1 (18)/2018-SP-1 dated August 06, 2020 of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Govt. of India (Department of Food and Public Distribution) has clarified that supply of raw sugar/ white sugar by Sugar Mills to refinery located at Special Economic Zone (SEZ), is considered to be export for the purpose of fulfillment of MAEQ allocated for the current sugar season 2019-20 wide order dated September 16, 2019.

Batala Cooperative Sugar Mills on behalf of all nine Cooperative Sugar Mills of Punjab invites e-Tender for export of approx. 9434 MT sugar (actual quantity may vary at the time of lifting), lying in eight Cooperative Sugar Mills of Punjab (for the sugar season 2019-20 and partly in respect of FY 2018-19 also) under MAEQ from experienced overseas buyers/ refineries located in the SEZ in India/ Export Houses/ Merchandisers and Govt./ Cooperative Institutions (in which State Govt./ Central Govt. has invested share capital) having valid Import Export code and experience of sugar export from 31.08.2020 onward to purchase the aforesaid quantity of sugar from all Cooperative Sugar Mills of Punjab and arrange its export as per above mentioned notifications under MAEQ and stipulated norms on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS". Bidders to note that the allotment of MAEQ in respect of Gurdaspur Co-operative Sugar Mills is currently not included in the aforesaid quantity of 9434 MT and the same is expected to be received shortly from Govt. of India and if received prior to e-Bid Submission Date then such quantity shall also form part of this Tender.

The documents can be downloaded from the e-Procurement website portal <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in> or from the Batala Sugar Mill's website www.smbatala.com. Online tender will have to be submitted in two bid system i.e. Technical Bid and Financial Bid on or before 24.09.2020 at 11:00 AM on the e-tender portal <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in> alongwith EMD and other documents. Other details (e-Bid document) for submission of e-bids along with eligibility criteria, date & time of submission of e-Bids, Opening of Technical Bids/Financial Bids, amount of EMD, experience and other terms & conditions will be available on e-Procurement website portal as mentioned above from the date 01.09.2020 onwards. The Bidders will have to deposit e-tender document fee (Non Refundable) of Rs. 1000/- + 18% GST + Rs. 1180/- and earnest money of Rs. 50,000/- per Quintal (Rupees Fifty Per Quintal) of Sugar to be exported, through RTGS/NEFT/ Net-Banking in the account as shown on e-Procurement website portal <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in>. Tender without e-tender document fee and EMD will not be accepted. The Govt./Cooperative Institutions are exempted from deposit of EMD. The stipulated norms for export and other terms and conditions are annexed along with the e-Tender form.

The undersigned reserves the right to cancel one or all the tenders without assigning any reason.

GENERAL MANAGER

PERFECTPAC LIMITED
CIN: L72100DL1972PLC005971
Regd. Off.: 910, Chiranjiv Tower-43, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019
Phone No. 011-26441015-18, Website: www.perfectpac.com
E-mail id: complianceofficer@perfectpac.com

INFORMATION REGARDING 48TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF PERFECTPAC LIMITED

In compliance with the applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 ("Act") and the rules made there under and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 ("Listing Regulations") read with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs ("MCA") Circular No. 14/2020 dated April 8, 2020, Circular No. 17/2020 dated April 13, 2020 and Circular No. 20/2020 dated May 5, 2020 (collectively referred to as "MCA Circulars"), and the Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI") Circular No. SEBI/CFD/CMD1/CIR/P/2020/79 dated May 12, 2020, the 48th Annual General Meeting (the "AGM") of the Company is scheduled to be held on **Tuesday, September 29, 2020 at 12:00 Noon**, through Video Conferencing ("VC") / Other Audio-Visual Means ("OAVM"), to transact the businesses as contained in the Notice convening the AGM ("Notice").

In compliance with the MCA Circulars and the Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI") Circular No. SEBI/CFD/CMD1/CIR/P/2020/79 dated May 12, 2020, Notice of the 48th AGM along with the Annual Report for Financial Year 2019-20 is being sent only through electronic mode to those Members whose e-mail addresses are registered with the Company / National Securities Depository Limited and Central Depository Services (India) Limited (the "Depositories"). The Notice of the AGM and the Annual Report for the Financial Year 2019-20 will also be available on the Company's website and Stock Exchanges i.e. www.perfectpac.com, www.bseindia.com, and www.cse-india.com. The Notice will also be available on www.evoting.nsdl.com. Further members can join and participate in the AGM through VC/OAVM facility only. The instruction for joining and manner of participating in AGM will be provided in the Notice. Attendance of the Members participating in the AGM through VC/OAVM shall be counted for the purpose of reckoning the quorum under Section 103 of the Act.

For members whose email ids are not registered with the depositories for procuring user id and password and registration of e-mail ids for e-voting for the resolutions set out in the notice:

Physical Holding: Send a request to the Registrar and Share Transfer Agent at admin@skylinert.com providing Folio No., Name of shareholder, scanned copy of the share certificate (front and back), PAN (self-attested scanned copy of PAN card), AADHAR (self-attested scanned copy of Aadhar Card).

Demat Holding: Send a request to the Registrar and Share Transfer Agent at admin@skylinert.com providing DPID-CLID (16 digit DPID + CLID or 16 digit beneficiary ID), Name, Client master or copy of Consolidated Account Statement, PAN (self-attested scanned copy of PAN card), AADHAR (self-attested scanned copy of Aadhar Card).

Members who are yet to register/ update their email addresses with the Company or with the Depository Participants are once again requested to register/ update the same for receiving the Notices, Annual Reports and other documents through electronic mode. Members holding shares in physical form may get their email addresses registered/ updated by providing their Name, Folio Number, E-mail ID and consent to receive the Notices, Annual Reports and other documents through electronic mode, by sending an email at admin@skylinert.com or complianceofficer@perfectpac.com. Member holding shares in dematerialized form may get email address registered/updated by providing E-mail ID to their Depository Participant(s).

The Company will provide remote e-voting facility to all its members to cast their vote on the resolutions set forth in the Notice. Additionally the Company will also provide the facility through e-voting system during the AGM. The detailed procedure for casting votes through remote e-voting/ voting at the AGM shall be provided in the Notice.

This advertisement is being issued for the information and benefit of all the members of the Company in compliance with the MCA Circulars and SEBI Circular.

For Perfectpac Limited
Shefali Chauhan
Company Secretary

Place : New Delhi
Date : 31.08.2020

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that a male child namely Dilshad, S/o: Jabbar, R/o: Unknown, was found on 19.08.2020 at 23:28 hrs abandoned condition Near RML Hospital, New Delhi. In this regard DD No. 60-A, dated 19.08.2020 has been registered at P.S. North Avenue, New Delhi. Sent to children home, Kasturba Niketan Complex, Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi. The description of found male child is as under:

Name: Dilshad, **Age:** about 12-13 Years, **Height:** 4'6", **Face:** Oval, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Medium, **Hair:** Black & Short, **ID Mark:** Old Boil mark on left arm, **Wearing:** White colour T-shirt and dark blue lower with bare feet.

If anyone have any information about this found male child please inform P.S. North Avenue, New Delhi.

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, **Email:** cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, **Fax:** 011-24368639 **SHO**
Police Station, North Avenue, New Delhi
DP/101/NDD/2020 Ph: 011-23093040, 23093294

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General Public is hereby informed that one person **Namely: Naresh Kumar, S/o: Bhagwat Mehto, Address: Vagabond, Regal Building, Connaught Place, New Delhi**, was admitted in Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi on 26.08.2020. During the treatment Doctors declared brought dead. The body has been preserved in Lady Hardinge Medical College's Mortuary, Delhi. In this regard a case has been lodged vide FIR/DD No. 82-A, dated 26.08.2020 at P.S. Connaught Place, Delhi. The description of the dead person is as under- **Age:** About 50 years, **Sex:** Male, **Height:** 5'5", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, **Hair:** Grey colour short, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Blue colour shirt and grey colour lower. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.

SHO
P.S. Connaught Place, New Delhi
Ph.: 011-23364139, 8750870525
DP/108/NDD/2020

Fiscal deficit overshoots target on lower revenue

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Government's fiscal deficit overshoot the budget target for the current financial year within four months (April-July), mainly on account of the impact of lockdown on revenue collections.

According to the data released by the Controlling General of Accounts (CGA), fiscal deficit during April-July was at 103.1 per cent of the annual target or at ₹8,21,349 crore.

It stood at 77.8 per cent of the annual target during the corresponding period of last fiscal.

Fiscal deficit, which refers to the difference between expenditure and revenue, had

overshot the annual target in October last year.

The Government had pegged the fiscal deficit for 2020-21 at ₹7.96 lakh crore or 3.5 per cent of the GDP in the budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in February. These figures, however, have to be revised significantly in view of the economic disruptions created by the outbreak of coronavirus. The Government had imposed a nationwide lockdown from March 25 to prevent the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. The economy was opened up gradually after the lockdown.

Fiscal deficit had soared to a seven-year high of 4.6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019-20, mainly on account of poor

revenue realisation, which dipped further towards the end of March because of lockdown. As per the CGA data, Government's revenue receipts stood at ₹2,27,402 crore or 11.3 per cent of the Budget Estimates (BE). During the same period of last fiscal, the realisation was at 19.5 per cent of the BE. Tax revenue stood at ₹2,02,788 crore or 12.4 per cent of BE during the first four months of the fiscal. During the corresponding period of the last fiscal, the tax revenue was at 20.5 per cent of BE.

The Government's total receipts were at 10.4 per cent of BE or ₹2,32,860 crore. In the Budget, the Government had estimated the total receipts for the fiscal at Rs 22.45 lakh crore.

Eight core industries' output contracts 9.6% in July, 5th month in row

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Contracting for the fifth consecutive month, the output of eight core infrastructure sectors dropped by 9.6 per cent in July due to decline mostly in production of steel, refinery products and cement. The production of eight core sectors had expanded by 2.6 per cent in July 2019, showed data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry on Monday.

Barring fertiliser, all seven sectors - coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, steel, cement and electricity -- recorded negative growth in July. The rate of contraction in the sectors, however, has come down from 37.9 per cent in April.

The output of steel, refinery products, cement, natural

gas, coal, crude oil and electricity declined by 16.5%, 13.9%, 13.5%, 10.2%, 5.7%, 4.9% and 2.3%, respectively. On the other hand, the fertiliser sector output grew by 6.9 per cent during the month under review as against 1.5 per cent rise in July 2019. During April-July 2020-21, the sector's output dipped by 20.5 per cent as compared to a growth of 3.2 per cent in the same period previous year.

Commenting on the numbers, ICRA Ltd Principal Economist Aditi Nayar said that based on the available trends for the core sector, auto production and merchandise exports, "we expect the contraction in the Industrial Index of Production to ease to 7-11 per cent in July 2020 from 16.6 per cent in June 2020".

Sebi refuses to extend Sept 1 deadline to implement new margin pledge rules

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi has refused to extend the September 1 deadline to implement the new rules on margin pledge, stock brokers' association Anmi said on Monday.

The new mechanism is aimed at bringing transparency and preventing brokerages from misusing clients' securities.

The decision was taken after Sebi's meeting with stock brokers' association, depositories and clearing corporations. The meeting was held to analyse readiness to implement the new norms.

Sebi had come out with the norms in February and was scheduled to come into effect from June 1. It was extended to August 1 and thereafter to September 1.

According to sources, the

regulator has refused to extend the September 1 deadline, as depositories are ready to implement the new mechanism.

However, Association of National Exchanges Members of India (Anmi), a grouping of around 900 stock brokers from across the country, on Friday urged Sebi to extend the implementation of the new mechanism on margin pledge by one month till September 30, citing several challenges faced by market participants.

Besides, back office vendors group has not given 100 per cent clearance to members to launch the new process, it had added.

"In today's virtual meeting, Sebi's decision to grant extension of further time in implementing margin pledge/repledge process. This mi and its 900 members. Anmi is holding consecutive meetings

with all stakeholders and studying all options available to it in the matter," a spokesperson of Anmi said.

The brokers association had requested for the co-existence of the current systems of title transfer, and the proposed pledge system till September 30.

However, Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) in July had said that trading members (TMs) or clearing members (CMs) can accept client securities as collateral by way of title transfer into the client collateral account as per the present system till August-end.

The regulator had allowed co-existence of the current title transfer collateral mechanism and the new pledge and repledge process till August 31 and had said no further extension will be granted.

NHAI awards projects worth over ₹31,000 cr during Apr-Aug of FY21

HIGHEST IN 3 YEARS

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on Monday said it has awarded projects worth ₹31,000 crore in the first five months of the current fiscal year, despite challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

A total of 26 projects for building 744 km length of highways were awarded during the April-August period of this fiscal, the NHAI said in a statement.

"Despite challenges due to the outbreak of the novel coro-

navirus pandemic, the NHAI has awarded highest length of projects during FY 2020-21 till date as compared to the projects awarded during same period in last three years.

"During April to August 2020, the NHAI has awarded 26 projects of 744 km length as compared to 676 km in FY 2019-20, 368 km in FY 2018-19 and 504 km in FY 2017-18," it said in a statement.

Capital cost of these 26 projects is over ₹31,000 crore, which includes cost of civil construction, land acquisition and other pre-construction activities, it said.

The NHAI said it has set a target of awarding 4,500 km of highway projects during the current fiscal and is likely to exceed the same.

Retail inflation for industrial workers eases marginally to 5.33% in July

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation for industrial workers eased marginally to 5.33 per cent in July compared to 5.98 per cent in the same month last year, mainly due to lower prices of certain food items.

"Year-on-year inflation based on all-items stood at 5.33 per cent for July 2020 as compared to 5.06 per cent for the previous month (June 2020) and 5.98 per cent during the corresponding month (July 2019) of the previous year," a labour ministry statement said.

The food inflation stood at 6.38 per cent in July, compared to 5.49 per cent in the previous month and 4.78 per cent during the same period a year ago, it added.

The All-India CPI-IW

(consumer price index for industrial workers) for July 2020 increased by 4 points to 336. On one-month percentage change, it increased by 1.20 per cent between June and July 2020 compared to 0.95 per cent rise in the same period the previous year.

The data showed that the maximum upward movement in the current index came from housing group, contributing (+) 2.28 percentage points to the total change.

The food index further accentuated the overall index by (+) 1.77 percentage points.

At item level, wheat atta, mustard oil, milk (Buffalo), green chillies, brinjal, gourd, palak, parval, potato, tomato, snack saltish, cooking gas, firewood, bus fare, petrol, tailoring charges, etc are responsible for

the increase in index.

However, this rise was checked by rice, fish fresh, goat meat, poultry (chicken), lemon, etc, putting downward pressure on the index.

At centre level, Jamshedpur recorded the maximum increase of 36 points followed by Haldia (23 points), Tiruchirappalli (13 points), Kodarma and Faridabad (12 points each), Srinagar (11 points), Lucknow and Doom-Dooma Tinsukia (10 points each).

Among others, 8 points increase was observed in 2 centres, followed by 7 points in 5 centres, 6 points in 8 centres, 5 points in 7 centres, 4 points in 10 centres, 3 points in 9 centres, 2 points in 9 centres and 1 point in another 9 centres.

₹ drops 21 paise to 73.60 against \$

GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS WEIGH

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee stalled its three-session winning run on Monday, sliding 21 paise to 73.60 against the US dollar after fresh tensions along the India-China border dented forex market sentiment.

At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened on a strong note at 73.26 but lost momentum as the trade progressed and finally ended at 73.60 against the greenback, down 21 paise over its previous close of 73.39.

During the session, the local unit witnessed an intraday high of 73.25 and a low of 73.80 against the US dollar.

Besides, weak macro-economic data suggesting a long road to recovery also brought the rupee under pressure.

Dharavi residents to intensify protest as Govt plans fresh bids for redevelopment

Mumbai: Dharavi residents have decided to intensify their agitation following the state Government's plan to invite fresh bids for the redevelopment of the Asia's largest slum.

The core team of the Dharavi Redevelopment Committee, a federation of 52 associations of residents, has already taken a decision to approach the court against the government's stand, its President Raju Korde said.

"We are yet to receive an official communication from the Government, but if the state is rethinking about its decision, then we will intensify our agitation. We will be holding another meeting on September 3 with rest of the members to decide our next course of action," he said.

Last year, former chief Minister Devendra Fadnis had sought state advocate general's opinion on whether to go for retendering after the Govt purchased the 45 acre land parcel at Matunga which was to be included in the project. The opinion was sought after the

Dharavi Redevelopment Authority, the special purpose vehicle appointed to implement the project had issued a letter of intent to Dubai-based Seclink Technologies Corporation, which was the ₹7,500 crore, while the second bid from Adani was lower at ₹4,529 crore. The AG had recommended inviting fresh bids for the project, which has already seen a delay of 16 years. According to reports, the government has accepted the recommendations of the Advocate General and is planning to invite fresh bids for the project. "We are unable to understand why the opinion (of AG) was sought when the land parcel in question was very much a part of the bid document. While bidding, we knew that the bidder will have to bear the cost of land acquisition, while the deal was to be sealed by the state and the railway authority. That is the reason why we had submitted a higher bid," Seclink Group chairman and MD Nilang Shah said.

Britannia's ex-CEO Sunil Alagh to head Vikas Multicorp's advisory board

Mumbai: BSE and NSE listed specialty chemicals firm Vikas Multicorp Ltd (VML) has constituted an advisory board under the chairmanship of Sunil Alagh, former MD and CEO for Britannia Industries, to steer the company's strategy in the B2C business having decades of experience in FMCG brand building.

VML recently announced that it will enter the food protection and personal hygiene segment with an investment of ₹100 crore in two years.

JioFiber rolls out new broadband plans starting at ₹ 399, bundles Netflix too

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reliance Jio on Monday announced new plans for JioFiber broadband starting at monthly price of ₹399 with no limit on data usage.

As per the new plans, entertainment app Netflix is added to the bouquet of bundled apps for customers subscribing mid-range plans.

The plans will be rolled out from September 1 onwards, Reliance Jio said in a statement.

"We want to take Fiber to each and every home and empower every member of the

L&T completes divestment of electrical, automation business to Schneider Electric

New Delhi: Engineering and construction giant Larsen and Toubro on Monday said it has completed the strategic divestment of its electrical and automation business to Schneider Electric. The move will see India becoming the third largest country in terms of revenues for Schneider Electric. With this, about 5,000 employees of Larsen and Toubro's electrical and automation business will be integrated with Schneider Electric's over 2,000 employees. Though the size of the deal was not disclosed, L&T had inked a defin-

itive pact with Schneider Electric in 2018 to sell its electrical and automation business for an all-cash consideration of ₹14,000 crore, as part of its long-term strategy to exit non-core activities. "Larsen and Toubro (L&T), India's leading engineering, technology, construction and financial services conglomerate, today announced the closure of the strategic divestment of its electrical and automation (E&A) business to Schneider Electric, a global player in energy management and automation," the company said in a statement.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (BHOPAL REGION)
M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN CO. LTD.
 NISHITHA PARISAR, BIJLINAGAR, GOVINDPURA, BHOPAL - 462023
 Phone : 0755-2588291, E-mail : seworksmpi@gmail.com
 NIT No. : CGM/BR/Works/Deposit/TS-02/3250 Bhopal, Date : 29.08.2020

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER (OPEN TENDER)

E-tenders are invited from eligible bidders for following works :

Particulars	Approx. Value	Cost of Tender Document (Rs.)	EMD (Rs.)	Date of Opening of Bids Online
Shifting of 11 KV, DTR, Conversion of O/H LT to U/G cable, Shifting of service lines and Repl. of deteriorated service cable at E-1 Arera colony for smart city Dev. Corp. Ltd. under City Circle Bhopal	Rs. 1.57 Cr.	18880/- including GST	1.00 Lakh	21.09.2020 15:30 PM

Other details are available on company website www.portal.mpcz.in & www.mptenders.gov.in
 M.P. Madhyam/98343/2020
CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (BHOPAL REGION)

SEARCH FOR MISSING



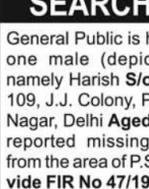
General public is hereby informed that a female (depicted in the photo), **Namely: Payal Sinha D/o Ajay Kumar Sinha R/o H. No. K-135B, 2nd Floor, Sector-9, Vijay Nagar, Ghaziabad, UP** has been missing since 22.05.2019 from the area of P.S. GTB Enclave, Delhi. In this regard a case vide DD No. 21A dated 22.05.2019 has been lodged at Police Station GTB Enclave, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-

Age: 32 Years, Height: 5'5", Complexion: Fair, Face: Oval, Built: Fat, Wearing: Blue colour frock suit and black colour payjama.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing female, may inform SHO, GTB Enclave, Delhi at E-mail Id - cic@cbi.gov.in or Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

Phone: **SHO 011-24368638, 24368641**
P.S. GTB Enclave, Delhi
 Fax No. **011-24368639**
Shahdara Distt., Delhi
 DP/1062/SHD/2019 Ph. No. **011-22580946, 22580947**

SEARCH FOR MISSING MALE



General Public is hereby informed that one male (depicted in the photo) **namely Harish S/o Sh. Jagdish R/o B-109, J.J. Colony, Pandav Nagar, Ranjit Nagar, Delhi Aged- 16 Years** has been reported missing since 28.12.2018 from the area of P.S. Ranjit Nagar, Delhi vide **FIR No 47/19, U/s 363 IPC Dated 13.02.2019** has been registered at Police Station Ranjit Nagar, New Delhi. His physical description is as under:-

Complexion: Shallow, Height: 5'2", Built: Thin, Face: Long, Wearing: Red checked shirt, blue jeans and slippers in feet.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing male, may inform SHO, Ranjit Nagar, Delhi at E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in>

Sd/-
 Tele No. : **011-24368638 or 24368641** SHO, Ranjit Nagar, Delhi
 FAX No. : **011-24368639** Tel.: **011-25704008, 25704009**
 DP/305/CD/2020 Mob.: **8750870436**

MODI RUBBER LIMITED
 CIN: L25199UP1971PLC003392, Registered Office: Modinagar - 201204 Dist. Ghaziabad (U.P.), Corporate Office: 4-7C, DDA Shopping Centre, New Friends Colony, New Delhi 110025
 Website: www.modirubberlimited.com Email: investors@modigroup.net Phone: +91-11-2684 8416

EXTRACT OF STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED JUNE 30, 2020

(Amount in Lacs)

Sl. No.	Particulars	QUARTER ENDED						YEAR ENDED	
		STANDALONE			CONSOLIDATED			STANDALONE	CONSOLIDATED
		June 30, 2020	June 30, 2019	Mar 31, 2020	June 30, 2020	June 30, 2019	Mar 31, 2020	Mar 31, 2020	Mar 31, 2020
1	Total Income from operations (Net)	109.15	122.77	164.01	103.15	122.77	140.01	513.35	489.35
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before tax and exceptional items)	-180.06	-248.36	150.75	-193.92	-225.01	-325.43	849.42	-742.54
3	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period before tax (after exceptional items)	-180.06	-248.36	150.75	-193.92	-225.01	-325.43	849.42	-742.54
4	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after tax (after exceptional items)	-180.06	-248.36	-134.12	-662.02	-225.01	-690.47	564.55	-233.20
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (after tax)	6.20	-313.85	-284.83	-310.71	-297.88	-1,009.17	328.92	-634.79
6	Equity Share Capital (Face value of share is Rs. 10/- each)	2,504.05	2,504.05	2,504.05	2,504.05	2,504.05	2,504.05	2,504.05	2,504.05
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserves as shown in the Balance Sheet of previous year)	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
8	Earnings per share (EPS) (of Rs. 10/- each) (Not Annualised)								
	(a) Basic and Diluted EPS (before exceptional Items) (in Rs.)	-0.72	-0.99	-0.54	-2.64	-0.90	-2.76	-0.93	0.00
	(b) Basic and Diluted EPS (after exceptional Items) (in Rs.)	-0.72	-0.99	-0.54	-2.64	-0.90	-2.76	2.25	-0.93

NOTES:

- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/ Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulations 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/ Annual Financial Results are available on the stock exchange website, www.nseindia.com, www.bseindia.com and on the Company website www.modirubberlimited.com
- The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and subsequently approved by the Board of Directors of the Company at their respective meeting held on June 30th, 2020. The Statutory Auditors of the Company have carried out a limited review of the aforesaid results.
- Previous quarter/ year end figures have been rearranged and / or regrouped, wherever necessary, to make them comparable with those of the current quarter/ year end.

Place : New Delhi
 Date : 31st August, 2020

By order of the Board
 Sd/-
 (Alok Kumar Modi)
 Managing Director

HEALTH

HeartSay

Severe cases of COVID-19 with pre-existing acute cardiovascular underlying condition are at a greater fatality risk. The death rate in such patients is estimated up to 15X higher than patients without co-morbidities. The doctors have observed that one out of five such cases expires while battling the deadly virus



DOCYARD

DR AMOD MANOCHA

Senior Consultant & Head

PAIN MANAGEMENT SERVICES,
MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL,
SAKET



Don't kneel on us

The Hindi idiom "apne pair pe khade hona" (standing on your own feet) is generally used to refer to the financial independence of a young adult. A little thought, and one realises how it can have a different meaning as one transitions through different phases of life. As a toddler it is about gaining bodily control and as one ages having seen it all, it is about retaining physical independence, functional capacity and quality of life.

Osteoarthritis (OA) of the knee is a common joint disease and a leading cause of disability, functional impairment worldwide. It is a serious disease with significant financial and socioeconomic implications. The impact is not limited to the knee with recent studies pointing towards a link between knee pain and increased mortality due to cardiovascular disease and other causes. The prevalence of OA is increasing across all ages and is likely to continue to rise due to a plethora of reasons including lifestyle changes, obesity and an increasingly ageing population. Joint pains are often neglected until it causes distress or impaired quality of life, but still a greater number of young patients are presenting with this problem. Obesity is a key modifiable factor for knee OA and cannot be overlooked as three to six times the body weight is transferred across the knee joint during walking. So, for every 5 kg of extra weight the knees have to carry an extra load of 15 to 30 kg.

Obesity is a key modifiable factor for knee osteoarthritis and can't be overlooked as three to six times the body weight is transferred across the knee joint during walking. So, for every 5 kg of extra weight the knees have to carry an extra load of 15 to 30 kg

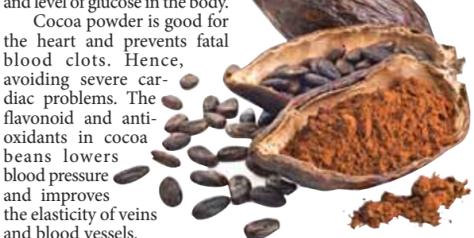
Despite the progress in medical technology and decades of trying to understand knee OA, in the absence of a cure the treatments strategies largely focus on symptom management including pain relief, improved joint function, and joint stability. If you think about it we do not cure most conditions and we either remove, replace or manage most conditions. Joint replacement surgery till date is the preferred option for long term solution in severe cases benefitting a vast majority, yet some of them continue to experience pain. As per research evidence around 9 per cent of the patients undergoing hip replacement surgery and 20 per cent of the patients undergoing knee replacement surgery have an unfavourable pain outcome. Despite the high prevalence, the condition remains under acknowledged like a silent epidemic. Persistent pain not only has an adverse impact on the quality of life but often leaves patients confused or blaming themselves for the pain or the decision to go ahead with surgery. When no obvious cause is found it leads to more dissatisfaction, frustration and breakdown of the doctor-patient relationship, thus promoting doctor shopping. Besides these patients, there is another subgroup of patients who are either not fit for surgery due to other coexisting medical problems or do not want to have surgery, come what may. Mobility may be ever more important for the ones who have other serious comorbidities as its absence often promotes a worsening spiral of health issues. So, what options exist for these subgroups apart from suffering and becoming dependent on others?

The minimally invasive technique of Radio Frequency Ablation (RFA) offers a ray of hope for these patients. The focus in this procedure is to deactivate the nerves responsible for transmitting pain signals from the affected joints to the brain. Less pain signals reaching the brain means less amount of pain experienced and less pain can in turn improve functionality and reduced medication requirements.

SUMMERCoolERS

COCOA: Cocoa is the dried and fully fermented seed of Theobroma cacao, widely available in powder form. It is considered to be one of the best medicinal foods. It is full of flavonoids. It helps control diabetes and cocoa based products are advised to be included in the daily diet to improve the insulin resistance and level of glucose in the body.

Cocoa is great for the skin. It is also considered to cure cancer — used particularly in the cure of prostate and colon cancer. It has anti-depressant properties that can help prevent mental exertion and facilitate certain physiological processes and elevate the mood.



Tiny killers

Mosquitoes spread diseases that claim more lives than any other disease.

DR GANESH HANDE lists a few such illnesses and the symptoms to look out for



Mosquitoes are found in different parts of the globe and the insect has 3,500 species of small insects that fly. These tiny insects are millions of years old and exist as species because they're next to impossible to wipe-out from the planet. Besides being a menace, in our ecosystem they serve as food for other species (birds, frogs, and fish) and are also pollinators.

Each year on August 20, World Mosquito Day is celebrated to raise awareness of the importance of mosquito control and educate people to save themselves from the deadly diseases spread by the insect that remain the number one killer of humans around the world. World Mosquito Day was introduced in the year 1897 by Dr Ronald Ross when he discovered the malaria parasite in the stomach wall of the mosquito. He succeeded in confirming that the insect was a carrier of the disease and transmitted it to the human body and was awarded a Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1902 for his discovery. According to the World Health Organisation, the harmless-looking creature claims more than 1 million human lives every year.

Following are the diseases spread by mosquitoes:
Anopheles: Malaria, Lymphatic Filariasis
Aedes: Yellow fever, Chikungunya, Dengue, Lymphatic Filariasis, Rift Valley Fever, Zika
Culex: Lymphatic Filariasis,

Japanese encephalitis, West Nile fever

Mosquito spread diseases that claim more lives than any other diseases.

Dengue: This is a mosquito-borne viral disease that occurs in the sub-tropical and tropical parts of the world, spread to humans through the bite of an infected species of Aedes. In dengue there are four DENV serotypes, meaning that there are chances of getting infected four times. While DENV infections produce only mild illness, it can cause acute flu-like illness as well.

Fact: According to studies, 100 million new infections of dengue are estimated to occur annually in more than 100 countries.

Chikungunya: This disease is highly found in Asia and Africa. Most people diagnosed with this disease recover within a week or sometimes few more days. Its symptoms occur within the first week of infection with sudden fever, joint pains, fatigue, and rashes in some cases. There is no cure for the disease and the treatment is focused on relieving the symptoms. Between the years 2012 and 2016 India saw a 300 per cent rise in the cases of Chikungunya.

Fact: This disease shares some clinical signs with Zika and Dengue which can be misdiagnosed in areas where they are common.

Malaria: This disease is caused

Yellow fever is also commonly known as jaundice. It is an acute viral hemorrhagic disease transmitted by infected mosquitoes. No specific treatments for the disease exist so far. Efforts focus mainly on managing symptoms and limiting complications

by a plasmodium parasite that is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. People suffering from this disease have symptoms like fever, chills, and sweatiness. This disease is curable by treatment from an expert doctor and it is also preventable by taking protective drugs before entering an area contaminated by the disease.

Fact: The majority of deaths due to mosquitoes are caused by Malaria which alone has around 4, 35,000 deaths as per a report in 2017.

Yellow Fever: Yellow fever is also commonly known as jaundice in many parts of the world. This disease is an acute viral hemorrhagic disease transmitted by infected mosquitoes. No specific treatments for the disease exist so far. Efforts focus mainly on managing symptoms and limiting complications.

Fact: While most symptoms of the disease clear up after three or four days, some cases enter a second phase, which can cause high fever, severe bleeding, and organ failure.

India being a favorite habitat for mosquitoes, during the monsoon season, and the hot tropical area with large population invites the female mosquitoes who are the carriers of the diseases. The spread of mosquito-borne diseases can be reduced only by taking precautions and being informed about the tiny killer.

The writer is Consulting Physician, Suasth Hospital

ALL ABOUT ENERGY DRINKS

There are several myths around the consumption of energy drinks and its effects. AVNI KAUL busts a few



An energy drink is a kind of drink having stimulant compounds, generally, caffeine, which is marketed as giving mental and physical stimulation (branded as energy, but different from food energy). They could or could not be carbonated and might also contain sugar, other sweeteners, herbal extracts, amino acids, and taurine. They are a subset of the bigger group of energy products, which includes bars and gels and separate from sports drinks, which are promoted to enhance sports performance. There are several brands and varieties in this drink category.

Coffee, tea and other naturally caffeinated drinks are generally not considered energy drinks. Other soft drinks such as aerated drinks may contain caffeine but are not considered energy drinks either. Though it is safe for a healthy adult to drink a total of 400 mg of caffeine a day. This claim is also confirmed by one of the panels of the European Food Safety Authority.

Energy drinks have the impacts of caffeine and sugar, but there is little or no evidence that the wide variety of other ingredients have any impact.

However, like several things, there are several myths about energy drinks.

Myth 1: Energy drinks have high amounts of caffeine

Fact: The large majority of energy drinks available that are consumed in India like the Monster, Red Bull, and several prominent brands have similar or lower levels of caffeine compared to the home-brewed coffee which many people enjoy on a daily basis. And many consists of half the caffeine of a similarly-sized coffee shop coffee. A 473.176 ml energy drink normally contains 160 milligrams of caffeine, while the same size coffee shop coffee contains around 300 to 330 milligrams. Moreover, caffeine has been considered to safely be consumed around the globe for hundreds of years.

Myth 2: Energy drinks and caffeine drinks are the same

Fact: Myths, energy drinks and energy shots are not the same. Mainstream energy drinks made and distributed by companies are branded as conventional beverages and thus, regulated as such. They are also present in package sizes comparable to those of other non-alcoholic drinks. Energy drinks are normally marketed as dietary supplements and are sold in package sizes where the quantity is usually about 59.1471 ml. Most well-known brands also normally contain a much higher concentration of caffeine.

Myth 3: Energy drinks are harmless

Fact: The sugar and caffeine in energy drinks can be excessive. Excessive caffeine can cause anxiety, a higher heart rate, and increased blood pressure. And the sugar well as much as 15 tsp in a single serving which is far beyond the daily recommendation of six teaspoons for women and nine teaspoons for men.

The writer is Nutritionist Wellness Coach & Certified Diabetes Educator, Founder of NutriActivaria

DadiKaKehna

The pandemic has made many people do all the household chores. While it is good to do your work, the down side is dry and rough hands. ROSHANI DEVI shares tips that can help



The COVID-19 has made many people do all the household chores including washing utensils and clothes. The detergents can make your hands dry and rough. While moisturiser is good, the effect is temporary. However, one can use kitchen ingredients for a lasting effect.

We all know the benefits of olive oil when it comes to cooking but did you know that using it on hands does wonders too? Take half a teaspoon of olive oil (cold pressed preferred) and a teaspoon of sugar. Rub the two between the palms and at the back of the hand for two-three minutes. Wash off with water.

For better results do this twice a day.

One can even use lemon juice, glycerin and rose water. Take one-part lemon juice, one-part glycerin and two parts rosewater. Pour them in a bottle and store in a cool dry place. Use this liquid at night on your hands. Wash off in the morning.

Aloe vera does the trick as well. Take a little aloe vera gel and rub it on the hands for a couple of minutes. If you have a plant, take a leaf cut in half and slice it horizontally. Rub this on the hands. Rinse off 15-20 minutes. Do this twice daily for soft hands.



TIPTOP

Biogetica, has announced its groundbreaking trials result on Herpes, on August 20, 2020. The research successfully marks reduced time & early treatment with the use of combination therapy of the company's Hyperisince and Reginimmune.

It started way back in the year 2004, when Dr T Vijayan from the JSS School of pharmaceuticals discovered that extracts of Hypericum Mysorensis, a rare plant from the Nilgiri Hills could completely suppress the herpes virus in-vitro.

Some major pharmaceutical companies decided to synthesise 'hypericin' and use it for trials on Herpes & HIV. However, the trials were put to a halt by the FDA due to reports of synthetic hypericin molecules having side effects.

Biogetica a global collective of doctors and scientists dedicated to natural medicine was the only firm that actually worked with the plant and not a synthesised version of

its active molecule. The challenge was to make it enter cell membranes and work in vivo. There was also attempts to cross the blood brain barrier to get to nerve ganglia where herpes thrives.

Clinical trials published in 2017 showed remarkable results for Herpes, busting the age old myth that Ayurveda takes a longer time to show results and that someone with herpes will always have recurrences. In the trial it was seen that a herpes outbreak usually lasts 21 days without treatment. Acyclovir the FDA approved pharmaceutical for herpes can bring that duration down to nine days. The combination therapy of Hyperisince and Reginimmune however brought the average time down to three days. Furthermore 76 per cent of patients with genital herpes who took the combination of Hyperisince and Reginimmune did not have a relapse of herpes for the follow up period of two years.

SLIMLINE

The Apollo Hospitals Group marked its 15th anniversary of JCI accreditation that recognises its commitment to excellence across the spectrum of care with a unique webinar on patient safety and quality of care in association with Joint Commission International, USA (JCI) and the National Accreditation Board of Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH).

It was in July 2005 that the Apollo Hospitals Group clocked a major milestone when Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, New Delhi

became the first hospital in the country and the sixth in Asia to be accredited by the JCI. Since then, eight hospitals in the group including the Apollo Proton Cancer Centre have joined the elite list of JCI accredited hospitals for best global practices, patient care and safety.

The webinar organised to mark the occasion saw participation from healthcare leaders, quality heads, administrators, policy makers, patient safety experts, and healthcare management students with a passion for quality and patient safety.

INBRIEF

Gurgaon-based Premas Biotech said on August 27, 2020 that its triple-antigen vaccine candidate for COVID-19 has induced neutralising immune response in mice during the four-week test of its SARS-CoV-2 vaccine candidate. The company is in talks with the regulatory authorities concerned to plan and initiate next steps towards conducting human trials.

The study consisted of 50 mice, divided into 10 cohorts dosed with 5, 10 and 20 micrograms of PRAK-03202 vaccine candidate. The vaccine candidate was generally well tolerated and safe at all doses, with no adverse events reported. The vaccine candidate was safe even at higher doses and generated a robust immune response against all three SARS-CoV2 antigens, Spike (S), Envelope (E) and Membrane (M). PRAK-03202 elicited neutralising antibody titers levels in all doses, from 5 microgram to 20 microgram dose regimens. After three doses in mice, all groups cohorts showed binding antibody levels similar to convalescent patients' levels.

Prabuddha Kundu, Co-Founder and Managing Director at Premas Biotech, commented: "We are happy to report that the vaccine candidate study in mice has gone on well, and the results are positive and encouraging. We have engaged with the regulatory authorities in India and are working towards the next steps under their guidance."

Premas' vaccine candidate is triple-antigen (based on the three COVID-19 proteins S, M & E) which differentiates it from other candidates under development around the world. Earlier in May, Premas Biotech had announced that it was the first in the world to obtain transmission electronic microscopic images of the recombinant virus like particle of SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Trend Blazer

Alia resumes shoot post lockdown

Actor ALIA BHATT is happy to resume shooting after the long spell of lockdown. She shared her excitement in a new Instagram post. In the clip, Alia is seen using a face roller.

"What day is it? It's a shoot day," she wrote with the video, although she did not reveal what she was shooting for.

On the work front, Alia's latest release is *Sadak 2*. Released on an OTT platform, the film has been facing negative reviews and response.

The film has tackled heavy trolling ever since the first look of the film was launched. On August 16, it was reported that the film's trailer had emerged the third most disliked video in the world and the most disliked YouTube video in India.



'If someone calls me for a role, I first ask them if I have to dance, fight or drive, because I can't do those things. I accept it. But if you ask me to say a monologue for an hour, I can do that easily. That's my strength. I can say that I am an actor with limitations. I don't think there is anything wrong in accepting the things I can't do.'

—Sanjay Gandhi

The year 2020 has been etched in everybody's minds for all the wrong reasons. Given the pandemic, everyone has faced setbacks. However, it's for us to decide how to overcome these setbacks and march ahead.



The will and determination to move forward comes from within, and the 12th season of *Kaun Banega Crorepati (KBC)* gears up for the comeback with the thought — *Jo Bhi Ho, Setback Ka Jawaab Comeback Se Do*.

The campaign of this season brings forth relatable examples, through humane stories, which inspire and encourage people to make a greater comeback in life.

Boseman honoured at VMAs

Black Panther star CHADWICK BOSEMAN, whose death last week came as a shock to many, received a one-minute tribute at MTV Video Music Awards.

"The world needs more super-heroes," a title card read at the beginning of the segment.

Back in 2018, he used the award ceremony to put the spotlight on a real life hero.

"Receiving an award for playing a superhero is amazing. But, it's even greater to acknowledge the heroes that we have in real life. So I just want to acknowledge somebody that's here today — James Shaw Jr. If you don't know him, he fought off a gunman in Antioch, Tennessee, at a Waffle House, saved lives. God bless you," Boseman had said.



Actor Nia Sharma has won *Khatron Ke Khiladi: Made In India*, beating Jasmin Bhasin and Karan Wahi in the final. The contest was a special edition of the reality TV adventure game show and it was launched earlier this month after season 10 of *Khatron Ke Khiladi* concluded.

Hosted by Rohit Shetty, the *Made In India* edition of *Khatron Ke Khiladi* featured champions of past seasons such as Jay Bhanushali, Rithvik Dhanjani, Bharti Singh, Haarsh Limbachiya, Aly Goni and Karan Patel. Dhanjani had to quit the contest midway due to personal commitments.

"*Khatron Ke Khiladi* started off as a fun special edition, but it quickly became my sole agenda to win the season. I gave my all to every stunt that I performed on the show," said Nia, who has ear-

Winning the wild

TV actor NIA SHARMA says that *Khatron Ke Khiladi: Made In India* started as a fun outing but soon steered her with a competitive spirit

lier contested in season eight of the show.

The season witnessed the host and action filmmaker Rohit Shetty design some incredible stunts for the contestants. Nia overcame challenges that involved conquering heights, negotiating explosions, swimming through mud and, in one round, surviving a watery coffin. She also made a mark on the Colors channel show with her camaraderie with co-contestants, especially comedian Harsh Limbachiya.

"The team always showed immense faith in me and

encouraged me to go and give my best. I did not want to let go of the second opportunity that Colors gave me. I wanted to win and I would not have been at ease with any other result. Winning the season brought a sense of happiness and satisfaction. It was also my answer to those people who thought Nia was only about makeup and styling. No, she's not. She is a winner and she has proven it with this win!" Nia added.

The grand finale had a Bollywood-style red carpet laid out for the contestants. The finale stunts involved

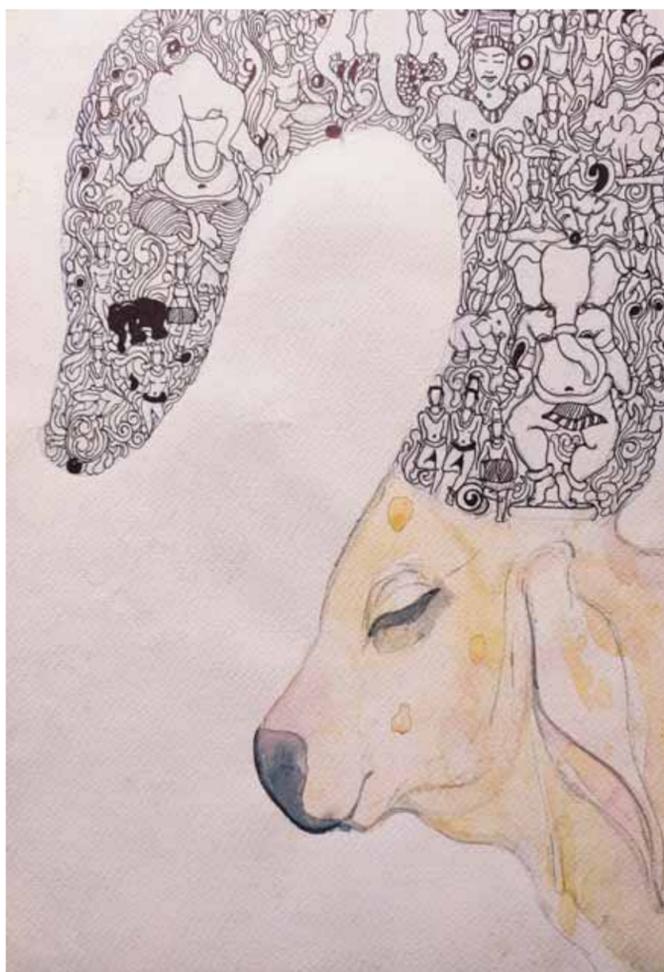
pythons, spinning stunts at towering heights, and a three-part heist designed specially by Rohit Shetty, where the contestants had to hunt down a necklace to win, amidst explosions, shattered glass, and electric shock.

Rohit earlier wrote in his Instagram post, "Before commencing the shoot for this season, we were worried because of pandemic, lockdown, safety of the unit and contestants and will be able to match the international standards of action for this season of *Khatron Ke Khiladi* as we were shooting it in

Mumbai. But at last we pulled it off. I am really proud of my action team for making this season as one of the best... After all it's *Made in India*."

Manisha Sharma, Chief Content Officer, Hindi Mass Entertainment, Viacom18, said, "Given the fact that we were shooting for the show in India, we got a great opportunity to incorporate various Bollywood elements to the stunts, while making it more entertaining."

Abhishek Rege, CEO, Endemol added, "I would like to congratulate Nia for her win and for giving such an amazing and spirited performance. To create such an impactful show with the constraints we faced due to the pandemic speaks of the creativity and ingenuity of the entire *Khatron Ke Khiladi: Made In India* team. We look forward to the next season." —With inputs from agencies



Some of them like Muktabai and Janabai even hold their own status in a male-dominated society. The conclusion drawn is that *bhakti*, though in a small way, paved the path for equality amongst the sexes, particularly in the medieval period. And Chikanna's intricate imagery points towards this movement of growth.

Detailed designs

Looking at Chikanna's cow images, we at once think of Nandi — Lord Shiva's sacred bull. Nandi is Shiva's faithful mount and the most devout worshipper — an embodiment of devotion. The young bull is popularly, but incorrectly, known as Nandi, "the joyful," but is better referred to simply as Vrishabha, the "white bull." He is understood as an expression of Shiva's supreme wisdom and thus is also worshipped as a theomorphic form of Shiva himself. Nandi always assumed an independent cult status. Shrines to Shiva's bull are the testifies to the resilience of such cults. Chikanna's imagery on the horns brings in the magic of folk art and echoes of the medieval era.

Miniature tradition

The exquisitely-detailed drawings tell us that Chikanna has studied the rigorous techniques of the miniature tradition — from gilding and hand-crafting the thickly-piled to carefully burnished paper supporting the careful application of colour with tiny pen, ink strokes, and curls and curves.

Chikanna has a velvet hand. He continues to experiment within the well-defined strictures of this traditional discipline. In both these examples, it is the finely-detailed portraits of the god set in sumptuously-filled landscapes, and replete with the meticulous detail that remind us of yesteryear imagery found in folios commissioned by the Mughal emperors. For Chikanna, there is an exquisite tension between the stringent parameters of this ancient practice and the modernity of his experience — one that speaks, in part, to the frictions of a world in which novelty and orthodoxy collide.

Expression becomes his leitmotif in his recreating the cow's face. In a world ruled by paradoxes of glittering wealth and abject poverty and sometimes oppressive religion and debauchery, these two drawings present a masterful debut steeped in atmosphere and shimmering with the mystery of the human hand that can create works, which we can admire till eternity.

Tales of the divine

Artist SANTOSH CHIKANNA's works find their inspiration in the holy cow and the beauty of mythology. By UMA NAIR

Lockdown unravelled the brilliance of artist Santosh Chikanna who lives in Bidar, Karnataka. It was his *Holy Cow* series that caught my gaze. It is an amazing composition, where the detailing of the divine appears to be his forte. He calls his series with an exclamatory dialogue; when you look at it, you can see the majesty of the miniature world, the beauty of mythology, his perennial fascination for the gods and some tales from the *Puranas*.

Bhakti and emotive essence

While his cow is both contemporary and traditional, it is his focus on the horn that radiates an energy that is at once evocative. Santosh recreates Lord Ganesha in different ways, striking up a conversation about the worship of gods and questioning as to how to look after the cow.

He says, "In Delhi, there are many who leave their cows back at home and wander, hoping to get some food. I have a cow that comes and bellows at my gate every morning at 6:30, and I feed her. Her trust in me is uncanny. Her eyes reflect a divinity I have rarely seen. There is the beauty of history and tradition and lifestyle and satire in these compositions as well as a sense of play.

The drawing on the horns evokes feelings of *bhakti*, or spiritual devotion, love for nature as well as worship and longing for the divine moment, but when used as storytelling, they mirror the same emotion in the viewer. The concept of *bhakti* goes back to ancient times and the *Rig Veda*. It is derived from the root 'Bhai', which means to serve or adore. *Bhakti* cut across all sections of society and

SANTOSH RECREATES LORD GANESHA IN DIFFERENT WAYS, STRIKING UP A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE WORSHIP OF GODS

became accessible to one and all. Maharashtra is full of stories of the *bhakti* movement and women saints. Scholars like J Stor say that in a sense, women did far better in the *bhakti* milieu but only within the metaphor of what was known as the *pati-vrata dharma*. There are some exceptions to this general description in the lives of women saints belonging to the *Varkari* tradition of Maharashtra.

Outside the auditorium

The 15th META celebrates stagecraft with a virtual award ceremony and signals possibilities for theatre in an increasingly digital world

Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) and Festival concluded a three-week celebration, bringing together theatre personalities in a virtual ceremony. The festival rewards and recognises excellence across all aspects of theatre production. It is curated and produced by arts and entertainment company, Teamwork Arts.

The 15th edition of the festival brings attention to the artiste community and performing arts space, whose livelihood have been significantly impacted due to the COVID outbreak.

Speaking at the ceremony, Anand Mahindra, Chairman, Mahindra Group said, "In spite of, or perhaps because of, all our current difficulties, the ceremo-



ny transcends the boundaries of an auditorium and becomes accessible to an audience of thousands, right in their homes."

Signalling new possibilities for theatre in an increasingly digital-only world, plays were viewed online to decide the winners. The jury included playwright, stage director and filmmaker Mahesh Dattani, playwright and novelist Makarand Sathe, veteran actor and a teacher of speech and drama Sushma Seth, actor-writer Vinay Pathak who's been actively involved in Indian cinema and theatre for over two decades, and film, television and theatre actor and director, Lillete Dubey.

Unanimously recognised as an example of modern experimental theatre, Delhi-based Black Box Okhla's *For the Record*, directed by Nikhil Mehta, won the Best Play and also bagged the highest number of awards across six categories.

The Old Man (Assamese and Gibberish) from Orchid Theatre and *Ghoom Nei* (Bengali) from Thakurpukur Ichheyamoto Theatre Group bagged four awards each, highlighting the talent in theatre being produced in the country's East.

The winner from the South, Malayalam production, *Bhaskara Pattellarum Thommiyude Jeevithavum* from Backstage won for Best Stage Design by Suveeran.

Eminent names who gave away the awards included Ajit Rai, Akhila

Krishnamurthy, Ashley Lobo, Deepa Punjani, Deepika Deshpande Amin, Dolly Ahluwalia, Feroz Abbas Khan, Ila Arun, Joseph Mitchell, Lillete Dubey, Makarand Sathe, Mahesh Dattani, Nandita Das, Naveen Kishore, Sharmila Tagore, Shobha Deepak Singh, Sonal Mansingh, Sumant Jayakrishnan, Sushma Seth and Vinay Pathak.

The nominated plays offered diverse theatre scenes and included plays in multiple languages such as Hindi, English, Hindustani, Bengali, Marathi, Malayalam, Assamese (blended with gibberish) and a non-verbal play too. The nominations featured five productions from Maharashtra, two from Kerala and one each from Assam, Delhi and West Bengal. From reinterpretations of mythology, the crises of ideology, explorations and exploitations of gender, and the marginalisation and politics of caste, there were thought-provoking drama that inspires change and brings relevant social issues to the forefront.

Earlier, the META Lifetime Achievement Award was conferred on director, actor, set designer, writer, teacher and Theatre Action Group's founder director, Barry John.

The ceremony also included a Theatre Critics Conference focussing on critical discourse on theatre in the country and the launch of the first-ever published edition of a META Best Original Script (winner of 2019) giving impetus to scriptwriting in contemporary Indian theatre.

End of road for Raina in CSK?

Hazlewood 'concerned' with Chennai's Covid-19 outbreak

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

His exit from the IPL attributed to personal reasons this season, all-round Suresh Raina's stint with Chennai Super Kings seems in jeopardy even next year as the franchise might part ways with him before the 2021 edition.

The CSK camp based in Dubai reported 13 Covid-19 cases, including two main squad members Deepak Chahar and Rituraj Gaikwad, a development which an IPL source said, played a role in the recently-retired Indian player's exit from the event starting September 19.

However, it has now emerged that the team management was not particularly happy with the 32-year-old's "conduct" during the quarantine time, something which infuriated CSK owner and former BCCI president N Srinivasan.

"In CSK, the norm is that the coach, captain and the manager get suites. However, Raina also gets a suite in any hotel that the franchise stays. It's just that his room didn't have a balcony," an IPL source said.

"It was an issue but I don't think big enough to warrant a comeback (to India). There could be something more than just the scare of rising Covid-caseload in Chennai," the source added, alluding to a speculated breach of the bio-bubble by Raina.

He said given the situation,



Raina could well be gone for good now not only this season but also the next IPL scheduled in April, 2021. Chennai's favourite *Chinna Thala* may not wear the Canary yellow again.

Is there a possibility of Raina coming back this season, thereby changing the circumstances?

"He is unavailable this season and that is clear from the official statement issued by the CSK. Now there are certain things that have not gone down

too well with the top people," the source said.

"It looks highly improbable that someone who has retired and likely won't play any cricket will come back for CSK. Maybe, he will be back in auction and someone else might pick him."

CSK is punting heavily on young Rituraj, expecting that he will come good once he completes the quarantine and rejoins the training session after two negative tests.

"CSK has not yet asked for

Dhoni should bat at 3 in Raina's absence

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mahendra Singh Dhoni should be batting at number three for Chennai Super Kings now that Suresh Raina has pulled out of the IPL, feels former India opener Gautam Gambhir.

Gambhir thinks that Dhoni, who has been away from the game for over a year, should try and play as many balls possible.

"It will be a good opportunity for MS Dhoni to come and bat at No 3," Gambhir said on *Star Sports'* show *Cricket Connected*.

"And he has been away

from the game for the last one year, so he would end up getting a lot more balls to face and then he can actually play the anchor innings as well which he has been doing for India for the last couple of years," the two-time IPL-winning skipper said.

Gambhir said that Dhoni can come at one down as there are batsmen who can play the finishing game.

"So, MS Dhoni at No 3 and then

they have got depth with Kedar Jadhav, Dwayne Bravo, Sam Curran, all those guys they can come in.

"So, I think it is going to be a great opportunity for someone like MS Dhoni and I am sure he is going to relish that. Also, Suresh Raina not being there, you want to have some experienced player batting at No 3, so it could be MS Dhoni now," he added.

Raina will realise what he's going to lose: Srinivasan

Seasoned batsman Suresh Raina will realise what he is missing out on by skipping the Indian Premier League and his absence won't have an impact on the Chennai Super Kings, team owner N Srinivasan has said.

In an interview with *Outlook* magazine, Srinivasan shared his views on Raina's sudden decision to leave the CSK team and head back to India.

The 75-year-old said that CSK were confident of their

chances in the 13th edition of the IPL despite the departure of their highest run-getter.

"The season has not begun yet and Raina will certainly realise what he is missing and certainly all the money he is going to lose," Srinivasan, a former BCCI and International Cricket Council chief, was quoted as saying.

CSK CEO Kasi Viswanathan had confirmed on Saturday that Raina had left the team and flown back to India due to "personal reasons".

PTI ■ SOUTHAMPTON

Australian pacer Josh Hazlewood on Monday admitted that he is "concerned" about the Covid-19 outbreak in his IPL side Chennai Super Kings, but said he is currently focusing on the limited overs tour of England.

The IPL, which is beginning in the UAE on September 19, has reported 13 Covid-19 positive cases from the CSK contingent, including two players.

"We have a group WhatsApp with all the information that comes through, it's obviously a little bit of a concern," Hazlewood, who is here for national duty, told reporters.

Those who have tested positive have been isolated

in a separate hotel. According to the BCCI's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), all those who test positive are mandated to go

through an additional 14-day quarantine. They can enter the bio-secure bubble only after returning negative in tests to be conducted after the extended isolation.

"Ideally you'd have no cases, they are in quarantine now and I think that finishes up in

next few days. All my focus is on this tour at the moment and when the IPL comes closer we'll think about that," Hazlewood said.

Hazlewood is part of the Australian squad that has travelled to England for the white-ball tour. The two sides will play three T20Is in Southampton and as many ODIs in Manchester between Sept 4-16.

The 29-year-old, who along with the likes of David Warner, Steve Smith, Pat Cummins and Aaron Finch is scheduled to travel to the UAE after the tour of England, said there will be discussions with the Cricket Australia (CA) if the number of positive cases in the IPL increases.

"We haven't spoken too much about it yet, it's a few weeks away until we get there. I assume those things will come up if cases are still happening closer to the date, then we'll touch base with Cricket Australia (CA) and have a chat."

CA has been extra cautious in its approach to counter the Covid-19 pandemic. The board has restricted its players from using sweat from the head, face and neck to shine the ball during the tour of England to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus.



Training on sticky wicket was a great challenge: AB

DUBAI: The sticky wicket was a "great challenge" but South African star AB de Villiers left the ground after his first net session in ages as a satisfied man, having got what he had wanted ahead of the IPL.

The 36-year-old, who turns out for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the T20 league, resumed training after a five-months and said the first sessions were pretty good as he stuck to the basics.

"It was very good, enjoyable to be out there, the wicket was a bit sticky so it was a great challenge, actually if I could have it my way, I would have wanted my first net session to go like this only after a long time," De Villiers said in a video posted on RCB's official Twitter handle.

"I kept my basics in place, watched the ball carefully, I played some nice shots in the end and it was enjoyable," added de Villiers, who also donned the keeping gloves during the session.

De Villiers was in quarantine for six days after arriving in the UAE and hit the nets after clearing three Covid-19 tests. The session was also attended by Umesh Yadav, Parthiv Patel and Gurkeerat Singh among others.

The team had hit the nets for the first time on Saturday after successfully ending its quarantine period.

Important for players like Shami to set example for juniors: Rhodes

PTI ■ DUBAI

Kings XI Punjab's fielding coach Jonty Rhodes feels it's important for the team's senior players such as Mohammed Shami to set an example for the juniors to follow in the upcoming IPL.

"From an energy perspective, I always look to the senior players to lead because there are some talented young players like Mayank Agarwal, Karun Nair, Deepak Hooda, some great fielders," Rhodes said in a video posted on the official Twitter handle of Kings XI Punjab.

"But it's guys like Shami who, for me, are so important to this outfit because they are often looked up to and respected in very high regard, especially in Indian cricketing circles.

"If they are setting high standards, then young players, it's easier for



them to follow. So it's great to see Shami speed to the ball, great technique and just showing the younger guys that he's still got something left in the tank."

This will be Rhodes' first stint with the Kings XI Punjab. He is making a return to the IPL after having spent two seasons away post his stint with the Mumbai Indians.

Misbah's reaction will have bad effect on team: Inzi

PTI ■ LAHORE

Former Pakistan skipper Inzamam-ul-Haq has slammed coach-cum-selector Misbah-ul-Haq for his negative body language during Pakistan's defeat in the second T20I against England on Sunday.

England chased down a stiff 196-run target losing only five wickets.

With England going strong at 65 for no loss, Misbah was seen sitting with his hands over his face and holding his head in disappointment.

Inzamam said such reactions sends a negative message to the team which was still battling in the middle.

"During the fifth over of England innings, when Pakistan were bowling their Powerplay overs and had con-



Pakistan head coach Misbah-ul-Haq reacts during 2nd T20 on Sunday

ceded 40-45 runs, the camera kept showing Misbah and he had his hands on his head, which suggested that something really bad had happened," Inzamam said in his *YouTube* channel.

"There were still 155-160 runs to go, the match could have gone in anyone's favour,

but you are sending a message that suggests that you have done something wrong.

"You can have a proper discussion after the game, but if you respond like this during the match, then this will have a bad effect on the team."

The former skipper said it is important to send "positive

vibes" irrespective of the match situation.

"No matter what happens during the match, only positive vibes should go out from the dressing room. It's very important. We are T20 champions. If we're losing in that (format), it's a cause of worry."

The 50-year-old Inzamam also drew a comparison between Misbah and former coach Mickey Arthur, who was shown the door following Pakistan's disappointing World Cup campaign last year.

"Mickey Arthur used to respond in the same way," said Inzamam, who was the chief selector when Arthur served as the chief coach.

"Whenever I used to go to watch series and talk to players, they used to complain a lot that Arthur's similar antics affected them negatively."

Anand wants Olympiad win to bring in 'long' due national honours for chess players

PTI ■ CHENNAI

It's been seven years since a chess player got the Arjuna award and the iconic Viswanathan Anand is hoping that India's triumphant campaign at the online Chess Olympiad will change this when the national sporting honours are announced next year.

In an interview after India won the top honours jointly with Russia on Sunday, Anand, a recipient of both the Arjuna and the Khel Ratna, said award recognition is due for the sport's practitioners in India.

"I hope this will lead to all sorts of positive things including the reconsideration in the Sports Ministry of the Arjuna award and the Dronacharya awards for chess. It has been a long time," said the country's first Khel Ratna awardee.

The last time a chess player received the Arjuna was in 2013 when Abhijeet Gupta was bestowed the honour, while a chess coach has been given the Dronacharya just twice — Raghunandan Vasant Gokhale (1986) and Koneru Ashok (2006).

"Sometimes you need to show that we are still there and I hope this results in positive impetus for many things," Anand said.

He said in the last few



years, there has been "a drop off in the attitude of the Sports Ministry towards chess players" regarding Government awards.

"I don't mean at a personal level obviously. Just that institutionally, we no longer get awards for international competitions," Anand said later in an online media interaction.

Anand also touched upon the wrangling within the national federation.

"It might be due to various issues pertaining to code of conduct etc. Our federation has had some difficulties. It would be nice to reset this. And the best way to reset this is not by writing long letters to editors but by having good results like this."

'MAGICAL MOMENT FOR US'
The legendary player termed India's maiden Gold

medal win in the Chess Olympiad as a "magical moment" which will spur the further growth of the sport in the country.

"The tournament went like a dream for me. A special Gold for me. A special moment for youngsters. Winning the Gold is simply a magical moment," Anand told reporters during an online media interaction, along with all the other 11 members of the Indian team.

"I hope this will be the start of many things for India," Anand said of the country's first Gold medal in the Chess Olympiad.

Indian men had previously won a Bronze in the 2014 edition, which was the country's best finish before this Gold.

"The Olympiad win is very special...A very special medal I will add to my collection," he added.

Murray eyes strong US run

NEW YORK: Andy Murray says his true self will be on show at a Grand Slam for the first time in three years this week at the US Open after battling back from a career-threatening hip injury.

The former world No 1 said the last time he felt this pain-free going into a tennis major was at Roland Garros in 2017.

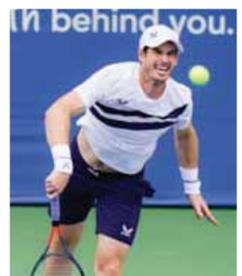
"It has been a long journey to get back to this point," the 33-year-old told reporters.

"I'm actually hopefully going to compete at a Slam where I'm not worried about how I'm going to be and how my hip is going to feel. The last time that would have been was in the 2017 French Open.

"It's a long time ago and I know I've played a couple of slams since then but that wasn't really me on the court," he added.

Murray had career-saving hip surgery in 2019, his second hip operation, before suffering another setback with a pelvic injury at the Davis Cup last November.

That, combined with the



coronavirus pandemic shutdown, kept him out of competition until the ATP Western and Southern Open this past week, where he reached the last 16.

The 2012 US Open champion said he is "pumped" to be back at Flushing Meadows for the first time since 2018.

"Physically right now I feel pretty good. So I'm really happy about that because it's allowing me to practice, and prepare properly and enjoy my time on the court," he said.

Murray plays Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka in the first round on Tuesday.

Immobile extends Lazio contract

ROME: Prolific scorer Ciro Immobile has extended his contract with Lazio through 2025. His previous contract was due to expire in 2023.

"This is important, because Immobile had gained the attention of some big clubs, considering that he's the European Golden Boot holder," Lazio communications director Stefano De Martino said on Monday.

Immobile scored 36 goals to match Gonzalo Higuain's Italian league record.

Santoso demands more shuttlers' in national camp

NEW DELHI: India's foreign coach for badminton, Agus Dwi Santoso, says he will not be able to implement his plans with only four shuttlers at his disposal, and wants the Sports Authority of India to allow more players in the national camp.

He admitted that the Covid-19 situation remains worrisome but said they will have to adapt to it. The nodal sports body had allowed the camp for eight Olympic hopefuls following approval from the Telangana Government but only four are currently training at the SAI-Pullela Gopichand Academy.

"The current situation is still a worry but we have to adapt and live with the virus. We have been following the protocols of the Government but I need more



players to implement my plans," Santoso said.

He has been hired to work with the top singles players.

Out of the eight Olympic hopefuls, only world champion PV Sindhu, B Sai Praneeth, women's doubles specialist Sikki Reddy and Kidambi Srikanth are currently attending the camp.

Former world No 1 Saina Nehwal has still not joined the

Centre of Sports Excellence.

"I understand SAI's decision to allow eight players for the camp in this pandemic but only four players are training. I need more players of the same level, quality players because badminton is a mind game, it needs teamwork," Santoso said.

"It has been few weeks and we are still training a few players and that is not good. It is important to train as a group so that players can compete hard and help each other. A healthy competition is important.

"I hope for support from SAI in getting more players to train. Once we have that, we would be in a better position to prepare and do well in tournaments including the Tokyo Olympics."