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FIGHT AGAINST CORONA

2,700 new beds will be added within next 4-5 days: Sisodia

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government will escalate bed strength amid rising cases of coronavirus in the national Capital, as on Tuesday, after a high-level meeting with Health Minister Satyendra Jain and officials, deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said 2,700 new beds will be added within next 4-5 days while city administration already increased beds from 6,071 to 19,101 in the last two weeks.

Urging people to follow the covid norms, and encouraging for home isolation, and to check the Delhi Corona App for the availability of beds in hospitals, Sisodia also warned hospitals for showing inaccurate information on the App will be dealt with stringent action.

Sisodia said, "The Delhi government is working on a war footing to increase the number of beds in Delhi's hospitals. In the last 2 weeks the number of covid designated beds in Delhi have been increased by 3 times. The number of covid-19 beds in Delhi on April 3rd 2021 was 6071 which is 19101 on April 20." According to database of



health department, presently, 320 beds in Burari Hospital, which will be increased to 800.

The capacity of beds at Ambedkar Nagar Hospital will be increased from 200 to 600 and the beds at Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital will be increased from 250 to 750.

250-250 new beds will be added at Acharya Shree Bhikshu (150 to 400) and DRDO's covid-19 Centre.

The number of beds in the Satyawadi Raja Harishchandra Hospital of Narela will be increased from 200 to 400 while government school will be connected to the LNJP hospital which will include 125 beds and a center of 500 beds will be set up in the Commonwealth Games Village.

Citing the health department preparedness report on corona, Jain said that the beds have been increased upto three times in Delhi in the last few days, 2426 beds out of 18923 beds available in covid hospitals. More than 90 thousand covid tests were conducted in Delhi on Monday and positivity rate was 26 percent. It has been appealed to the Central Government that all companies should be allowed to supply Remdesivir so that its shortage ends. There is an appeal to the migrants that Delhi has a very short lockdown, they should not leave Delhi, the Kejriwal government will take care of its people. If the central government allows us to start vaccination centres in schools and community centers, then we will be able to do inoculate at a steadier pace.

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Home Secy appointed Nodal officer to supervise migrant issues

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Amid restrictions imposed to curb the spread of Covid-19 sparked the exit of migrant workers, the Delhi Government on Tuesday appointed Bhopinder Singh Bhalla, Principal Secretary (Home) as State Nodal officer for the coordinating and supervising matters pertaining to migrant workers.

As per the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) order, the appointed officer may issue necessary instructions to the District Magistrates (DMs) and District DCPs of Delhi as and

when required.

It is noteworthy to mention here that while announcing the lockdown, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had urged migrant workers not to leave the city as the imposed lockdown was of short duration.

The order cited the observation of the Delhi High Court stated DDMA constituted the committee of officers - Principal (Pr) Secretary (Home) Chairperson, Pr Secretary (Labour), Commissioner (Labour), Director (Education) member, Special Secretary (Finance), Deputy

Commissioner (HQ) Revenue Department, and Secretary, Delhi building and other construction workers welfare board.

Putting their health at risk, the migrant workers strived to reach their homes and had to wait hours at bus stop faced harassment being charged ten times fair more than usual.

Meanwhile, Rajesh Khurana, Special Commissioner (Police) will also be the Nodal Officer as per the DDMA notice to ensure support and assistance required from the Police department.

City records 28,395 new cases on Tuesday, 277 deaths

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi on Tuesday registered 28,395 new Covid-19 cases and 277 fatalities in the last 24 hours, the highest single-day since the beginning of the pandemic.

The positivity rate reported 32.82 percent per cent positivity rate, 19430 patients discharged. The death toll in Delhi recorded at 12,638.

On Monday, 21,500 patients were discharged. With

7,87,898 total discharged. Currently, 40,0124 people are in home isolation in the national capital.

In the last 24 hours, 56,724 samples were tested. Out of this, 29,803 were RT-PCR tests.

Cops create green corridor for tankers carrying 20K litres oxygen

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Tuesday created a green corridor for two tankers carrying 19,500 litres of liquid oxygen from Uttar Pradesh and Haryana borders to a Covid-19 hospital in outer Delhi's Paschim Vihar area.

Police said that the tankers had to urgently reach Sri Action Balaji Hospital, where oxygen levels had reached a critical point, but were stuck in a traffic jam.

According to Sudhanshu Dharma, the Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Outer district, the police received information around 11.30 PM on Monday and immediately teams were rushed to ensure smooth passage for the containers.

"A dedicated corridor was provided by Outer district police for two oxygen tankers carrying 19,500 litres of liquid oxygen from the UP and Haryana borders. The containers had to reach all-

COVID Action Balaji Hospital. The two tankers were escorted by Delhi police vehicles," said the Additional DCP.

"Meanwhile, 25 oxygen cylinders were arranged through the cooperation of medical superintendents of Sanjay Gandhi, Bhagwan Mahavir, Maharaja Agrasen and Jaijpur Golden hospitals," he said.

Dr Sunil Sumbil, medical superintendent of Sri Balaji Action Hospital thanked the Delhi Police for its efforts.

"The oxygen levels at our facility had reached a critical point. The vehicles carrying liquid oxygen could not reach on time as they were stuck in a traffic jam. We immediately informed the police and they rushed their teams. They created a green corridor and both vehicles reached on time," said Dr Sumbil. If the tankers had not reached in time, the lives of COVID-19 patients would have been in danger, he said.

Nodal officers to check availability of beds in pvt, Govt hosps in G'gram

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM :

With city registering a surge in Covid cases, the Deputy Commissioner of Gurugram, Dr Yash Garg appointed 22 nodal officers for 41 private/Government Covid hospitals across the district to check availability of beds in hospitals.

On Monday, the district administration had also informed that the number of beds for covid patients in all government and private hospitals of Gurugram will be increased by 800 from current

200. The nodal officers review meeting of the covid situation was held on Monday in Gurugram in which it was decided to ramp up medical infrastructure by increasing the number of oxygen and ICU beds across major hospitals.

"Nodal officers have been appointed in Gurugram to oversee arrangements that have been made to treat patients. They will submit daily reports to their superiors. The officials will ensure the number of beds reserved

for covid patients in those hospitals, the data of the admitted patients etc. will be uploaded on the portal 'https://covidggn.com' an online portal has been started on which every private hospital was asked to update the information about the number of beds available to them and the details of the filled beds, etc. regularly.

"A nodal officer in each hospital to regularly upload information about the availability of beds in these hospitals etc. on the portal, which in collaboration with the health department and administrative teams to make

the needy infected patients, the district administration 'https://covidggn.com' an online portal has been started on which every private hospital was asked to update the information about the number of beds available to them and the details of the filled beds, etc. regularly.

"A nodal officer in each hospital to regularly upload information about the availability of beds in these hospitals etc. on the portal, which in collaboration with the health department and administrative teams to make

the information sharing system in order," Garg stated.

"Instructions have been issued to all officials to stay in touch with these hospital authorities to avoid a crunch. Hospitals have been asked to maintain adequate stock of oxygen and other equipment based on consumption," Garg said, adding that the administration has decided to ramp up bed capacity in hospitals, including ICU beds, increase testing in crowded areas and take measures to lower the fatality rate and to curb covid cases".

Add 400 more Covid beds: Sisodia, Jain ask Ambedkar hospital

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

On the fifth day of continuous hospital visits to review the situation, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia went to Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar hospital in Rohini along with Health Minister Satyendra Jain and instructed to add 400 more Covid beds.

Sisodia spoke to the doctors and medical staff to under-

stand more about their situation. He also interacted with the admitted patients and their families and inquired about their well-being. He directed the hospital authorities to provide better services to patients.

Appreciating the role of doctors and medical staff, Sisodia said, "They are the real heroes. They are working tirelessly, keeping their lives at stake. They are saving thousands of lives. We are obliged

to them and salute their efforts."

Sisodia said, "We are living through really difficult times. Delhi government is leaving no stone unturned in ensuring best facilities to the people. I appeal to everyone to follow the rules and regulations diligently. We are all together in this battle against the Covid pandemic and we need everyone's cooperation to win this fight."

Week-long lockdown triggers migrants' exodus again

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After the Delhi Government imposed a week long lockdown from Monday night to curb the spike in Covid cases, in a replay of last year's, a large number of migrant labourers gathered at bus stations on Tuesday to go at their homes from the city, fearing the shutdown of the public transport may force them to walk hundreds of kilometers.

Last year, hundreds of migrant labourers had left the city on foot in the absence of public transport during the lockdown.

On Tuesday scores of migrant labourers were seen at Anand Vihar ISBT, Kashmiri Gate, New Delhi railway stations and Kaushambi bus depot. The officials at the bus stands and railway station were seen making several announcements and asking people to maintain social distancing, wear masks and regularly sanitise themselves.

Chandan Siroj, a native of Jaunpur in Uttar Pradesh, said that during the last lockdown, he travelled in a truck to reach his home.

"We were stuck for over one month here last year during the lockdown. The food was not an issue, but we were



Passengers arrive at Anand Vihar Terminal in New Delhi on Tuesday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

scared for our lives. We reached Jaunpur after travelling in a truck. We came back around two months ago. On Monday, we told our employer that we are leaving for Jaunpur and requested him for some money. He only gave Rs 500 each to us. Its not going to be the same this year, nobody will help," Siroj said who works, along with his four friends from Jaunpur, at a factory in north Delhi's Anand Parbat area.

Dharamvir Singh, a native of Akbarpur near Lucknow, was looking for a bus to his hometown. He, however, had different reasons to go home.

"I work as a carpenter in west Delhi's Subhash Nagar. I have to go to my hometown as my sister is getting married next week. Earlier, I was planning to go there this weekend, but after the lockdown was announced by the government, my family told me to come as soon as possible. I somehow reached Anand Vihar to board a bus till Lucknow," he said.

"I hope the situation does not deteriorate as I have to return for earning my livelihood. We will be again out of work and there will again be a crisis," he added.

At Kaushambi bus stand,

A bus conductor said they have instructions that there should not many passengers inside the bus and that they have to maintain social distancing.

Deepak Kumar, an e-rickshaw driver at Dilshad Garden, said he is not leaving for his hometown now but he is having trouble making ends meet as he is not getting many passengers.

"We are barely getting one or two passengers. It will become difficult to survive as my family's financial condition is not good. I am not going back home because I have to earn a livelihood and send money but what will I do if I don't get any passengers due to lockdown," he wondered.

Geeta Kumari, a migrant daily wageer from Nepal, fears

that she fear that it will be a repeat of last year. "What if the lockdown is extended? What if they completely stop construction activities for a longer period? What will we eat then? Last time we waited for the situation to get better but ultimately had to go back home anyway," said Geeta, waiting for family members at Kaushambi bus depot.

"I have seven members in my family, including a senior citizen. During the last lockdown, we went to Nepal after the situation became worse. We returned around four to five months ago. We work as a daily labourers and do not have work due to the ongoing situation. We have no work back in our native place so we will have to come back but not sure when as the lockdown could be extended," she said.

Scenes similar to last year's migrant exodus could be seen replaying at interstate bus terminals with thousands of migrant workers gathering there to catch a bus home, hours after Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced a week-long lockdown and appealed to them with folded hands not to leave Delhi.

The chief minister appealed workers to not leave Delhi, saying the short period of lockdown would need not be extended. At present, there is no restriction on inter-state movement during the lockdown.

Stay home during lockdown, top cop urges Delhiites



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

On the first day of week-long lockdown, the Delhi Police Commissioner S N Shrivastava held a briefing via video conference with senior police officers of districts to review the situation on ground.

"We urge people to follow Covid appropriate behaviour and stay home during this lockdown," he said.

Emphasizing that essential services and goods need to be facilitated, Shrivastava directed that unnecessary movement of vehicles and people on roads be curbed, police said.

He asked the field officers to also make use of announcements in colonies and densely populated areas for people to obey the COVID curfew, besides strictly checking at the pickets on roads, officials said.

Anyone coming out of home will be definitely checked by the police personnel and questioned. Essential services like medicine shops, vegetable shops etc. the social distancing be ensured, they said.

"The priority task is to implement this week-long lockdown and tightness in restrictions be kept," he said, adding that if anyone is found in disobedience to the restrictions without a genuine ground or exemption, needs to be prosecuted at once.

expressed concern over the health and safety of police personnel who are serving 24x7 on the ground and exposing themselves to risks of infection.

"Being frontline warriors, our personnel need to perform their duties, but also ensure COVID safety by following strict covid discipline," Shrivastava said.

Delhi Police Public Relation Officer (PRO), Chinmoy Biswal said that the CP also directed the deployment of police officials at pickets and areas to be in small groups and with social distancing, even while checking people or vehicles so that their exposure risk is minimum.

Shrivastava also directed the district and unit officers to

keep sufficient stock of covid equipment like PPE kits, masks, sanitisers etc and pay attention to repeated cleanliness of toilets and common areas of the barracks and police stations, Biswal said.

Daily health monitoring of the staff should go carried out. The police colonies should also be sanitised because policemen return to homes from duties. Officers should remain in communication with staff who have fallen sick and make best possible arrangements for their treatment, the CP said.

The Covid Helpline 011-24369900 is already getting nearly thousand calls a day for facilitation and help and maximum possible assistance is being extended, officials said.

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Managing Director

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform to all concerned that MR. DALIP KUMAR Son of SHRI BABU LAL, R/o-1448, Gali No. 1, SANGAM VIHAR, DVLI EXTENSION, NEW DELHI had executed a will deed on dated 06.11.2006 in respect of Residential Flat No. 122-B, First Floor, Block-SK, Sector-122, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, UP. The will is dated 05.05.2018. Late MR. DALIP KUMAR had executed a registered WILL in favour of MR. VINOD KAPOOR S/o SHRI P.N. KAPOOR, R/o A-35, Sector-33, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, UP. The WILL is duly registered in the office of Sub-Registrar, Noida, vide Book No. 3, Volume No. 125 on pages 385 to 394 at Document No. 645, on 06.11.2006.

So it is informed to all concerned that the said Residential Flat No. 122-B, First Floor, Block-SK, Sector-122, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, UP is going to be transferred in favour of MR. VINOD KAPOOR S/o SHRI P.N. KAPOOR, R/o A-35, Sector-33, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, UP. If anyone has/have any objection hereto may file his/her objection along with the sufficient proof in the Housing Department (H) of the Noida Authority within 15 days from the date of publication of this Notice.

UPDESH KUMAR (Advocate)
A-25, Sec-33, Noida, Opposite Assisi Convent School, Sec-33, Noida

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Defer lockdown till possible: PM

Assures people nation well-stocked with vaccines, medicines, oxygen supply; Opposition parties express disappointment at Modi's address

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asked States to "use lockdown as the last measure" as he assured people that the nation is well-stocked with vaccines, medicines and oxygen supply to "win" the second wave of Covid-19. "I urge the States to consider lockdowns only as the last option and focus creating on micro containment zones," Modi said in a 20-minute address to the nation.

The Congress and the NCP have expressed disappointment at the PM's speech. The PM's speech also triggered a storm on social media with netizens divided on the contents of

speech. While most twitteratis were relieved that the PM's didn't announce a countrywide lockdown, several others expressed disappointment that his speech did not offer any specific relief.

Stressing that the Government is making all efforts to ensure lives and livelihood is least affected, the Prime Minister said, "The country has the biggest vaccination drive in the world with 12 crore vaccine doses injected." The PM said, "I understand the pain you are going through and express my sympathies to the families who have lost their loved ones due to Covid."

Modi said pharma sector in the country is very robust and



it has increased the production of medicines by many folds. He said he had held detailed discussions with leaders of pharma industry for further enhancing drug production. Modi said the Centre-State and private sector are collectively trying to step-up the production of oxygen supply, the requirement of which has increased in recent weeks.

Similarly, the PM said in many States big hospitals are being set up. In reference to migrant workers, Modi requested State administrations to "win workers confidence" and ask them to be where they are as they will continue to get their job and employment.

"I request State Governments to urge the workers to stay where they are. This trust given by the States to the

workers will help them, and that they will be vaccinated in the city where they are," he said.

He said from May 1 all above the age of 18 years will be vaccinated. He said half of the vaccines produced in the country "would go to States" and like last year all Government hospitals will provide free vaccines. The PM asked States to use the "lockdown as the last measure" and rather "focus on micro-containment zones". Modi reminded that, unlike last year, the country is well prepared to cope with the second-wave of coronavirus with "enough vaccines, network of labs, PPE kits, increased testing, and expert knowledge" available to beat the pandemic.

The PM sought youth to come forward and make small committees to "implement Covid discipline" which will lessen the need for having containment zones or lockdown, he said. He appealed to children to ensure in their homes that none comes out without a serious reason.

Quoting "shastras", the Prime Minister said patience should not be lost in difficult times and instead, right decisions need to be taken to win victory over the adverse time. Modi referred to the "pious month of Ramzan" which, he said also teaches discipline.

Covid-19 IN INDIA	
TOTAL CASES:	1,56,09,004 (+2,94,115)
DEATHS:	1,82,570 (+2,020)
RECOVERED:	1,32,69,863 (+1,66,520)
ACTIVE:	21,50,119
MAHARASHTRA:	39,60,359
KERALA:	12,72,646
KARNATAKA:	11,98,644
TAMIL NADU:	10,13,378
DELHI:	9,05,541 (+28,395)

2,000 DIE IN A DAY, CASES NEAR 3 LAKH/DAY MARK

New Delhi: India on Tuesday again saw a rise in number of cases and deaths. In past 24 hours, India registered 2,020 Covid deaths — biggest one-day spike, and over 2,94,115 new cases. The total number of cases now stands at more than 1.56 crore. Active cases have gone above 21 lakh. Whereas, total deaths have reached 1,82,570.

No oxygen! Covid care in mortal peril

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As Delhi is staring at severe oxygen shortage with stock only for a few hours, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal requested the Union Government to increase the supply immediately.

In a tweet, Kejriwal wrote, "Serious oxygen crisis persists in Delhi. I again urge the Centre to urgently provide oxygen to Delhi. Some hospitals are left with just a few hours of oxygen."

Sir Ganga Ram Hospital said they have just eight hours of oxygen left. Its chairman DS Rana said, "6,000 cubic meters of it is left, which at the rate of current consumption will last till 1 am."

He said around 120 patients in the ICU are heavily dependent on oxygen. "If we don't get oxygen on time, then many will die," he warned.

On Monday, the Delhi Government set up a 24-member committee to ensure "rational" use of oxygen for treatment of Covid-19 patients. A Health Department order said the "Oxygen Audit Committee" will identify areas of wasteful consumption.

Meanwhile, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia too warned that many hospitals in Delhi will face shortage of oxygen in next few hours.

"In most hospitals in Delhi,

Delhi CM seeks Centre's immediate help

oxygen is available for the next 8 to 12 hours only. We have been demanding for one week to increase the oxygen supply quota to Delhi. If oxygen does not reach the hospitals in sufficient quantity by tomorrow (Wednesday) morning, there will be an outcry," he tweeted.

The Delhi Chief Minister claimed his administration is working on a war footing to ensure adequate oxygen supply and convened review meetings on emergency situation with senior officers to increase oxygen beds across several facilities in Delhi.

Allocate, divert resources, stop industrial use of oxygen: HC to Centre

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday expressed hope that the Central Government was allocating or diverting resources and medicines, like Remdesivir, based on the needs and situation of each State, otherwise "people will have blood on their hands".

"We will be doomed," a bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli said with regard to any non-application of mind in allocation and diversion of resources and medicines.

Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Chetan Sharma and Central Government

standing counsel Moniika Arora told the court that medical opinion was divided on use of Remdesivir.

The Delhi HC also said economic interests cannot override human lives and in view of various hospitals in Delhi running low on oxygen, the Centre should immediately implement the ban on industrial use of oxygen instead of waiting till April 22.

"Long and short of it is that it (Remdesivir) is in short supply," the HC said and added that giving clearance for setting up units to manufacture would not yield quick results as establishing the facilities for manufacture takes time.

States' approaches vary for want of lockdown policy

Causing migrants' exodus; hoarding, black marketing worsening crisis

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the absence of a uniform policy for lockdown, the State Government have gone for different approaches amid confusion and uncertainty, triggering, in some cases, the exodus of migrant workers and hoarding and black marketing.

While Maharashtra on Tuesday prepared for complete lockdown, and Jharkhand has announced a seven-day "shut down", other States have announced night curfew, weekend lockdown, and several other restrictions.

National Capital Delhi is already in the midst of an extended 24x7 curfew till next Monday morning. Uttar Pradesh has refused to implement a High Court order to implement lockdown in five districts and got a stay from the Supreme court.

Maharashtra, the State with the largest positive cases in the country has placed stringent measures of restricting the timing of groceries and shops to curb the crowding but will take a couple of days before completely shutting down the State.

As of now, Maharashtra has tightened curbs, limit timings of grocery shops to 4

hours, 7am-11 am but authorities believe that this too is not effective in checking the virus spread in the State.

According to Maharashtra Relief and Rehabilitation Minister Vijay Wadetiwar, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will take a final call on complete lockdown as merely tightening of restrictions are not delivering the desired result.

UP has, on the other hand, taken a contrarian view to the lockdown prescription saying it had to "protect both, lives and livelihoods."

The Jammu & Kashmir Government on Tuesday ordered the extension of night curfew to all municipal and urban areas due to the rise in the cases of Covid-19.

SC stays HC order directing UP Govt to impose strict restrictions in 5 cities

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the Allahabad High Court order directing the Uttar Pradesh Government to impose strict restrictions till April 26 in five cities due to the surge in Covid-19 cases. A bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli said oxygen supply of various hospitals will run out in 4-8 hours and in such a situation there was no justification in implementing the ban from April 22 as the need was now.

Public loos breeding ground for pandemic

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Planning to use a public loo or restroom to attend nature's call? Beware, for high chances are that you might risk contracting the deadly coronavirus from there, researchers have warned.

They pointed out that while respiratory droplets are the most prominent source of transmission for Covid-19, the small numbers of viable viruses have, however, been found to be in urine and stool samples.

Hence, public restrooms or toilets can be cause of concern for transmitting the pathogen because they are relatively confined, experience heavy foot traffic and may not have adequate ventilation, researchers from Florida Atlantic University's College of Engineering and Computer Science have now cautioned.

It is already known that a variety of pathogens are usually found in stagnant water as well as in urine, feces and



vomit. When dispersed widely through aerosolisation, these pathogens can cause Ebola, norovirus that results in violent food poisoning, as well as Covid-19 caused by SARS-CoV-2, said the scientists who investigated droplets generated from flushing a toilet and a urinal in a public restroom under normal ventilation conditions. The study is published in the journal Physics of Fluids. To measure the droplets, researchers used a particle

counter placed at various heights of the toilet and urinal to capture the size and number of droplets generated upon flushing.

Results demonstrated that public restrooms could serve as hotbeds for airborne disease transmission, especially if they do not have adequate ventilation or if toilets do not have a lid or cover. The study holds importance in the context of India too where most public loos often are not equipped with toilet seat lids and urinals are not covered.

For the study, researchers obtained data from three different scenarios: toilet flushing; covered toilet flushing and urinal flushing. They examined the data to determine the increase in aerosol concentration, the behavior of droplets of different sizes, how high the droplets rose, and the impact of covering the toilet. Ambient aerosol levels were measured before and after conducting the experiments.

Job safe for people with food, drug, latex, bee sting allergies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Individuals with severe allergies to foods, oral drugs, latex, bee stings or venom can safely receive the Covid-19 vaccines, a team of scientists at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in the US has said after studying 65,000 people.

"Our main goal is to enable as many individuals as possible to receive a Covid-19 vaccine safely and avoid unnecessary vaccine hesitancy due to a lack of knowledge around allergic reactions to vaccines," said lead author Aleena Banerji, clinical director of the Allergy and Clinical Immunology Unit at MGH.

However, people with a recent severe allergic reaction to polyethylene glycol (PEG) — an ingredient in the vaccines — should see an allergist before getting the jabs, they recommended. The findings are published in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology: In Practice.

The study examined possible allergic reactions to Covid

vaccinations in more than 65,000 people who have become fully vaccinated, with the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna Covid vaccines. PEG is the common excipient in both the mRNA Covid vaccines, whereas polysorbate 80 is the excipient in the Janssen Covid-19 vaccine.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention described the rate of anaphylaxis after receipt of the mRNA Covid-19 vaccines as 4.5 cases per million doses administered, with 89 per cent occurring within the 15- to 30-minute observation period. However, Polysorbate 80 caused anaphylaxis is extremely rare.

If a person is allergic to PEG, s/he should not receive an mRNA Covid-19 jab, instead speak to the physician about receiving the Janssen Covid-19 vaccine, the team suggested. On the other hand, if you are allergic to polysorbate 80, you should not receive the Janssen vaccine and instead speak to your physician about receiving the mRNA Covid-19 vaccines.

Free vaccine for all above 18 yrs in UP

Lucknow: The UP Government on Tuesday decided to administer Covid-19 vaccine free of cost to all those above 18 years of age from May 1. The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by CM Yogi Adityanath. The Cabinet also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for allowing administering of coronavirus vaccine to those above 18 years of age.

CAPSULE

INDIA-EU SUMMIT: PM'S VISIT CALLED OFF

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's planned visit to Portugal to attend the annual India-European Union summit next month has been called off in view of the coronavirus crisis.

ICSE CANCELS CLASS X BOARD EXAMS

New Delhi: The ICSE Class 10 board exams have been cancelled in view of the worsening Covid-19 situation and the option for students to appear in the exams later has been withdrawn.

DRDO setting up huge Covid facilities in 4 cities

Def Min asks services Chiefs to open their hospitals for civilians

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Giving a boost to the national effort to fight corona pandemic, the armed forces have opened the doors of their hospitals to civilians. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is setting up huge hospitals in Varanasi, Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Patna for exclusive use of corona patients.

Reviewing the pace of these projects here on Tuesday in a virtual meeting with the Defence Ministry top brass, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also asked the three Services to be in regular touch with the State Governments on the preparations for fighting the disease.

The meeting was attended by the three Services chiefs. Rajnath asked them to offer available facilities and expertise to the civil administration during the ongoing Covid crisis. The Defence Minister also



directed Army Chief General MM Naravane to instruct local commanders to reach out to Chief Ministers of States and offer whatever help possible in dealing with the Covid-19 situation.

Following this, Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar also issued instructions that during the current surge of coronavirus cases, 67 Cantonment Board hospitals across India be

advised to ensure medical service to patients among both cantonment residents and non-residents.

The DRDO chief G Sateesh Reddy informed the Minister that a Covid-19 facility developed by DRDO has again been made functional in New Delhi and efforts are being made to soon increase the number of beds from 250 to 500.

He also informed the meeting that the ESIC Hospital, which was converted to Covid hospital in Patna, has started functioning with 500 beds. He informed that work is on war footing to set up a 450-bed hospital in Lucknow, 750-bed hospital in Varanasi and 900-bed hospital in Ahmedabad.

The DRDO on Monday supplied 150 jumbo cylinders of medical oxygen to the Uttar Pradesh Government, as per directions by the Defence Minister. An additional 1,000 cylinders would be provided by the DRDO later. The oxygen would be supplied to

hospitals in Lucknow for Covid-19 patients.

Rajnath was briefed about the measures taken by the DRDO, Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) and the National Cadet Corps (NCC) in providing aid to the civil administration in this hour of crisis.

He urged the DPSUs, OFB and DRDO to work on war footing to provide oxygen cylinders and extra beds to civil administration at the earliest. He also delegated the emergency powers of procurement so that critical needs are procured.

The DRDO chief further said SpO2 (Blood Oxygen Saturation)-based supplemental oxygen delivery system developed for soldiers posted at extreme high-altitude areas can be used for Covid patients as their conditions become similar. The product will be available soon in the market from the industry as per technology provided by the DRDO.

Rahul, KCR test Covid +ve, Kejriwal in quarantine

Ex-PM, CMs Adityanath, Yeddyurappa, Vijayan among many politicians tested +ve

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

After former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, now former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi and Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao have tested Covid-19 positive while Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had to isolate himself as his spouse caught the infection. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is recuperating while several MLAs, Ministers and candidates of the recent Assembly polls have succumbed to the disease.

Last year, too, when the nation saw a long lockdown, biggies like Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, Union Ministers Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shiv Raj Singh Chouhan had tested positive for Covid and undergone prolonged hospitalisation. Former President Pranab

Mukherjee, Congress chief political strategist Ahmed Patel, Union Minister Suresh Angadi succumbed to the deadly virus last November. Former cricketer and a Minister in Yogi Cabinet Chetan Chauhan too died battling corona in the first phase.

Rahul Gandhi tweeted to say that he has tested positive for the Covid-19 infection. He said he had mild symptoms of Covid-19 and simultaneously asked all those who may have come into his contact in the past few days to get themselves tested.

"After experiencing mild symptoms, I have just tested positive for Covid. All those who've been in contact with me recently, please follow all safety protocols and stay safe," he said.

Rahul had held an election rally on April 14 in West Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur. He later announced the cancellation of all his rallies in West



Bengal over a frightening surge in Covid-19 cases across the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi wished him a speedy recovery.

On Monday, Manmohan Singh was admitted to AIIMS after he tested positive for the infection.

Other politicians who tested positive for Covid-19 were Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath who fell ill after coming back from election rallies in West Bengal last week. He developed complications during the course and now is on a recovery path.

All the leaders used the social media platforms to share that they were victims of the pandemic and hence, as per the

SOP, those who came in contact with them was to mandatorily quarantine to prevent further spread of deadly virus.

Union Ministers Arjun Munda, Sanjeev Baliyan, Arjun Meghwal were amongst the few Ministers who also tested Covid positive.

Early this month, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan tested positive just two days after polls were conducted in Kerala. He has now recovered. CPI leader D Raja also was diagnosed with corona amid the peak of Kerala Assembly elections.

Congress candidate PSW Madhav Rao from Tamil Nadu died of Covid-19, a few days after he contested from the Srivilliputhur on April 11. Another Congress candidate Rezaul Haque and a RSP candidate in West Bengal Assembly elections died due to corona.

Karnataka CM BS Yeddyurappa, Tripura CM Biplab Kumar Deb, the then Uttarakhnd CM Trivendra Singh Rawat too fell to corona and self-isolated and recovered.

Small States, UT depend on Govt for jobs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the third phase of Covid-19 vaccination opening up in less than two weeks for everyone above 18 years largely through private facilities, almost all small States and Union Territories are still entirely or mostly dependent upon Government facilities, according to the Government's CoWIN portal.

The role of private facilities conducting vaccinations holds importance in view of the Government's announcement to liberalise the vaccination drive to allow States, private hospitals and industrial establishments to procure the doses directly from manufacturers in the third phase of Covid-19 vaccinations to be launched from May 1.

However, as per the Government data, 13 small States and Union Territories have less than 10 private facilities where vaccination against Covid-19 infection is being conducted and out of these while five States and Union Territories have no private facilities for vaccination.

The States and Union Territories with less than 10 private facilities for vaccination are — Andaman and Nicobar (0 private facility), Arunachal Pradesh (0), Dadra and Nagar Haveli (2), Daman and Diu (0), Lakshadweep (0), Manipur (3), Meghalaya (7), Nagaland (4), Puducherry (7), Sikkim (1), Tripura (1) and Mizoram

Bharat Biotech to produce 700 million doses yearly to meet rising demand

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As India starts vaccinating all those above 18 years of age from May 1, Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech has announced scaling up of manufacturing capacity at its various facilities to produce 700 million doses per annum of Covaxin annually to meet the growing demand. Sources said the company had 200 million doses capacity when it started producing Covaxin in the beginning last year.

According to a press release issued by the city-based vaccine maker, manufacturing scale up has been carried out in a stepwise manner across multiple facilities at Hyderabad and Bangalore.

Capacity expansion in vaccines manufacturing is a long and tedious process, requiring investments and several years, the release said.

"Bharat Biotech is able to expand Covaxin manufacturing capacity in a short



timeline, mainly due to the availability of new specially designed BSL-3 facilities, first of its kind for manufacturing in India that have been re-puted and preexisting expertise and know how to manufacture, test and release highly purified inactivated viral vaccines," the firm said a day after the Government opened up vaccination policy including all those above 18 years of age.

Covaxin has received Emergency Use Authorisations in several countries across the globe with another 60 in process.

Manufacturing partnerships are being explored with our partners in other countries, who have prior expertise with commercial scale manufacture of inactivated viral vaccines under biosafety containment, the Bharat Biotech said.

To further increase capacities, Bharat Biotech has part-

nered with Indian Immunologicals (IIL) to manufacture the drug substance for Covaxin.

The technology transfer process is well underway and IIL has the capabilities and expertise to manufacture inactivated viral vaccines at commercial scale and under biosafety containment.

Bharat Biotech uses a proprietary adjuvant Algel-IMDG, which has now proven to be a safe and effective adjuvant, especially to stimulate memory T cell responses, said the statement.

The synthesis and manufacture of the IMDG component has been successfully indigenised and will be manufactured at commercial scale within the country.

This is the first instance where a novel adjuvant has been commercialised in India. EUAs have now been obtained from Mexico, the Philippines, Iran, Paraguay, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Guyana, Venezuela, Botswana, Zimbabwe, among several other countries.

Pricing for international markets and supplies to governments under EUAs have been established between USD15-20/ dose, the vaccine maker said.

above 18 years of age will be eligible for Covid vaccination.

The announcement comes as India grappled to rein in the surging coronavirus infections that crossed 1.50 crore.

The Central paramilitary forces have clocked nearly 3,700 Covid-19 cases, till Monday, in the second wave with the BSF registering 1,864 cases, followed by 837 cases in CISF and close to 650 cases in CRPF. In all, the CAPFs have recorded 215 deaths since the beginning of the disease in early 2020.

Likewise, the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has recorded 186 cases followed by 125 cases in Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), 28 cases in National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and 14 cases National Security Guards (NSG).

and the ITBP has recorded 4,767 cases till so far. The NDRF has recorded 664 cases and the NSG has 358 cases in its ranks.

During the 24-hour period as on Monday, a total of 401 persons were confirmed to be positive for coronavirus, including 179 cases in

the CRPF, 68 in BSF, 113 in CISF, 26 in SSB and 14 in ITBP.

The CRPF has reported 87 deaths due Covid-19, including 10 casualties this year. The BSF has suffered 51 casualties due to the pandemic till so far including six this year. The CISF suffered loss of lives of 49 personnel, including one in March and four in April this year.

The SSB, ITBP, NDRF and has not suffered any deaths due to Covid this year. Out of a total of 58,211 infections in these forces, as many as 54,298 patients have recovered from the disease and 3,698 patients continue to be active.

Boost med infra to tame virus, UTs told

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday directed Delhi and other Union Territories to plan augmentation of hospital infrastructure for next three weeks and ramp up testing and strict enforcement of Covid appropriate behaviour. The high-level meeting chaired by Union Home and Health Secretaries reviewed and discussed Covid status, and the management and response strategy with Chief Secretaries of all the Union Territories of India.

Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla pointed out the steep growth in a number of cases all across the country. From 20,000 cases reported on 1st January 2021, India has almost 10 times more cases (more than 2,00,000 cases) being reported daily since 15th April 2021. In the last 11 days, new cases have almost doubled from 1.31 lakh reported on 9th April to 2.73 lakh reported on 20th April.

"The UTs shared their present efforts for containment and management of the positive cases. Ladakh, J&K, and Lakshadweep pointed to the rise in cases due to a large number of inbound travelers.



Lakshadweep has seen a sudden spike after 14th April, 2021 primarily due to travel of large number of people to mainland to shop for the recent festive occasions. Most UTs have imposed movement restrictions, including night curfew, restriction of intra-island movement in the island UTs. Chandigarh informed that they are conducting door to door counselling for increasing vaccination. 90% of the patients are in home isolation who are being monitored by mobile teams," said Centre in a statement.

"UT of Delhi discussed shortage of beds and the present efforts to augment this through Central Government infrastructure and support through the DRDO's recently operationalised COVID Hospital. Delhi Government expressed gratitude for the timely support of Union

Government for augmenting their hospital beds capacity, during last year and this year. Their efforts to ramp up testing and reduce the turnaround time for the test results were also outlined," it added.

Expressing concern over the worrying scenario, Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan and Dr V K Paul pointed out the criticality of next three weeks for COVID response measures. The UT administrators were advised to plan in advance for three weeks. A survey to promptly identify the COVID positive people should be taken up. Paul stressed on planning the minutest details of COVID management. For UT of Ladakh, he recommended regulation of the incoming labourers and supervised containment. Islands can be made large containment zones, he suggested.

Modi urges vaccine makers to raise production



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With Covid pandemic raging across many parts of the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday urged vaccine manufacturers to continuously scale up the production in shortest possible time to vaccinate more and more people. Appreciating the efforts of vaccine manufacturers for their achievements and professionalism, Modi said that biggest strengths of our vaccine industry are its 'Samarthya, Sansadhan and Seva Bhaav', and these are what make them a vaccine leader in the world.

Noting the fact that vaccines manufactured here are the cheapest, PM Modi said India the world's largest vaccine programme is underway in India and reiterated them to gear up for May 1, when vaccination is opening up for people above 18 years.

"PM Modi remarked that throughout this process of developing and manufacturing vaccines, the country has constantly worked with the spirit of public-private partnership under the 'Mission Covid Suraksha', and created an end-to-end vaccine development ecosystem. The Government ensured that all the vaccine manufacturers not only get all possible help and logistic support, but also the process of vaccine approval is speedy and scientific, said the Prime Minister. He also assured all possible support and smooth approval process for the vaccine candidates which are currently under trial phase.

"The Prime Minister said the health infrastructure of our private sector has played a big role in the country's fight against Covid-19 and in the coming days, the private sector will play an even more active role in the vaccination drive. This will require better coordination between hospitals and industry," said PMO said in a statement.

Nadda reviews preparedness for Bengal election rallies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP national president JP Nadda on Tuesday chaired a meeting to review preparations for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public rallies in the 'new Covid-19 format' in poll-bound West Bengal.

In view of the alarming surge in coronavirus cases across the country in the recent weeks, the BJP has decided to hold only small public meetings with not more than 500 people in poll-bound West Bengal.

The party has suspended the big rallies and public meetings in remaining three of the eight-phased polling in Bengal.

It has been decided that only small public meetings



with not more than 500 people will be held by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other Union Ministers in West Bengal. All these public meetings will be held in open spaces following Covid-19 guidelines," according to a BJP statement.

The party has set a target of the distribution of six crore masks and sanitisers in West Bengal.

Dedicated Covid-19 helplines have been installed by the party in all the states and workers have been asked to provide help to the corona

infected families in their respective areas, according to Party General Secretary Arun Singh.

On the direction of party president, BJP will also open a dedicated Covid-19 helpdesk and Covid helpline in all states and start the campaign 'Apna Booth - Corona Mukta' (my booth, coronavirus free).

The first five phases of the eight-phase West Bengal Assembly elections have been completed. The sixth phase of the State Assembly polls is scheduled for April 22. Polling for the seventh and the eighth phase will be held on April 26 and April 29. The counting of votes will take place on May 2. India reported 2,59,170 new COVID-19 infections and 1,761 deaths in the last 24 hours.

₹14,788 crore approved for Bangalore metro expansion



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Tuesday approved further development of Bangalore Metro Rail project worth ₹14,788 crore. The two projects titled as phase 2A and 2B will connect the metro rail to Central Silk Board Junction to K.R. Puram and K.R.Puram to Airport via Hebbal Junction. The Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi also approved the proposal of the Department of Fertilisers for the formulation of exclusive subsidy policy for Urea produced through coal gasification route by Talcher Fertilizers Limited (TFL).

Addressing media through video conference Union Minister Piyush Goyal said that the development project of Bangalore Metro will give more connectivity with the

city and airport. He said the new metro lines of 59 kilometers worth ₹14,788 crore will provide economic prosperity, last mile connectivity and sustainable transportation in Bangalore city.

"Considering the strategic energy security and urea self-sufficiency of the country, looking into the country's vast coal reserves, it has been decided to go ahead with Talcher Fertilizer Limited plant based on coal gasification technology.

The project shall improve availability of fertilizer to farmers thereby boosting development of eastern region and will save transport subsidy for supply of urea in eastern part of the country. It would assist in reducing Urea imports to the tune of 12.7 LMT per annum leading to savings in foreign exchange.

"The project will also give a boost to 'Make in India' ini-

tiative and AtmaNirbhar campaign and would help development of infrastructure like roads, railways water, etc. providing major boost to economy in the eastern part of the country including promoting ancillary industry. The project will also provide New business opportunity in form of ancillary industries in the catchment area of the project," said Government in statement detailing the Urea subsidy project.

Coal gasification plants are strategically important as coal prices are non-volatile and coal is abundantly available. Talcher plant shall also reduce dependence on important Natural Gas for production of urea leading to reduction in LNG import bill.

The gasification process adopted in Talcher unit is a Clean Coal Technology giving negligible SO_x, NO_x and free particulate emissions as compared to directly coal fired processes. Talcher Fertilizers Ltd. (TFL) is a Joint Venture Company of four PSUs namely Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers (RCF), GAIL (India) Ltd. (GAIL), Coal India Ltd. (CIL) and Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd.

Covid 2nd wave infects 3,700 in Central forces

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Central paramilitary forces have clocked nearly 3,700 Covid-19 cases, till Monday, in the second wave with the BSF registering 1,864 cases, followed by 837 cases in CISF and close to 650 cases in CRPF. In all, the CAPFs have recorded 215 deaths since the beginning of the disease in early 2020.

Likewise, the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has recorded 186 cases followed by 125 cases in Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), 28 cases in National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and 14 cases National Security Guards (NSG).

and the ITBP has recorded 4,767 cases till so far. The NDRF has recorded 664 cases and the NSG has 358 cases in its ranks.

During the 24-hour period as on Monday, a total of 401 persons were confirmed to be positive for coronavirus, including 179 cases in



While the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has reported 15,791 cases, the Border Security Force (BSF) has recorded 15,278 cases and the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has registered 11,682 cases till now. The SSB has reported a total of 5,758 cases

Order to attach property of taxable person sans cogent proof draconian, says SC



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said the power to order a provisional attachment of the property including the bank account of the taxable person is draconian in nature and must be based on tangible material.

A Bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and M R Shah said the exercise of the power for ordering a provisional attachment must be preceded by the formation of an opinion by the Commissioner that it is necessary to do for the purpose of protecting the interest of the government revenue.

"Before ordering a provisional attachment the Commissioner must form an opinion on the basis of tangible material that the assessee is likely to defeat the demand, if any, and that therefore, it is necessary to do for the purpose of protecting the interest of the government revenue," the bench said.

It also clarified that the expression "necessary to do for protecting the government revenue" implicates that it can-

not be protected without ordering a provisional attachment.

The top court said the Commissioner is duty bound to deal with the objections to the attachment by passing a reasoned order which must be communicated to the taxable person whose property is attached.

The apex court's judgement came against an order of Himachal Pradesh High Court which dismissed the writ petition instituted under Article 226 of the Constitution challenging orders of provisional attachment.

The petitioner Radha Krishan Industries challenged the orders issued on October 28, 2020 by the Joint Commissioner of State Taxes and Excise, Parwanoo in Himachal Pradesh provisionally attaching the appellant's receivables from its customers.

The provisional attachment was ordered while invoking Section 83 of the Himachal Pradesh Goods and Service Tax Act, 2017 and Rule 159 of Himachal Pradesh Goods and Service Tax Rules, 2017.

Adopt Draft Rules of Criminal Practice, 2021, SC tells High Courts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed all High Courts to adopt the Draft Rules of Criminal Practice, 2021 as part of the rules governing criminal trials and ensure that the existing rules, notifications, orders and practice directions are suitably modified and promulgated within six months.

"If the State Government's co-operation is necessary in this regard, the approval of the concerned department or departments, and the formal notification of the said Draft Rules, shall be made within the said period of six months," a bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde said.

The apex court also directed that the State Governments, as well as the Union of India (in relation to investigating agencies in its control) shall carry out consequential amendments to their police and other manuals, within six months from today.

"This direction applies, specifically in respect of Draft Rules 1-3. The appropriate forms and guidelines shall be brought into force, and all agencies instructed accordingly, within six months from today," the bench said.

The three-judge bench also comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao and S Ravindra Bhat said that the courts in all criminal trials should, at the beginning of the trial, i.e. after summoning of the accused, and framing of charges, hold a preliminary case management hearing.

"This hearing may take place immediately after the framing of the charge. In this

The Draft Rules of Criminal Practice, 2021 deals with various aspects of criminal trial including post mortem report, charge, trial, recording of evidence among others

hearing, the court should consider the total number of witnesses, and classify them as eyewitness, material witness, formal witness (who would be asked to produce documents, etc) and experts," the bench said. The Draft Rules of Criminal Practice, 2021 deals with various aspects of criminal trial including post mortem report, charge, trial, recording of evidence among others.

According to the draft rules, as per Every Medico Legal Certificate, Post Mortem Report shall contain a printed format of the human body on its reverse and injuries, if any, shall be indicated on such sketch.

The rules state that the depositions of witnesses shall be recorded, in typed format, if possible and the record of evidence shall be prepared on computers, if available, in the Court on the dictation of the Presiding Officer.

The judgement came on a suo motu case of 2017 related to the "deficiencies and inadequacies" in criminal trials in the country in which it proposed to amend the criminal manual and the rules which can be incorporated in the existing ones of the High Courts.



Sh. Manohar Lal
Chief Minister, Haryana

Don't Panic Adopt Safety Norms to prevent Corona

Cleanliness



Frequently wash hands with soap and water or use sanitizer

Vaccination

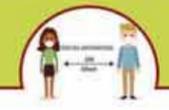


COVID vaccine is safe, must get vaccination



Adopt Healthy Lifestyle & Ayurveda to Boost Immunity

Strictness



Strict adherence to social distancing and use of masks



Challan for not wearing mask as well as free mask distribution



Comprehensive arrangement in Covid Testing Centre under the supervision of District Administration

Follow the rule of SMS

S Sanitization

M Mask

S Social Distancing

Information, Public Relations & Languages Department, Haryana

Centre shirking responsibility on jobs: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

With the country's corona graph rising to helpless levels Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday shot off a second letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in which she faulted him for "evading" responsibility. Days after writing to the Prime Minister to make arrangements for 5 crore vaccines and life-saving drugs like remdesivir Banerjee on Monday tore into the central Government's "belated" decision to universalize the distribution of vaccines even as she wrote, "I'm informed that the Central government has

announced the much-delayed 'universal' vaccine policy on 19th April, 2021, which appears to be hollow, without substance, and a regrettable show of evasion of responsibility...at the time of crisis." Complaining that the Centre has failed to address issues like quality and stable flow of drugs in the market Banerjee wrote, "the announcement does not address major issues like the quality, efficacy, stable flow of supply..." reminding that the policy "appears to be based on market prices which may put the common people under huge financial burden." The Government's policy could encourage "unscrupu-

lous" dealings and "mechanisms" she warned reminding the Prime Minister that he had yet to respond to her earlier letter written on April 24 seeking permission (for her Government Bengal) to purchase vaccines directly from the market. Later she told in rallies that "I am sitting with money ready, I am willing to buy the vaccine from the market and distribute it free among the people but here is a Government that will not allow me to do so." With the medical system buckling under huge pressure of demand in the backdrop of rising cases, the Centre had earlier okayed vaccinations for all

adults from May 1 and also lifted the bar on the State Governments to procure stocks from the manufacturers and the open market. Considering the fact that the young people going out for earning livelihoods were more likely to contact and transmit the disease faster a number of States like Maharashtra, Bengal Andhra Pradesh etc had complained about shortage of vaccines and demanded opening up the vaccination drive for people of all ages. In the strongly-worded letter, the Chief Minister also wrote that the Centre through its new policy had preferred not only to shirk its responsibility

but indulge in empty rhetoric. She wrote "when the number of cases...is spiraling...the Centre has chosen to tactically indulge in empty rhetoric..." Later launching a vitriolic attack on the Prime Minister from an election rally at Murshidabad she said that her Government could have vaccinated many people by this time but the Centre's faulty policy failed her initiative. Attacking the Prime Minister she said Modi had exported vaccines to other countries to earn praises from the international community whereas States like Maharashtra, Delhi, Rajasthan, and Bengal were struggling to

get vaccines for their citizens. "You all know how the pandemic is rising ... the workers are coming back ... now we needed to vaccinate them and the other residents ... but even if I have the intention to provide vaccine to the people free the Centre acted as a stumbling block ... Here was a Prime Minister who was busy building his image internationally by exporting vaccine doses ... how can we feed others remaining hungry ourselves ... and now they are saying that they are opening up vaccination for the States also but where is the stock ... they have already been exported out of India," she said.

After Opp, BJP for micro rallies to avoid criticism

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

After the Left Front, Congress and the Trinamool Congress it is the turn of the BJP to truncate the size of its rallies. Amid criticisms that its leaders were more interested in winning elections than preserving the lives and health of the people who were giving them votes, the saffron party on Monday declared that it would no longer organise big rallies and that all the rallies would be truncated to a size of 500 people to the maximum. This announcement would apply for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rallies too the party has said adding that it would use its "massive digital footprint" for campaigning where the message of the top leaders would be taken to the people through digital meetings. BJP's IT wing chief Amit Malviya said that his party would use its "massive digital footprint" to take the message of the Prime Minister and other leaders to the people. "We did that successfully during Bihar elections... The opposition had then complained that it gave us an edge," he maintained. Bengal has three more phases left for voting. While the Trinamool Congress had been asking to combine the three

phases into one a request the Election Commission turned down in the interest of what it called free and fair elections. Considering the fierceness of violence during the earlier phases of polls the ECI needs about 3 lakh central forces --- it has ruled out using State police --- which is not possible for the poll panel to procure, sources in the Commission said. The BJP too had opined against clubbing the election phases while Pradesh Congress president Adhir Chowdhury went to the extent of requesting withholding of the polls for the time being till the situation improved. The CPI(M) was the first party to declare holding of small rallies and street-corner meetings followed by the Congress. Its leader Rahul Gandhi has already cancelled his rallies in Bengal. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has also said that her party would organise small meetings in Kolkata. Saying that hence forward it would hold public meetings in open places in accordance with pandemic guidelines BJP leader Jayprakash Majumdar said that apart from holding small rallies his party would distribute six crore masks and sanitisers in the state.

Molestation victim eats toxic substance in SSP office to protest inaction

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

The victim, who was hurt due to non-action against the accused in the case of molestation, which occurred about 15 days ago, consumed the toxin at the SSP office. This stirred up the staff present there. In a hurry, she is admitted to JN Medical College. SSP Kalanidhi Naithani said that the investigation of this case has been handed over to CO Atrauli. Action will be taken against whosoever is found guilty in the investigations. A woman from a village in Atrauli area had filed a case against some youths in the area 15 days ago, stating that the accused molested her. It is alleged that even after the registration of the case, the police did not take any action against the accused. After this, the accused started harassing the victim further. Recently, the victim had come to the SSP office along with several people from her village and demanded action against the accused. The girl reached the SSP office and consumed the toxic substance, saying that she was indifferent to the attitude of the area police. Shortly after the woman began to faint, the staff at the office was stirred up. Immediately the girl was taken to JN Medical College. She has been admitted for treatment there. In this case, the police has something else to say. According to the police, earlier the woman had accused some people of the village of assaulting her. In this case, the police sent two people including the woman to jail from the accused side.

Maharashtra restricts outlets vending essentials to remain open for 5 hrs only

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Amid the surge in the infections and fatalities, the Maharashtra government on Tuesday tightened the pandemic restrictions further, by mandating the shops and outlets vending groceries, vegetables, fruits, other kinds of food and essential commodities to remain open for only 5 hours daily instead of the earlier 13 hours for the next 10 days in order to break the chain of the Covid-19 in the state. Amending its "break the chain" order issued on April 13 in which it had allowed the shops and outlets vending essential commodities to remain open from 7 am to 8 pm, the Maharashtra government - in its latest order - said all groceries, vegetable stalls, fruit vendors, dairies, bakeries, confectioneries, all types of shops vending food items chicken, mutton, poultry, fish and eggs, can remain open only between 7am and 11am daily. The order will also cover shops related to agriculture implements and farm produce, pet food shops, shops related to

'Home delivery from these shops however may be allowed between 7 am to 8 pm. These timings may be changed by the local authorities,' Chief Secretary Sitaram Kunte stated in his order. The State government has empowered the local authorities to include any additional entities/services with the consent of the State Disaster Management Authority. An official said that this effectively means that people will not be allowed outside for these activities for 19 hours daily, though they will be permitted to go out anytime for medical emergencies as in the past.

More than 1.2 million Covid patients in Kerala, TN too cross one million mark

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI/CHENNAI

With hundreds of ambulances blaring the emergency sirens speeding to hospitals with patients in the last phase of their lives, the number of Covid patients in Kerala crossed past the 1.2 million mark by Tuesday evening. The day saw 19,577 new persons getting diagnosed with Covid-19 on a single day taking the total number of patients in the State to 1,27,2645. The day also saw 28 fatalities across Kerala due to Covid-19. As leaders of the Indian Medical Association described that the situation has gone out of control in the State, a political diatribe commenced with ministers and politicians blaming the Centre for short supply of vaccines. Though Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had claimed before the assembly election that the State would initiate measures to manufacture its own branded vaccine, he is maintaining silence on the issue once the election was over. Meanwhile neighbouring Tamil Nadu too saw the number of Covid-19 patients shooting up though not as badly as Kerala. On Tuesday, Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine said in a release that the State saw 10,986 new cases of Covid-19 while the pandemic claimed 48

lives across Tamil Nadu. The hike in the number of persons afflicted with pandemic in both the States are a fall out of the high pitched campaigns for the election to assemblies. Though Tamil Nadu ahead of Kerala in the number of Covid-19 patients by leap and bounds, as on Tuesday there were only 1.01 million positive cases in Tamil Nadu against Kerala's 1.27 millions. Both Kerala and Tamil Nadu have declared night curfew for the nest fortnight with effect from Tuesday night. Kerala has announced stringent rules to discipline people who do not wear masks and maintaining social distancing. Though the Government has tightened the rules and limited the number of guests who could be invited for marriages and social functions, the police officials turn a blind eye to violations of rules. "So long as nobody registers any complaint, we do not have any issues. But ensure that your neighbours do not create any problems," is the standard advice from the cops to persons who are holding such events. Situation in Kerala is grave and medical doctors asked people in other States to reschedule their travel plans to God's Own Country till the Covid-19 situation is brought under control.

Amid Covid surge Maha cancels State board SSC exams

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a significant development that will have bearing on the academic careers of lakhs of students slated to appear for 10th standard exam this year, the Maharashtra government on Tuesday decided to cancel the state board SSC examinations in view of the worsening Covid-19 situation in the state. Announcing the cancellation of the SSC examinations, Maharashtra Education Minister Varsha Gaikwad tweeted: "Given the worsening situation of the #Covid-19 pandemic, the Maharashtra government has now decided to CANCEL the state board exams for class 10th. Health & safety of students & teachers is our top-most priority." "As the current atmosphere is not conducive to exams, we had earlier postponed our exams while requesting other boards to reschedule theirs. In response to our communication, other boards have now cancelled their exams, so maintaining parity, we have cancelled ours too," she tweeted. The minister said that the criterion on the basis of which results would be declared for class 10th & date of result declaration would be announced shortly. "The School Education Dept is committed to devising a fair and accurate assessment criterion," she tweeted. "As far as the state board exams of class 12th are concerned, we have already conveyed our decision to postpone the exams till May end. The status remains the same. We are closely monitoring the health and safety situation in the state," the minister tweeted. It may be recalled that on April 12, the Maharashtra government on Monday postponed the board examinations of Standard 10th and 12th in view of the worsening Covid-19 situation in the state. The State Education Minister had at that time said that "keeping in mind the schedule of entrance exams for professional courses, class 12th exams will be held by end of May, while 10th standard exams will be in June". The postponement of the SSC and HSC examinations had come on the state government announcement made on April 3 that all state board students from standard 1 and 8 would be promoted to the next without any examination.

MAHA LOGS RECORD 519 DEATHS, 62K PLUS TEST COVID POSITIVE

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In an alarming development, the daily Covid-19 toll shot up a record 519 in Maharashtra on Tuesday, even as 62,097 people tested positive for the pandemic in various parts of the state. Two days after the pandemic had claimed 503 lives on a single day in the state, Maharashtra logged 519 deaths, taking the total number of deaths in the state from 60,824 to 61,343. Similarly, the number of infections rose from Monday's tally of 58,924 to 62,097 on Tuesday. The state had recorded an all time high of 68,631 infections on Sunday, On Saturday, the state had recorded 67,123 infections. With 62,097 fresh infections reported on Tuesday, the total number of infections went up from 38,98,262 to 39,60,359. As 54,224 patients were discharged from the hospitals across the state after full recovery, the total number of people discharged from the hospitals since the second week of March last year went up to 32,13,464. The recovery rate in the state for the first time

in several days rose from 81.04 per cent to 81.14 per cent. The total "active cases" cases in the state rose from 6,76,520 to 6,83,856. The fatality rate in the state dropped from 1.56 per cent to 1.55 per cent. With 34 fresh deaths, the Covid-19 toll in Mumbai rose from 12,301 to 12,354, while the infected cases went up by 7192 to trigger a jump in the infections from 5,86,867 to 5,94,059. While Pune accounted for a maximum 1,11,7521 "active cases" in the state, Mumbai stood second with 82,761, followed by Thane (80,440), Nagpur (78,484), Nashik (44,279), Ahmednagar (21,634), Latur (19,062), Chandrapur (15,744), Bhandara (15,186), Aurangabad (14,779), Satara (14,183), Jalgaon (13,475), Nanded (13,233), Parbhani (12,964), Solapur (12,487), Beed (11,359) Gondia (9,762) and Nandurbar (7,128). Of the 2,43,41,736 samples sent to laboratories, 39,01,359 have tested positive (16.27 per cent) for COVID-19 until Tuesday. Currently, 38,76,998 people are in home quarantine while 27,690 people are in institutional quarantine. J&K sees highest single-day spike of 2,030, active cases cross 13K Jammu : Jammu & Kashmir logged 2,030 new Covid cases on Tuesday, the highest single day spike since the beginning of the pandemic while the number of active cases crossed 13,000. Officials said that the new cases included 944 from the Jammu division and 1,086 from the Kashmir division while 716 patients were discharged from different hospitals after recovery. Eight patients -- five from Jammu division and 3 from Kashmir division - - succumbed on Tuesday, as the total number of people killed by coronavirus rose to 2,071. So far, 150,238 people have been infected with coronavirus in J&K out of which 134,697 have recovered. The number of active cases is 13,470 out of which 5,575 are from the Jammu division and 7,895 are from the Kashmir division. IANS

RIL supplies 700 tonnes of medical oxygen daily to 3 States, 1 UT

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Amid the shortage of liquid Oxygen across the country, the Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) has tweaked its manufacturing process at Jamnagar Refinery to produce and distribute around 700 metric tonnes of medical grade oxygen everyday to three states and a Union Territory. For the past two days, RIL has been transporting 700 metric tonnes of medical Oxygen daily to the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Union Territory of Dadra, Nagar Haveli and Daman &

Diu, free of cost through special tankers. The 700 tonnes of medical oxygen is sufficient to provide relief to at least 70,000 critically ill Covid-19 patients daily in three states and UT. Sources said that the RIL was prepared to supply medical Oxygen for other states in the country as well, provided there were specific requests from the states concerned and they were ready to bear the transportation cost. Given that the medical grade oxygen was not produced earlier at the Jamnagar refinery, RIL has installed equipment and

setup process to produce and supply medical-grade oxygen by diverting industrial oxygen to produce medical-grade oxygen to pitch its contribution to meet the demand for medical Oxygen. "Currently, the entire supply of oxygen, including transportation in special tankers at (-) 1830C is being made free of cost to the state governments as a part of RIL's CSR initiative. This is one more initiative of the Reliance Industries and Reliance Foundation to provide relief in the ongoing pandemic," an RIL spokesperson said. At a meeting with prominent industrialists and leaders of

Corporate houses held here on Saturday last, Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray had among other things appealed to them to make arrangements for priority production and supply of oxygen for Covid patients in the state. The industrialists had unanimously agreed to do the needful. It may be recalled that Reliance Foundation had earlier set up country's first Covid hospital in Mumbai in collaboration with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) in just two weeks. After setting up a 100-Covid bed hospital initially, it scaled up the bed capacity to 260.

Reliance Foundation also developed a fully-equipped isolation facility at Lohivali in Maharashtra and handed it over to the district authorities there. It also supported the setting up of a quarantine ward for suspected patients at Spandan Holistic Mother-And-Child Care Hospital in Mumbai. Reliance Foundation supported digital and medical infrastructure at Sardar Patel COVID-19 Care Centre, Delhi. In addition, Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital, which was the first institute in Maharashtra identified by

ICMR to be part of a multicentre clinical trial to evaluate the efficacy of plasma therapy, set up an exclusive 10 bedded dialysis centre in HBT Trauma Hospital, Mumbai in collaboration with BMC. Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital also provided home quarantine services. It provided over 5.5 lakh litres of free fuel, supporting over 14,000 ambulances across 249 districts in 18 states. It produces 1,00,000 PPE and face masks per day for India's health and frontline workers.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Lip service?

The parties' decision to curtail electioneering in Bengal smells more of hypocrisy than concern

The parties in the West Bengal poll fray have realised, albeit too late in the day, that it is essential to break the transmission chain to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. With the number of infections in the country skyrocketing on a daily basis, the contagion has clearly marked itself a wide territory and the decision of the politicians appears to be a myopic case of too little, too late. In fact, rather than an act of genuine concern and empathy, it resembles a rat race with the parties vying to score brownie points about which one of them has its heart in the right place vis-à-vis the health of their constituents. Had these parties and their leaders really cared for the masses, they wouldn't have waited five phases to show their fraternal concern. Only after the Left, the Congress and TMC announced that they would not hold big rallies in the State in the backdrop of rising Coronavirus cases did the BJP proclaim that it would cut down on the number of attendees at the public meetings, including those addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Sadly, but fittingly, none of the parties deserves a commendation for such a decision; maybe their leaders are now actually worrying about their own well-being after their fellow partymen are falling like ninepins to the virus. The Congress and its motley group of allies, pragmatically speaking, were never truly in the battle for West Bengal; so

it doesn't really matter if the Gandhi scion campaigns there.

For the TMC — the ruling party in the State which is fighting a resolute BJP tooth and nail — it's not easy to yield and fold up like the Congress; hence it would still go ahead with canvassing but will organise only small meetings with 20-minute speeches. The BJP is also toying with a similar plan. But the question is: Does the SARS-CoV-2 virus take longer than 20-odd minutes for transmission? However, on Didi's part, it's a calculated move to send out the message that she cares for her State's people. However, the BJP has emerged in this episode as the party most indifferent to the electorate's health and safety. Being the ruling party at the Centre, one would have expected from it more maturity and seriousness in fighting the global crisis, and certainly not the bullheadedness that at best overarches the majority in an Assembly. No doubt, the BJP-led Government has made laudable efforts in the fight against COVID-19, but it cannot afford to look boorish when its political opponents are airing concern for people. On a separate note on the COVID-19 issue, the Centre has allowed all adults to get vaccinated from May 1 under the nationwide inoculation programme. Rather than looking like a graded response based on empirical data, the new liberalised vaccine policy appears more of a knee-jerk reaction to the sudden and exponential rise in the Coronavirus infection cases. However, it is the destiny of the common man in our country to stand in a long queue for long hours, be it outside a polling booth or vaccination centre.

PICTALK



The Karbi tribals during the traditional Gohain Uliuwa festival at Mayong village in Morigaon district, Assam

PTI

Bitter homecoming

The migrant workers are rushing back because they don't trust the Governments' assurances

As the pandemic's second wave surges, India's migrant workers are again heading home, just like they did when the first wave resulted in a hard nationwide lockdown in a matter of four hours last March. This time around, fortunately, we are not witnessing the heartbreaking mass migration of impoverished workers with families in tow, carrying all their worldly goods on their shoulders, as they trudge back home in the searing summer. Now, the workers don't trust the insensitive Governments, employers and city dwellers enough so as to be left in the lurch. As more cities come under the contagion's grip and as the Governments start increasing the number of restrictions and curfews/short lockdowns, the migrant workers who had just started to resettle in the cities after returning to their jobs a few months ago, are rushing back. The trains going to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the biggest sources of migrant workers, are leaving Mumbai, Lucknow, Delhi-NCR and Ahmedabad with standing room only.

Even though most of the workers know that they are returning to joblessness and penury, they say they prefer starving at home among their loved ones than be stranded in an alien place without any social security, hope or helping hand from the Governments or the people. The trauma they went through last year will stay a lifetime and they have chosen what, to their mind, is an easier option. However, this exodus does not augur well for the nation's fiscal health that had just started recovering after last year's hard lockdown delivered another crushing blow to an already tottering economy. Comprising 20 per cent of the workforce, migrant labour is vital to every economic sector, especially the informal sector and MSMEs, and constitutes nearly 50 per cent of India's GDP. Even though most State Governments and the Centre, too, are clear that there will be no hard lockdown this time, the message seems to be lost on the unnerved workers. The only option for the Government to stop this migration is to get the message across loud and clear. The workers need to be assured that they will not be left to fend for themselves this time around. If the Governments fail to convince them, the nation's rural and urban economies will be in a shambles. This is surely not something we can afford right now.

The conundrum gets trickier

The Supreme Court's scathing judgment notwithstanding, Nepal's PM KP Oli has prorogued the House a second time

After the Supreme Court of Nepal on February 23 overturned Prime Minister (PM) KP Oli's decision to dissolve Parliament, he prorogued the House session on Monday afternoon.

A two-year power struggle between Oli and his *bête noire*, revolutionary leader Prachanda, has ended in a climactic anti-climax with Oli providentially keeping his chair. Witness the events in the last six months: Oli dumped the Prachanda-Madhav Nepal group, ditched the Chinese by refusing to step down as the PM, dissolved Parliament, ordered elections and reinstated himself as the PM — not caretaker — of a revived Government, insisting that it was business as usual. Except that the quality of governance had declined further through rule by ordinances, boosted by the party faithful President Bidhya Devi Bhandari.

In a shock-and-awe judgment, the Supreme Court deprived the Nepal Communist Party (merged CPN-UML and CPN Maoist Centre) of its label and symbol, reducing it to separate constituents. Prachanda's writ petition for the NCP's revival was rejected. Strangely, the Election Commission withheld its decision on allotting the NCP's 'Sun' symbol and party label to either faction, saying the party had not split. The story of political hara-kiri was scripted in the NCP despite its overwhelming and unprecedented political stability in Parliament, majority Governments in six of the seven provinces and 80 per cent of posts in the local elections.

Landmark dates in the calendar of events are February 2018 (Oli elected as the PM with Maoist support); May 17, 2018 (the merger of the NCP factions); July 2, 2020 (Oli prorogues House); December 20, 2020 (Oli dissolves Parliament); February 23, 2021 (the Supreme Court's verdict on revival of the House on March 7); April 19, 2021 (Oli prorogues the House again).

While Oli has not resigned on moral grounds, the Maoists have not withdrawn support to him. No single party has the necessary majority of 138 law-



makers in a House of 275. No party or combination of parties has filed a motion of no-confidence according to Article 100 (5) of the Constitution that requires 68 lawmakers. (The new Constitution bars a no-confidence motion in the first two years of any Government.) The political conundrum continues with Oli at the helm.

The arithmetic of the revived House is the CPN-UML - 121 (including 38 dissident lawmakers belonging to the Nepal-Khanal faction); Nepali Congress - 63 (fractured among Sher Bahadur Deuba, Ramchandra Poudyal and Koirala factions); Janata Samajwadi Party - 32 (Upendra Yadav, Baburam Bhattarai, Mahanta Thakur and Rajendra Mahto groups); CPN Maoist Centre - 48 to 53. The Government-formation combinations realistically at play are the CPN-UML plus JSP; NC, Maoists plus JSP; and CPN-UML plus NC. As Oli is tarred by the brush of poor governance and "self before service", the NC is unlikely to support Oli, who has not sought a vote of confidence. Strange are the ways of Nepali politics (imbibing the Belgian model where the country operates seamlessly without a Government), probably due



NEPAL HAS HAD SEVEN CONSTITUTIONS SINCE 1948. IT IS A FEDERAL, SECULAR, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, NOT COMPLETELY INCLUSIVE THOUGH ONE-THIRD OF PARLIAMENT'S STRENGTH IS MEANT TO BE WOMEN. BUT JANJATIS AND MADHESIS ARE DISSATISFIED WITH ITS PROVISIONS

to the hurriedly drafted Constitution of 2015.

Nepal has had seven Constitutions (1948, 1951, 1959, 1962, 1990, 2007 and 2015). It is a federal, secular, democratic republic, not completely inclusive though one-third of Parliament's strength is meant to be women. But *janjatis* and Madhesis are dissatisfied with its provisions. The Madhesis in the JSP are negotiating with Oli to redress their constitutional grievances in lieu of supporting the Government's formation. It is interesting that in 2008-09, Nepal turned away from a Maoist Government (Maoists won nearly a 2/3rds majority but were relegated to the third position in 2013). In 2021, Nepal has shied away from Communist rule despite China's Herculean efforts to keep the Left flock together. Ambassador Hou Yanqui has not abandoned her efforts to keep the Left parties united and has met both former Prime Ministers Madhav Nepal and Prachanda. But the unity project appears to be beyond reach. The *Himalmedia Public Opinion Survey April 2021* has blamed Oli and Prachanda for putting the democracy at risk. India has made an impressive comeback, thanks to the

good and quiet work by Ambassador Vinay Kwatra and agencies. The Kathmandu-Raxaul DPR for a broad gauge railway line, 198-km-long and costing \$3.15 bn, has been submitted to Singha Durbar. India has said it will complete the railway five years after the land is obtained. In addition, several legs of the Hulaki Rajmarg connecting the East-West Highway with the Indian border are being completed. The grand China-Nepal Economic Corridor, which includes a road and railway line from Kyrong-Kathmandu-Pokhara-Lumbini, is awaiting the green light and funds. Once completed, Chinese goods will reach the rich markets of the Indo-Gangetic Plain.

While Deuba has said there is no chance of a new Government till Maoists withdraw support to Oli, the PM has prorogued the House again even as a no-confidence vote was being planned. The political conundrum seems embedded in the Constitution of Nepal.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sheer politics in West Bengal

Sir — It refers to the editorial 'The guides' (April 20). The decision taken by the political parties to break the chain of virus came quite late as the voting for five phases already over and campaigning for the sixth phase is going on. A huge damage has already been done by the political leaders through their rallies and campaigning as West Bengal is reporting significant number of COVID-19 cases. Earlier it was the TMC and the Congress which announced that they would not conduct or organise mega rallies and finally the BJP also followed in their footsteps and showed some restraint by announcing that rallies with only 500 people will be organised.

Anyhow, West Bengal is going to be a high-stake battle where innocent people have lost their lives to dirty politics. However, it seems that the leaders of political parties have realised the importance of the lives of citizens and hopefully lessons would be learnt from it. Any public gatherings of large magnitude should not be allowed anywhere in the country till we develop herd immunity by way of aggressive vaccination. With the Government allowing everybody above 18 years of age to get the job from May 1, we will soon develop herd immunity. It's good that the States can buy doses directly from vaccine-makers in the "liberalised and accelerated Phase 3 strategy of COVID-19 vaccination". We have reported 2.73 lakh new daily cases in the highest spike since the pandemic broke out a year ago.

Bal Govind | Noida

Right step in the right direction

Sir — It's a good decision by the Centre to announce that all Indian citizens above the age of 18 years can get COVID-19 vaccine starting May 1. The immunisation drive was currently restricted to only citizens aged above 45. The Government has allowed States, private hospitals and industrial establishments to procure the doses directly from the manufacturers. It's good to scale up their manufacturing by increasing the role played by the private sector and State Governments.

Lockdown is not a solution



The lockdown imposed in Delhi and many other cities by the respective State Governments shows that it is for the State dispensation to take decisions on the curbs and curfew, based on the prevailing situation in their particular State. This situation can vary; hence, it's better that only the State Governments take a call with respect to it. Currently, not all States are witnessing the same uncontrollable surge of the COVID infections. However, the gains from the curfew must be proportionate to the costs incurred. Breaking the chain of transmission during the next six days will offer some respite to healthcare workers and facilities that are swamped by an

The Government has been working hard for over a year to ensure that the maximum number of Indians are able to get the vaccine in the shortest possible time. India's approach to building scientific and epidemiological pillars is guided by the global best practices, SoPs of the WHO as well as the vision of experts in the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19. The total vaccinations across the country have crossed more than 13 crore. This is the right step towards a decisive battle against COVID-19. Hope that people will come forward for vaccination and cooperate in curbing the pandemic.

Amit Singh Kushwaha | Satna

Behave properly with citizens

Sir — The manner in which flying squads have been enforcing pandemic-related protocols in public places and behaving with the citizens needs to be condemned. It is a

avalanche of cases. Lockdowns are leaky unless the disease surveillance mechanism improves, wearing of masks is strictly enforced, institutional alternatives to home quarantine are made available and the food security needs of migrant workers are catered to so as to avert an exodus like last year. Further, access to testing and healthcare facilities mustn't be retarded. Otherwise, a lockdown will not serve its intended purpose.

Some authentic reports claim that the virus transmission takes place even in air. Door-to-door testing and tracing to spot asymptomatic spreaders must be intensified. Despite much ado about a micro containment strategy, the public health system's disease surveillance capacity is poor. This is why the second wave surprised us. Imposing a lockdown and depopulating public spaces mustn't push the Government machinery into inaction. Lockdowns cannot become the default containment strategy while waiting for the vaccination project to ramp up.

N Sathasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

mere target-oriented exercise entrusted to the enforcing agencies, including the police, by the Government to show that they are serious in tackling the menace. It, however, appears that our politicians are in a class by themselves in that they seem to exempt themselves from the orders passed for effective control of COVID-19. Is the Coronavirus biased in its virulent approach that it makes clear-cut distinctions between politicians and the common man while it tears across the country on its infecting spree! While the need of the hour is to stave off the threat of the virus by standing unitedly against it, the State Governments blaming each other for the huge COVID-19 surge at such a time is uncalled for.

Pachu Menon | Goa

SOUNDBITE

There is no lockdown in the country and people do not need to panic about how they will reach home. Trains will continue to run as before.



Railway Minister

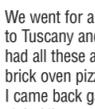
— Piyush Goyal



Moscow's alleged involvement in the 2014 ammunition depot explosion was not an act of State terrorism.

Czech PM

— Andrej Babis



We went for a holiday to Tuscany and we had all these amazing brick oven pizzas and I came back gaining eight kilos.

Actor

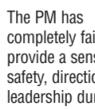
— Kareena Kapoor Khan



The Tokyo Olympics will be different for me. I'm learning how to control my thoughts. At the same time, I'm performing better.

Archer

— Deepika Kumari



The PM has completely failed to provide a sense of safety, direction or leadership during this massive human crisis we are facing.

Congress leader

— Priyanka Gandhi

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FIRST COLUMN

DARK DAYS AHEAD FOR PAKISTAN

TLP leader Rizvi, by demanding expulsion of the French Ambassador, has caught Imran Khan by his throat



MARKANDEY KATJU

The Pakistani Government and the religious fundamentalist Tehreek-e-Labaik Party (TLP) have agreed to place the issue of expelling the French Ambassador before the Parliament. The TLP is a far-Right extremist group which wants strict enforcement of the blasphemy laws in Pakistan which are often used to target Ahmadis, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians and so on. In 2017, the TLP launched an agitation which brought the whole of Pakistan to a standstill over a proposed change in an election law, which it said was against the concept of "khatme nabuwat (finality of Prophethood)". Now, the TLP has demanded the expulsion of the French Ambassador and nixing all trade ties with France, as cartoons of the Prophet had been shown there and President Macron had said this was part of the freedom of speech guaranteed by the French law. I think any MP in Pakistan who will plead against expulsion of the French Ambassador in the debate will be placing his life at risk and becoming "wajib al qatl" (deserving to die), like those members of the French National Convention who in January 1793 voted to spare King Louis 16 from the guillotine.



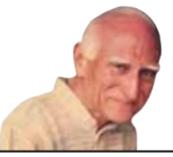
TLP leader Rizvi, by demanding expulsion of the French Ambassador, has caught Prime Minister Imran Khan by his throat and is twisting it slowly but surely. If the demand is accepted, all Western nations (including the US, UK, Germany, Italy and so on) may cut off diplomatic ties, trade and aid to Pakistan, which will swiftly bring the country to its knees financially. But if it is not accepted, then Imran Khan will be branded as a collaborator with those who have insulted the Prophet. In his election campaign in 2018 Imran Khan hobnobbed with Tehreek-e-Labaik and other extremist groups to get votes, and gave his party's tickets to dubious electables, including many shady businessmen and the infamous Amir Liaquat, whose TV show resulted in the killing of many innocent Ahmadis. He expelled Atif Mian, an internationally-renowned, Princeton-based economist from the Pakistan Economic Advisory Council only because he was an Ahmadi. Thus, Imran Khan abandoned all his professed principles soon after coming to power, and became a pucca politician, like a Faust doing a deal with a Mephistopheles. Under his rule the Pakistani economy has gone downhill, with rising unemployment and skyrocketing prices of foodstuffs, fuel, electricity and so on.

In the current crisis, with large-scale protests and demonstrations going on all over Pakistan, Imran Khan thought that by entering into an agreement with the TLP he could ward off the danger. In fact it was like Neville Chamberlain signing the Munich Pact with Hitler in 1938, and announcing, "It is peace in our times." Churchill rightly called it a dishonourable surrender, and the Second World War started the next year. Imran Khan forgot that surrender to blackmailers only invites further blackmail. He will soon realise this. The next demand will be strictly enforcing the blasphemy laws against the minorities. I believe Imran Khan's days are now numbered and the army will rule. However, many army personnel are reportedly supporters of the TLP, and the example of Governor Salman Taseer's assassination would have put fear in the hearts of generals or officers who would like to suppress the TLP. Hence a time may come when a TLP-led Government might be formed. The TLP is as feudal minded and reactionary as the Taliban. So Pakistan is headed towards the Middle Ages, and we may soon see sharia law imposed in full rigour in Pakistan, with women stoned to death for adultery and limbs of thieves cut off. Those who do not say namaz five times daily will be flogged. And of course poverty, unemployment, child malnourishment are all irrelevant. All that matters will be how to attain jannat (heaven) even if it is on an empty belly.

(The writer is a former justice of the Supreme Court of India. The views expressed are personal.)

Memories of the birth of Bangladesh

This description also points to the commonality in the history of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, in a wider background of time and space, that also deserves present recollection



AND HAKSAR

Last month's celebration of the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence, brought back some memories of those times. Here they are, for those whose interest may have been aroused by Prime Minister Modi's recent visit to our neighbouring country on that occasion. Fifty years ago, in 1971, I was in the Indian Foreign Service and assigned as Political Counselor in India's permanent mission to the UN, at New York. My work involved following current events and the role of the UN. The ongoing tension and conflict in then East Pakistan was a part of that job. This became especially so in the heated environment of late 1971 for the subcontinent. The Cold War was at full blast, the US was seeking a historic opening with China, and India was steadfastly maintaining its policy of non-alignment, while grappling with massive refugee inflows fleeing the genocide inflicted by the Pakistani army on its own population in the East.

Much has been written about this conflict. Here are some key vignettes from the sidelines of action at the UN. As the situation escalated, with rising pressure at the UN from the US on behalf of their Pakistani proxies, in August 1971 there was a news flash that India and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) had just signed a bilateral treaty. There was then an immediate media request for an interview on this treaty with the Indian Mission in New York. We could not delay a response and I was asked to go for this interview, though we had not till then received the treaty's text.

I prepared carefully, as best as I could, based on what we knew within the Mission on India's overall policy posture. A main question asked by the media was if this treaty with the USSR affected India's policy of non-alignment. I denied this firmly, non-alignment being a cornerstone of our foreign policy, and on return to office, was glad to find that my position had been in line with the treaty text that had meanwhile arrived.

As the conflict continued, some Bangladesh representatives also came to New York to further their cause in late 1971. I was asked to help them. Some of these visitors later became important figures in independent Bangladesh. One of them was Rehman Sobhan, a friend from our student days, who also wrote about our discussions in his memoirs, published just five years ago. Referring in them to me, he wrote that I "assured him that no action by the UN would frustrate the march of the Indian Army to Dhaka as the Soviet Union had told them of a veto," in the UN Security Council (UNSC). The situation continued to escalate through the fall, an important and busy time at the UN as this conflict continued. Growing pressure on the Pakistani military from the Mukti Bahini freedom fighter forces in Bangladesh led to a rapidly unfolding end-game in December 1971.

On December 3, the Pakistan air force launched sneak attacks aimed at disabling runways on 12 forward western Indian airbases. The Indian Air Force shrugged this off and established air superiority over East Pakistan. This was a new dimension of a direct military conflict between India and Pakistan, and the matter was further taken up in the UNSC on December 4. There the US delegation, led by George Bush Sr twice proposed ceasefire resolutions, supported by a majority of members, including the People's Republic of China that had just been seated in the UNSC, replacing Taiwan in October (with



ON DECEMBER 3, THE PAKISTAN AIR FORCE LAUNCHED SNEAK ATTACKS AIMED AT DISABLING RUNWAYS ON 12 FORWARD WESTERN INDIAN AIRBASES. THE INDIAN AIR FORCE SHRUGGED THIS OFF AND ESTABLISHED AIR SUPERIORITY OVER EAST PAKISTAN. THIS WAS A NEW DIMENSION OF A DIRECT MILITARY CONFLICT BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN, AND THE MATTER WAS FURTHER TAKEN UP IN THE UNSC ON DECEMBER 4

The writer is a former diplomat and a translator of Sanskrit classics. The views expressed are personal.



India's support ironically). A ceasefire would have been severely prejudicial to Bangladesh and India, given the ongoing ground operations of the Indian Army in support of Bangladeshi liberation.

We were not members of the UNSC at the time, but our Ambassador was invited to the session, where I went with him and we lobbied heavily behind the scenes. With Indian support, the USSR insisted that members of the Bangladeshi liberation movement also be invited to the UNSC to present their case and evidence of heinous crimes by the Pakistani army. The ceasefire resolutions were ultimately vetoed by the USSR.

The Soviet veto gave a brief window to the Bangladeshi freedom forces, supported by the Indian Army, to persevere with their goal of liberating their country. As the fighting continued, some days later the UNSC reconvened on December 6 to forward the case to the General Assembly. This time both India and Pakistan sent senior Ministers to represent their positions. From India it was Sardar Swaran Singh, a stalwart Cabinet Minister of the then Congress Government. From Pakistan it was the just-appointed Foreign Minister and leader of the recently-formed Pakistan People's Party, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

Their exchanges intensified along with the ground conflict now going on more and more against Pakistan. There was also speculation if China

would also be drawn further into the debate by the US, with memories in India running high of the 1962 conflict with its northern neighbour.

Three very personal memories of that time have remained with me. The first was of corridor talk, on the margins of the UNSC chamber, about yet another ceasefire resolution, this time by a Soviet ally member, as all other members were getting increasingly concerned about the prolongation of the conflict on the ground and its potential for wider conflict. But before any such eventuality, news also came of the Pakistani forces surrendering to the Indian side on December 17, ending a matter that then seemed rather touch-and-go. The other is of listening to Bhutto's fierce final speech to the UNSC, when he tore up his papers and walked out of the meeting. Some speculated that it was meant more for his home audience and politics rather than the UN where the matter of conflict seemed almost over.

But my most vivid memory is of an encounter with Bhutto himself. I had first heard about him from senior school fellows, some of whom knew of him from their times together at the University of Southern California. I had then met him in the 1960s when I was Deputy Chief of Protocol for India's Ministry of External Affairs and he had come to India for bilateral exchanges. After the final UNSC session on December 16, India's UN Ambassador Samar

Sen went to the UN bar-lounge to meet his Pakistani counterpart Agha Shahi. I happened to accompany Sen to this meeting. After some time, we were also joined by Bhutto. Asked to get Bhutto a drink from the bar, I went back there for a glass of Black Dog whiskey (his reputed favourite). As I handed it to him, and sat down, he looked at us and said something that I still remember. "Some forces were opposed to our being together. Otherwise, we would not have been separated. Then I may not have become the Prime Minister but would certainly have been the Foreign Minister of a united India," he said.

Not much later, Bhutto did become the Prime Minister of Pakistan, and visited India. His meeting with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and their famous Simla Agreement are of course well-known. So is the subsequent history of contacts between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh over the next five decades. During this period, all these three subcontinental neighbours have experienced their own political changes — in Governments, ruling parties and leaders. These also impacted their mutual relations. The memories here recalled and described reflect only one important section of this process. But this description also points to the commonality in their history and culture, in a wider background of time and space, that also deserves present recollection.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE WAY PM MODI'S PHOTO IS PUT ON VACCINATION CERTIFICATES, WE DEMAND THAT THE PM'S PHOTO SHOULD BE PUT ON DEATH CERTIFICATES ALSO.
—MAHARASHTRA MINORITY AFFAIRS MINISTER
NAWAB MALIK



THIS IS A VACCINATION DRIVE. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE PICTURE WILL BE OF THE PM OF THE COUNTRY AND NOT OF THE LEADERS OF THE OPPOSITION.
—UNION HOME MINISTER
AMIT SHAH

Chief Ministers should not blame it all on PM and the Centre

Be it employment generation, economic growth or even pandemic management, the States and the Centre have to share the responsibilities

A second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic is spreading at a much faster rate than the first one and data showed the worst ever daily spike in the country on Sunday. Certain sections have raised the demand of a nationwide lockdown but given last years' experience, it is unlikely that the Centre will implement any such pan-India shut down.

The States are better-placed to evaluate the situation and take necessary steps accordingly. A complete lockdown situation will also jeopardise the economic recovery and given the fact that now we have vaccines against the deadly virus, a conscious call should be taken by the policymakers.

Our healthcare system lacks basic facilities and improving health infrastructure requires continuous



SHSHANK SAUROV

The writer is a chartered accountant and a public policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.

efforts by the Centre and States. Building hospitals and research centres, setting up manufacturing facilities for medicine and medical equipment and so on, are time-consuming processes and can't be ramped up in a short span of time to fight the pandemic.

In the Indian federal structure, though the Centre and States share responsibilities in managing the healthcare system, the States have a larger role to play. Entry six of list II of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution puts "public health and sanitation; hospitals and dispensaries" under the State List. Therefore, State Governments have a larger role to play in managing and maintaining the healthcare system during this pandemic.

However, certain aspects of healthcare like population control, family planning and

medical education are part of the Concurrent List. Therefore, both the Centre and States are empowered to take decisions in these matters.

If someone blames only the Centre for the poor state of medical care in the country then s/he is passing the buck to the Prime Minister for something which is the joint responsibility of the Chief Ministers (CMs) and the Union Government together.

According to the October 2020 Reserve Bank of India (RBI) report on State finances, 12.1 per cent of overall expenditure towards social services has been spent on medical and public health alone by the State Governments in the Financial Year (FY) 2019-20. The health expenditure of States was ₹1,92,636 crore in the FY



2019-20. Therefore, the question should be asked from the CMs on what they have done to improve the situation.

Further, health research and collaboration with international bodies lies under the specific domain of the Centre and now we have an effective cure to the disease in the form of the Coronavirus vaccine. It is worthwhile to

highlight that the COVID vaccine was mocked as the "BJP vaccine" and the Opposition was busy raising questions over the effectiveness of the vaccine which created confusion in the minds of the common man.

This was a time when the entire political leadership should have stood together and spoken in a common voice but alas! It can happen only in our vibrant democracy where someone can first question the vaccine itself and when the situation goes out of control then starts blaming others for what has happened.

The discussion on the COVID pandemic is incomplete without mentioning the ongoing State elections. Social media campaigns are targeted towards the BJP in general and Modi in particular as if the BJP was the only party

which was doing election campaigning in West Bengal.

However, thankfully, this is one area where the Opposition showed some initiative to help the nation in the fight against the Coronavirus and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi decided not to hold any rally in West Bengal. As a matter of fact, his last rally in Bengal was on April 14. But the proclamation by the Gandhi scion came only after completing his campaign in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It would have been better if the political leadership of the Congress had taken this decision earlier.

However, the good thing about the Congress' decision to stop campaigning in Bengal was that the States' Chief Minister and even the BJP decided to limit the number of people at its rallies to

500 people, the next day.

But given the criticism the Centre is facing from the Opposition over the handling of the current pandemic, it seems that the federal structure of our country is highlighted by our politicians only when they have to take grants from the Centre or when petty political considerations compel them to do so, but there is complete silence when it comes to taking accountability.

Be it employment generation, economic growth or even pandemic management, the States and the Centre have to share these responsibilities equally. The CMs should understand that information travels very fast in this new-era and it would be difficult for inept policymakers to remain hidden from public scrutiny, whether it is at the Centre or in the States.

Pak Govt surrenders before radical Islamist party

RESOLUTION TABLED IN PARL TO EXPEL FRENCH ENVOY

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD/LAHORE
Succumbing to Islamists' demands, Pakistan's Imran Khan-led Government on Tuesday decided to introduce a resolution in Parliament to expel the French ambassador and quash all criminal cases filed against the banned radical Islamist party TLP after they reached a deal following a marathon round of talks.
The agreement came a day after Prime Minister Khan said that the expulsion of the French ambassador was not a solution to stop the incidences of blasphemy in the western world, noting that "it will only trigger incidents of blasphemy in other countries as in the West they call it freedom of expression."
"Under a marathon round of talks and an agreement reached with the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), a resolution on the expulsion of the French ambassador will be presented on Tuesday in the National Assembly," Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid said in a video statement.
The cases against TLP workers, registered under terrorism charges, will also be quashed. Besides, the names of TLP leaders from the Fourth Schedule will also be taken off, Rashid said.
The expulsion of the French ambassador is one of the main four demands of the radical Islamist party, which was banned last week after its members staged violent anti-France protests across the country.
On Monday, the National Assembly session was adjourned to meet again on April 22. However, shortly after the minister's statement, a session of the lower house of Parliament was summoned in the late afternoon.
Hours later, a resolution was tabled in the National

Chad's President killed on battlefield, says military

AP ■ N'DJAMENA, CHAD

Chad's longtime leader died of wounds suffered during a visit to front-line troops battling a little-known rebel group, the military announced on Tuesday, just hours after he was declared the winner of an election that would have given him another six years in power.
The military quickly announced President Idriss Deby Itno's son as the central African nation's interim leader, succeeding his 68-year-old father who ruled for more than three decades.
Some observers immediately questioned the chain of events leading up to Tuesday's stunning announcement on national radio and television.
Ayo Sogunro, a Nigerian lawyer and fellow at the South Africa-based Center for Human Rights, said that under Chadian law the term of an incumbent president who dies is completed not by family members but by the National Assembly.
"The army seizing power and conferring it on the son of the president... is a coup and unconstitutional," Sogunro tweeted Tuesday, calling for the African Union to condemn the transfer of power.
Deby's 37-year-old son, Mahamat, is best known as a top commander of the Chadian forces aiding a U.N. peace-keeping mission in northern Mali. The military said Tuesday he now will head an 18-month transitional council following his father's death.
The military called for calm, instituting a 6 p.m. curfew and closing the country's land and air borders as panic kept many inside their homes in the capital, N'Djamena.
"In the face of this worrying situation, the people of Chad must show their commitment to peace, to stability, and to national cohesion," Gen. Azem Bemardoa Agouma said.
The circumstances of Deby's death could not immediately be independently confirmed due to the remote location of the fighting. The government has released few details of its efforts to put down the rebellion in northern Chad. The army said Tuesday that Deby had fought heroically but was wounded in a battle. He was then taken to the capital where he later died of unspecified wounds.
Some residents of the capital, though, said they feared there was more to the story of Deby's demise.
"The rumors that are going around about the transitional council give me the impression that some information is false," Thierry Djikoloum said. "They are already talking about dissolving parliament... So for me, I'd say it was a coup d'etat. He was killed."
Some foreign observers also questioned how a head of state could have been killed, saying it cast doubt on his protective guard.

Xi hits out at US, says there should be no bossing, meddling in other's internal affairs

Beijing: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday hit out at the US, saying there should be no "bossing" and "meddling" in the internal affairs of other countries as Beijing is increasingly coming under pressure from Washington and its allies over issues of human rights violations, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

"Bossing others around or meddling in others' internal affairs would not get one any support. We must advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are common values of humanity, and encourage exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations to promote the progress of human civilization," Xi said, without directly referring to the US.
"What we need in today's world is justice, not hegemony," he said addressing the annual Boao Forum for Asia (BFA), a China promoted influential think tank based in Hainan via video link.
"Big countries should behave in a manner befitting to their status and with a greater sense of responsibility," he said.
His snide remark against Washington came as US President Joe Biden vigorously pursued a strong China containment policy initiated by his predecessor by Donald Trump.
Biden united US allies like the UK, the EU and Japan over his China policy. He also held the first quadrilateral summit of the emerging alliance called Quad which included US, Australia, Japan and India.
The US, the European Union, Britain and Canada have imposed coordinated sanctions on China over alleged human rights violations against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang, a charge Beijing denied.
These countries have also taken united position on China firming up its control over Hong Kong.

Next 2 decades to be volatile with no single superpower: US intel forecast

New Delhi/Washington: In the international system, no single state is likely to be positioned to dominate across all regions or domains, and a broader range of actors will compete to advance their ideologies, goals and interests.
The forecast has been published in the seventh edition of the US National Intelligence Council's Global Trends report.
The document, published every four years since 1997, assesses the key trends and uncertainties that will shape the strategic environment for the US during the next two decades.
In the next 20 years, the intensity of competition for global influence is likely to reach its highest level since the Cold War, the US Intelligence Council has forewarned.
"Countries and other actors are likely to compete over food, mineral, water, and energy sources made more accessible, more valuable, or scarcer," the report said.
Expanding technological, network, and information power will complement more traditional military, economic, and soft power aspects in the international system. These power elements, which will be more accessible to a broader range of actors, are likely to be concentrated among leaders that develop these technologies.
The US Intelligence Council claimed that these power dynamics are likely to produce a more volatile and confrontational geopolitical environment, reshape multilateralism, and widen the gap between transnational challenges and cooperative arrangements to address them. Rival powers will jockey to shape global norms, rules, and institutions.
The US, along with its longstanding allies, and China will have the greatest influence on global dynamics, supporting competing visions of the international system and governance that reflect their core interests and ideologies, the report said. Their rivalry will affect most domains, straining and in some cases reshaping existing alliances and international organisations that have underpinned the international order for decades.

28 people freed from Taliban prison in Afghanistan

Kabul: Six armed militants were killed and 28 people were freed from a Taliban detention centre after the Afghan army launched a special operation in Helmand province, the Defence Ministry said on Tuesday.
"The commandos of Afghan National Army launched the raid in surrounding areas of Helmand's Musa Qala district. A gunfight took place when the troops arrived at the targeted facility, and six armed militants were killed," Xinhua news agency quoted the Ministry as saying in a statement.
The freed people received medical checkups after they were shifted to an army camp, according to the statement.
Taliban insurgents frequently detain civilians and off-duty soldiers from villages and highways and punish civilians for spying on government security forces.

Japan's Osaka to request new emergency declaration

Tokyo: Japan's Osaka prefecture will on Tuesday request the Central Government to declare a fresh state of emergency due to the continued surge of Covid-19 cases and the ensuing strain on healthcare facilities, authorities said.
The Osaka prefectural Government will formalise their decision to request the emergency virus period, the third for the hard-hit prefecture, at a task force meeting to be held in the afternoon on Tuesday, Xinhua news agency reported. If the central government approves the request, the prefecture would be empowered to implement stronger measures to tackle the spread of the virus.
On Tuesday, quasi-emergency steps came into effect for parts of Tokyo's surrounding prefectures of Saitama, Chiba and Kanagawa, as well as for Aichi prefecture, and will be effective through May 11.

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA CORRIGENDUM					
SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD CORP./AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/NIT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	UHBVN	NOTICE INVITING TENDER NO. 09/UH/XEN/P-II/MM/2020-21 [2021_HBC_163150_1] FOR EMPANELMENT OF FIRMS FOR SUPPLY OF BLDC FANS.	PART-I DATE OF SUBMISSION EXTENDED UPTO 03.05.2021 (1300 HRS.)	uhbvn.org.in	8053428343 cemm@uhbvn.org.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in RO NO. 2663

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE						
SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	HAFED	E-TENDER FOR PURCHASE OF APPROX. 20,000 MT MUSTARD SEED FOR HAFED OIL MILLS, REWARI & NARNAUL. THE DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON HTTPS://ETENDERS.HRY.NIC.IN AND WWW.HAFED.GOV.IN	CLOSING DATE 28.04.2021	EMD Rs. 500/- per MT	www.hafed.gov.in	0172258912 hafed@hry.nic.in
2	MAHARANA PARTAP HORTICULTURAL UNIVERSITY	CONSTRUCTION OF IMPLEMENTS SHED AND FARM STORE AT REGIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE, RAIYA (JHAJJAR) AND ALL OTHER WORKS CONTINGENT THERE TO UNDER THE CONTROL OF MHU (RE-TENDER 2ND TIME) (RS. 49.59 LACS)	26.04.2021 17.05.2021	49.59 LACS	www.mhu.ac.in	70159-98919
3	MAHARANA PARTAP HORTICULTURAL UNIVERSITY	SITC OF MUSHROOM CLIMATE CONTROL ALL IN ONE MACHINE, S.T. RACKS, PUFF PANELING ETC. AT REGIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE (RMRC), MURTHAL (SONPAT) AND ALL OTHER WORKS CONTINGENT THERE TO UNDER THE CONTROL OF MHU (RS. 31.75 LAC) (RECALLED 1ST TIME)	21.04.2021 11.05.2021	31.75 LACS	www.mhu.ac.in	70159-98919
4	HSSIDC	CONSTRUCTION OF PERIPHERAL BOUNDARY WALL OF 1128 ACRE LAND, IMT MANESAR, DISTT. GURUGRAM.	22.04.2021 06.05.2021	606.75 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9815330033 manojpal.singh@hssidc.org.in
5	HAFED	E-TENDER NOTICE FOR SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF ALL-IN-ONE COMPUTERS, SERVERS & LAPTOPS FOR HAFED, PANCHKULA	20.04.2021 30.04.2021	@2% OF THE ESTIMATED QUOTED PRICE	hafed.gov.in	01722590520 hafed@hry.nic.in
6	HSSIDC	PROVIDING & LAYING INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES ON TURNKEY BASIS IN SECTOR-19, 19A, R&R POCKETS & SECTOR-ROADS AT IMT SOHNA, (HARYANA).	22.04.2021 20.05.2021	230.38 CORE	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9810581395 ia.sohna@hssidc.org.in
7	HSSIDC	CONSTRUCTION OF RAIN WATER HARVESTING SYSTEMS ONE AT HSSIDC APARTMENT, SECTOR-14 AND ONE AT HSSIDC CORPORATION OFFICE BUILDING, SECTOR-6, PANCHKULA.	22.04.2021 06.05.2021	16.53 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	8558829289
8	HSPV PANCHKULA	AUGMENTATION OF PROVIDING LED LIGHTS INSTEAD OF SODIUM FITTING ON EXISTING HIGH MAST IN ATAL PARK SEC-8 & 9 UJE KARNAL. (INCLUDING THREE YEARS REPLACEMENT WARRANTY, ON OFF OPERATION OF SYSTEM AND THREE YEARS FREE MTC/ DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD FREE OF COST).	CLOSING DATE 29.04.2021	12.20 LACS	www.hsvphry.org.in	918427999660
9	HSPV PANCHKULA	PROVIDING HT LINE & 200 KVA TRANSFORMER AND REPLACEMENT OF HPSV SODIUM FITTING WITH LED STREET LIGHT FITTING ON EXISTING OCTAGONAL POLE AND PDG. NEW LED STREET LIGHT FITTING 25 WATT ON EXISTING PCC POLE IN SEC-18 UJE KATHAL. (INCLUDING THREE YEARS REPLACEMENT WARRANTY, ON OFF OPERATION OF SYSTEM AND THREE YEARS FREE OF COST FOR LED LIGHTS AND ONE YEAR FOR OTHER ITEMS FREE OF COST)	CLOSING DATE 06.05.2021	50.20 LACS	www.hsvphry.org.in	918427999660
10	MDU ROHTAK	PROVIDING AND LAYING PAVAR BLOCKS IN TYPE-IA (36 NOS. FLATS) UNDER CONSTRUCTION + 1 OTHER WORK	16.04.2021 06.05.2021	22.12 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	xen.civil@mdurohtak.ac.in
11	GMDA GURUGRAM	"CONSTRUCTION OF 25 MLD CAPACITY OF SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT (STP) AND MAIN PUMPING STATION (MPS) BASED ON SEQUENTIAL BATCH REACTOR (SBR) TECHNOLOGY ALONGWITH OPERATION & MAINTENANCE FOR 06 YEARS INCLUDING 01 YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD AFTER STABILIZATION PERIOD OF 03 MONTHS ON TURNKEY BASIS COMPLETE IN ALL RESPECT AT MANESAR, HARYANA"	20.04.2021 10.05.2021	63.52 LACS	https://www.gmda.gov.in	xen4inra2.gmda@gov.in

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GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA CORRIGENDUM					
SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD CORP./AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/NIT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	THE AMBALA DISTT. COOP. MILK PRODUCERS UNION LTD	2021_HBC_160629_1, 2021_HBC_160915_1, 2021_HBC_160926_1, 2021_HBC_160964_1, 2021_HBC_160981_1, 2021_HBC_160993_1	THE LAST DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION WAS 17.04.2021 AT 11:00 HRS IS FURTHER EXTENDED UP TO 30.04.2021 AT 11:00 HRS (HIRING OF PROCUREMENT ROUTE VEHICLE)	www.vitaandia.org.in	9729875323 milkplant@vitaambala.com
2	HVPNL	NIT NO. 04/2021-22/KEN/TS/PKL DATED 09.04.2021	DUE TO LESS NO. OF BIDS THIS TENDER IS HEREBY EXTENDED UPTO 26.04.2021	www.hvpng.org.in	01722583789 pro@hvpng.org.in
3	HPGCL	(NIT NO. PTP-POM-300142) (EVENT NO. 2021_HBC_163109_1) SUB: SUPPLY OF ALUMINA FERRIC GRADE-II FOR PTPS.	START DATE 09.03.2021 AT 17:00 HRS. & LAST DATE 28.04.2021 AT 13:00 HRS.	www.hpgcl.org.in	01802566015 xenmp1.ptps@hpgcl.org.in
4	HPGCL	2021_HBC_165509_1 NIT NO. 01/RGTPP/CM/26/VOL-IV DT. 22.03.2021	LAST DATE OF BID SUBMISSION 30.04.2021 UP TO 15:00 HRS. ARC OF VIBRATION ANALYSIS, ALIGNMENT & BALANCING OF CRITICAL AUXILIARIES AT VARIOUS SITES AT RGTPP, KHEDAR, HISAR.	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9315164648 xencm.rgtp@hpgcl.org.in
5	HPGCL	2021_HBC_163107_1 NIT NO. 03/RGTPP/EMD-I/2020-21/119 DT 09.03.2021	LAST DATE OF BID SUBMISSION 26.04.2021 UP TO 15:00 HRS. THE WORK OF REPAIRING OF DE SIDE BEARING SHEET OF ROTOR SHAFT OF PRIMARY AIR FAN MOTOR HAVING CAPACITY OF 3650 KW, 11 KV, 1485 RPM, SHANGHAI ELECTRIC MACHINERY CO. LTD. MAKE AT RGTPP, KHEDAR HISAR.	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9315164618 xenemd1.rgtp@hpgcl.org.in
6	HPGCL	(NIT NO. PTP/POM-111880) (EVENT NO. 2021_HBC_157979_1) SUB: SUPPLY OF AIR CONDITIONERS FOR PTPS PANIPAT.	START DATE 29.01.2021 AT 17:00 HRS. & LAST DATE 26.04.2021 AT 13:00 HRS.	www.hpgcl.org.in	01802566015 xenmp1.ptps@hpgcl.org.in
7	UHBVN	NIT NO. 1/XEN/CITY/KNL/2021-22, DATED 02.04.2021	CORRIGENDUM FOR HIRING OF VEHICLE 2 NOS. MAHINDRA/TATA, FORCE/ANY OTHER JEEP OPEN FROM BACK SIDE WITH HARD TOP & WITH DRIVER SDO 'OP' CITY SUB/DIVISION, KARNAL. (COMPLAINT CENTRE 24x7) OPENING DATE 29-04-2021 CLOSING DATE 29.04.2021 UPTO 1.00 PM OPENING OF TENDERS 29.04.2021 AT 3.30 PM	www.uhbvn.org.in	01842265001 xenocpitykarnal@uhbvn.org.in
8	HVPNL	NIT NO 05/CWD-2/VOL-XIII/HVPM/2021-22 DATED: - 07.04.2021	DATE OF OPENING BID 20/04/2021 LAST DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION IS EXTENDED UPTO 29/04/2021 (13:00 HRS) (SOCIETIES & CONTRACTORS)	www.hvpng.org.in	01722583789 pro@hvpng.org.in
9	HVPNL	NIT NO 04/CWD-2/VOL-XIII/HVPM/2021-22 DATED: - 07.04.2021	DATE OF OPENING BID 20/04/2021 LAST DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION IS EXTENDED UPTO 29/04/2021 (13:00 HRS) (SOCIETIES & CONTRACTORS)	www.hvpng.org.in	01722583789 pro@hvpng.org.in
10	HVPNL	NIT NO 03/CWD-2/VOL-XIII/HVPM/2021-22 DATED: - 07.04.2021	DATE OF OPENING BID 20/04/2021 LAST DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION IS EXTENDED UPTO 29/04/2021 (13:00 HRS) (SOCIETIES & CONTRACTORS)	www.hvpng.org.in	01722583789 pro@hvpng.org.in
11	HVPNL	NIT NO 33/WFG-25/VOL-V/HVPM/2021-22 DATED: - 22.03.2021	ONLINE TENDER IS INVITED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF 4 NO ABB MAKE BREAKER AT 220 KV SSTN PALLA FARIDABAD. (ONLINE TENDER ID :- 2021_HBC_165490_1) ESTIMATE COST/EARNEST MONEY (IN LACS):- RS. 5.02 LACS /10040 RS. LAST DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION:- 26.04.2021 (11:00 A.M) START DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION:- 19.04.2021 (01:00 P.M)	www.hvpng.org.in	01722583789 pro@hvpng.org.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in RO NO. 2669

Convicted ex-Malay PM called out for tall tales in court

IANS ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Former Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak was accused on Tuesday of coming up with a "cock and bull story" to try to overturn his 12-year jail sentence for corruption and abuse of office.
Prosecutor V Sithambaram told Malaysia's Court of Appeal that Najib's claim that his bank account was "manipulated" was "bizarre" and "a trick", reports DPA news agency.
Sithambaram said Najib's story was undermined by text messages between the appellant and Low Taek Jho, a fugitive "financier" better known as Jho Low.
Najib was sentenced to 12 years in jail in 2020 on charges related to the theft of 42 million ringgit (\$9 million) from SRC International, a subsidiary of the 1MDB state fund set up by Najib. Up to \$4 billion dollars could have been stolen from 1MDB, according to the US Department of Justice, which has returned hundreds of millions of dollars to Malaysia after seizing assets bought using 1MDB money, including by Jho Low.

Global CO2 emissions set for 2nd-biggest spike in history: IEA

New Delhi: Global energy-related carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions are on course to surge by 1.5 billion tonnes in 2021, the second-largest increase in history, reversing most of last year's decline caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, according to a new International Energy Agency (IEA) report released on Tuesday.

This would be the biggest annual rise in emissions since 2010, during the carbon-intensive recovery from the global financial crisis.
The IEA's Global Energy Review 2021 estimates that CO2 emissions will increase by almost five per cent this year to 33 billion tonnes, based on the latest national data from around the world as well as real-time analysis of economic growth trends and new energy projects that are set to come online.
The key driver is coal demand, which is set to grow by 4.5 per cent, surpassing its 2019 level and approaching its all-time peak from 2014, with the electricity sector accounting for three-quarters of this increase.
"Global carbon emissions are set to jump by 1.5 billion tonnes this year, driven by in the resurgence of coal use in the power sector."

US Ambassador to leave Russia temporarily

Moscow: US Ambassador to Russia John Sullivan on Tuesday said that he will return to Washington for consultations "about the current state of bilateral relations" between the two nations.

"I believe it is important for me to speak directly with my new colleagues in the Biden administration in Washington about the current state of bilateral relations between the US and Russia" he told Russia's TASS News Agency.
"Also, I have not seen my family in well over a year, and that is another important reason for me to return home for a visit. I will return to Moscow in the coming weeks before any meeting between Presidents (Joe) Biden and (Vladimir) Putin," the Ambassador added.
According to the US embassy, "Ambassador Sullivan is returning to the US for consultations this week".
Sullivan's announcement comes after an exchange of harsh sanctions between the two countries, including mutual expulsions of 10 diplomats.
Russian Foreign Minister

Sergey Lavrov said at a press conference on April 16 that presidential aide Yuri Ushakov at a meeting with Sullivan had recommended that the US Ambassador return to Washington for consultations.
Russian Ambassador Anatoly Antonov to Washington returned to Moscow amid worsening bilateral ties on March 22 after he was recalled following President Biden's remarks on March 17 that Russia will "pay a price" for its alleged interference in the 2020 American election.

Office of the Executive Engineer, Construction Division, Uttarakhand Pejal Nigam, Khatima, District- Udham Singh Nagar
(E-mail: eeckdhatima@gmail.com) Telephone: 05943-253646

E-Tendering/Tender Notice

Letter No. 748/Nivida/ 40 Date: 20.04.2021

Name of Work :- For FHCT and Pipe Line Work.

Name of Scheme	Estimated cost	Period of completion of work:
1 Sarpura pumping W/S Scheme	Rs. 65.33 Lakh	02 months

Key Dates-

2 Date of Online Publication	22.04.2021 at 17:00 hrs.
3 Document Download : Start Date	23.04.2021 at 10:00 hrs.
4 Document download : End Date	05.05.2021 at 17:00 hrs
5 Pre Bid Meeting	28.04.2021 at 13:00 hrs.
6 Bid Submission : Start Date	23.04.2021 at 10:00 hrs.
7 Bid Submission : End Date	05.05.2021 at 17:00 hrs.
8 Offline Submission of Document (Cost of bidding document, Bid Security, Original Affidavits & all the Supporting Documents in support of qualification)	06.05.2021 upto 17:00 hrs.
9 Date of Technical & Financial Bid Opening	07.05.2021 at 11:00 hrs.
10 Details of tender, corrigendum or cancellation etc. may be obtained at web site: www.uktenders.gov.in	Executive Engineer

Retail inflation for farm, rural workers rise marginally in Mar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation for farm workers and rural labourers rose marginally to 2.78 per cent and 2.96 per cent in March, mainly due to higher prices of certain food items.

Consumer Price Index-Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL) and Consumer Price Index-Rural Labourers (CPI-RL) had stood at 2.67 per cent and 2.76 per cent, respectively, in February 2021.

"Point-to-point rate of inflation based on the CPI-AL and CPI-RL increased to 2.78 per cent and 2.96 per cent in March 2021 from 2.67 per cent and 2.76 per cent, respectively, in February 2021," the labour ministry said in a statement.

It showed that CPI-AL and CPI-RL stood at 8.98 per cent and 8.69 per cent in March 2020.

According to the statement, inflation based on the food index of CPI-AL and CPI-RL are at (+) 1.66 per cent and (+) 1.86 per cent, respectively, in March 2021.

The All-India CPI num-

bers for agricultural labourers and rural labourers for March 2021 decreased by 2 points and 1 points to stand at 1,035 and 1,043 points, respectively.

The CPI-AL and CPI-RL indices stood at 1,007 points and 1,013 points, respectively, in March 2020.

The major contribution towards the fall in the general index of agricultural labourers and rural labourers came from food with (-) 3.69 points and (-) 3.34 points, respectively, mainly due to fall in prices of jowar, onion, chillies green, garlic, vegetables and fruits, the ministry stated.

The fall or rise in the index varied from state to state, it said.

In the case of agricultural labourers, the index recorded a decrease of 1-9 points in 13 states and an increase of 1-8 points in seven states.

Tamil Nadu, with 1,243 points, topped the index table; whereas Himachal Pradesh, with 814 points, stood at the bottom.

In the case of rural labourers, it recorded a decrease of 1-

8 points in 12 states and an increase of 1-7 points in eight states.

Tamil Nadu, with 1,229 points, topped the index table; whereas Bihar, with 839 points, stood at the bottom.

Among states, the maximum decrease in the CPI numbers for agricultural labourers and rural labourers was experienced by Tamil Nadu (-9 points and -8 points, respectively), mainly due to fall in the prices of jowar, onion and vegetables and fruits.

On the contrary, the maximum increase in the CPI numbers for agricultural labourers and rural labourers was experienced by Tripura (+8 points and +7 points), mainly due to a rise in the prices of rice, mustard oil, vegetables and fruits, and kerosene oil.

In the statement, Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar said, "The decline in index (month-on-month) will benefit the millions of workers in rural areas, as it will put lesser burden on their daily budget."

Power under GST law to order provisional attachment 'draconian': SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said the rule of law in a constitutional framework is fulfilled when law is substantially fair, procedurally fair and applied in a fair manner, as it held that the power to order a provisional attachment of property, including a bank account, of a taxable person, under the GST law is "draconian in nature".

The top court emphasised that this power of attachment can't be used as an "unguided discretion" by the authorities.

A bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and M.R. Shah said: "The power to order a provisional attachment of the property of the taxable person including a bank account is draconian in nature and the conditions which are prescribed by the statute for a valid exercise of the power must be strictly fulfilled."

The bench noted a provisional attachment under Section 83 is contemplated during the pendency of cer-

tain proceedings, meaning thereby that a final demand or liability is yet to be crystallised.

"An anticipatory attachment of this nature must strictly conform to the requirements, both substantive and procedural, embodied in the statute and the rules," said the bench.

In the 61-page judgement, the bench observed the formation of the opinion must be based on tangible material which indicates a live link to the necessity to order a provisional attachment to protect the interest of the government revenue.

"The commissioner must be alive to the fact that such provisions are not intended to make pre-emptive strikes on the property of the assessee, merely because property is available," the bench said.

The top court allowed an appeal by Radha Krishna Industries, challenging the Himachal Pradesh High Court order of January 1, 2021.

Sensex, Nifty extend losses in choppy trade; banking, IT stocks drag

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty erased early gains to finish with losses for the second day on the trot on Tuesday, as surging Covid-19 cases and growing localised restrictions continued to dent investor sentiment.

The BSE Sensex slipped 243.62 points or 0.51 per cent to close the session at 47,705.80, an over two-month low. Intra-day, the BSE gauge rose as much as 529 points to touch the day's peak of 48,478.34.

Likewise, the NSE Nifty climbed over 167 points to reclaim the key 14,500-level during the day, but surrendered all its gains to end at 14,296.40, showing a drop of 63.05 points or 0.44 per cent.

On the Sensex chart, UltraTech Cement, HCL Tech, HDFC, Tech Mahindra, HDFC Bank and HUL emerged as the major laggards -- falling as much as 4.70 per cent.

On the other hand, Bajaj Finserv, Dr Reddy's, Bajaj

Rupee slips to 74.88 against dollar on Covid concerns

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee pared its initial gains to close marginally down by 1 paise at 74.88 against the US dollar on Tuesday due to worries that the alarming surge in Covid-19 cases could derail the economic recovery in the country.

An increase in crude oil

prices and losses in the domestic equity markets also weighed on the local unit.

At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened at 74.65 against the US dollar, but lost ground to touch the day's low level of 74.98. The rupee finally closed at 74.88 against the US dollar, down by 1 paise over the previous close.

Finance, Bajaj Auto, M&M and Maruti were among the top gainers, climbing up to 3.70 per cent. Market analysts said a continued spike in fresh COVID-19 cases in the country and announcements of restrictions by several states have clearly dented investor sentiments and posed a threat to earnings recovery.

"Indian markets witnessed a bounce-back in its opening trade, however, failed to hold on to its early gains due to weak

global cues and the possibility of a stricter lockdown in Maharashtra.

"Despite the vaccine drive kindling hopes of recovery, the trend in the market will depend on positive developments like decreasing COVID cases and lifting restrictions.

IT and FMCG were the sectoral laggards while mid and small-caps outperformed," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

India's crude oil output drops 5%, gas production falls 8%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's crude oil production fell by 5 per cent and natural gas output slumped by 8 per cent in the fiscal year to March 2021 as private and public sector firms produced less, government data showed on Tuesday.

Crude oil production fell to 30.5 million tonnes in 2020-21 from 32.17 million tonnes a year back, according to the latest data released by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) produced over 2 per cent less oil at 20.2 million tonnes than a year back as a nationwide lockdown that lasted over two months shut some of its fields.

Oil India Ltd (OIL) produced 5.4 per cent less oil while fields operated by private firms such as Vedanta's Cairn saw 12.6 per cent less output.

Natural gas production at 28.67 billion cubic meters was over 8 per cent less than 31.18 bcm output in 2019-20. However, output in March was

11 per cent higher as Reliance Industries-BP started output from their KG basin fields.

Gas production in March 2021 was higher "due to new field D-34 (KG-D6 block of Reliance-BP), which started production in December 2020 with 1.3 million standard cubic meters per day, ramped up to 9.6 mmscmd in March 2021," notes accompanying the data said.

With the pandemic pummeling economic activity, resulting in fall in fuel demand, India's public and private sector refiners processed nearly 13 per cent less crude oil at 221.7 million tonnes in 2020-21.

Reliance Industries Ltd's twin refineries at Jamnagar in Gujarat had a 11.5 per cent less crude throughput at 60.94 million tonnes while Rosneft-led Nayara Energy processed over 13 per cent less oil at 17 million tonnes.

Public sector refiners such as Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) had nearly 12 per cent less crude processing at 127.5 million tonnes.

Serum hails financial aid from Govt to ramp up Covid-19 vaccine production

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Vaccine major Serum Institute of India (SII) on Tuesday hailed government's initiative to provide financial aid to manufacturers to ramp up production of Covid-19 vaccine in the country.

"On behalf of the vaccine industry in India, I would like to thank and applaud Shri @narendramodi ji, @nsitharaman ji, for your decisive policy changes and swift financial aid which will help vaccine production and distribution in India," SII CEO Adar Poonawalla said in a tweet.

In order to ramp up supplies ahead of the opening of Covid-19 vaccination to all citizens over 18 years of age, the government has approved a payment of about Rs 4,500 crore as advance to vaccine makers like Serum Institute of India (SII) and Bharat Biotech against future supplies, sources said.

SII will supply 200 million doses and Bharat Biotech is to supply another 90 million doses to the government by July at a pre-agreed rate of Rs 150 per dose.



Sources said the finance ministry has relaxed rules to allow advance payment without bank guarantee to help the vaccine makers ramp up production.

SII will get Rs 3,000 crore in advance and Bharat Biotech about Rs 1,500 crore. Earlier this month, Poonawalla had said that the company would require around Rs 3,000 crore to ramp up production capacity for making vaccines for COVID-19.

Meanwhile, the government on Monday allowed citizens over the age of 18 years to receive COVID-19 vaccination from May 1 as it seeks to control the rapid spread of the

Localised lockdowns already hitting economic activities: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

With the pandemic caseload remaining over 2.5 lakh for the second day, a report has warned of the grim economic scenario as with even limited restrictions on people's movement and some businesses, power consumption and e-way GST bill collections are already down.

The report has also called for speeding up the vaccination drive that of late has been on the decline on a weekly basis.

With cases spreading very fast, more and more states are clamping down more localised restrictions on people movement and commerce, falling just short of a complete lockdown.

This already has electricity consumption and GST e-way bills collection, which are used as proxies to track economic activity, softening somewhat and it needs to be seen whether this softening is a blip, or marks a shift in a trend, Crisil said in a note on Tuesday.

India likely to waive customs duty on Covid-19 vaccine imports

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government is likely to waive 10 per cent customs duty levied on imported vaccines in a bid to keep low the cost of overseas vaccines that are being eyed to supplement domestically made shots ahead of opening Covid-19 vaccination to all citizens over 18 years of age, sources said.

While Russia's Sputnik V vaccines are due to arrive this month or latest by next month, manufacturers like Moderna and Johnson and Johnson have been urged to seek emergency use approval in India.

The government presently levies 10 per cent customs or import duty plus a 16.5 per cent I-GST and social welfare surcharge on vaccines coming from overseas. These taxes would make the imported vaccines costlier than the ones made by Serum Institute of India (SII) and Bharat Biotech.

"A customs duty waiver is being considered," a source aware of the matter said.

Another source said a decision is likely to be made "very soon." As and when, foreign vaccine manufacturers approach the government with a formal proposal for allowing import of vaccine, the waiver would be given, government sources explained.

No proposal has been made so far, finance ministry

sources added.

The government earlier this month allowed emergency use of imported vaccines to curb spread of coronavirus infections. With 2.59 lakh new infections, the caseload has crossed 1.53 crore, making India the second-worst affected nation after the US, which has reported more than 3.1 crore infections. India's deaths from COVID-19 rose by a record 1,761 to over 1.8 lakh.

Sources said discussion on duty exemption on vaccines started sometime in Dec last year when overseas manufacturers such as Pfizer sought approval to supply its vaccines to India.

The finance ministry and its indirect tax collection arm had done some preliminary calculations on the implications of a duty waiver but a decision was put off until the government approved use of imported vaccines, they said.

The govt, which on Monday allowed citizens over the age of 18 years to receive COVID-19 vaccinations "from May 1, currently regulates the sale and purchase of all Covid shots in the country. Under the third phase of its vaccination strategy, manufacturers will be required to supply 50 per cent of their monthly doses to the government and the rest to state governments or the open market.

E-commerce, OTT, gaming saw over 100% growth in 2020

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the pandemic, online payments, indoor entertainment and gaming witnessed over 100 per cent growth in India last year, a new report said on Tuesday.

As theatres and offline entertainment avenues remained shut consumers turned to indoor entertainment, the OTT segment witnessed an incredible 144 per cent increase in the number of transactions and a 139 per cent increase in expenditure between 2019 and 2020, according to online payments solution provider PayU.

The pandemic gave a huge boost to online payments, seen in the 24 per cent increase in the number of transactions and 23 per cent increase in

expenditure across the PayU platform, year on year.

"PayU is committed to partnering with merchants to facilitate adoption of digital infrastructure," said Hemang Dattani, Head- Data Intelligence, PayU.

Interestingly, during the festive season (October-December 2020) there was a 45 per cent spike in the number of online transactions vis-a-vis the same period in the previous year. The number of UPI transactions grew by 288 per cent and expenditure through UPI grew a phenomenal 331 per cent between 2019 and 2020. The gaming segment saw a phenomenal 100 per cent increase in expenditure and a 154 per cent increase in average ticket size between the two years.

"For gaming and entertainment, the number of transactions made at night increased by 34 per cent while the number of transactions made during the day decreased by 11 per cent in 2020 vs 2019.

An indication of the increased dependence on indoor entertainment while working from home," the findings showed.

Travel and hospitality were some of the most impacted sectors with an 86 per cent drop in the number of transactions and expenditure between pre and post-COVID quarters (January-March vs April-June 2020).

Compared to 2019, there was a 46 per cent drop in the number of transactions and a 52 per cent drop in expenditure in '20.

Cabinet gives ex-post facto approval for amendments to Finance Bill, 2021

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Tuesday gave ex-post facto approval to the official amendments to the Finance Bill, 2021, which were aimed at clarifying and rationalising tax proposals for 2021-22. The amendments were essential to clarify and rationalise the proposals further and address stakeholders' concerns arising out of the proposals enumerated in the Finance Bill. The Finance Bill became the Finance Act, 2021 on March 28, 2021 after receiving the President's nod. An official release said that the government's amendments to the Finance Bill, 2021 tried to address the concerns of the stakeholders with regard to the tax proposals for the fiscal

Cabinet approves MoU between India, Bangladesh to increase cooperation in trade remedies

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Tuesday gave its ex post facto approval to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India's Director General of Trade Remedies and the Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission to increase cooperation in the area of trade remedies, an official statement said.

The MoU was signed on March 27 in Dhaka.

The primary objective of the MoU is to promote cooperation between the two countries in the area of trade remedies, exchange of information, undertaking capacity building activities and activities in accordance

THE MOU WAS SIGNED ON MARCH 27 IN DHAKA

with various provisions of World Trade Organization (WTO) in the area of anti-dumping, countervailing and safeguard measures in bilateral trade between the countries.

The MoU seeks to foster better cooperation between the relevant authorities of both the countries so as to discourage unfair trade practices and promote rule based bilateral trading, the statement added

P-notes investment drops to ₹89,100 cr in March

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Investments through participatory notes (P-notes) in the Indian capital market declined to ₹89,100 crore at March-end, after hitting 33 months high level in the preceding month.

P-notes are issued by registered foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to overseas investors who wish to be part of the Indian stock market without registering themselves directly.

They, however, need to go through a due diligence process. According to Sebi data, the value of P-note investments in Indian markets-equity, debt and hybrid secu-

rities - fell to ₹89,100 crore in March-end from ₹91,658 crore in February-end.

Prior to that, the investment level was at ₹84,916 crore at January end.

Of the total Rs 89,100 crore invested through the route till March, ₹81,236 crore was invested in equities, ₹7,306 crore in debt and ₹559 crore in hybrid securities.

The month of February 2021 saw the highest level of investment since May 2018, when fund inflow through such route stood at ₹3,497 crore, and experts said the trend indicated growing confidence of overseas investors into domestic markets.

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON



General public is hereby informed that this person **Namely: Jamshed, S/o: Alamgir, R/O H.No. F-100, J.J. Colony Bawana, Delhi, Age: 31 years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Built: Medium, Wearing: Sky Blue Colour Shirt and White Pajama**, has been missing since 26.03.2021 at 05:30 PM from his house.

In this regard a vide DD No.39A, dated 28.03.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this person but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this person kindly inform to the following.

E-Mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in **SHO**
Website: http://cbi.nic.in **P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi**
Fax: 011-24368639 **Ph. 011-27787592, 27787593**
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641 **DP/951/ON/2021**

SEARCH OF MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one boy (depicted in the photo), **Namely: Ganga Sagar @ Bauva, S/o: Gulab Chand, R/O: H.No. B-928, Shahbad Dairy, Delhi, Aged: 22 years** has been missing from the area of P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi since 07.03.2021. In this regard a DD No. 0051A, Dated 07.03.2021, has been registered at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi. His physical description is **Ganga Sagar @ Bauva**



as under:

Height: 5'3" feet, Complexion: Blonde, Face: Long, Built: Medium, Clothing: Blue Colour T-Shirt, Grey Colour Jeans and Relaxo Chappal in feet.

Any person is having any information/clue about this missing boy, may inform SHO, Shahbad Dairy, Delhi at E-mail: **cbc@cbi.gov.nic.in** or website : **http://cbi.nic.in** **Tele No.: 011-24368638 or 24368641**

S.H.O
P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi
Ph.: 011-27821047, 27822207
DP/949/ON/2021.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Yogesh Kumar Tomar S/o Late Shri Surendra Singh Tomar R/o B 5&6 / 4048, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110070, Prop of M/s RYSA Infratech previously this firm was Proprietorship firm now converted to Private Limited with addition of another Director Mr. Sanjiv Kumar Chaudhary S/o Late Saroop Singh Chaudhary.

If anyone has any objection regarding the above, kindly contact within 10 days to HQ Chief Engineer Western Command Chandimandir.

M/s. Rysa infratech
Proprietor: Yogesh Kumar Tomar
Tele No : 011-26122097.

CORRIGENDUM

ICICI Bank | Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No-23, Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Notices under SARFAESI Act for Loan Account No. **LBDE.L00001147253**. Name of the Borrower **UMA MEHTA & VIMAL MEHTA** property address **A-IV/57, SECOND FLOOR, DAYANAND COLONY, LAJPAT NAGAR, NEW DELHI** were published as Demand Notice under section 13(2), Symbiotic Possession, under Sec 13(4) in newspaper **PIONEER (ENGLISH)** dated **April 14, 2017, May 30, 2018** respectively. We wish to mention that inadvertently and unintentionally a typographical error has occurred in the said notices and area was mentioned as **A-57, SECOND FLOOR, DAYANAND COLONY, LAJPAT NAGAR, NEW DELHI** instead of **A - IV/ 57, SECOND FLOOR, DAYANAND COLONY, LAJPAT NAGAR, NEW DELHI**. We therefore, request you to please read the same as **A - IV/ 57, SECOND FLOOR, DAYANAND COLONY, LAJPAT NAGAR, NEW DELHI**.

Dated: April 21, 2021 **Authorised Officer**
Place : Delhi/ NCR **ICICI Bank Limited**

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE No. 07/2021 Dated 16-04-2021

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender through IREPS only for supply of following items:

Sl	Tender No.	Description in Brief	Qty.	Tender Due on
1	77211002	Paint, Enamel smoke grey, interior finishing for Household.	26240 Ltr.	21-04-2021
2	56211042	Red aspect LED main signal unit 110V AC	464 Nos.	01-05-2021
3	56211020	Yellow aspect main LED signal 110V AC	506 Nos.	01-05-2021
4	33211040	Ball joint Roll Link	4285 Nos.	03-05-2021
5	76211039	Manual metal Arc welding Electrode Class M1	12135 Kgs	07-05-2021
6	38211184	Air Brake hose coupling	6150 Nos.	13-05-2021

For details log on to: **www.ireps.gov.in**

PUB/19/AAS/PRB/SWR/2021-22 **Principal Chief Materials Manager, Hubballi**



QUOTE OF THE DAY

Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.

— Mark Twain

Virtual hackathon at SRMIST

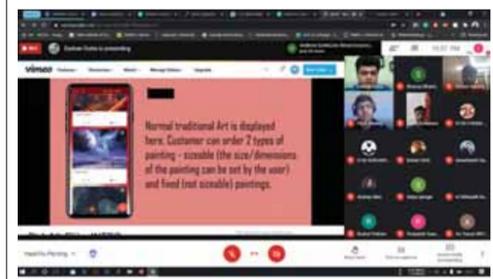
The Department of IEEE at SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur conducted HackTriX, a three day international virtual hackathon with an add-on conference recently. Students chose from eight diverse tracks to pit against each other as they revolutionised their chosen field. The event turned out to be the perfect place for participants to foster their learning skills. The flagship hackathon was presided by leaders and veterans of their respective fields. Participants were from Australia, Germany, USA, Canada, Russia, Turkey, Mexico among others. With a vision to coordinate splendid mentalities, IEEE SRM Student Branch constantly tries to incorporate Discussion, Demonstration & Development, and encourage technological advances in new arenas and promote application-based knowledge.

Winners of this mega event were TRIX4; Commit Cats for first runners up; second runners up went to Code Linguists and an honorary mention was awarded to Ctrl-Alt-Elite.

Judges include Alon Grinshpoon, CEO and founder of echoAR; Soham Dixit, Alumni of SRMIST and winner of Smart India Hackathon 2018 and Airbus Hackathon (Aerathon 2019) and Akshay Saini, Founder & CEO of Boiling News. Saini has been with Paytm as an SDE and currently with Uber. Satya Iyengar and Devasheesh Saxena, Principal Architect and Global Delivery Leader for Digital Business for QuEST Global also graced the panel.

The mentor's panel was graced by Ayon Roy who has been a mentor in 70+ hackathons; SDE1 at Hackerrank, Aditya Agarwal, TR Rohith who is a Software Engineering Intern at Bajaj Health, Jahanavi Bhagat, a mentor at Tesseract Coding and Praveen Kumar Puroshattam an ex-Microsoft MVP. This is not all. (Sahil Rahman, a mentor at Future Blink and Anustup Mukherjee who is a mentor from Dark Horsealong with the international names Bormotov Dmitrii who is a mentor from Flow Health and Michael Pautav, mentor from Deem incorporated were also present.

From the IEEE SRM SB Web Dev domain, Ahmed Mawia, Harsh Gour and Shaurya Bhandari graced the occasion as mentors. Mawia is a full stack developer with understanding of software development concepts. He is currently experimenting with blockchain technology and the decentralised web. He was the winner of VIT Hackathon held in 2020 and was the Web Dev Leader at IEEE SRM SB. He is also an SDE Intern at Fibonabits and got selected as a mentor for Girlsript Summer of Code 2021. While, on the other hand, Gour is an experienced developer and a SD Intern with FibonaLabs and the Web Development Lead for IEEE SRM SB.



The JEE Main April session has been postponed and fresh dates are awaited. MUSBA HASHMI speaks with educationists and students about what the delay means and how can aspirants make the best of it

SEE YOU SOON, JEE

The postponement of JEE Main April session is not a surprise. With the recent deadly surge in COVID cases, it is a welcome move.

The session was supposed to be held on April 27, April 28 and April 30. After the intervention of Education Minister Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal, the National Testing Agency (NTA) gave out the statement.

The agency has stated that the new dates of these exams will be announced 15 days in advance and students should not put a halt or become lenient in studies.

"Earlier this month, the Class X Boards were also cancelled. Whereas Class XII Boards were postponed given the importance that they hold. All these are much needed steps in the view of the current situation," Saurabh Kumar, National Director Academics, Vidyamandir Classes (VMC), says.

While this was a crucial time for students who were all set to appear for Boards, this delay is a blessing in disguise for them. "The postponement of Boards may also lead to postponement

of JEE Advanced exam as well. But students can see it as a blessing in disguise and use this time to practice more. They should also revise the Class XI syllabus and study all the concepts that they find tough," Kumar explains.

While, a majority of students are happy with the decision, bright students who wanted to prove their mettle are left disappointed. However, a checkpoint which was there ever since in class 10th has suddenly disappeared, on the other hand class 10th marksheet was only used to verify date of birth only. However, the exit exam for school system is class 12th which is still intact and is key factor for admission in multiple graduation courses"

Kanishk Srivastava, a VMC Student says that the postponement won't concern the students who attained a good percentile in previous sessions are now preparing for JEE Advanced.

"For those who couldn't perform well in preceding sessions, this is a make or break situation. If they study hard, they can improve their score dras-

KEEP IN MIND

- Don't indulge in wasting time
- Work on your weak subjects and concepts
- Revise as many times as possible
- Don't forget, practice makes a man perfect
- Stay calm and patient
- Don't forget to take breaks for your mental health
- Think of this delay as a bonus time for preparation
- Students can visit www.nta.ac.in or <https://jeemain.nta.nic.in/> for the latest updates related to the exams

tically and if they don't and get relaxed, their score might drop," Srivastava says.

Another student, Namrata Jha, who studies at VMC, feels that there wasn't a need of postponing this session. "I don't think that there was any need for this postponement, because the number of JEE Mains this year has already been increased from two to four, and one attempt is expected in May too. So students could have decided to not give this attempt, if they wanted to. Postponing exams create uncertainty and distress and should be avoided," she asserts.

Experts, however, are of the opinion that this delay is the best time for students to brush up their knowledge of the subjects. "The decision might leave some students disappointed. However, the wise thing to do is to keep on practicing. The delay simply means extra time for preparation. Don't lose hope. Think of this time, like last year, as a bonus. Work on your weak concepts, revise as much as you can and don't indulge in wasting time. This is indeed the best time for serious stu-

dents," says Swoyan Satyendu, Director, ODM Public School.

While postponing the examinations was a necessary step taking into account the rising Covid-19 cases all over the country, the news has come as a shock to the students who had prepared themselves for the exams. "JEE is one of the most popular entrance exams in our country and it often defines the career trajectories of many students. Several students had not even appeared for the February session and had opted instead to prepare for the April session as it gave them more time to focus on improving their weak areas. The fact that it has been postponed now has left them in a state of limbo — not knowing what to do. I would advise students not lose hope and continue revising their syllabus. The situation may seem unsalvageable at the moment but we must realise that the most important thing right now is to stay safe and healthy. It's like they say, 'live to fight another day,'" Mena Mittal, Vice-principal, Modern Public School, Shalimar Bagh, New Delhi, says.

Get set for HR 3.0

Emerging technologies have revolutionised the HR goals from merely getting processes in place to a more broad-based goal — driving value from talent, says VICKY JAIN

In this digital era, when advanced technology like Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning has been transforming each and every industry in our country, how can Human Resource Management (HRM) be left behind? Even HR is going through a new wave, which is called as HR 3.0. Through HR technology, the complex HR processes like recruitment, performance management, employee engagement, payroll among other have been simplified and can be performed in just a click. Emerging technologies have completely revolutionised the HR goals from merely getting processes in place to a more broad-based goal — driving value from talent.

With the current technology at place, popular American worldwide management consulting firm McKinsey and Company has suggested that nearly 56 per cent of their hiring to retiring tasks have been automated using the technologies available including the HR software. The HR's role has also been expanded and more emphasis has been put on productivity and employee engagement. Gone are the days when HR was a person, now it has become portal. Shifting to SAAS based HRM softwares has provided the firms to have universal access to HR services even when you're remote working, dramatically changing the practice of human resource management.

The need of cost cutting or expansion or providing better services has propelled these changes. Recent research shows organisations that successfully adopt sophisticated HR technology tools outperform those that do not. Since many com-



panies have automated their basic HR administration, these organisations have actually determined the use of technology to transform their HR practices and market their HR brand.

Key challenges of talent acquisition

Finding the right talent when you have a huge skill gap in the country is one of the biggest challenges in these unprecedented times. It is pivotal that HR team is using the right technology in order to streamline the whole process of managing the various job vacancies and spreading out the right messaging. An advanced HRMS helps to manage all the vacancies at one platform. It has been observed that mastering the art of balancing efficiency and quick decision mak-

ing from the HR is the can being a big change in the process of talent hunting and acquisitions. Decision making needs data but managing and using this data needs to be efficient to be effective.

Role of HR during the current crisis scenario

HR is now adopting new ways to operate and support every new decision the company is taking to reduce the effect of the pandemic. The new role of HR is to become more agile, adaptable and augmenting. HRM must aim at achieving competitiveness in the field of HR by providing constant educational and training programs for the personal and professional development of the employees of the organisation. It has been seen that the companies have understood

the importance of effective recruiting and realised that without the technological support, it cannot be done. The HR people are now making use of the various job portals that are available online to look for the best candidates for the position. The complete recruiting process has become easy and effective with the use of the technology. As many people come to know of the offer and hence increases the probability of hiring efficient employees. Employers can present all necessary information related to job, careers and personal development of each employee on portals online. This is a great promotional tool for the organisation.

The writer is Founder, uKnowva, Mobile Enabled HR Software for your Business

Step up your game

With changing times, reskilling has picked up pace and is now increasingly preferred by organisations. RS MAAN tells you how it benefits professionals

The pandemic's occurrence in 2020 disrupted the entire job market. While many employees lost their jobs, others had to step up their game to ensure their survival and sustenance. Understanding the tight scenario, organisations are now introducing various innovations in their functioning so that they can maintain their lead position in the market.

Reskilling and upskilling are two of the recent solutions adopted by both brands and start-up ventures to ensure that their operations are smooth as well as attract & retain quality talent. While both the terms are often used interchangeably, they are distinct concepts with differentiated benefits.

Why reskilling is important?

Earlier, upskilling was considered as a feasible option and the firms were focusing on training their employees to expand their skill set for their current job role. However, with the changing times, reskilling has picked up an equal pace and is now increasingly preferred by organisations.

They have understood that an employee can possess various traits ideal for a job role other than he/she is already working in. Hence, the firms are training their workforce for a different job role that will be apt as per their skill set and experience.

This is usually done when the organisation wants to retain the employee understanding that he/she is an asset to the company and their present job designation

has no further scope of growth.

From the business perspective, reskilling helps organisations to retain the performing employees, boost job satisfaction, maintain their competitive position in the market and optimally utilise the full potential of their existing workforce.

Some of the major benefits of reskilling making it relevant for every professional are:

■ Helps retain top talent

Reskilling helps employers to retain performing employees. They are considered valuable for the company and retaining them would eventually benefit the organisations. A company that makes efforts to retain their employees successfully develops a relationship with their talent which makes the employee loyal towards their organisation.

■ Helps overcome the digital skills gap

In the present times, where one needs to be digitally advanced, it is critical to reskill your employees to bridge the digital skill gap. For instance, the IT knowledge need not be limited to the IT team anymore. The other departments can possess a basic understanding so as to resolve minute issues at their end.

■ Boosts soft skills

Firms over the past few years have started giving preference to the soft skills of their employees. Communication, problem-solving, team building and management, analytical thinking, leadership, and

managerial are some of the abilities that are no longer optional and have become requisite skills to be possessed in the talent pool of the firms. Reskilling employees will help the organisations imbibe these soft skills amongst their employees which will further boost their performance.

■ Financially feasible

Another major benefit of reskilling is that it is a financially viable process. Hiring new talent will not only be time-consuming but financially stressful as well. Reskilling existing employees will help save costs and also ensures trust-building at both ends — the employee will be satisfied that his/her job is not at risk and the firm is content having retained the best of their employees and having saved the additional costs associated with hiring new talent.

■ Helps in engaging the employees

Employees be it experienced or from the young generation tend to face redundancy from their job roles. This leads to decreased engagement and also affects their performance. Implementing reskilling strategy helps encourage collaboration amongst the employees and also helps extend their continuous learning. When reskilled, employees feel valued & benefited and hence engage pro-actively. A place that welcomes constant learning is further valued by the employees.

The writer is Managing Director and Global Chief Revenue Officer, Codileo

Virtual workshop by Vibgyor

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Spending time with pets when staying indoors all day can help children develop non-verbal communication, compassion and empathy, say experts. Pets who are normally accustomed to outdoor activity can also benefit similarly from their indoor interactions with children, which can help to destress them.

With this view, Vibgyor Group of Schools hosted a vir-

tual workshop for students on Sunday, April 11, to mark Pet Day.

In an interactive session Abodh Aras, CEO, Welfare for Street Dogs, taught students how to become responsible pet owners and how to take care of stray animals amid the lockdown.

The students from Classes IV to VIII, from Gurugram, Vadodara, Surat, Lucknow, Nashik and Indore participated in the hour-long virtual fun and engaging session.

Accolades for VIT students

The team from VIT School of Law, VIT Chennai, has made its college proud by winning the second Surana and Surana and Army Institute of Law, Mohali, Family Law National Moot Court Competition held virtually between April 9 and April 11, 2021.

A total of 37 law schools from all over the country participated in the competition and the team comprising N Ashitha (third year BBA, LLB), Nivedita Muchilote (third year BBA LLB) and Aarcha Sasikumar (second year BA, LLB) from VIT School of Law, VIT Chennai has emerged as the winners and won a cash prize of ₹20,000.

Asmitha has also shared the Best Student Advocate award with Chaturya Srinivasan, student of NLU Jodhpur. And Nivedita has been declared as the Best Speaker for the final round.



BE A TECHNO BIOLOGIST

Biotechnology is growing at a fast pace. More so, after the pandemic opening doors to lucrative options for those wanting to pursue this course, says DR ARMINDER KAUR

As the admission season starts students become conscious about their career after Class XII Boards on which course to choose from. Already COVID-19 affected the academic delivery in 2020-21 due to which students have not attended the classes. In the present situation also, most of the classes are being conducted virtually. The unprecedented COVID 19 made the students confused about their career and due to this unhealthy surrounding, stopped from exploring various career options and opportunities. Here's knowing all there is about biotechnology.

THE COURSE

Biotechnology is the course pursued by Science students basically after class 12th; it comprises the subjects including biology, chemistry, technology, and minor mathematics. The terminology of 'Biotechnology' explains Biology+ Technology, covering the topic of cellular and biomolecular for the development of the latest technology required in our daily

life. Biotechnology is used in the different sectors of healthcare, pharmaceuticals, food production, animal husbandry, agriculture, textiles, and nutrition, etc.

The different courses that are available after Classes X, XII and graduation are Diploma in Biotechnology, B.Sc, B.Tech or B.E in Biotechnology, M.Sc., M.Tech in Biotechnology, or P.G in Biotechnology. Many of us get confused with topics that are covered in Biotechnology subjects but it is simple and vast. The different branches of this latest covered subject of technology are Microbiology, biochemistry, genetics, molecular and cellular biology, pharmacology, dairy technology, agri-tech, virology, biostatistics, and many others as well.

Some of the topics covered in the vast area of the Biotechnology courses are as follows:

Biochemistry: This topic deals with the study of Biology + Chemistry as a major; it is the study of the chemical process occurring inside the living cells.

We need techno biologists who can experiment & design equipment. This will upgrade the healthcare system and increase pace of development so that everyone can get proper care at an affordable cost

The subjects cover majorly the structure and behavior of complex molecules and the formation of cells, tissues, and DNA, etc.

Microbiology: This is the course mostly opted by Science students for a future career in biotechnology as it opens up multiple job opportunities in the healthcare industry. It comprises

the study of micro-organisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, protozoa, etc and their impact on the human body. This course also covers the topic of diseases related to bacteria and viruses.

Agri-Tech: Agri-Tech is also known to be Agricultural Engineering where we study to improve the agricultural sector through innovation and different biological technology. The main role of agriculture engineers is to make agriculture production better and give more effective crops to the farmers. It also helps in machinery, bio-gas, new technology, and other agricultural products, allowing making a brighter career in agricultural technology.

Pharmacology: This course is the study of pharmacological science where we get to know about drugs and their effects. The study provides students a basic understanding of drugs or medicine required by a living organism. It also comprises the study of organ systems like cardiovascular, neurological and ortho. Students opt-

ing for pharmacology make a better future in laboratories, forensic labs and pharma companies.

Biotechnology is a field, growing faster everyday majorly after the period of COVID19. It is leading a way towards a healthier environment as well as providing a vast field of opportunities. The global pandemic of COVID-19 has changed so much and shows us the reality of our medical and healthcare systems.

Our country needs to produce more such techno biologists who can work on different experiments, design equipment, and work in the field of medication. These fields will also lead to a strong and upgraded healthcare system in the country. The pace of development will increase and everyone will get proper healthcare facilities and at a very affordable cost. This will break our dependency on other countries for medicines and equipment.

The writer is Dean, School of Basic and Applied Science, Sanskriti University, Mathura

'Hybrid learning must for best outcomes'

NICK HUTTON tells SHALINI SAKSENA how the Internet has made it possible for education to reach the remotest parts of India

What is a hybrid learning model?

A hybrid learning model is a learning model in which most of the learning is done online supplemented with face-to-face instruction. Hybrid learning combines the benefits of both online and offline learning, giving students a balanced perspective: Where the in-person interventions can fulfill the social and emotional needs of students, and the online, self-paced learning allows for flexibility and personalisation. This effectively prepares the learner for the workforce and whatever lies ahead.

How to implement it effectively?

To effectively implement a hybrid learning model, States and districts will need to ensure that the technology utilised is one that can fully support both online and offline learning. It should allow the online activity to be engaging and personalised, because if it isn't, the students will not be able to effectively take advantage of the learning model. As such, teacher intervention becomes completely inadequate. The technology utilised should also enhance the way the teacher intervenes: the tools used should support the teacher's delivery and pedagogical style in order to ensure the best outcomes.

How does it allow educational institutions to prepare for changing scenarios?

The lockdown have already changed the learning landscape in India. With the second wave of rising cases, it is apparent that schools are not going to open up fully anytime soon. Given that we can't do away with technology for the foreseeable future, it is critical for the institutions to understand that adopting a robust learning platform ensures that quality education is still delivered in spite of the unavoidable circumstances.

Why is the hybrid learning model especially essential for India?

Today, as the Internet is made available across all parts of India, being able to deliver education to even the remote parts of the country becomes a legitimate possibility and not just a far-fetched dream. At present, higher education courses are skewed towards bigger towns, and rural areas tend to be less catered to. The only way to reach them



Nick Hutton
Regional Director Asia, D2L

is through the hybrid model: Anyone who wants to study and get access to higher education courses can do so at the comfort of their own living space without having to travel to bigger towns or spend extra money or resources. Hybrid learning can help to increase the gross enrollment ratio and decrease the dropout ratio across the country in the long run.

How do we ensure students of all abilities are accounted for in our new learning systems?

A proper learning management system creates equity for all students. For example, teachers or faculties are able to manage the delivery of the learning, from the content or topic, through to the activity, based on the abilities of the students. It is not only important to create equity across all abilities of students, but it is also important to have equity in terms of accessibility and inclusion challenges. Equity is also about ensuring that any student can use any device to access the course and learn — be it mobile devices, or assistive devices like screen readers. Getting the right technology to include and support all students and give them excellent access to learning is another critical area of creating an equitable classroom.

When a student plans to study abroad, his mind is full of questions right from choosing the right career, visa procedure to accumulating the basic documentation needed for the admission process. Earlier, the awareness regarding streams and sub-streams were limited and the students had to rely on the snippet of the information published in a newspaper or on the decision parents would take for them.

But, with changing times, there is a sea of knowledge for students who want to study studies. All thanks to the Internet. But give the huge information that is out there, one needs to choose the effective one for you and this is where the role of career counselor comes into play.

Here is how our overseas education consultants can guide:

They understand your requirements: It's very important that you choose the right course depending upon the skills and job expectations you have. The career counselor provides assistance in choosing the right career option depending upon the profile the student has. This ultimately helps the students to be successful in life.

Picking the right university: Before selecting the university, it's imperative to learn the vision and focus of the university. It should align with your interest and goals. Counselors know both — your ambitions and universities well, he will help to select the right university from the long list of the

MINDIT



educational institutes in a particular country.

Admission process becomes easy: We all know how cumbersome the whole admission process becomes. But if you go through a counselor, they make the process easy. They take care of everything right from compiling the necessary documents to sending the form to the university. Not only that, they also track the application form status time to time. They keep updating the status to the student.

Visa application: Normally, the educational consultants have good ties with

the visa officials. They ensure that the student gets their visa application approved successfully.

How to choose the most reliable education consultant?

Taking help of an educational consultancy can be a key to success. With the right guidance and advice, it is just our duty to work hard and conquer all your dreams and desires. As your future completely depends upon the consultant, it's pivotal that you go through the reviews written about the consultant on the internet. You can also check their website and social media pages for customer testimonials and awards.

Then try and ask as many questions as possible. The conversation should be such

that you should be able to identify that how well he has placed other students in the universities of their choices.

The another important thing you should consider that the consultant should be consistent in his approach right from starting with the admission procedure going through to pre-departure guidance. The best education consultant will guide you about visa and college selection.

A professional consultant will provide you end to end services. A good career counselor will regularly try to make the entire process a comfortable experience for you.

The writer is Captain Amardeep, Founder-director, Triya Group of Institutions



The University of Sheffield invites applications for its NCUK Postgraduate Taught Scholarships. International applicants are eligible to apply.

Courses: Postgraduate taught degree in Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health, and Faculty of Science.

Eligibility: Must accept an offer to study a full-time or part-time postgraduate taught programme at the University of Sheffield. You must be studying a pre-master's qualification at an NCUK Centre, in any country.

Supporting documents: Applicants need to provide proof of your previous degree, academic references, English language certificates, a supporting statement, CV/resume.

Admission requirements: Applicants need to check out the admission requirement page at the university.

Language requirement: Students must be proficient in written and spoken English, normally demonstrated by grade 4 or grade C or above in GCSE English Language or an acceptable English language qualification.

How to apply: In order to apply for the award, candidates are

obligatory to apply through an online application form.

Application deadline: It is June 18, 2021.

The Portland State University invites applications for its International Achievement Scholarships for 2021/2022.

Award: Up to \$10,000 per academic year.

Eligibility: Master's and doctoral applicants may be eligible for this application depending on funding availability. Students who have not yet met the TOEFL/English Language Proficiency requirement are eligible for this application; however, activation of the support will be delayed until after the ESL restriction has been lifted and the students are fully eligible for unrestricted enrollment in academic classes.

Supporting documents: Send a photocopy (never the original) of the document to the institution that originally issued it.

Admission requirements: Eligible students typically have entering grade point averages (GPA) of at least 3.5 out of a possible 4.0 grading scale.

Language requirement: Candidates must meet all the English Language Requirements of the university.

How to apply: In order to apply for the award, applicants must take admission in an undergraduate at the university. After being enrolled, they should complete the application form for access the fund.

Application deadline: The last date to apply is August 1, 2021.

CONTENT WRITING AT BOOLMENT SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹5,000-₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/8345374
Deadline: April 29, 2021

GRAPHIC DESIGN AT MASTERCXO

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/8345379
Deadline: April 29, 2021

VOICE OVER ARTIST (FINANCE) AT MEDMONX ENTERPRISES

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/8345380
Deadline: April 29, 2021

MARKETING AT TALENT QUEST

Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹20,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/8345381
Deadline: April 29, 2021

FRONT END DEVELOPMENT AT EDUGORILLA

Location: Lucknow
Stipend: ₹14,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/8345383
Deadline: April 29, 2021

GRAPHIC DESIGN AT WE THE FLAWSOME

Location: Mohali, Panchkula, Chandigarh
Stipend: ₹9,000-₹12,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/8345390
Deadline: April 29, 2021

CONTENT WRITING AT SHOPWEB

Location: Bhubaneswar
Stipend: ₹5,000-₹7,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/8345392
Deadline: April 28, 2021

IN BRIEF

COGNIZANCE FEST 2021 AT IIT ROORKEE

The IIT Roorkee hosted Cognizance 2021 — endeavors have been recognized by UNESCO. Make in India, CEE, SAYEN, and many other national institutions — the first online edition. The engineering student showcased papers on strengthening the traffic monitoring system with the solution of AI and ML.

The world's first Hindi speaking humanoid robot and the First-time display of glucose monitor smartwatch by the director of Quantum Operation Inc.

The events continued with the participants interested in displaying their skills and thriving through the competitive spirit. Immense participation was seen in many technical events like Codathon, Alankan, Aer-O-Vacx, case study, and finance events based on the ongoing issues.

HYDERABAD GETS FIRST EMF CLUB

The Indian School of Business & Finance (ISBF), inaugurated Hyderabad's first Economics, Management & Finance (EMF) Club, in partnership with Gitanjali Senior School. The club is a student-led body

aimed at facilitating enthusiasm and passion for innovation in EMF.

Around 200 learners from Classes X, XI and XII led by founder-member Shreya Shivakumar of the Class XII took part in an engaging and interactive EMF quiz

conducted by Aryapriya Ganguly, Associate Professor, ISBF. Chiraag Mehta, associate director, ISBF said: "The EMF are inter-related disciplines and are pathways to lucrative and intellectually challenging careers."

184 PATENTS FOR IIT MADRAS

The Indian Institute of Technology Madras Faculty, Researchers and Students filed 184 patents during 2020 overcoming the several months of nation-wide lockdown. This includes nine patents related to COVID-19 for inventions ranging from Systems and methods for detection of severe acute

respiratory syndrome Coronavirus 2, a standalone, portable single-use and wireless ventilator system.

The patent also includes a system for non-invasive calibration-free blood pressure measurement and smart and sustainable devices for infectious mask and PPE waste treatment.

No room for fake news

Extensive sessions were held on the discourse of information in digital age and how it impacts the democracies at the ongoing International Faculty Development Programme organised by IP University, New Delhi. Experts from national and international universities discussed the issues related to information literacy, misinformation, disinformation and fake news that is vigorously circulated in the social networking sites.

The experts concluded that fake news erodes the credibility of the traditional media as well.

Professor Jatin Srivastava from Institute of International Journalism, E W Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University, USA discussed the importance of information and media literacy in his address titled 'Research in Communication and Media Studies: An Information Literacy driven agenda'. He discussed the democratic potential of new media whereas cautioned regarding the digital divide and other challenges.

Professor Nikolaos Panagiatou from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece discussed the need and potential of Data Journalism. He emphasised that journalists are required to draw meanings out from the large sets of data and the algorithms or machine cannot replace them. Journalists should give importance to accuracy over speed, meaning than describing, multiple sources than merely reading and analysis than impressions.

He tried to predict the future of journalism in the digital age. His lecture was titled 'Emerging trends in Data and Journalism'.

The two-week online Faculty

Development Programme/Research Methodology Workshop on the theme 'Developing Academic Leaders for Future: The Way Forward' is scheduled from April 15, 2021 to April 27, 2021.

The programme is organised by University School of Mass Communication, IIQAC-NAAC, MOOCs-IPU. The FDP is sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Ministry of Education, Government of India, New Delhi.

Dr Ruth Sabina Francis, Programme Director, School of Hospitality Tourism and Events, Taylor's University, Malaysia will deliver her lecture on the topic 'Open Education Resources-MOOCs, Flipped Learning and Blended Learning'.

Dr Dhiman Chattopadhyay from Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, USA will deliver his lecture on the topic 'Nature and Types of Social Science Research'.

The Faculty Development Programme was inaugurated by Ambassador Akhilesh Mishra (IFS), OSD (Development Partnership Administration), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. The ceremony was graced by Padma Shri Prof (Dr) Mahesh Verma, Vice Chancellor, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi.

Prof AK Saini, (University School of Management Studies), Chairman, NAAC-IQAC-NAAC and Prof Queeny Pradhan, Dean, USMC are the Chairpersons for the Faculty Development Programme.

Dr Durgesh Tripathi is the coordinator for the programme and Dr Sachin Bharti is the Co-Coordinator for the event.

GAME ON 2021

WHEN YOU ARE PLAYING, YOU DON'T REALLY WANT ANYONE TO SAY HE'S UNFIT. I HAVE TO KEEP UP WITH THE YOUNGER GUYS, THEY ARE VERY FAST, IT'S GOOD TO CHALLENGE THEM
— MS DHONI



DELHI END MI JINX

boundarymeter

4s 380
6s 158

Capitals' horses for courses approach works at Chepauk as Mishra's (4/24) helps DC win 1st game in Chennai since 2010

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Experienced leg-spinner Amit Mishra's four wicket haul coupled with a crucial 45 by opener Shikhar Dhawan formed the cornerstone of Delhi Capitals six-wicket win over Mumbai Indians at Chepauk on Tuesday.

Mishra (4/24) spun his web around the Mumbai Indians batsman to restrict them to sub-par 137 for 9 after the defending champions decided to bat.

Opener Shikhar Dhawan then top-scored with a 45 off 42 balls as Delhi held their nerves in the final overs to chase down the target with five balls to spare.

It was their first win over MI in last five meetings, having lost four times last season in UAE.

Chasing 138 to win, Delhi lost opener Prithvi Shaw (7) early as he gave a return catch to Jayant Yadav (1/25).

Dhawan, who started with a cut short for a boundary, was joined by Steve Smith (33) as the two resurrected the innings by adding 53 runs for the second wicket.

The two kept the scoreboard ticking, while scoring the odd boundaries as Delhi were 39 for one after six overs.

Smith, who hammered two fours off Krunal Pandya in the ninth over, was the aggressor but a lapse in concentration saw him back in the hut as Kieron Pollard trapped him in the 10th over.

Dhawan, who hammered five fours and a lone six, and Lalit Yadav (22 not out) kept Delhi in the hunt.

With DC needing 48 runs from the last six overs, Dhawan smashed a six and four to bring up the 100 before perishing in the 15th over with Krunal Pandya taking a diving catch in the deep.

Skipper Rishabh Pant (7) also fell cheaply with Delhi still needing 23 runs.

Yadav and West Indian Shimron Hetmyer (14 not out) then held their nerves to take the side home.

Hetmyer cut Kieron Pollard on the first ball of the final over to get his team



Delhi Capitals spinner Amit Mishra celebrates after he takes wicket of Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma during IPL match at MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Tuesday

on a cusp of a win and the game ended when the bowler overstepped next.

Earlier, Mumbai suffered a middle-order collapse on a sluggish Chepauk track after they were 67 for 2 at one stage as Delhi led by Mishra (4/24) made a spectacular comeback.

Opting to bat, Mumbai lost opener Quinton De Kock (1) early, who edged a Marcus Stoinis (1/20) delivery to Pant in the third over.

Suryakumar Yadav (24) then joined Rohit Sharma (44), who got his first boundary — an elegant drive, which raced to deep extra cover fence in the third over.

The duo rallied the innings with their 58-run stand.

Rohit took on ace off-spinner Ravichandra Ashwin (0/30) in the 4th over which fetched 15 runs.

The Mumbai skipper hammered a boundary and a maximum — a loft over extra cover, while Surya also got one boundary, courtesy an outside edge.

Rohit then hit Kagiso Rabada (1/25) for a six over long-off. Surya then hit successive fours off Mishra as Mumbai raced to 55 for one after six overs.

However, Delhi pegged back the defending champions by grabbing three quick wickets.

First Avesh Khan (2/15) dismissed Surya, who nicked one to Pant and then Mishra removed Rohit and Hardik Pandya (0) in the 9th over as Mumbai slipped to 77 for 4.

Both Rohit and Hardik holed out at long on. Mumbai then lost half its side for 81 as Krunal Pandya (1) chopped an under-cutting arm ball by Lalit Yadav (1/17) onto his stumps.

Mishra then used his googly to trap Kieron Pollard (2) in front of the wicket, as MI was teetering at 84 for six.

In the end, a responsible 26 from Ishan Kishan, who became Mishra's fourth wicket, coupled with Jayant Yadav's 23 took the side beyond the 125-run mark.

SCOREBOARD

MUMBAI INDIANS (137-9)

Rohit Sharma c Smith b A Mishra	44
Quinton de Kock c Pant b Stoinis	1
Suryakumar Yadav c Pant b Avesh	24
Ishan Kishan b A Mishra	26
Hardik Pandya c Smith b A Mishra	0
Krunal Pandya b Lalit	1
Kieron Pollard lbw b A Mishra	2
Jayant Yadav c and b Rabada	23
Rahul Chahar c Pant b Avesh	6
Jasprit Bumrah not out	3
Trent Boult not out	1
Extras (b 0, lb 6, w 0, nb 0, p 0)	6
Total (9 wks, 20 Overs)	137

Fall of Wickets: 9-1 (Quinton de Kock, 2.1), 67-2 (Suryakumar Yadav, 6.6), 76-3 (Rohit Sharma, 8.4), 77-4 (Hardik Pandya, 8.6), 81-5 (Krunal Pandya, 10.4), 84-6 (Kieron Pollard, 11.5), 123-7 (Ishan Kishan, 17.3), 129-8 (Jayant Yadav, 18.5), 135-9 (Rahul Chahar, 19.4)

Bowling	
Marcus Stoinis	3-0-20-1
Ravichandran Ashwin	4-0-30-0
Kagiso Rabada	3-0-25-1
Amit Mishra	4-0-24-4
Avesh Khan	2-0-15-2
Lalit Yadav	4-0-17-1

DELHI CAPITALS (138-4)

Prithvi Shaw c and b Jayant	7
Shikhar Dhawan c Krunal b R Chahar	45
Steve Smith lbw b Pollard	33
Lalit Yadav not out	22
Rishabh Pant c Krunal b Bumrah	7
Shimron Hetmyer not out	14
Extras (b 0, lb 3, w 4, nb 3, p 0)	10
Total (4 wks, 19.1 Overs)	138

Did not bat: Marcus Stoinis, Ravichandran Ashwin, Kagiso Rabada, Amit Mishra, Avesh Khan

Fall of Wickets: 11-1 (Prithvi Shaw, 1.3), 64-2 (Steven Smith, 9.2), 100-3 (Shikhar Dhawan, 14.5), 115-4 (Rishabh Pant, 16.5)

Bowling	
Trent Boult	4-0-23-0
Jayant Yadav	4-0-25-1
Jasprit Bumrah	4-0-32-1
Krunal Pandya	2-0-17-0
Rahul Chahar	4-0-29-1
Kieron Pollard	1-1-0-9-1

SRH search 1st win KKR look to arrest slide

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Bruised and battered after suffering a hat-trick of defeats, a desperate Sunrisers Hyderabad would seek inspiration from skipper David Warner to arrest any further slide when they take on Punjab Kings at Chepauk on Wednesday.

SRH couldn't have asked for a worse start to the season as they slumped to three straight defeats, and in all occasions while chasing.

Punjab are a tad better than SRH, having registered one win out of three games to be placed at seventh in the standings, a rung above their Wednesday's opponents.

Chasing has been Sunrisers' achilles' heel so far in the league. They have been hit hard by the lack of depth in their playing XI and below-par Indian bench strength.

In these circumstances, the onus rests on Warner to do some magic and inspire his side to bounce back in the tournament.

A big innings is due from the SRH captain as he has scored just 93 runs from the three matches.

He also needs some serious introspection before deciding his playing XI on Wednesday.

Warner and Rashid Khan are certainties in the foreign players' slots, but the absence of Kane Williamson has been badly felt as he can provide solidity to the middle-order, especially after they faltered in three consecutive chases.

Going by Wridhiman Saha's poor form, Jonny Bairstow is the frontrunner for the wicket-keeper's position.

But what would be troubling Warner most is the lack of depth in the team's local batting resources.

It's high time the likes of Manish Pandey, Vijay Shankar, Abhishek Sharma and Abdul Samad pulled up their socks as the likes of seasoned Kedar Jadhav and Priyam Garg are waiting in the wings for their opportunities.

VENUE: CHIDAMBARAM STADIUM, CHENNAI

HEAD TO HEAD

Matches	16
Punjab Kings	05
Sunrisers Hyderabad	11

LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

- Sunrisers Hyderabad defeated Punjab Kings (KXIP) by 69 runs in Dubai
- Punjab Kings (KXIP) beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 12 runs in Dubai

Faisal Features

SRH have also been hit hard by the poor show of Bhuvneshwar Kumar and T Natarajan.

Natarajan was replaced by Khaled Ahmed in their last match and the latter did a good job to restrict Mumbai. But Bhuvneshwar continues to be on the expensive side.

Rashid has been economical but didn't look menacing so far.

Punjab too are on a losing streak after the win in their tournament opener over Rajasthan Royals. They lost to Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals.

After a batting collapse against CSK, Punjab made a significant improvement to post a challenging 195 for four against DC.

But a below-par effort from their bowlers spoiled the hardwork of the openers.

M o h a m m e d Shami has not been in his best form so far and leaked runs but what would be a concern for KL Rahul is the performance of Australian pace duo of Jhye Richardson and Riley Meredith.

Both Richardson and Meredith were expensive in all the matches they played without much success and it is time for Rahul to think of other alternatives like C h r i s Jordan.

PTI ■ MUMBAI

On a roll after back-to-back wins, the vintage Chennai Super Kings would look to extend their winning run when they clash with struggling Kolkata Knight Riders at Wankhede stadium on Wednesday.

After their abject campaign in UAE last year, the CSK started the season in an ominous fashion, losing to Delhi Capitals by seven wickets in a one-sided affair.

But since then, the MS Dhoni-led side has come on its own with the *Captain Cool* making the most of his resources at the batting-friendly Wankhede stadium.

Deepak Chahar's brilliance handed them their first win of the season against Punjab Kings and on Monday new recruit Moeen Ali shines with bat and bowl to script another big win for Chennai.

And come Wednesday against a side which will play its first match of the season at the Wankhede, smarting from two successive defeats, the Dhoni-led CSK will start as overwhelming favourites against KKR as Eoin Morgan is all set to ring in some changes to revive their campaign.

After their emphatic start against



KKR head coach Brendon McCullum and skipper Eoin Morgan

Sunrisers Hyderabad, KKR have slipped to fifth spot with defeats to Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bangalore.

And in both the defeats, the Morgan-led side had the upper hands but could not capitalise on their starts.

It remains to be seen if Morgan persists with Shakib or bring in seaming Aussie all-rounder Ben Cutting in the less spin-

VENUE: WANKHEDE STADIUM, MUMBAI

HEAD TO HEAD

Matches	22
Kolkata Knight Riders	14
Chennai Super Kings	08

LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

- Kolkata Knight Riders defeated Chennai Super Kings by 10 runs in Abu Dhabi
- Chennai Super Kings beat Kolkata Knight Riders by 6 wickets in Dubai

Faisal Features

friendly conditions.

Morgan also has persisted with the veteran Harbhajan Singh and gave him the opening overs in all the three matches. Left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav could be a better option.

As for CSK, opener Ruturaj Gaikwad is enduring a terrible form with scores of 5, 5 and 10 and it remains to be seen whether he is given a longer rope by Dhoni who is not known to tinker his XI much.

shortpasses

MASON INTERIM HEAD COACH

LONDON: Tottenham confirmed on Tuesday that former midfielder Ryan Mason would be in caretaker charge until the end of the season following the sacking of Jose Mourinho.

7 MORE BOXERS IN SEMIS

NEW DELHI: Babyrojisana Chanu outclassed defending European champion Alexs Kubicka as seven Indian boxers stormed into the semi-finals at the youth world championships in Kielce, Poland.

NZ PLAYERS GET VACCINATED

NAPLES: New Zealand Cricket (NZC) said on Tuesday that all of the cricketers who will be leaving for their tour of England have been vaccinated.

LEEDS HOLD LIVERPOOL

LEEDS: Liverpool were held to a 1-1 draw away to Leeds United on Monday in a match overshadowed by the furious response to the Merseysiders' planned involvement in a breakaway European Super League. A draw left sixth-placed Liverpool two points adrift of fourth-placed West Ham in the league table.

NO ICC INTERVENTION IN CSA

MONTREUX: The ICC on Tuesday said it will not intervene in the governance crisis engulfing South African cricket till the three national team captains expressed concerns over possible suspension by the game's global governing body.

WTC final to go ahead as planned: ICC

PTI ■ DUBAI

The World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand will go ahead as planned in Southampton from June 18, the International Cricket Council (ICC) has assured after Britain added India to its travel 'red list' following a massive surge in Covid-19 caseload.

India's entry into the 'red list' effectively bans all travel from the country and makes a 10-day hotel quarantine compulsory for UK residents arriving back home. However, the ICC expressed confidence in staging the WTC final in a bio-secure environment.

"The ECB and other members have demonstrated how we can stage International cricket safely in the middle of a pandemic and we are confident that we can continue to do that and that the WTC Final will go ahead as planned in June in the UK," said the ICC in a statement on Monday night.

"We are currently discussing with the UK Government the impact of countries being on the 'red list'," it added.

A BCCI source told PTI that it's difficult to say anything at this point in time and the Board is hoping that India will not be in the 'red list' by the time the team leaves for UK in early June for the WTC final.

FIFA 'strongly disapproves' of Super League: Infantino



AFP ■ MONTREUX

FIFA boss Gianni Infantino on Tuesday blasted the proposed European Super League and warned that the clubs involved could face "consequences".

Twelve major clubs launched plans on Monday for a new breakaway league which would drastically change the landscape of the world's most popular sport.

"At FIFA we can only and strongly disapprove the creation of the Super League, which is a closed shop, a breakaway from the current institutions, from the leagues, from the associations, from UEFA, and from FIFA," Infantino told a UEFA congress in Switzerland.

"There is no doubt whatsoever of FIFA's disapproval for this."

Liverpool, Arsenal, Chelsea, Manchester City, Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur are the six English clubs involved, together with Barcelona, Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid from Spain and Italian trio Juventus, AC Milan and Inter Milan.

UEFA has said the teams would be banned from domestic and other European competitions, including the Champions League.

Real Madrid president Florentino Perez, the head of the new ESL, has insisted that would be "impossible", but Infantino threatened action as FIFA took a stronger stance than it did with its initial statement when the news first broke.

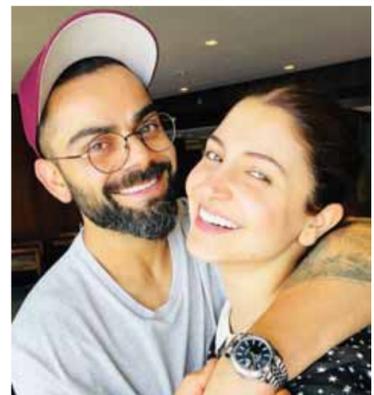
"It is our task to protect the European sport model, so if some elect to go their own way then they must live with the consequences of their choices," said Infantino.

"They are responsible for their choices. 'Either you're in or you're out. You can't be half in and half out. Think of it, this has to be absolutely, absolutely clear.'"

UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin said there was still time for clubs to pull out, addressing the owners, particularly of the Premier League teams involved, and saying they could row back on their "mistake".

SUMMER SLAM

MOTION PICTURE



RCB and India skipper Virat Kohli posts selfie with his actor wife Anushka Sharma

LIVINGSTONE PULLS OUT

Rajasthan Royals' English recruit Liam Livingstone has pulled out of the IPL due to bio-bubble fatigue, his franchise announced on Tuesday. Livingstone has flown back home late on Monday due to bubble fatigue "accumulated over the past year". The franchise confirmed the development and said that it respects his decision and will continue supporting the cricketer in any way it can.

SAMSON WON'T RESTRICT HIS SHOTS

Rajasthan Royals captain Sanju Samson is not bothered about failures and said he would continue to play his shots and keep on batting the way he loves to. "I don't want to restrict my shots and keep on batting the way I love to do. So, I'm also accepting a lot of failures on the way. I am not at all worried about getting out, but at the same time, I will definitely look to keep on contributing to my team's victory in the coming matches."

ALI BRINGS ALL-ROUND VALUE: FLEMING

CSK head coach Stephen Fleming feels that Moeen Ali has strengthened the team as he brings all-round value to it, which was missed in the last IPL season. "He is adding an all-round aspect to our game which we lacked last year," Fleming said of Ali. "His contribution was just what we were looking for. We are absolutely happy with the way he has started," Fleming said.

POINTS TABLE

	P	W	L	NRR	PTS	
1	RCB	3	3	0	+0.750	6
2	DC	4	3	1	+0.426	6
3	CSK	3	2	1	+1.194	4
4	MI	4	2	2	+0.187	4
5	KKR	3	1	2	-0.633	2
6	RR	3	1	2	-0.719	2
7	PBKS	3	1	2	-0.967	2
8	SRH	3	0	3	-0.483	0

OTHER SPORT