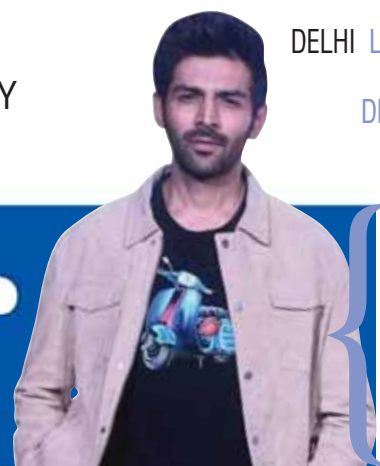


OPINION 6
POLITICS AND THE
MILITARY DON'T GEL**MONEY 9**
NET TAX REVENUES RISE
5% IN FY21: FM**SPORT 12**
INDIA TO FACE
BELGIUM IN SF TODAY

DEHRADUN, TUESDAY AUGUST 3 2021; PAGES 12 ₹2

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CRAVING
TO EXPLORE:
KARTIK ARYAN
11 VIVACITY

Chak De India moment in Tokyo

Women's Hockey
team scripts history
with maiden entry
in Olympic semis

PTI ■ TOKYO

They seemed courage and tenacity personified as India's women hockey players stunned three-time champions Australia to enter their maiden Olympic semifinals, while debutant discus thrower Kamalpreet Kaur held her own against a world-class field to give the country a lot to be proud of on day 10 of the Games here on Monday.

Rani Rampal and her resolute team brought their 'A' game and lots of determination to the field and the Australians did not know what to do.

It was a case of real imitating the reel as blockbuster "Chak De India", which told the tale of an underdog Indian women's hockey team guided by a discredited coach winning the World Cup, trended all across.

The pinnacle is still some distance away for the real bunch but it has already surpassed all expectations and redeemed itself for the 12th place finish back in the 2016 Rio Games.

This was a day after the Indian men's team entered the Olympic semifinals following a 49-year gap, a phenomenally gritty run for both the teams.



Indian players celebrate their victory against Australia during women's field hockey quarterfinal match at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo on Monday

PTI

Drag-flicker Gurjit Kaur rose to the occasion when it mattered and converted India's lone penalty corner in the 22nd minute to surprise the Australians on the day, who cried in disbelief even as the Indians shed tears of joy and let out ear-splitting screams to celebrate.

"I don't know what to say because emotions are too high at the moment, and we all are very happy because it was not an easy game to win from Australia," an elated skipper Rani Rampal said after the

upset win.

India will play Argentina in the semifinal on Wednesday.

"I think that belief like we can work really hard throughout the game... And this is only 60 minutes, just focus on the 60 minutes. Don't think further what will happen, just focus on 60 minutes, and give everything that you have got. And I think everyone did that, so yeah, I am super proud," Rani said, a reminder of the "70 minute speech" that had galvanised the reel team in Chak De India.

SC orders inclusion
of Paralympian
shooter Naresh

New Delhi: In a major victory before firing a shot in the upcoming Tokyo Paralympics, the Supreme Court on Monday ordered the PCI immediately include Arjuna awardee and five-time Paralympian shooter Naresh Kumar Sharma as an additional participant for the sporting mega-event in Japan.

TOKYO 2020 MEDAL TALLY				
Country	G	S	B	
China	29	17	16	
USA	22	25	17	
Japan	17	6	10	
Australia	14	4	15	
ROC	12	21	17	
G Britain	11	12	12	
France	5	10	7	
India	0	1	1	

Rahul invites Opp leaders to
plan strategy on Pegasus row

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing stalemate in Parliament, former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi has invited leaders of Opposition parties to a breakfast meeting at the Constitution Club on Tuesday to chalk out a joint strategy on the Pegasus snooping issue. All Opposition MPs and floor leaders of various parties have been invited for the meeting, sources said.

AICC sources added an invite has also been sent to the Trinamool Congress, which has been skipping all meetings convened by Rahul so far. Rahul met with TMC chief Mamata Banerjee when she called on Congress chief Sonia Gandhi last week.

After a meeting with the floor leaders of Opposition parties last week, Rahul said the Opposition has only one question: whether the Government had bought Israeli spyware Pegasus to use it as a "weapon against its own people".

While the Opposition has been insisting on a full-fledged debate on the Pegasus issue, the Government's stand has been that it is ready to discuss anything but the tapping scandal.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi leaves Parliament in New Delhi on Monday

PTI

Nitish backs Opp demand
for probe into snoopgate

PNS ■ PATNA

In a major embarrassment to ally BJP, JD(U) supremo and Bihar Chief Minister Kumar has backed the Opposition's demand for a probe in the Pegasus snooping scandal.

"A probe should be done, indeed. We have been hearing about telephone tapping for so many days, the matter should

be discussed (in Parliament). People (Opposition) have been reiterating (for talks) for so many days, it should be done," Nitish said on Monday.

While Opposition parties have stalled Parliament for ten days over demand for a debate and probe, this is the first time that an ally of the BJP has backed their stand for a probe.

J&J takes back plea
for vax nod in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bad news for those waiting for the US pharma giant Johnson & Johnson's single-shot Covid-19 vaccine 'Janssen' in India. The top drug regulator, Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), said on Monday that the pharma major had withdrawn its proposal seeking accelerated approval of its in the country. It didn't give additional details.

So far, four vaccines have been given Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) in India — Covishield, Covaxin, Sputnik V and Moderna.

In mid-July, Dr VK Paul, Niti Aayog member (health), had said, "We are in talks with Johnson & Johnson regarding their single-dose vaccine." He had added, "As per the plan, this vaccine will also be produced in Hyderabad's Bio E."

The US-based Johnson & Johnson had sought approval in April to conduct a bridging clinical study of its Janssen Covid-19 vaccine candidate in India.

It was reported earlier that a few thousand doses of Johnson & Johnson's vaccine could arrive in India in July.

The US FDA authorised



Johnson & Johnson's viral vector Covid-19 vaccine for emergency use in February 2021. However, weeks after its authorisation, the vaccine was linked to a rare but serious blood-clotting disorder.

Covaxin effective
against Delta Plus

Hyderabad: Bharat Biotech's Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin (BBV152) is effective against Delta Plus (AY.1) variant of the coronavirus, according to a study published in bioRxiv by the Indian Council of Medical and Research (ICMR).

Maha reports first
Zika virus case,
Centre rushes team

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After Kerala, Maharashtra has reported its first case of Zika virus infection, prompting the Centre on Monday to rush a high-level team to the State to support the authorities to draw an action plan to control the further spread of the disease.

Zika virus is transmitted mostly by the bite of an infected Aedes species mosquito, mainly Aedes aegypti.

On July 31, Maharashtra reported the first case in a resident of Purandar district in rural Pune. The 50-year-old woman was admitted to Belsar primary health centre in Purandar and has now recovered and been sent home. She was also infected by chikungunya.

A statement issued by the Union Health Ministry said that the three-member Central team consists of a public health expert from the office of Regional Director, Pune; a gynecologist from Lady

Hardinge Medical College, Delhi; and an entomologist from National Institute of Malaria Research (NIMR), ICMR, New Delhi.

"The team shall work closely with the State Health Department, take a stock of the situation on the ground and assess whether the

Union Health Ministry's Action Plan for Zika Management is being implemented, and recommend necessary public health interventions for the management of Zika in the State," said the statement.

Kerala has so far reported 61 Zika cases. The infection is mostly found in the tropical and subtropical regions. The symptoms of Zika are similar to dengue, including fever, skin rashes and joint pain. In the vast majority of cases, there are no symptoms. Zika can cause paralysis (Guillain-Barré Syndrome) in some people. It has the potential to cause birth abnormalities in pregnant women.

Chargesheet against
Sushil, 12 others filed
for wrestler's murder

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Monday filed a thousand-page chargesheet against Olympic medallist wrestler Sushil Kumar and 12 others in connection with the alleged murder of a former junior national wrestling champion at Chhatrasal Stadium in the national Capital.

The chargesheet names 13 accused persons, with Sushil Kumar as the main accused. A total of 15 accused have been arrested in the case and five are on the run.

The chargesheet has been



filed before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) Satvir Singh Lamba by the crime branch. The judge will announce the date for hearing of the case at the point of taking cognisance of the chargesheet on Tuesday.

Rains likely to be normal in Aug, Sept: IMD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday said monsoon rain is likely to be "normal" in August and September, between 95 per cent and 105 per cent of the long-period average (LPA).

According to the IMD, during August and September, "below normal" to "normal" rainfall is likely over many areas of the northwest, east and northeast India while "normal" to "above normal" rainfall is most likely over peninsular India and adjacent central India.

The monsoon halted its progress across central India in the third week of June, resulting in a three-week delay in the rain during the key sowing season.

The IMD said after witnessing uncharacteristically



A migrant family sells balloons on a roadside as monsoon clouds gather over Srinagar on Sunday

AP

heavy rain and an irregular weather pattern in July, Delhi is likely to receive normal rainfall in August. Normally, the national Capital receives 210.6

mm and 247.7 mm rainfall in July and August, respectively.

In another forecast for August, IMD Director General Mrutunjay Mohapatra said

monsoon is also likely to be normal in the month. West Madhya Pradesh and adjoining Rajasthan, some parts of interior Maharashtra, Jammu &

Kashmir, Ladakh, some parts of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh are likely to receive below-normal rainfall in August, Mohapatra said.

Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh, Konkan and Goa, central Maharashtra, south Gujarat, northeastern States, Bihar are likely to receive above-normal rainfall during the month, he added.

July recorded a 7 per cent deficiency in rain, with 26 per cent deficiency over east and northeast India; 27 per cent excess over south peninsula; 7 per cent deficiency over north-west India and 7 per cent deficiency over central India.

June ended with 10 per cent excess rain but a monsoon break of around 12 days from June 19 to July 11 led to a long dry spell in many parts of the country.

Indian student
in China found
dead in room

PTI ■ BEIJING

A 20-year-old Indian student studying in a university in the Chinese city of Tianjin has been found dead in his room and the cause of his death is not yet known, officials here said on Monday.

Aman Nagseen, who hailed from Gaya in Bihar, was a student of Business Administration in the Tianjin Foreign Studies University. He was found dead on July 29.

The cause of his death is under investigation, officials said. He was one of the few Indian students who remained in China through the coronavirus pandemic.

The Indian Embassy here and his family have been informed.

CONG DEMANDS WHITE PAPER ON EMPLOYMENT

Claims made by different CMs on employment generation are confusing: Godiyal

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Ganesh Godiyal has demanded the Uttarakhand Government should release a white paper on employment. He said a condition of confusion has been created by the statements of different Chief Ministers on employment and this confusion should be cleared. Addressing mediapersons

at Rajiv Bhawan on Monday, Godiyal said the condition of unemployment in Uttarakhand is grave.

He said it is unfortunate that the first CM confused people by stating that 7.50 lakh employment were given by his Government while the second CM talked about 22,000 jobs. He added the new CM is talking about giving 10 lakh jobs so the prevailing confusion should be cleared.

Taking up the issue of the

employees of the State Government, the PCC president said like other States the Uttarakhand Government had put a freeze on the Dearness Allowance (DA) of employees but now when the Union and other Governments have removed the freeze the Uttarakhand Government is on a sleeping mode on the issue.

He added the DA is the constitutional right of the employees and that too has

been slashed. He said the UPNL workers were on strike for more than two months on their demands and Cabinet Ministers Harak Singh Rawat and Ganesh Joshi had visited their agitation and gave assurance to them.

Godiyal said even after many rounds of talks the justified demands of the UPNL workers are still unresolved.

The Congress leader said that the pay disparities in the salary of employees of different

departments still persist.

He said the State Government had taken a decision to increase the stipend of the guest teachers from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000 per month but even after one month of the decision the Government Order for it has not been issued.

The PCC president took the State Government to task for not being able to organise the recruitment examination to fill 2,600 posts of nursing ser-

vices of health services.

On the issue of grade pay of police personnel, Godiyal said it is probably for the first time in the history of the State that the family members of the police personnel are forced to hit the roads.

"In the last eight months the double engine Government has set up one committee after another on the issue of grade pay of police personnel but the problem persists," he added.



Why patronising sand, liquor mafia: Majithia asks Sidhu

PNS ■ MOHALI

SAD MLA and former SMinister Bikram Singh Majithia on Monday asked the newly-appointed Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee president Navjot Singh Sidhu to tell Punjabis why he was patronizing the sand and liquor mafia instead of holding them responsible for the scores of deaths and open loot of the State exchequer.

Majithia, who was in Mohali to attend a function which witnessed the joining of independent councillor Nirmal Kaur and former SOI leader Simran Dhillon back into the party fold, said that the alacrity with which Sidhu had embraced the sand and liquor mafias was commendable especially when he had supposedly taken up cudgels against them earlier. "The mafia and those who patronized them including Madan Lal Jalalpur, Hardyal Kamboj and Gurkirat Singh Kotli are Sidhu's biggest supporters now. The mafia has even taken on the responsibility of running the Pradesh Congress office in Chandigarh and this is why we now see Sidhu expressing gratitude to the mafia leaders from Congress stages," he said.

UTTARAKHAND ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

'Vidyut Niyamak Bhawan', Near ISBT, PO-Majra, Dehradun-248171
PH. 0135-2641115 FAX- 2641314 Website www.uerc.gov.in E-mail- secy.uerc@gov.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

Inviting Comments on draft Order on Review of the Benchmark Capital Cost for Solar PV, Solar Thermal and Grid Interactive Rooftop & Small Solar PV Plants to be applicable for FY 2021-22 and onwards till reviewed/revised by the Commission.

In exercise of powers vested in it under Section 61(h), 86(1)(e) read with Section 181(2)(zd) of the Electricity Act, 2003, the Commission has issued draft Order on Review of the Benchmark Capital Cost for Solar PV, Solar Thermal and Grid Interactive Rooftop & Small Solar PV Plants to be applicable for FY 2021-22 and onwards till reviewed/revised by the Commission. The draft Order dated 30.07.2021 has been posted at the Commission's website www.uerc.gov.in.

Notice is hereby given inviting comments/written responses on the draft Order from all the stakeholders. These could be sent to the undersigned latest by 23.08.2021 by post or e-mail or in person at the above-mentioned address for Commission's consideration.

The comments/suggestions/objections received after the stipulated date in the Commission's office may not be considered while finalizing the Order.

Advt. No. - 09/2021-22

Secretary

WOMEN'S HOCKEY FEAT AT OLYMPICS

MRITUANJAY KUMAR ■ RANCHI

The waves of euphoria gripped Khunti and Simdega districts in Jharkhand when the daughters of the State, Nikki Pradhan and Salima Tete's team created history by defeating Australia 1-0 on Sunday. The team has made it to the semi-finals after being successful for the first time in the quarter-final match.

Gurjit Kaur scored the only goal for India. The team dominated the Australian team throughout the match and continued the attacking

game continuously.

The parents of Pradhan, the lone defender of Jharkhand's Khunti district, have expressed happiness. Nikki's father said that his daughter would definitely bring gold, while Nikki's mother Jeetan Devi became emotional after watching the entire match on the TV screen. She said that when my daughter falls while playing, it hurts a lot but what to do, it keeps on falling in the game. My daughter Nikki will definitely bring gold, she added.

Pradhan's Coach Dashrath

Mahto has also congratulated the entire team. He said that Nikki was trained in difficult situations. "Nikki is hard working from the beginning, as a result of which Nikki is known in the whole Country and Nikki will definitely bring gold for the Country," he added.

Mahato believes that if the youth of this Naxal-affected Khunti district is to be connected with the mainstream, then the Government and system will have to promote the youths towards the game so that the youth who have strayed here will

join the mainstream after seeing players like Nikki.

Talking to the Pioneer, he said that it was a big challenge to connect the youth here with sports. "According to the time, people changed and got associated with the game. If the name of the district is to be illuminated, then sports will have to be promoted here. A playground will have to be built in the villages of the remote areas, so that if people join, then they will be saved from going on the wrong path," he added.

5 arrested in Ranchi lawyer murder case

Raids continue to nab kingpin Afsar Alam

PNS ■ RANCHI

Ranchi police on Monday claimed to have resolved murder case of Ranchi Civil Court lawyer Manoj Jha as the police disclosed that five criminals have been arrested along with weapons used in in the murder.

The arrested accused were identified as Sonu Ansari, Imdad Ansari and Rizwan Ansari who are natives under Tamar police station of Ranchi, whereas other two arrested accused Sanjit Majhi and Shakil Ansari are the natives of Saraikela-Kharsawan district and Purulia of West Bengal respectively. They have been arrested from Baghmundi locality of West Bengal.

According to police Afsar Alam alias Langda alias Chotu, a local land mafia mastermind of the crime and raids are going on to arrest him.

Ranchi SSP Surendra Kumar Jha who addressed a press conference said that on July 26 these criminals shot dead the lawyer at Rargaon under Tamar police station where he was supervising construction works of St Xavier's College.

The college administration had purchased 14 acres of land for construction of the college building. A local land mafia and criminal Afsar Alam alias Langda alias Chotu was trying to grab college land.

The College administration had approached the court for a peaceful and legal occupation of the land after the accused tried to create a legal dispute on the land. The court had ruled in the favour of the college.

Deceased lawyer was supervising construction of the building And boundary wall of the college. Afsar Alam is the main accused of the case as a conspiracy with other criminals to eliminate the lawyer to grab college land.

Local resident of Tamar said that accused Afsar Alam was a police informer. Claiming police protection he was also illegally capturing land and was involved in criminal activities also.

Last year he was arrested for threatening and manhandling revenue circle officer Kamal Kishor Singh to grab someone's land.

Ranchi police was under tremendous pressure to solve this case as lawyers across Jharkhand had observed token protest whereas the Jharkhand High Court had expressed deep concern over the Murder of the lawyer. Ranchi SSP swiftly formed a special investigation team to solve the case and carried raids on whereabouts of criminals in West Bengal, Odisha, besides Jharkhand.

Cong likely to face factionalism in C'garh unit

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

A factionalism in its Chhattisgarh unit is the next headache for the Congress. Days after Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel met party chief Sonia Gandhi and later set aside speculations of a change in leadership, a section of party MLAs has complained the party high command over the curtailment of powers of the Panchayats in the State.

The grievance comes over the administrative measure that lays down a set of formulae for the Panchayats to engage agencies and determine the procurement rates.

"The Panchayats will now have to depend upon these agencies even for trivial works. The decision by the Government has not gone down well with the representatives of Panchayats who are said to be unhappy with it. At times when a nationwide campaign is going on to strengthen the grass root level Panchayati Raj Institutions across the country, the move by the Baghel Government to curtail the power of Panchayats in

the State and to interfere in its activities, ranging from procurement to allocation of work, is surprising," said a party representative camping in the national Capital to apprise the high command of the situation.

As per a section of party members from the State, the financial autonomy of these grass root level institutions is not only being curtailed but also ended in several ways by the Chhattisgarh Government. The complainants have given an emotional touch saying former Prime Minister late Rajiv Gandhi had taken several initiatives to strengthen the Panchyati Raj institutions financially.

"The State Government's attempt to bereft Panchayats of its autonomy and take decisions on its behalf goes against the spirit of strengthening these institutions. The Panchayats are quite capable of deciding about their work, choosing agencies that should be onboard for the procurement process and about how to ensure transparency. The Government can augur well by issuing guidelines for the same but need not necessarily inter-

fere in their autonomy," explained a senior party leader from the State visiting Parliament on Monday.

There has been new set of guidelines for the construction of toilets, biogas plants, solid waste management and procurement of essential equipment under "Swachh Bharat Mission" in Chhattisgarh. The elected representatives would now not be able to utilize the corpus of funds available with the Panchayats for undertaking these activities.

Now, Nigam level officials would float tenders for such works. Also, approval from different agencies would be required for these activities. It is being speculated that such measures would promote the culture of middlemen and will increase the undue interference in the functioning and activities of Panchayats.

Baghel is also at loggerheads with Health Minister TS Singh Deo, a CM aspirant. Recently, Deo had even staged a walkout from the State Assembly after one of Baghel's confidant, a tribal MLA, met with an accident which, he alleged, was carried out by Deo.

Haryana CM launches 'Har Hith' outlet scheme

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

In a bid to empower youth with jobs and entrepreneurship, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Monday launched the first of its kind 'Har Hith' store scheme for promoting the sales of best quality of daily need products at reasonable prices.

"These stores will provide a platform to youth franchisees as well as Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), government cooperative institutions, FPOs (Farmer Producer

Organizations), Self Help Groups (SHGs) to increase their business," said Khattar while officially inaugurating and inspecting a store during a programme held at Panchkula.

The Chief Minister said, "Making Haryana 'Boroigar Mukht, Rozgar Yukt' by 2024 is our target and opening of these stores would ensure creating of a necessity and would also enhance the possibility to encourage entrepreneurship and further create an ecosystem that promotes youth to be a part of Atmanirbhar Bharat."

2 hurt as boulders hit car after landslide in Himachal's Kinnaur

Shimla: Two persons were injured when their car was hit by boulders following a landslide in Himachal Pradesh on Monday, a disaster management official said. The injured have been identified as Pritam Singh and Upender Singh, both residents of Khadur village in Moorang tehsil, he said. The condition of the one of the injured is critical and he has been referred to IGMCS Shimla, while the other is being treated at regional hospital in Reckong Peo, the official said. **PTI**

PUBLIC NOTICE

I hereby informed the general public that I Aman Singhal S/o Late Mr. Ritu Raj Singhal is absolute owner of property situated at Khata no. 482 (fasi year 1399 to 1404) khasra no. 2142 measuring 83.70 Sq Mtr. situated at Mauza East Hope Town, Pargana Pachhwa Doon, Tehsil Vikasnagar, Distt. Dehradun.

I have lost original sale deed of Documents No. 3258, Executed by Mr. H.N. Chand S/o Mr. Teg Chand in favour of Mr. Suraj Pal Singh Negi S/o Mr. Mahavir Singh Negi, which is duly registered in the office of Sub-Registrar Vikasnagar in book no. 01, Volume 1707, Pages 341 to 358 as document no. 3258 dated 05/07/2011.

Police report has been got registered on 31/07/2021 in Indiranagar (Vasant Vihar) Police Station Dehradun, Uttarakhand. If anybody found, PIs inform to undersigned

Aman Singhal
S/o Late Mr. Ritu Raj Singhal
R/o : H.No. 01, Milan Vihar,
GMS Road, Dehradun

MVY launched for children orphaned during pandemic

Sum of ₹3,000 every month to be given to beneficiary children till they turn 21

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In a major initiative to provide relief to the families adversely affected by pandemic of Covid-19, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami launched Mukhyamantri Vatsalya Yojana (MVY) for the children who have lost their parents during the pandemic period.

Under the scheme which the Uttarakhand Government claims to be the first of its kind in the country, a sum of ₹3,000 would be provided to every month till the selected child attains age of 21 years. A total of 2,347 children have been selected for the scheme and in the first phase 1,062 children have received the benefit. Speaking on the occasion, CM said it is very difficult to compensate the loss of parents but the State Government would act like a guardian of



such children.

“We want to replace the tears of these children with smiles. I am sure that these children would become leaders in the fields of their choice,” he said.

The CM said apart from a

sum of ₹3,000 per month these children would also get free food grains and free education and the district magistrates concerned would ensure protection of their properties.

He said the Uttarakhand Government is committed for

● A total of 2,347 children have been selected for the scheme and in the first phase 1,062 children have received the benefit

● The CM said apart from a sum of ₹3,000 per month these children would also get free food grains and free education and the district magistrates concerned would ensure protection of their properties

● He added the State Government has recently declared a package of ₹200 crore for the people associated with tourism industry and ₹205 crore for the benefit of health workers

uptil of those standing on the last step of the social ladder. Dhami claimed that 85 per cent of the announcements made by the BJP Government have been fulfilled in the last four and half years.

He added the State

Beneficiaries hail Vatsalya Scheme

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Rani (name changed) a resident of Dehradun lost her husband, a property dealer on April 22 due to Covid-19. Since her husband was the only bread earner of the family Rani was very concerned about future of her two sons. “One of a relative

informed me about the scheme after which I filled the application form. I am happy that both my sons who are in Class IX and I respectively have been covered under the scheme,” she said while interacting with *The Pioneer* on the sidelines of the programme.

Nisha (name changed on

request) a student of Class XI said that her mother succumbed to Covid-19 on April 30 this year. Her father resides in Thailand but does not take care of the family.

“I want to become an officer in Indian Army and this scheme of Government would help me in fulfilling my dream,” she said.

Government has recently declared a package of ₹200 crore for the people associated with tourism industry and ₹205 crore for the benefit of health workers.

Dhami informed that the process to fill vacant posts in Government sector has started and a plan for generating self employment opportunities is

on anvil.

Women and Child Development Minister Rekha Arya said MVY reflects the humane face of the Government and claimed that Uttarakhand is the only State in the country which has come out with such a holistic scheme for the children who have lost their parents during the pan-

dem. She said that the scheme would make the children mentally, socially and economically strong.

Cabinet Minister Ganesh Joshi also addressed the audience. Former CM Trivendra Singh Rawat, Assembly Speaker Prem Chand Agarwal, MLAs Munna Singh Chauhan, Sahdev Pundir, Ram Singh

DHAMI MAMA; REKHA BUA FOR BENEFICIARIES

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami summed up the importance he gives to the MVY by telling children beneficiaries that he is like a Mama (uncle) to them. He said the Government will act like a guardian to the children covered under MVY.

Interestingly, prior to Dhami, while addressing the programme, Women and Child Development Minister Rekha Arya told the children that they should consider her as their Bua.

Kaida, Diwan Singh Bisht and others attended the programme virtually.

COVID-19

37 new patients, 71 recoveries in U'khand

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The State health department reported 37 new cases of coronavirus and 71 recoveries from the disease in Uttarakhand on Monday. No death from the disease was reported in the State on the day.

The cumulative count of Covid-19 patients in the State is now at 3,42,198 while a total of 3,28,224 patients have recovered from the disease so far. In

the State 7,362 people have lost their lives to Covid-19 till date. The recovery percentage from the disease is now at 95.92.

The State health department reported nine new patients of Covid-19 from Dehradun, six from Udham Singh Nagar, five from Almora, three each from Haridwar, Pauri, Nainital and Pithoragarh, two from Chamoli and one each from Bageshwar, Rudraprayag and Uttarkashi.

No new cases of the disease were reported from Champawat and Tehri districts on the day. The State reported no new case of Mucormycosis (Black fungus) on Monday. A total of 556 patients of Black Fungus have been reported till date in the state and out of them 124 have died. In the ongoing vaccination drive 86,476 people were vaccinated in 728 sessions held on Sunday in different parts of the State.

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● In the ongoing vaccination drive 86,476 people were vaccinated in 728 sessions held on Sunday in different parts of the State

Divya Rawat organises vax camp



PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Divya Rawat, popularly known as Mushroom girl, organised a vaccine camp for Covid-19 in Mothrowala here on Monday. Speaking on the occasion

senior Congress leader Mahesh Joshi said the health workers acted as saviours of mankind during the pandemic. He said that everyone should get vaccinated as it is the only weapon against Covid-19.

Transport associations protest against State Transport Department

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Various unions of goods and public transport vehicles of Dehradun district staged a protest in the regional transport office against the State transport department on Monday.

Unions like Dehradun Mahanagar City Bus Seva Mahasangh, Doon Autorickshaw Union, Bisht Gaon Tata Magic Association, Garhwal Truck Owners Association of Rishikesh and Tehri Garhwal Motors Owners Corporation (TGMOC) of Rishikesh participated in the protest against the department mainly for providing relaxation in taxes for one year due to Covid-19 pandemic.

“We were asked to stay home during the lockdown and the Covid curfew and we complied with the orders. Why is the transport department demanding taxes for that period?” asked the head of Garhwal Truck Association, Dinesh Bahuguna.

He said his association has demanded the transport department to reinstate the old policy regarding the surrendering of commercial vehicles besides providing exemptions in taxes.

President of TGMOC, Jitendra Singh Negi also stated that rather than giving relaxations, the department is making things more difficult for transport operators.

“We have demanded to waive off the taxes for one year besides giving us relaxation in permit renewal for two years so that business can get back to normal for operators,” Negi said.

However, the unions of city buses, autorickshaws and maxi cabs have mainly targeted the operation of electric buses in the city. These associations have asked the department to regulate the operation

○ Unions like Dehradun Mahanagar City Bus Seva Mahasangh, Doon Autorickshaw Union, Bisht Gaon Tata Magic Association, Garhwal Truck Owners Association of Rishikesh and Tehri Garhwal Motors Owners Corporation (TGMOC) of Rishikesh participated in the protest against the department mainly for providing relaxation in taxes for one year due to Covid-19 pandemic

○ However, the unions of city buses, autorickshaws and maxi cabs have mainly targeted the operation of electric buses in the city

of electric buses across the city as they claimed it has severely affected their business.

“While the private local transport operators are facing losses during the pandemic, the State Government is bearing the losses of the electric buses along with snatching employment of various people associated with the public transport.

We, along with some other unions, want the Government to fix the routes of e-buses either within the smart city area in Dehradun or outside the city,” said the head of the city bus union in Dehradun, Vijay Vardhan Dandriyal.

Meanwhile, the regional transport officer (administration) Dinesh Chandra Pathoi and RTO (enforcement) Sandeep Saini has assured the union members of approaching the State Government regarding their demands soon.

The union members asserted if the department will not consider their demands in the next few weeks despite the assurances, all the unions will hold an indefinite strike against the State Government.

Over 40,000 unregistered voters in Dehradun



PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Over 40,000 residents of Dehradun district who largely belong to the age group of 18-19 years are not registered in the Assembly electoral roll in Uttarakhand.

While preparing for the approaching State Assembly elections next year, the district election office came to know about thousands of local residents who are missing from the electoral list.

According to the deputy district election officer, Bir

Singh Budiyal, there are total of 44,502 locals who mostly include adults in their late teens or early 20s and women who are not registered on the voter list.

Informing about the procedure of registering the name in the electoral roll, Budiyal said eligible locals can apply online to register their name on the voter list through National Voters' Services Portal by visiting www.nvsp.in.

The applicants need to upload a clear colour photograph on the portal besides

uploading the relevant certificates as age and address proof.

After providing related details, the applicants will get their names registered on the voter list.

Moreover, the deputy district election officer asserted that those, who are incapable of registering online on their own like senior citizens and differently-abled people, can go to Common Service Centres (CSCs) for online application. Locals can also call the district election office at toll free number 1950 regarding any infor-

mation or issues in this matter, informed Budiyal.

Meanwhile, the election office has also asked municipal bodies and councillors to register the names of all the eligible residents in the voter list in their respective areas across the district. Other departments concerned have also been directed by the election office to raise awareness among local residents, especially among the youth and women living in remote areas to encourage them to register their names on the voter list.

DM, SSP check traffic management in Doon

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

out helmets and seat belts.

Apart from this, many people were found flouting the covid rules like not using masks and maintaining social distancing while commuting through public transportation. Rawat informed that authorities penalised all the offenders and warned them against repeating such offences again.

The SSP also directed the officials to penalise an autorickshaw driver and file a court case against him as the driver con-

tinued to drive rather than stopping his over speeding vehicle in the Clock Tower area when police directed him to stop.

The DM also disclosed the main reason for conducting this inspection. He said he has been receiving several complaints regarding the violation of traffic rules and Covid protocols by public vehicles in the city so he decided to observe the issues himself.

According to him, the administration will continue

such inspections and drives to raise awareness among locals about traffic rules along with taking action against the culprits.

“I have directed the traffic police and regional transport office to take necessary actions to improve the traffic management system in the city. Authorities have also been directed to take strict actions against those who fail to comply with Covid norms in public vehicles,” informed Kumar.



Banded krait seen in Ramnagar after decades

PNS ■ RAMNAGAR

The highly venomous banded krait was found in the inhabited part of Ramnagar after a period of 30 years, according to a local snake expert. On being informed about the presence of a snake in a resort in the Dhikuli area, snake expert from Save The Snake organisation, Chandrasen Kashyap and his team members reached the resort.

They spotted the banded krait, easily recognisable with alternate black and yellow crossbands on its body. Kashyap averred that this snake has been seen in the populated part of Ramnagar after a gap of about 30 years.

Known to have very potent neurotoxic venom, the banded krait feeds mainly on other snakes and plays a vital role in the ecology. Being bitten by it means almost certain death for a human but no such deaths have been recorded here in 30 years.



A nocturnal snake which is generally shy and non-aggressive towards humans, the banded krait caught from the resort was about five feet long. It will be helpful in learning more about the presence and activity of the banded krait in the jungles of Corbett landscape, added Kashyap.

Navy fleet to set sail to ensure peace, order in high seas



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With China flexing its maritime muscle in the Indo-Pacific and South China Sea, a task force of the Indian Navy comprising warships will proceed for deployment in these zones. The duration of the overseas deployment will be for more than two months.

Besides, the Indian Navy will also take part in the Malabar series of exercise in the Western Pacific with the other Quad nations including the US, Japan and Australia. China is against the Quad and has repeatedly claimed that this grouping will lead to militarisation of the region.

Giving details of the deployment, the Navy said here on Monday in pursuit of India's 'Act East' policy and to enhance military cooperation

with friendly countries, a Task Force of Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet is scheduled to proceed on an Overseas Deployment to South East Asia, the South China Sea and Western Pacific from early August.

The deployment of the Indian Navy ships seeks to underscore the operational reach, peaceful presence and solidarity with friendly countries towards ensuring good order in the maritime domain and to strengthen existing bonds between India and countries of the Indo Pacific.

The Indian Naval task force comprises Guided Missile destroyer Ranvijay, Guided Missile Frigate Shivalik, Anti-Submarine Corvette Kadmat and Guided Missile Corvette Kora. The latter three ships are indigenously designed and are equipped with a versatile array of weapons and sensors, and

India, China agree to continue dialogue to ensure LAC disengagement

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and China have agreed to sustain the dialogue process to ensure disengagement of troops from the friction points at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh. The two sides also reiterated their resolve to maintain peace in the interim at the border.

These two main points emerged from the Corps Commander level talks between India and China on Saturday last and the two countries on Monday issued a joint statement.

The statement issued here said, "The 12th round of India-China Corps Commander Level Meeting was held at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point on the Indian side.



This round of meeting was held following the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of India and People's Republic of China on July 14 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan and the 22nd meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) held

on June 25.

The two sides had a candid and in-depth exchange of views on resolution of remaining areas related to disengagement along the LAC in the Western Sector of India-China border areas. The two sides noted that this round of meeting was constructive, which

further enhanced mutual understanding.

They agreed to resolve these remaining issues in an expeditious manner in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols and maintain the momentum of dialogue and negotiations.

The two sides also agreed that in the interim they will continue their effective efforts in ensuring stability along the LAC in the Western Sector and jointly maintain peace and tranquility."

The 12 rounds of talks were held nearly four months after the last round in early April. Stalemate persists at three friction points including Hot Springs, Gogra and the Depsang valley for the last more than a year.

A breakthrough was not

expected in the latest round as China wants the involvement of local military commanders of both the sides in the talks. However, the Indian security establishment is wary of the proposal.

Moreover, India has all along maintained that disengagement and withdrawal from all the stand-off sites is the prerequisite for restoring normal ties between the two countries. China is in favour of keeping this issue aside and get on relations. Also, India has insisted that status quo ante has to be restored at the LAC as was in April 2020.

The first stand-off began in the first week of May last year at the Pangong Tso(lake)and snowballed into face-offs at many other places at the LAC in Eastern Ladakh.

After several rounds of talks the military and diplomatic levels, armies of both the countries withdrew from the southern and northern banks of the Pangong Tso in February this year.

Since then, no progress took place in terms of disengagement from the three friction points despite military and diplomatic level talks in the last few months.

Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi held bilateral talks on the issue on July 14 on the sidelines of the foreign ministers' conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation(SCO). This interaction at the high political level saw both the sides reiterating their commitment to continue dialogue for early resolution of the disputes.

Indian missions' talks with States/UTs to secure border

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

To bolster better assessment of the security situation emerging from the neighbourhood, the Indian missions in the countries adjoining the frontiers will hold meetings on half yearly/yearly basis with officials of the bordering States/Union Territories and border guarding forces to have a better sensitisation and assessment of security concerns.

"The Union Home Ministry in coordination with the External Affairs Ministry, Research and Analysis Wing, Intelligence Bureau and Directors General of border guarding forces will initiate action for holding such meetings with officials of the concerned States and Union Territories on six monthly or yearly basis," a senior security official said.

In addition to this, the border guarding forces like the Border Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) have been directed to organise problem-specific hackathons in collaboration with premier educational institutions and start-ups in the country to evolve cost-effective indigenous solutions for border arrangement. The



Assam Rifles, deployed on the border with Myanmar, will also be in such an exercise, officials said.

They said all issues concerning construction of roads along the Indo-China border under the India-China Border Roads-II scheme are being resolved in top priority.

In order to keep the border population synced with the security apparatus, the police forces of the bordering States have been advised to hold "vikas utsavs" in their respective areas along the frontiers by involving the local community, public representatives, local administration and all stakeholder agencies.

The developments come in the backdrop of border row with China in eastern Ladakh and the continuing threats from the Pakistan army and its terror cohorts along the frontiers in Punjab and Jammu

and Kashmir.

Officials said these mechanisms will lead to a better assessment of the ground situation in the bordering areas and simultaneously tweaking the emerging threats by putting in place relevant counter-measures in relation to the challenges from inimical forces and agencies.

The comprehensive mechanisms in place on the ground are also expected to lead to better synergy between the stakeholder agencies for an effective counter to challenges emanating from dynamic security scenarios amid two major hostile neighbours.

While the ITBP secures the frontiers along China, the BSF is deployed on the border with Pakistan and Bangladesh. The SSB is the designated paramilitary force for the frontiers with Nepal and Bhutan.

BJP MPs from Northeast meet PM over Assam-Mizoram dispute

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP MPs from North East on Monday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and submitted a memorandum, apprising him of the developments in the region against the backdrop of the ongoing border dispute between Assam and Mizoram. The BJP MPs accused a section of politicians led by the Congress for politicizing the issue.

"Through 2018, they tried to make CAA and NRC political issues but the people of North East gave them a befitting reply. Now, they are stoking tempers between Assam and Mizoram," the BJP MPs said.

The memorandum also praised the Modi-led NDA Government's "development work in the Northeast", calling it "historic and unparalleled". In a related development, Mizoram Governor K Hari Babu met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday and said the Centre is trying to find a solution to the border issue.

In the memorandum, the BJP MPs highlighted various issues pertaining to the region, including the border row. "A series of confidence-building measures have (been) taken over last few days by both Assam and Mizoram governments, yet actions of Congress

The memorandum also praised the Modi-led NDA Government's "development work in the Northeast", calling it "historic and unparalleled"

remain devious and mischievous," they said.

The BJP MPs said that they want to convey to all those elements who view the Assam-Mizoram issue as a means of "spreading chaos in India that their shenanigans will not work". The MPs further alleged that during the tenure of the previous Congress governments, chief ministers of Northeastern states had to wait for hours before they could get an appointment from Congress leaders and if they managed to get the appointment "they would play with their pets".

"Today North-East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) is looking after the inclusive development of Northeastern states. Unable to digest this, Congress and its ecosystem is trying many dirty tricks. In 2018 they tried to make CAA and NRC a political issue but the people of the Northeast gave

them a befitting reply. Today they are trying to stoke tempers between Assam and Mizoram," said the BJP MPs in their memorandum to the Prime Minister.

Speaking to the media post the meeting, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju accused "elements from outside our country" of "fuelling violence by making inciting statements". "Former Prime Ministers Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi were not sensitive to the aspirations of Mizo and Naga communities," they said.

The MPs from Northeast further said, "The Naga accord, Bodo accord, Bru Reang moved towards peaceful resolutions. Northeast is home to infrastructures like Bogibeel Bridge and Dhola Sadiya bridge. Insurgency and violence have been reduced. On the contrary, Congress has no regard for the culture of the Northeast."

Earlier, the PM met Mizoram Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati to discuss the border situation and ways to diffuse the tensions between two states, as per sources.

Meanwhile, Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday said he has directed state police to withdraw FIR against Rajya Sabha MP K Vanlalvena as a "goodwill gesture". However, he further said that cases against the other police officers will be pursued.

Crisis in Rajasthan Congress deepens once again

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

The crisis within the Ashok Gehlot Government and the ruling Congress is getting murkier. With Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot seemingly not to ready to give in to his political bete noire and former deputy Sachin Pilot's demands, sources said party chief Sonia Gandhi rushed senior Congress leader and Haryana Congress chief Kumari Selja to hold another and perhaps the last round of meeting with Gehlot.

Selja reached Jaipur on Sunday night and returned Delhi on Monday after a long meeting with Gehlot. Selja was sent after AICC General Secretaries K C Venugopal, Ajay Maken, Randeep Surjewala conducted a series of meeting with party members, legislators, rebels and the Chief Minister during the last one month.

AICC sources said that Selja returned with Gehlot's query for the central party leadership whether the party will keep repeating Punjab if there are differences within. "Should we repeat Punjab in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and then set a trend as this is the last resort to run a party and government," Gehlot is understood to have conveyed and asked, according to the sources.

The sudden trip has added to the speculation over the expected reshuffle, amid demands by Pilot that he and his loyalists should get a bigger share. Selja enjoys the confi-

dence of Congress president and is also considered close to Gehlot.

She was the chairperson of the screening committee formed to decide the Congress candidates in the last assembly elections in Rajasthan.

Selja's meeting with Gehlot comes just a day after Maken returned and briefed the high command about his three days of meeting with MLAs and CM last week. In a clear indication that some members of the Gehlot Cabinet may be dropped, Maken had told the media that a few ministers have expressed willingness to quit the state government to work for the organisation.

The Gehlot government, which came to power in December 2018, has completed half of its tenure. The demand for a cabinet reshuffle and political appointments to other posts gained momentum in June after some MLAs close to Pilot expressed resentment, saying promises made by the party high command to him last year had not been fulfilled but similar issues were met in Punjab within a few weeks of trouble there.

As of now there are 21 cabinet members including the CM in Rajasthan and after a reshuffle nine will be added taking the tally to 30 members in the Gehlot government. A three-member AICC committee too had been formed to look into the grievances of Pilot and his MLAs and both the time the central leadership took the step to pacify Pilot.

JD(U) delegation meets Shah, seeks caste-based census

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A delegation of Janata Dal (United) MPs, led by the new party president Lalan Singh, met Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday with the demand for a caste-based census.

Speaking to reporters, Singh said the Bihar assembly had passed unanimous resolutions in 2019 and 2020 for having census on the caste lines, and added that it is now for the central government to take a final decision. He said, Shah assured them that the matter will be discussed.

The JD(U) had also passed a resolution in support of the caste-based counting of population, a move with potentially wide political ramifications, in its national executive meeting on Saturday where Singh was elected its president. Its rival RJD too has been pressing for a caste-based census and even suggested that the State should do on its own, if the Centre isn't willing.

The Central government had recently again made it clear that it will not include caste wise data on population

other than Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in the national Census. The Ministry of Home Affairs said this decision has been taken as a "matter of policy".

Responding in the Lok Sabha, the MHA noted that a request for the collection of caste data in the Census had been made by some state governments.

"The State governments of Maharashtra and Odisha have requested to collect caste details in the forthcoming Census. The Government of India decided as a matter of policy not to enumerate caste wise population other than SCs and STs in Census," the MHA said in the Lok Sabha.

In March this year too, the Government had informed Parliament that it was not planning to release the data on caste Census collected as part of the 2011 exercise.

To a question that some Bihar BJP leaders have expressed reservation against such a move, Singh claimed that he was unaware of their stand but noted that the saffron party had also backed the resolutions in the Assembly.

Covaxin effective against Delta Plus, says ICMR study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, India's first indigenous vaccine to fight Covid-19, is effective against the Delta Plus (AY.1) variant of SARS-CoV2 virus, a new study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has said. Despite a slight reduction in neutralisation of antibody titres, Covaxin is effective against Delta, AY.1 (Delta Plus) and B.1.617.3 variants, the study added.

Covaxin has been developed by the Hyderabad-based pharma major, in collaboration with ICMR. As per the website, when the vaccination was launched on January 16, just a little over 5 crore doses of Covaxin have been administered in the overall 45 crore immunisation so far. Majority has been contributed by Serum Institute of India, a Pune based vaccine manufacturer which is making Covi-shield.

So far 70 cases of the Delta Plus variant have been found by INSACOG, a group of 28 laboratories involved in genome sequencing. Delta Plus is a mutated form of the Delta variant, first discovered in India. It is characterised by increased transmissibility.

"Our research showed that Covaxin could still neutralise Delta, AY.1 and B.1.617.3 vari-



ants," Dr Samiran Panda, head of epidemiology and communicable diseases, ICMR, according to reports.

The new ICMR-National Institute of Virology study — "Comparable neutralization of SARS-CoV-2 Delta AY.1 and Delta in individuals sera vaccinated with BBV152" — published as a pre-print on bioRxiv, said that Sera of vaccines among Covid naïve, recovered cases with full vaccination and breakthrough cases demonstrated 1.3, 2.5 and 1.9-fold reduction against Delta variant in comparison to B.1 variant respectively.

Lead author of the study, Dr Pragya Yadav said a minor reduction was observed in the neutralising antibody titer in Covid-19 recovered cases, fully vaccinated and post immunised infected cases as compared to Covid-19 naïve vaccinated

individuals.

"However, with the observed high titers, the sera of individuals belonging to all the groups in the study would still neutralise the Delta, Delta AY.1 and B.1.617.3 variants effectively," Dr Yadav said.

In July, the Hyderabad-based company released data from the final analysis of Covaxin and said that it demonstrated overall efficacy of 77.8 per cent against symptomatic infection. It also said that Covaxin has now received emergency use authorisations (EUA) in 16 countries including, India, Philippines, Iran, Mexico, with EUAs in process in 50 countries worldwide.

In another development, Bharat Biotech said that Rotavac 5D, a variant of its Rotavac vaccine, has received "Prequalification" from the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Parl passes Inland Vessels Bill, 2021



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Parliament on Monday passed the Inland Vessels Bill, 2021, with the Rajya Sabha passing it by voice vote amidst protests and sloganeering by the Opposition. The Lok Sabha had already passed the Bill on July 29, 2021.

Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal moved the Inland Vessels Bill, 2021 for consideration and passing. The Bill aims to bring uniformity in the application of the law relating to inland waterways and navigation within the country.

The Minister of Tribal Affairs also introduced the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in Rajya Sabha amid the din.

During the debate on the Inland Vessels Bill, certain Opposition members, who were in the well of the House, yet again tore papers and flung those in the air just like they did a couple of days ago.

Apex court nixes rape survivor's plea to marry accused

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed the plea of a rape survivor from Kottiyoor, Kerala, who moved the Supreme Court seeking permission to marry her assaulter — a defrocked Catholic priest who is undergoing 20-year imprisonment. The apex court also dismissed a separate plea of the defrocked Priest Robin Vadakkumchery seeking bail on the ground that he wanted to marry the survivor, who was a minor at the time of rape had given birth to a child.

A bench of Justices Vineet Saran and Dinesh Maheshwari told the former priest, "The High Court has taken a decision consciously and we would not like to interfere with its finding".

The apex court told the victim that she may knock on the door of trial court with her plea to marry the former priest. During the hearing, advocate Amit George, appearing for the former priest, said the High

Court had passed sweeping directions in the case with regard to the marriage, which is a fundamental right. The bench asked George what is the age of the victim and the former priest to which he replied that his client is 49, while the rape survivor is around 25. The top court then told George, "You yourself have invited sweeping directions from the High Court and it would not like to interfere."

At the outset, senior advocate Kiran Suri, appearing for the woman, said that she has sought interim bail for the accused for two months, so that he can marry her and give some legitimacy to the four-year-old child. The bench said that both the victim and the former priest can take recourse of whatever remedy is available under law.

Meanwhile, the State prosecution said that it is up to the two adults to decide on the marriage and bail can't be given. Marriage can be conducted at jail premises but no bail can be allowed, said the Kerala State's prosecutor.

Breather in Kerala, Covid storm abates

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Kerala, which has been reel-
ing under unabated
increase in the number of
Covid-19 cases and fatalities, got
a small relief on Monday as the
cases came down slightly to the
comfort of Health Minister
Veena George, who is leading
the operation to fight the pan-
demic from the front line.

The Minister's plea to take
the people of the State for the last
one week to abide by the guide-
lines and not to crowd anywhere
had its impact as the number of
persons diagnosed with the
pandemic came down to 13,984
on Monday from the daily aver-
age of more than 20,000 new
cases.

The Test Positivity Rate too
came down from the average
figure of 13 to 10.93 per cent on
Monday though the fatalities
recorded during the last 24
hours showed 118 persons suc-
cumbing to the disease. The
death toll till date reached
16,955 (excluding the 7,000+
under reported cases).

George said 1,27, 903 sam-
ples were tested during the last
24 hours. Thrissur topped the
table of districts with the high-
est number of positive cases
(2350). Malappuram which was
the district with the highest
number of patients till Sunday
(the district had 3,770 cases)
diagnosed 1,925 new patients
on Monday.

The Health Minister said

that as on Monday, the State had
1.65 lakh patients undergoing
treatment for Covid-19. Idukki
district diagnosed 196 new
cases while Wayanadu (repre-
sented in the Lok Sabha by
Congress leader Rahul Gandhi)
had 263 patients.

Dr Rajiv B Pillai, senior
Ayurvedic physician, was of
the view that Idukki and
Wayanadu were ideal districts to
study about the immunity cap-
ability of the population. "Both
these districts are known for
people who work hard to earn
their livelihood and have not
changed their lifestyle to what
we see in cities which are full of
fast food joints and Arab foods,"
said Dr Rajiv while glancing
through the day's figures.

TMC condemns attack on Abhishek's convoy in Tripura

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress has strongly
condemned the Monday's attack on the
convoy of its MP — and the party's sec-
ond-in-command— Abhishek Banerjee.

Hours after his cavalcade was attacked
by alleged BJP supporters the Bengal rul-
ing outfit took to Twitters saying "Shocking
display of absolute hooliganism by the
Tripura (BJP) government! When it comes
to BJP, ruthlessness and DISRESPECT
FOR DEMOCRACY seems to be running
the show. You can keep trying but you can-
not erase us from the hearts of the people
of Tripura! Shameful attempt."

The car of Banerjee who was on a day-
long visit of Tripura was attacked with a
flag stick by some alleged BJP men while
he was proceeding towards the
'Tripureshwari Kali Temple, party sources
said.

Alleging that the Tripura BJP and its
Chief Minister Biplab Deb was "taking the
state to new heights," Banerjee later tweet-
ed "Democracy in Tripura under BJP...
Well done Biplab for taking the state to new
heights." He further said "They (BJP) say



'Athithi Devo Bhawa' (guest is God) ... but
now they are attacking (the visitors). The
people of Tripura will judge."

The TMC also accused the BJP of
damaging and tearing off posters of
Banerjee. The plan of creating trouble for
Banerjee was hatched in advance, the party
claimed even as its Rajya Sabha MP
Derek O'Brien called upon Home Minister
Amit Shah to look into the matter and act
against the miscreants.

He wrote "Raised the issue in Rajya
Sabha of Lok Sabha MP Abhishek Banerjee
being attacked today in Tripura. Amit Shah

please come to Parliament and answers the
hard questions. Democracy?"

While officials on duty at the Agartala
police headquarters claimed "no infor-
mation on any attack" on the Trinamool
Congress leader who is also the nephew
of Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee,
Bengal BJP spokesperson Samik
Bhattacharya said "the BJP does not such
an act ... though it is peanuts in compar-
ison to what they have been doing here in
Bengal."

He said "I have heard there was a small
commotion as people were spontaneous-
ly protesting against his party's attempt to
vitiate Tripura's political atmosphere when
Abhishek Banerjee's vehicle reached there
... the entire cavalcade had crossed the BJP
procession and only at the tail end of the
BJP rally some youth hurled a stick at his
car which is not desirable."

The Bengal BJP later wrote in its social
media handle, "While this has been a rou-
tine affair in Bengal for any opposition
leader, seems you have now dispatched vio-
lent TMC cadres to Tripura... Wait till the
people of Bengal do this to TMC leaders
in West Bengal too."

Akhilesh remark on ropeway baseless: Min

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Responding to tweets posted
by Samajwadi Party chief
Akhilesh Yadav on the inau-
guration of a ropeway by Union
Home Minister Amit Shah at
Vindhyachal Dham in
Mirzapur on Sunday, UP
Minister and Government
spokesman Sidharth Nath
Singh flayed the SP chief for
making irresponsible state-
ments.

In his tweet, Akhilesh had
attributed the credit for con-
ceptualising and planning the
ropeway in Vindhyachal Dham
to the previous Government
headed by him.

"Akhilesh Yadav has no
future left in 2022 UP
Assembly elections and is per-
turbed over his party's pre-
dictable defeat. Samajwadi
Party's defeat in the 2022 elec-
tions is a foregone conclusion.
In fact, this time Akhilesh and
his party will be wiped out of
Uttar Pradesh. People are wait-
ing for the elections to kick
them out. Akhilesh knows this
too well and for this reason, he
is making baseless and non-
sensical statements on every
issue," Singh said in Lucknow
on Monday.

Hitting out at the SP chief,
the Government spokesman
further said that the Samajwadi
Party was just making false
claims and taking the credit for
whatever work the Bharatiya
Janata Party had done in the
state.

"In regard to the develop-
ment work of Vindhyachal
Dham, the SP chief is making
fabricated statements. Akhilesh
is a frustrated person, perpet-
ually engaged in misleading the
people of the state through fal-
lacious claims. The SP chief is
merely reaping the
fruits of what he has sown dur-
ing his chief ministership," he
said.

IN SHORT

PMO ADVISER AMARJEET SINHA RESIGNS

New Delhi: Amarjeet Sinha, an
Adviser in the PMO and handling
projects related to the social
sector, has resigned from his post.
A Bihar-cadre IAS officer of 1983
batch, Sinha had superannuated as
the Rural Development secretary in
2019 and was then appointed to
the PMO. He is the second top
officer to quit the PMO in recent
months after former Cabinet
Secretary P K Sinha, who worked
there as Principal Advisor,
resigned in March. In December
2019, PM's Principal Secretary
Nripendra Misra resigned.

EAM TO REPRESENT INDIA AT IRAN PREZ OATH TAKING

New Delhi: External Affairs
Minister S Jaishankar is likely to
represent India at the swearing-in
ceremony of newly elected Iranian
President Ebrahim Raisi in Tehran
on August 5, people. Raisi, a
hardliner and known to be close to
Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah
Ali Khamenei, won the presidential
election in June by a landslide.

SC SUGGESTS MEDIATION TO AP, T FOR KRISHNA WATER

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on
Monday suggested "mediation" to
Andhra Pradesh and Telangana for
settling their dispute over sharing
of Krishna river water, saying it did
not want to interfere
"unnecessarily". A bench headed
by Chief Justice N V Ramana was
hearing the plea of Andhra
Pradesh which has alleged that
Telangana has deprived it of its
legitimate share of drinking and
irrigation water.

NIA RE-REGISTERS ISRAEL EMBASSY BLAST CASE

New Delhi: The NIA on Monday
took over and re-registered the
case pertaining to the blast that
took place outside the Israel
Embassy in Delhi on January 29
this year.

DELAY IN LAYING OF 378 NOTIFICATIONS

New Delhi: The Committee on
Subordinate Legislation, headed by
Partap Singh Bajwa, in its report
tabled in the Rajya Sabha on
Monday said that there had been a
delay in laying of 378 notifications
and 141 notifications (26.5 percent
of total delayed Notifications) were
delayed by more than 11 months
while some others by more than
four years.



Priests offer prayers at Kashi Vishwanath Temple during 'Sawan' in Varanasi on Monday

Cong to observe Dalit Swabhiman Diwas in UP today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

To woo the Dalit community ahead of the 2022
Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, the
Congress has decided to organise 'Dalit
Swabhiman Diwas' on Tuesday.

Desperately trying to find its lost political
foothold in the state, the Congress had earlier
organised conferences of various castes which
could play important role in the State politics,
like Nishad-Kevat-Mallah conference, Maurya-
Shakya-Saini-Kushwaha conference and Pal-
Gaderia-Dhangar conference.

Formerly with Congress, Jitin Prasada too
had started a Brahmin Sabha to woo the com-
munity, alleging harassment by the ruling
Bharatiya Janata Party across the State before
recently switching allegiance to the saffron out-
fit. The Dalit cell of UP Congress will be cele-
brating 'Dalit Swabhiman Diwas' across the state
on August 3 and will also take out a Dalit
Swabhiman Yatra in all 75 districts of the state.

"After Independence in 1947, first Prime
Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet had
passed a resolution to make Babasaheb Bhimrao
Ambedkar the Law Minister on August 3 and the
UP Dalit Congress will celebrate the day as
Swabhiman Diwas," said state chief of Dalit cell
of UP Congress, Alok Prasad, in Lucknow on
Monday.

ATS arrests hawala trader funding terror module

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The sleuths of the Anti-Terrorism Squad
claimed to have made a breakthrough in
terror racket when they arrested a man from
Gorakhpur district for his alleged involvement
in sending money through the hawala route to
Pakistani handlers, officials said on Monday.

The accused, Dinesh Kumar Singh alias
Ajay Kumar Singh alias AK Singh (46) of
Gorakhpur, was arrested on Sunday. He was
evading arrest for the past three years and car-
ried a reward of ₹50,000 on his arrest, the of-
ficials said.

In a statement issued here, the ATS said,
"Information was received that on the instruc-
tions of Pakistani handlers, some people were
using fake documents to open accounts in dif-
ferent banks, duping people to deposit money
in those accounts, withdrawing the deposited
money and sending it to the Pakistani handlers
through the hawala route.

Pondy Min: Decision on reopening of schools only after Aug 15

Puducherry: Minister A Namassivayam on
Monday said the Puducherry Government
would decide on re-opening of schools and col-
leges in the Union Territory after consulting the
Lieutenant Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan
and Chief Minister N Rangasamy after August
15. The Home and Education Minister, in a press
statement, said he held a meeting with educa-
tional officials to discuss about Covid-19 and its
third wave.

He said the government has decided not to
re-open the schools and colleges for now. **PTI**

Kerala HC: A stray dog is made ferocious by its circumstances

Kochi: A dog is made ferocious
by the circumstances and it is a
myth that a stray canine is dan-
gerous by nature, the Kerala
High Court said on Monday
while dealing with the issue of
poisoning of street dogs in
Thrakkara municipality area
of Ernakulam district.

A Bench of Justices A K
Jayasankaran Nambiar and P
Gopinath said killing or maim-
ing the street dogs was not the
way to make people safer and the
better option was to capture the
canines and rehabilitate them at
animal shelters. It also said, "This
kind of dog catching using ham-
mers cannot be done."

The court said a balance has
to be maintained between the
interests of the residents of the
area who feel threatened by the
street dogs and the welfare of the
animals. It was also skeptical
with regard to the municipality's
claims that one of its junior
health inspectors paid for the poi-
soning of the canines from his
own pocket.

The court directed the
municipality to identify in its area
any animal shelters run by private
organisations who would be able
to capture the street dogs and
shelter them in their premises.
It issued the direction while

observing that it understands
that presently the municipality
would not be able to spend funds
for setting up such shelters.

The Kerala Government was
asked to give details of the animal
shelters -- run by the state and
private ones -- in all the districts.

With these directions the
court listed the matter for hear-
ing on August 6.

The court had taken up the
issue of the poisoning of the dogs
after a video on the same was
brought to its attention. While
seeking the stand of the munic-
ipality over its role in the entire
matter, the bench had also direct-
ed the civic body to ensure no
such incident takes place within
its territorial limits in future and
to put in place suitable machin-
ery to ensure the same.

On Monday, the municipal-
ity told the court that it had no
role in the matter.

Last week, the junior health
inspector -- arrayed as an accused
in the case with regard to killing
of the canines -- moved the
High Court, seeking anticipat-
ory bail and claimed that he was
being falsely implicated in the
case to divert the probe from the
Chairperson and of the munic-
ipality and the chairperson of its
standing committee on health.

Sena workers damage 'Adani Airport' signboard in Mumbai

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

An irate group of Shiv Sainiks van-
dalised a brand new "Adani
Airport" signboard erected by Adani
Airport Holding Ltd. (AAHL) out-
side the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj
International Airport (CSMIA) here
on Monday, in protest against the
AAHL's move to rename the city air-
port christened after the Maratha
warrior which they dubbed as "an
insult" to the people of Maharashtra.
Still fresh from jubilation of
taking over the management of
CSMIA from the Mumbai
International Airport Limited
(MIAL), the Adani group tasted
anger of the Shiv Sainiks over the
renaming of CSMIA, as the Shiv
Sainiks went on a rampage and tore
down a brand new "Adani Airport"
signboard erected by the AAHL.

Raising slogans like 'Chhatrapati
Shivaji Maharaj ki jai ho', Shiv Sainiks
climbed up the landscaped garden
outside the city airport where the
controversial hoardings have been
erected, uprooted AAHL sign boards
in English and Marathi languages
and planted saffron flags there.

Monday's protests by the Shiv
Sainiks were in line with the serious
reservations expressed by Sena MP
and party spokesperson Sanjay Raut
over the renaming over the CSMIA
as Adani Airport Holding Ltd.
(AAHL). "It is Chhatrapati Shivaji



Police officials inspect the site after Shiv Sena workers damaged an Adani group signboard near the Shivaji Maharaj statue in Mumbai on Monday

Maharaj International Airport. We
had undertaken an agitation and had
the city named as CSMIA. We do not
accept if the airport is named after
any industrialist. It will remain as
CSMIA," Raut said.

"The AAHL employees have
been given T-shirts with Adani
Airport written on them. You have
to use binoculars to see the name of
Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj written
in such small letter. This is an insult
to the great Maratha warrior. When
the Adani group ignores our reser-
vations about the renaming of the
airport, you can expect the kind of
angry reaction from the Shiv Sainiks
as the one you witnessed in the af-
ternoon," Shiv Serna MP Arvind
Sawant said.

"The name of Chhatrapati Shivaji
is not known just in Maharashtra but
in the entire country. Earlier we had
a big company GVK group that was
managing the Airport. But, it did not
name the airport after the group. Has
Industrialist bought the entire
Airport? Why is the industrialist try-
ing to destabilise Mumbai and
Maharashtra by resorting to this kind
of acts? And for what?" Mumbai
Mayor Kishori Pednekar asked.

Meanwhile, reacting to the Shiv
Sena's protests, an AAHL spokesper-
son said: "In light of the incidents
around Adani Airports branding at
the Mumbai International Airport,
we firmly assure that Adani Airports
Holding Limited (AAHL) has mere-
ly replaced the previous branding

with Adani Airports branding and
that no change has been made to
Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj
International Airport's branding or
positioning at the terminal

"The branding at CSMIA is in
compliance with the norms and
guidelines of Airport Authority of
India (AAI). AAHL will continue to
adhere to all the guidelines laid out
by the government in the interest of
the aviation community at large," the
spokesperson added.

The AAHL's move to erect a new
sign board comes nearly three weeks
after AAHL a wholly owned sub-
sidiary of Adani Enterprises Ltd, took
over the management control of
Mumbai International Airport
Limited (MIAL) from the GVK
Group. It may be recalled that on July
13, the AAHL had taken over the
management control of Mumbai
International Airport Limited
(MIAL) from the GVK Group. The
development had followed approvals
received from the Government of
India, the City and Industrial
Development Corporation (CIDCO)
of Maharashtra, and the Government
of Maharashtra.

MIAL is India's second busiest
airport by both passenger and cargo
traffic. With eight airports in its man-
agement and development portfolio,
AAHL is now India's largest airport
infrastructure company, accounting
for 25% airport footfalls.



Tourists visit the historic Taj Mahal during a cloudy day in Agra on Monday



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Power play

Ignoring Indian protests, Pakistan is trying to legitimise its occupation of Gilgit-Baltistan

In what India claims is a violation of its natural right over Pakistan-occupied Gilgit-Baltistan, the Imran Khan Government gives shape to a law to award the region the status of a 'provisional' province. Khan had made that promise last November. This is an attempt by Islamabad to legitimise its illegal occupation by applying the provisions of Pakistani law and the election commission to the region. India has lodged a strong protest over the decision, asserting once again that Gilgit-Baltistan, along with the entire Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, is an integral part of India by virtue of its legal accession. The region, or the provisional province which it may soon be, is of immense strategic importance to India, Pakistan and China. It is Pakistan's only territorial frontier with China. It meets China's Xinjiang autonomous region at that point. It is also a land route between the two provinces. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passes through it. Its neighbours also give Gilgit-Baltistan a vantage location: Afghanistan is to its west, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir to its south, and Jammu and Kashmir to the east. Till a decade ago, it was a nameless region — merely called Northern Areas — and administered from Islamabad, unlike Pakistan-occupied Kashmir with its own Constitution and Assembly. That changed with the Gilgit-Baltistan (Empowerment and Self-Governance) Order of 2009 that introduced the legislative Assembly in the region in place of the Northern Areas Legislative Council.



The reason why Pakistan never annexed the region is because it did not want to weaken its international case for a plebiscite in Kashmir by annexing Gilgit-Baltistan or, for that matter, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. It hopes that if ever a plebiscite is held, the votes in Gilgit-Baltistan would become vital to influencing the result. This explains why the region's provincial status is 'provisional'. India has begun to assert afresh its right over the region since Prime Minister Narendra Modi referred to it in his Independence Day speech in 2016. Previously, Indian Parliament passed a resolution in 1994 re-affirming its right over the region. In 2017, the British Parliament also asserted that Gilgit-Baltistan, under Pakistan's control, belongs to India. Gilgit is crucial to China's expansion of its land trade routes across the Himalayas. Without the control of Gilgit, the Gwadar port that establishes a direct access to the Indian Ocean via the CPEC is of little value to China. The whole idea of China's \$46 billion CPEC is to have surface transport and pipeline connectivity between Gwadar and Xinjiang via Gilgit, extending China's sphere of influence to Gilgit-Baltistan and right up to Hormuz Strait. Even as Pakistan makes the region a province, it cannot deny that it ceded control over the region to China and the Chinese Army. The latest development poses a challenge to India's claim to the whole of Jammu and Kashmir and brings closer home the threat of China's presence in Gilgit. Pakistan has made its move and the ball is in India's court now.

PICTALK



People bathe at Prabhatspuri Ka Khola waterfall after monsoon rains in Jaipur

PTI

The Kerala crisis

After the distinction of being the first COVID-free State, Kerala is now caught deep in the quagmire

Kerala wakes up every morning to an eerie silence. The State was the first to declare itself free of COVID-19 on the 100th day of diagnosing the first pandemic case in the country. But the last week saw Kerala diagnosing 20,000 new cases per day with an average Test Positivity Rate of 13. The death toll is surging at an unprecedented rate. When Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan declared on May 8, 2020, that the State was COVID-free, Kerala rejoiced and sang paeans to former (and then) Health Minister KK Shailaja. But it did not take long for the façade of the success of the "Kerala model" to collapse. "Kerala was known for its good healthcare system at low cost. The colonial masters and the Royal Family of Travancore, who were the rulers till 1947, have to be feted for this. The State's good climate and availability of pure water and air had laid a strong foundation for an excellent public health infrastructure," says Dr SS Lal, an internationally renowned expert on contagious diseases. He has been alert-



ing the authorities about the danger which they were going to face. But the doctor says that the policymakers had become prisoners of their own image.

The Government failed to co-opt the services of private hospitals, where 80 per cent of the State's doctors are employed. The Kerala Government Medical Officers Association's plea to appoint 1,000 doctors on a war footing fell on deaf ears. The unscientific lockdown rules and the failure to operationalise the existing infrastructure worsened the situation. The RTI probes have revealed that the authorities suppressed details about 7,000 COVID-19 related deaths. There were instances of COVID patients committing suicide in these hospitals because of the failure of the authorities to attend to them. An interesting point is the fewer number of cases being reported from Idukki and Wayanad, the districts atop the Western Ghats, apparently because of the hardworking lifestyle of the people there. Vijayan's decision to bring in personalities like filmmaker Adoor Gopalakrishnan and a bishop as members of a committee to advise the Government on how to tackle the COVID menace evoked laughter. No wonder, the State is adding 50 per cent of the new patients to the daily national tally. It once again underlines the fact that we should have the right people for the right job even during the pandemic.

Politics and the military don't gel

It would be in the interest of the political establishment to desist from politicising the military, lest it creates an uncontrollable monster



DEEPAK SINHA

The former President of the United States, Donald Trump, has always had the reputation of being a man of questionable moral and ethical integrity with close connections to the radical right. Yet, there were those who voted for him in 2016 because they genuinely believed that he was the lesser of the two evils, and strongly felt that only an "outsider" like him was capable of draining the "Washington Swamp", a phrase alluding to the seemingly all-pervasive corruption surrounding the Washington power elite. They would certainly have been disappointed by his insipid performance as President, especially the extent of his chicanery and selfishness. These have been laid bare in a recent book by two Pulitzer Prize-winning *Washington Post* journalists, investigative staff writer Carol Leonnig and former White House Bureau Chief Philip Rucker, on Trump's final year in power, titled "*I Alone Can Fix It*". A fitting sequel, and as perceptive and illuminating, is "*A Very Stable Genius*".

One of the most fascinating aspects of their latest book pertains to the manner in which the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Mark Milley, responded to President Trump's brazen attempts to overturn the election results by peddling his "Big Lie" that the elections had been "stolen" by the Democrats resorting to widespread fraud. Despite his legal challenges being summarily dismissed, he continues to peddle these allegations to this day. There can be little doubt that his incitement of his supporters culminated in a violent but abortive attempt on January 6 to disrupt proceedings at Capitol Hill to formalise the election results.

Prior to this, one may recall, General Milley had been excoriated by military veterans, politicians and the media for having unwittingly dragged the military into politics by being present, in uniform, at Trump's infamous "Bible photo op" at the St John's Church, immediately after peaceful protestors had been forcefully evicted while demonstrating for racial equality. Indeed, that he then went on to tender a public apology for his error of judgement speaks volumes of his forthrightness, integrity and



strength of character.

He then initiated action to ensure that the military was not dragged into the political sphere, despite Trump having appointed his own lackeys to key positions within the Pentagon. If the authors are to be believed, he went so far as to compare Trump to Hitler and refer to the January 6 insurrection as the "Reichstag Moment" for the US. On Trump's attempts to cling to power through force, he reportedly told his colleagues in the Joint Chiefs: "They may try, but they're not going to f@###g succeed... You can't do this without the military. You can't do this without the CIA and the FBI. We're the ones with the guns."

His actions have lessons that our military leadership would do well to imbibe. It is inconceivable that our senior military hierarchy can, or ever will, adopt such a confrontational attitude towards the leadership of a democratically elected Government, whatever be the provocation, or however unconstitutional be their actions. The aloofness displayed by the military during the 1977 Emergency is a case in point. True, there have been the likes of General Thimmayya, Field

IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT OUR SENIOR MILITARY HIERARCHY CAN, OR EVER WILL, ADOPT SUCH A CONFRONTATIONAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE LEADERSHIP OF A DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT, WHATEVER BE THE PROVOCATION, OR HOWEVER UNCONSTITUTIONAL BE THEIR ACTIONS

Marshal Manekshaw and a few more of that vintage who have displayed spine and opposed Government directions, but these have been few and far between, and restricted only to professional matters within their purview. Moreover, till recently, the military's senior leadership has been quite circumspect in ensuring that its actions were completely unbiased, apolitical, secular and within constitutional parameters. In fact, it was their adherence to such behaviour that made the military the most popular and respected institution within the country.

Unfortunately, while the bulk of our military remains apolitical and secular, the actions and public statements of the Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat, have created perceptions that the military's senior leadership has become excessively politicised. Then there is the fact that some very senior officers have taken the plunge into active politics immediately on shedding their uniform.

While some within the ruling elite may see this turn of events as advantageous to their ideological cause, and in fact encourage this shift within the military hierarchy

through the process of "deep selection", as some allege, they may well be biting off more than they can chew. If there is anything to learn from history, it is that once the military gets sucked into politics, it will not be satisfied acting as a mere handmaiden of those in power. As General Milley so eloquently put it, they are the ones with the guns! We just need to look closely at our own neighbourhood for examples.

It would be in the interest of the political establishment to desist from politicising the military. Creating an uncontrollable monster, that will go on to bite the hand that feeds it, is nothing but sheer stupidity. The Government and the legislative would do well to put rules in place that prevent members of the military and even the Civil Services from joining politics without an appropriate cooling-off period. That would go a long way in insulating them, especially the military, from politics.

(The writer is a military veteran, who is a Visiting Fellow with the Observer Research Foundation and Senior Visiting Fellow with The Peninsula Foundation, Chennai. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HAS DELHI LOST ITS WARMTH AND DIL?

Sir — Nowadays, we often hear about the northeastern people being harassed in the national Capital. These unfortunate incidents pain me somewhere because I have always regarded Delhi as my second home. I was there for the most part of my early childhood, from 1994 to 1999. Since my father used to travel frequently, my mother and I were in a quarter which we can term "Mini India" as there were people from various States.

We used to exchange our local food with their delicacies. The auntsies would 'kidnap' me to take me along on their evening walks and sometimes to *mandirs*, *gurudwaras* and mosques. My mother, who would go to the bazaars alone, never faced any untoward incident; in fact she was helped by people with her bags. What has happened to the Capital now? Has it been hijacked by hooligans? Delhi earned the title of "*Dilwalo ki Dilli*" for a reason but such incidents are bringing shame to it and to the real '*Dilwalas*' of Delhi. I urge the Government to be more strict on this front so that our northeastern people keep feeling safe and loved, like my family did in the national Capital.

Noopur Baruah | Tezpur

BWARE OF THE THIRD COVID-19 WAVE

Sir — India will witness another alarming rise in COVID-19 cases in the middle of August with the third wave peaking, and nearly 1,50,000 infections a day is the worst scenario. A study by a group of researchers led by Mathukumali Vidyasagar and Manindra Agrawal at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Hyderabad and Kanpur predicts that if the third wave occurs, it will hit us sometime around the middle or end of August and continue increasing till October.

This peak can be of two types. If the variant is more infectious, the peak can be more like the first wave. If it is not that infectious, the cases will not be that high. India reported 40,134 new cases of COVID-19 and 422 deaths in the last 24

Kerala must not be vilified



The State of Kerala continues to detect over 20,000 COVID-19 cases daily through more than 1.5 lakh tests. There seems to be no let-up in the furious spread of the Delta variant of the virus in the State. Yet, the campaign against the State Government's COVID management using the pretext of the latest surge needed to be contested. Though Kerala's overall tally of 34.11 lakh cases accounts for 10.76 per cent of the total cases reported in the country, the death toll of 16,837 is 3.96 per cent of the total number. Against the country's fatality rate of 1.34 per cent, Kerala's is

0.49 per cent, indicative of its success in saving lives. The State has succeeded in keeping the fatalities low through early detection, timely hospital admission and better medical care. Lives do matter more in God's Own Country.

A new study conducted by the researchers in India, Canada and the United States has put India's real death count between 31 and 34 lakh. The studies have also found that the actual death toll in Kerala is 1.4 times the official figure. Computed on the estimate of the uncounted deaths, the national fatality rate would be 9.78 per cent of the total cases reported and Kerala's would come to 0.69 per cent. The shortage of oxygen or non-availability of a hospital bed or ventilator, or shortage of a life-saving drug has never been the cause for any death in the State until now. Pampa, the holy river, has been flowing serenely; it never had to bear the sorrow of carrying bloated, abandoned dead bodies. The Kerala model of COVID-19 management has been successful in saving countless lives.

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

hours, as per the Government on Monday. The total number of cases currently stands at 3,16,95,958 and the death toll at 4,24,773. The number of active cases in the country is 4,13,718. Less than 50,000 daily new cases have been reported in 36 days, which is the result of sustained and collaborative efforts by the Centre, the States and UTs.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

CAST IN HAPPY BRONZE

Sir — After missing the glorious chance of bagging the gold, Pusarla Venkata Sindhu settled for the bronze medal with a clinical performance at Tokyo Olympics 2020. PV Sindhu fixed her hair, shuffled her feet thrice, leaned forward and muttered "come on" as she took up the challenge and settled for a bronze. She took a deep breath before letting the shuttle sail over the net. The point ended with a thunderous cross-court smash, and she let out a scream.

She had scaled the mountain of expectations, beating China's He Bingjiao 21-13, 21-15 to clinch the Olympic bronze medal. She is now the first Indian woman to clinch back-to-back medals at the Olympics. Sindhu had her Chinese opponent scrambling around the court and a couple of authoritative shots put the Indian 11-8 ahead and she never looked back.

In the end, Sindhu's power and guile proved just too much. Bingjiao began to engage Sindhu in longer rallies in the second game to control the tempo of the game, but the Indian was prepared. She finished points early and derived great success from her ferocious forehand cross-court smashes. Thus, Sindhu cast her name in bronze in a fierce battle for supremacy.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUNDBITE

I have directed the Assam Police to withdraw the FIR against K Vanlalvena, Hon'ble MP, Rajya Sabha, from Mizoram.

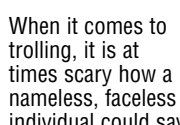


Assam Chief Minister — Himanta Biswa Sarma



What is their (Taliban militants') change? They have become more cruel, more oppressive, more non-Muslim.

Afghanistan President — Ashraf Ghani



When it comes to trolling, it is at times scary how a nameless, faceless individual could say anything about anybody without getting caught!



Actor — Tiger Shroff



I showed the team a movie about staying in the moment and I think that made a big difference in this match against Australia.

Indian women's hockey coach — Sjoerd Marijne

The BJP's end is near and those who cast an evil eye on the party headquarters, will be found floating in the Worli gutters.



Shiv Sena president — Uddhav Thackeray


FIRST COLUMN

EDUCATION IS NEXT CALAMITY IN MAKING

The current learning gap and reduced social skills can lead to a widening knowledge gap

SHUBHANG RATHI

There is a calamity in the making in the field of education, especially school education, in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has affected every stake holder, be it the parents, teachers, students, and school administrators. Innovative ways and technical tools are being developed to make students come close to get the feel of classroom teaching. According to *Azim Premji Foundation*, more than 60 per cent of children cannot access online education and around 90 per cent of students with disabilities are unable to participate in online classes. Delhi-based NGO, Child Fund India, says as many as 64 per cent of children in rural India are facing the prospect of being dropped out of school. For students, the biggest challenge is the absence of physical interaction with peers and teachers. Primary school students cannot even comprehend what is happening to them. Not only are learning standards affected, physiological pressure on senior students is becoming immense. There



is little physical activity because local parks and school playgrounds are also shut. Students in X, XI and XII are irritated about the new methodology of exam evaluation. For parents, it is challenging to teach different concepts and methods to their children every day. Parents are juggling between house chores, office work, and handling the education needs of their children. One parent of my school said: “If this year it is online classes, I am shifting back to my village as I am here in the city only for my children’s studies.” Parents who have suffered financially due to COVID-19 are taking extreme steps to cut down on education expenses. Unfortunately, it is also their first response, resulting in a heavy blow to the child’s future. For teachers, the biggest challenge is teaching by using technology and understanding students’ body language. Old and experienced teachers face issues related to online teaching. Teachers are dissatisfied with learning outcomes after putting in extra effort.

I see a calamity coming: Many students have left any formal form of studying in 2020-21. Something needs to be done to rectify the situation. For instance, when we return to work after a gap of 10 days, we feel we have to start work from scratch even though we have been doing the same work for the past several years. Imagine how will a child in the 5-10 age group cope with a break of over 18 months and still attain previous academic levels? Even though we have the infrastructure to teach children, what we lack is continuity. It might become difficult for students to remember the past concepts and relate them to the new ones. It is a challenging task to bring the students back to their previous academic levels. There is already a fear of many small schools closing down because of the spiraling running costs. The administrators are bogged down by unpaid fees in spite of the Supreme Court’s verdict. The current learning gap, reduced social skills, and poor handling by educators can lead to a widening knowledge gap of students when offline classes commence again. This can create an educated but unskilled and incapable workforce in the future. We are also looking at an education divide between the rich and the poor and urban and rural. We require the government’s intervention to come up with a plan to allow students to visit their schools once or twice a week while continuing their online classes. A hybrid model to clear doubts and reduce the physiological pressure of the students will be most welcomed by schools.

(The writer is the owner of a private school in Morena, Madhya Pradesh. The views expressed are personal.)

Power reforms — a distant dream

Unshackling of discoms will take away the leverage parties enjoy to serve their populist goal of giving cheap/free power at election time

Since last year, there have been several announcements regarding the reformation of power distribution companies (discoms). They include the Electricity (Amendment) Act, 2020, Reforms-Linked, Result-Based Scheme for Distribution (RLRBSD), and a special loan of ₹90,000 crore (subsequently raised to ₹130,000 crore) to discoms in 2020, and the new draft National Electricity Policy, 2021.

The key reform measures included (i) developing an efficient market for electricity distribution; (ii) de-license the distribution business, bring in competition, and give the consumer power to choose supplier (or “open access”); (iii) direct benefit transfer (DBT) of subsidy; (iv) putting a cap on the hike in power tariff; (v) linking payments by discoms to letter of credit (LoC); (vi) denying grants or loan to loss-making discoms, etc.

An overwhelming share of power generated by PSUs such as the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), etc., independent power producers (IPPs), besides generating stations of State electricity boards (SEBs) is procured by discoms (these are mostly owned and controlled by State governments) under power purchase agreements (PPA). Most of these PPAs are long-term contracts up to 25 years. A mere five per cent of the electricity is traded.

The State governments order discoms to sell electricity to some preferred consumers, viz. poor households and farmers, either at a fraction of the cost of purchase, transmission, and distribution, or even free. On the units sold to these groups, they incur colossal under-recovery. This is aggravated by aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses - most of it is plain theft. In flated tariff allowed to IPPs/PSUs under a cost-plus formula (under the PPAs) adds to the revenue shortfall.

A deadly cocktail of these three factors contributes to persistent and increasing losses of discoms. In 2015-16 it was ₹52,000 crore, Ts. 17,000 in 2017-18 (this reduction has to do with a massive bail-out given in November 2015 under Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana), ₹30,000 crore in 2019-20, and ₹58,000 crore in 2020-21.

In this backdrop, let us analyze the reform measures: (i) A pre-requisite for the development of an efficient market for electricity distribution is that a major chunk of power should be available for sale in the open market. But, with 95 per cent of electricity tied to PPAs, that too long-term, this is unthinkable.

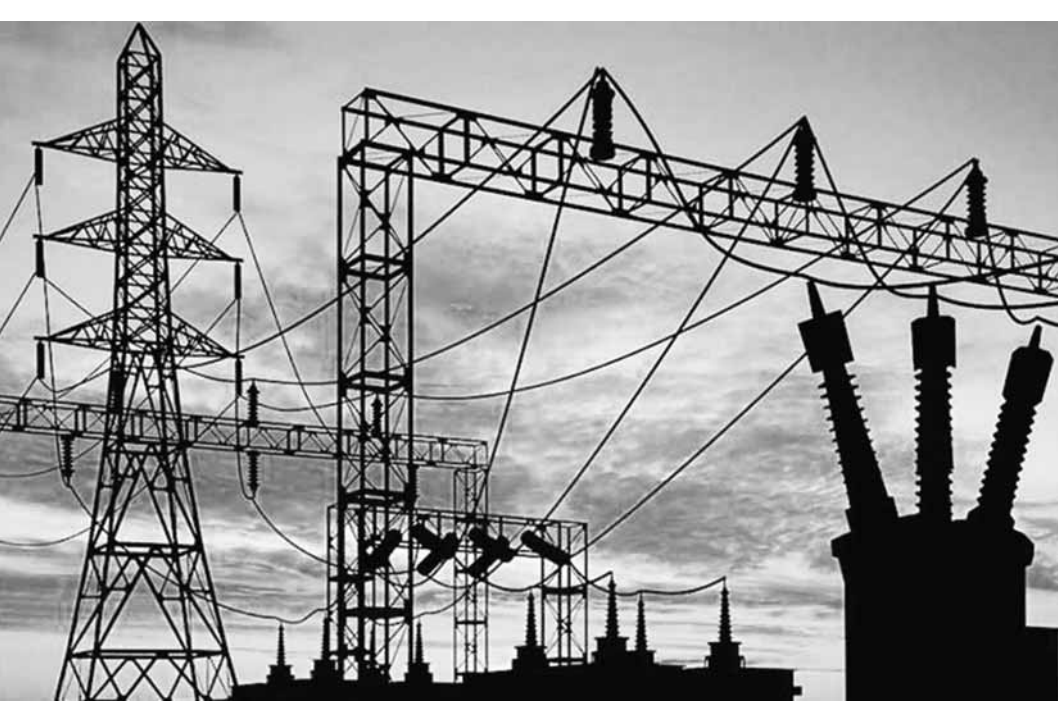
About (ii), considering that the entire distribution network — transmission lines, feeder lines, transformers (that caters to households), industries, etc. — is owned and controlled by discoms, any talk of letting in private entities is a misnomer.

As for ‘open access’, a provision was made even under the amended Electricity Act (2003). Under this policy, to be imple-



BY FIXING THE SURCHARGE AT A HIGH LEVEL AND NOT BOTHERING TO REDUCE IT (AS MANDATED UNDER THE ACT), THE STATE GOVERNMENTS ENSURED THAT POST-SWITCH, THE EFFECTIVE COST OF POWER TO THE CONSUMER — TARIFF CHARGED BY THE NEW SUPPLIER PLUS OAC — IS HIGHER THAN WHAT THEY PAY TO SEBs. THAT RENDERED THE SWITCH UNECONOMICAL

(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)



mented within five years of its enactment, i.e., by 2008, the choice was given to the bulk consumers (having consumption more than 1 megawatt) to choose their supplier. But another provision in the Act required such customers to pay an ‘open access surcharge (OAC)’ to the concerned SEB they wanted to leave.

State governments used this lacuna to the hilt to shield the SEBs who are prone to charging exorbitant tariffs from industries. By fixing the surcharge at a high level and not bothering to reduce it (as mandated under the Act), they ensured that post-switch, the effective cost of power to the consumer — tariff charged by the new supplier plus OAC — is higher than what they pay to SEBs. That rendered the switch uneconomical.

They have not even spared the Railways which spends over ₹12,000 crore annually on the purchase of electricity. Under the Railways Act, it is allowed to distribute and supply power and is a “deemed” licensee as it is buying electricity for its consumption and is exempt from payment of the surcharge. Yet, it has to pay OAC as States will not give ‘NOC’ - a requirement for availing exemption.

Coming to (iii), under DBT, the State Government gives subsidies directly to the target beneficiaries, even as discoms fix tariff in a manner as to fully recover their cost of purchase, wheeling, and distribution, thereby avoiding any under-recovery on such sale. They also need not charge more from industries and businesses which they have

to do under the present regime to cross-subsidize supplies to preferred users. With direct cash transfer, discoms can be freed from state control which will help them reduce costs including by reining in theft. Under this regime, it will also be easier to implement “open access”.

Despite these positive spin-offs, the Union Government has not shown the gumption to implement the DBT. In fact, following strong protests from farmers’ leaders on its inclusion under the Electricity (Amendment) Act, 2020, it has even promised that the status quo will continue. If the existing system of supplies at heavily subsidized tariff or even without charge to farmers has to continue, then, logically, the same should apply on supplies to households as you cannot have two different methods of delivering subsidy to different sections of the society. So, there is no hope of the DBT ever seeing light of the day.

As for (iv), discoms can recover only up to 15 per cent of under-recovered power supply cost from other consumers. Simply put, if their under-recovery from supplies to farmers/households is say, ‘X’, then they will be allowed to recover only 0.15X by hiking tariff on supplies to industries and businesses. This will end up further bloating the losses of discoms (though industries will face a modest hike in tariff vis-à-vis the existing scenario of no cap). But this will not prompt them to set their house in order all the more when they know that eventually, the Government will bail them out.

As for (v), under the LC

arrangement, the banks guarantee that a buyer’s payment to a seller will be received on time and for the correct amount. If the buyer is unable to pay, the bank will be required to cover the full or remaining amount, which, in turn, it will recover from the buyer using all available legal means. Here, the buyer being the discom - owned by the State - it will be a daunting challenge for the bank. As for (vi), denial of loan to loss-making discoms will not make them feel the heat as experience shows that help reaches them by hook or crook.

To conclude, measures such as those mentioned under (iv), (v), and (vi) are merely cosmetic while the political brass does not have the gumption to act on other measures — as discussed under (i), (ii), and (iii) — which are real reforms. This is because it will require the unshackling of discoms and that will take away the leverage that all parties currently enjoy to serve their populist goal of giving cheap/free electricity to the people who matter at election time. No wonder that we hear proclamations about reforms only to justify mammoth capital infusion whenever discoms need salvaging.

Under UDAY (2015), discoms were given a package worth ₹400,000 crore but are still saddled with under-recovery of ₹0.42 on every unit of electricity sold and a debt of about ₹450,000 crore as on March 31, 2021. Under RLRBSD, the government will be spending another Rs 300,000 crore but with no hope of trimming under-recovery. The vicious cycle will continue.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THESE PEOPLE (CONGRESS) WERE THE JAMES BOND OF SPYING (WHEN IN POWER). THEY SPIN A WEB OF SPYING WHEN IN GOVERNMENT. — UNION MINISTER MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI



NO GOVERNMENT ALLOWS OTHERS TO SNOOP ON ITS PEOPLE, BUT THIS WAS ALLOWED TO AN ISRAELI COMPANY. IS SECURITY OF THE COUNTRY SAFE? — CONGRESS LEADER MALLIKARJUN KHARGE

Thirty years later, ‘reform’ yet to happen

Liberalisation was not voluntary but was egged on by global lenders who would not lend without a firm Indian commitment on ‘reforms’

Thirty years and India is still waiting for the dream to become real. The liberalization of the economy in 1991 is erroneously taken as being limited to divesting government assets and holdings in industry.

Liberalisation was not a voluntary decision but was nudged by major lenders, the IMF and World Bank, who threatened to stop lending without a firm commitment to “reforms”. The country went through a foreign exchange crisis in the late 1980s and 1990s and family jewels were pawned because forex reserves plunged to unexpected lows. In July 1991, the RBI pledged 46.91 tonnes of gold with the Bank of England and Bank of Japan to raise \$400 million to meet its international obligations. The




SHIVAJI SARKAR

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal.)

reforms that meant losing government assets to the private sector started with a “bang” but did not bring the private sector to par with the government. The reforms initiated by the then finance minister, Manmohan Singh, were not a roaring success but a piece of confusing policy that has dumped subsequent governments into a policy quagmire.

While liberalizing the society from licence-permit raj was welcomed, the process of doing so gradually became complicated. Changes were made in industrial policy, monopolies law was annulled, import licensing was abolished, India joined WTO and TRIPS, quantitative restrictions on import of manufactured goods and farm products were removed, and current



account convertibility was introduced, business processes were eased, and the GST was introduced.

But disinvestment of public assets caught all attention. Every government took pride in selling assets or being seen doing that. Still, the private sector is suspect in the eyes of the bureaucracy.

It is still a mystery why a partial opening up was considered revolutionary. India is still not free of its socialist

mindset and a preference for government control on the pretext of “concern for people’s welfare”.

The “reforms” worked a bit. But the pandemic impoverished 80 crore people. Growing joblessness during the lockdown pushed the middle class to the edge of poverty. This is reflected in the slow growth of the GDP. In 2020-21, India’s economic growth slowed and contracted by 7.3 per cent, the NCAER says.

Liberalisation in 1991 was followed by a series of ₹7 lakh crore scams - Harshad Mehta to Ketan Parekh, UTI, LIC (about ₹2 lakh crore), and a series of banks, leading to a JPC probe. The top scams are coal allocation (₹1.86 trillion), 2G spectrum (₹1.76

lakh crore), Waqf Board land (₹1.5 lakh crore), Commonwealth Games (₹70,000 crore), Telgi stamp (₹20,000 crore), Satyam (₹14,000 crore), and Hawala scandal (₹100 crore).

Scams of such magnitude had never happened since Independence. Every divestment deal was also questioned. While the large private houses acquired these assets with loans from public sector banks, it also opened up an era of high bank losses (NPAs) particularly after the Lehman meltdown in 2007-08. The RBI Financial Stability Report (FSR) says despite banks writing off ₹23,786 crore loans in 2019-20, enabling the PSU banks to show lower NPAs, banks could go into severe stress as it fears the NPAs may

escalate to 16.2 per cent by September 2021 as borrowers are saddled with unpaid dues.

Repeated reorganization and mergers of banks have not boosted confidence. The latest move to sell four major banks and LIC is not being seen as a happy event. Many buyers could be from the list of 50 major defaulters.

Since 1991, government assets worth ₹3.63 lakh crore were divested. During 2014-19, ₹2.79 lakh crore worth assets were disinvested. The target set for 2020-21 is ₹2.1 lakh crore. The money received is adjusted in budgetary expenditure and is not known to have been used for building assets.

In 2016, demonetization shook the economy. The cash flow was severely hit, affecting

sales of goods and commodities. People’s purchasing power collapsed, delaying the post-pandemic industrial, real estate, and market recovery. It might lead to years of moderate to slow post-pandemic growth and that means a severe resource crunch. Thirty years since the reforms, the power sector is in a mess again and agriculture remains the mainstay of the economy.

Have we made progress? Prime Minister Narendra Modi says his government is working for a targeted \$5-trillion economy. But former PM Manmohan Singh says that the future economic path is tougher than in 1991. Either way, the country must bite the reforms bullet and recast its policies keeping in mind growth in the next 30 years.

Af Prez seeks defence of cities as Taliban advance

Kabul: The Afghan President on Monday blamed the American troops' speedy pull-out for the worsening violence in his country and said that his administration would now focus on protecting provincial capitals and major urban areas in the face of the rapidly advancing Taliban.

Ashraf Ghani also urged lawmakers to back a national mobilisation drive against the

Taliban amid an intensifying war between the Taliban and Afghan government forces over the past few months as US and NATO troops complete their pullout from the war-torn country. An imported, hasty peace process a reference to Washington's push for negotiations between Kabul and the Taliban not only failed to bring peace but created doubt and ambiguity” among Afghans, Ghani said in his address to Parliament.

The Afghan President arrived by helicopter for the extraordinary session of the house, called because of the dire situation on the ground. Ghani touched down at the Darul Aman Palace in Kabul

and inspected an honor guard before heading inside.

The Taliban are now trying to seize provincial capitals after already taking large swaths of land and scores of districts in more rural areas, as well as several key border crossings with neighboring countries.

The Taliban do not believe in lasting or just peace,” Ghani said. He predicted a sea change on the battlefield in the next six months” that would push the Taliban back, without elaborating. He claimed that Afghan forces are up to the task and have the capacity” to defeat the insurgents. But in past weeks, Afghan forces have struggled against the Taliban onslaught, and have often been left with-

out reinforcements and resupplies. On Sunday, the Afghan armed forces spokesman, Gen. Ajmal Omar Shinwari, told reporters that three provinces in southern and western Afghanistan face critical security situations.

Southern Kandahar the birthplace of the Taliban as well as Helmand and Herat provinces have witnessed several attacks.

Helmand provincial council chief Attaullah Afghan said the Taliban are also advancing in the provincial capital of Lashar Gah, and now have control of the city's seventh district. On Monday, elite Afghan commando units were dispatched to Lashar Gah to help

defend the city.

There have been relentless gunfire, air strikes and mortars in densely populated areas. Houses are being bombed, and many people are suffering severe injuries, said Sarah Leahy, Helmand coordinator for Doctors Without Borders.

The group, also known as Mdecins Sans Frontiers or MSF, said in a statement Monday that life in Lashkar Gah was at a standstill as residents hunker down inside their homes, afraid to venture out.

Some of our colleagues are staying overnight in the hospital as it's safer, but also so they can keep on treating patients,” the organization said. The situation has been dire for

months but now it is even worse.

Faizullah, who like many other Afghans goes by one name, told The Associated Press over the phone that he fled Lashkar Gah with his family and was now following the Helmand River to safety.

Clashes between the Taliban and Afghan forces have intensified, he said, and Afghan security forces are out of supplies and food in the city.

Back in Kabul, Ghani claimed his government has the financial and political support of the United States and the international community to turn the tide even as he urged the insurgents to reinjoin peace talks. **AP**

Citing Taliban violence, US expands Afghan refugee program

Washington: The Biden administration on Monday expanded its efforts to evacuate at-risk Afghan citizens from Afghanistan as Taliban violence increases ahead there of the US military pullout at the end of the month.

The State Department said it is widening the scope of Afghans eligible for refugee status in United States to include current and former employees of US-based news organizations, US-based aid and development agencies and other relief groups that receive US funding. Current and former employees of the US Government and the NATO military operation who don't meet the criteria for a dedicated program for such workers are also covered. **AP**

Malaysia lawmakers protest Parliament closure as ploy by PM

Kuala Lumpur:Police blocked Opposition lawmakers from marching on Monday to protest a two-week lockdown of Malaysia's Parliament, which they consider another ploy for the embattled Prime Minister to dodge a no-confidence vote.

With a crucial parliamentary session due, Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin instead postponed it and Parliament will be shut for two weeks. The health ministry said Parliament was deemed a high-risk venue because four of 11 COVID-19 cases detected among staff and others were

suspected to be the fast-spreading delta variant.

Lawmakers and activists questioned the timing of the announcement of Parliament's closure, which came after the king rebuked Muhyiddin's government on Thursday for misleading Parliament on the status of ordinances it issued during the seven-month coronavirus state of emergency. The opposition immediately filed a motion of no-confidence against Muhyiddin that was expected to have been raised Monday. **AP**

Florida breaks record for Covid hospitalisations

Orlando: A day after it recorded the most new daily cases since the start of the pandemic, Florida has broken a previous record for current hospitalisations set more than a year ago before vaccines were available.

The Sunshine State had 10,207 people hospitalised with confirmed Covid-19 cases, Florida is now leading the

according to data reported to the US Department of Health & Human Services.

The previous record was from July 23, 2020, more than a half-year before vaccinations started becoming widespread, when Florida had 10,170 hospitalisations, according to the Florida Hospital Association.

Florida is now leading the

nation in per capita hospitalisations for Covid-19, as hospitals around the state report having to put emergency room visitors in beds in hallways and others document a noticeable drop in the age of patients.

In the past week, Florida has averaged 1,525 adult hospitalisations a day, and 35 daily pediatric hospitalisations. **AP**

Australia city extends lockdown as clusters grow

Brisbane: A lockdown of Australia's third-largest city Brisbane was extended until Sunday because of a growing Covid outbreak.

Brisbane and several sur-

rounding municipalities in Queensland state were due to end a three-day lockdown on Tuesday. But the Queensland government on Monday announced the extension after 13 locally acquired infections of the highly contagious delta variant were detected in the latest 24-hour period. **AP**

UK eases travel curbs as industry lobbies for more

London: Britain opened its borders to vaccinated travellers from the US and European Union on Monday as travel industry leaders urged the Government to further ease restrictions and allow people to enjoy the benefits of a Covid inoculation programme.

The new rules came into effect amid reports that Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government may add a new category to Britain's traffic light system of travel restrictions, a move industry officials say would make many people decide to stay home. As of Monday, fully vaccinated travellers from destinations on Britain's "amber list" are allowed to enter the country without self-isolating for up to 10 days. **AP**

London: Britain summoned Iran's ambassador to the Foreign Office on Monday after an attack on a merchant vessel off the coast of Oman. James Cleverly, the minis-

ter for the Middle East, summoned Mohsen Baharvand in response to the attack on MV Mercer Street on Thursday, which killed a British national and a Romanian.

Skipper: Documents show no coverup in submarine sinking

Portland:The release of about 3,000 pages of documents delving into the deadliest submarine disaster in US history has not yielded any sinister effort to hide the truth, a retired Navy skipper says.

Instead, documents show the Navy's policies and procedures failed to keep pace with fast-moving technological advances during the Cold War, allowing a series of failures that led to the sinking of the USS Thresher on April 10, 1963, said retired Capt. James Bryant, **AP**

who sued for release of the documents under the Freedom of Information Act.

"There's no coverup. No smoking gun," he said.

That doesn't make it any less tragic, though. The loss of the nuclear-powered submarine and all 129 sailors and civilians aboard during a test dive in the Atlantic Ocean was both a tragedy for the families and a blow to national pride during the Cold War. **AP**

Public Notice

Be it known to all that my clients Sh. Omkar Singh Rana S/o Late Shri Khem Chand R/o E- 6-A, 234,Sangam Vihar, New Delhi has disowned / debarred his son namely Sh. Suraj Pratap Singh and his wife Smt. Rakhi @ Anuradha from all his movable and immovable properties /assets and severed all relations with above named persons due to their misbehaviour / misconduct towards my clients, the abovesaid persons are not in control of my client, in future my client shall not be responsible for any conduct of Sh. Suraj Pratap Singh and his wife Smt. Rakhi @ Anuradha.

Advocate Kuldeep Grewal
Ch.505, Jawahar Block, Saket Court
Phone: 844717888

Public Notice

Be it known to all that My Clients. Narender Singh S/o Diwan Singh and Jagwanti W/o Narender Singh R/o H.No. L-9, Shyam Park, Nayada, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059, have disowned their Son **Mukesh Kumar alies Jhau** from all their movable/immovable properties and severed all their relations both legal & social with his due to disrespectful behavior. Any person dealing with **Mukesh Kumar alies Jhau** shall be doing so at his/her own risk, and my clients shall not be responsible for the same.

Sanjeev Dwivedi (Advocate)
48, Gaganand Block, Tis Hazari Courts,ND-54

PREMIUM MERCHANTS LIMITED

Registered office: Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola, New Delhi-110025
CIN: L51909DL1985PLC021077,Tel: +91 11 61119658
Email id: **premiummerchants123@gmail.com,**
website:www.pmltd.com

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the meeting no. 03/2021-22 of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on 12th August, 2021 (Thursday) at the registered office of the Company at Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola, New Delhi-110025 at 3.30 P.M to discuss the following agenda items:

- To take on record the Unaudited Financial Results of the Company for the Quarter ended on 30th June, 2021 in terms of Regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirement) Regulation, 2015.
- To discuss and approve the Director's Report along with Corporate Governance Report for the Financial Year ended on 31.03.2021.
- To fix the date of the next Annual General Meeting of the Company.
- To consider and decide the period of closure of register of members for record purpose.
- To avail services of Electronic Voting Platform from National Securities Depository Limited.
- To consider appointment of Scrutinizer for the purpose of e-voting at ensuing Annual General Meeting.
- To table and approve the draft of the Notice convening the next Annual General Meeting.
- To discuss any other business with the permission of Chair.

By Order of the Board
For **Premium Merchants Limited** Sd/-
Place: New Delhi Date: 02.08.2021 (Balbir Singh)
DIN:00027438 Director

Millions under Covid lockdown; China battles Delta Variant outbreak

Beijing: Millions of people were confined to their homes in China on Monday as the country tried to contain its largest coronavirus outbreak in months, including seven positive tests found in Wuhan, where the virus first emerged in late 2019.

China reported 55 new locally transmitted cases on Monday as an outbreak of the fast-spreading Delta variant reached over 20 cities in more than a dozen provinces.

The Wuhan cluster came after the official daily tally was released, but it was confirmed by state media which said the infections had been traced to a train station.

"The seven were identified as migrant workers," Xinhua reported, citing Covid-19 prevention and control officials.

Major cities including Beijing have now tested millions of residents while cordoning off residential compounds and placing close contacts under quarantine.

Authorities in the capital

met and agreed on the need to "raise vigilance, take strict precautions and defend (the city) to the death, sparing no expense," in comments put out by the Beijing Government.

Elsewhere, over 1.2 million residents were placed under strict lockdown for the next three days in the central city of Zhuzhou in Hunan province Monday, as authorities roll out a citywide testing and vaccination campaign, according to an official statement.

"The situation is still grim and complicated," the Zhuzhou government said. China had previously boasted of its success in bringing domestic cases down to virtually zero after the coronavirus first emerged in Wuhan, allowing the economy to rebound. But the latest outbreak, linked to a cluster in the city of Nanjing where nine cleaners at an international airport tested positive on July 20, is threatening that success with more than 360 domestic cases reported in the past two weeks. **AFP**

Iran records highest number of daily Covid cases

there were 411 deaths, bringing the country's total death toll in the pandemic to 91,407 - the highest in the Middle East.

The new surge has been fueled by the contagious delta variant, and Iranian authorities say less than 40% of the population follows measures such as wearing face masks and social distancing. Iranian health officials have regularly warned

that hospitals in the capital, Tehran, and other major cities are overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients.

On Sunday, Health Minister Saeed Namaki in a letter to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei asked a two-week shutdown of the country, something the minister said the military would help enforce. **AP**

UK calls Iranian ambassador over oil tanker attack

"Minister Cleverly reiterated that Iran must immediately cease actions that risk international peace and security, and reinforced that vessels must be allowed to navigate freely in accordance with international law," the Foreign Commonwealth &

Development Office said in a statement.

The United States, the UK and Israel have alleged that Iran carried out the fatal drone strike on the oil tanker, though Tehran denied involvement in the attack. **AP**

Pelosi, Democrats call on Biden to extend eviction ban

AP ■ WASHINGTON

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the House Democratic leaders on Sunday called on the Biden administration to immediately extend the nation's eviction moratorium, calling it a "moral imperative" to prevent Americans from being put out of their homes during a COVID-19 surge.

An estimated 3.6 billion Americans are at risk of eviction, some as soon as Monday.

Congress was unable to pass legislation swiftly to extend the ban, which expired at midnight Saturday, and the Democratic leaders said in a statement that it was now up to President Joe Biden's administration to act.

Death toll from floods in China's Henan reach 302

Beijing: The death toll from floods triggered by torrential rains in China's Henan province has increased to 302 as of Monday, according to the information office of the local Government.

Another 50 people remain missing, Xinhua news agency quoted the office as saying.

A total of 292 people were confirmed dead and 47 missing in Zhengzhou, the provincial capital.

There were seven fatalities and three missing in Xinxiang city, while Pingdingshan and Luohe reported two and one death, respectively. **IANS**

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

Large scale riots occurred in **February-2020** in **North East District, Delhi**. The rioters had indulged in violence and arson to public and private properties and inflicted injuries upon a number of public persons and police personnel.

In this regard, criminal cases are being investigated in various police stations. General public is hereby requested to help identify the culprits who indulged in these riotous activities. Any information leading to arrest of rioters, the identity of the informant will be kept secret. Delhi Police reserves the right to decide actual informant and its decision will be final. Following persons were seen in Video Footage during the riots which took place near Shamshan Ghat, Kabir Nagar, Delhi on 25.02.2020.



The information can be given in person to the SHO/IO of the respective police station or can be communicated on phone number **011-22822746, 011-22826808, 011-22829335** or on email ID: **dcpnortheast-dl@nic.in** and **adcpn1-northeast-dl@nic.in**.
S.H.O.
P.S. Welcome, North East, Delhi

DP/939/NE/2021

RE-TENDER NOTICE

No.SSA/CW/KGBV-VI to X/254/2020/ 7042 Dated -26/07/2021

The Mission Director I/C], SSA, Assam, invites fresh bids for the following work from registered contractors [Class- I (A, B & C)] under A. P.W.D.(Building) Assam, having experience of similar nature of work.

Details of the bid may be seen at e-procurement portal website i.e. www.assamtenders.gov.in and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours from 02/08/2021(04:30 PM) to 12/08/2021 (2:00 PM)

The bidders must be enrolled in www.assamtenders.gov.in

Name of Work	Package No	Place	Approx. Value of Work	Time of completion	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	E.M.D. to be drawn in favour of	Tender Cost
CONSTRUCTION OF KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYA (CLASS VI TO X) (ACADEMIC BLOCK ASSAM TYPE WITH RCC HOSTEL BUILDING (G+2) (KGBV-TYPE-II), SSA, ASSAM	1S	SOUTH SALMA RA, S.S. MANKA CHAR	Rs.1,91,28,90 0.00 [Per site]	12 (twelve months)	Rs.3,82,578.00 (for General) Rs.1,91,289.00 (for reserved Category) [PER SITE]	The Mission Director, SSA, Assam, Guwahati-19	Rs.5000.00

Janasanyog No. CF/813/21

Sd/- Mission Director I/c, SSA, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SW)-I
OVER HEAD TANK: OPP. BHARTI COLLEGE
JANAKPURI; NEW DELHI-58.
e-mail: eesw1janakpuri@gmail.com

"STOP CORONA; Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"
Press N.I.T. NO: 16 SW-I (2021-22)

S. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (In Rs.)	Date of release of tender in E-procurement solution)	Last date/time of receipt of tender through solution E-procurement Solution
1.	Replacement of sewerage system by Providing Laying 250 mm dia sewer line from Taar Factory road to Solanki Chowk, Vishwas Park in Palam Constituency AC-37 under EE(SW-I)	25,09,237/-	2021_DJB_206464_1 31.07.2021	17.08.2021 up to 3.00 pm

Further details in this regard can be seen at (<https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>)

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 238(2021-22)

Sd/- (Munish Kumar)
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SW-I)

JASCH INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Regd. Off. : 502, Block C, NDM-2, NSP, Pitampura, Delhi 110034 CIN : L24302DL1985PLC383771
Website : www.jaschindustries.com, Email : accounts@jasch.biz

Extract of Unaudited Ind AS Financial Results for the Quarter ended on 30th June 2021 (Standalone & Consolidated Financial Results under Regulation 47(1)(B) Of Listing Regulations) (₹ in Lakh)

Sl No	Particulars	Standalone					Consolidated*	
		Quarter Ended		Year Ended			Quarter Ended	Year Ended*
		30.06.21	31.03.21	30.06.20	31.03.21	31.03.20	30.06.21	31.03.21
		Unaudited	Audited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited	Unaudited	N.A.
1	Total Income from Operations.	3704.21	4984.58	1488.66	13567.63	13077.64	3704.21	-
2	Profit before Interest, Depreciation & Taxes (EBITDA)	512.70	754.17	181.40	1909.27	1154.72	512.70	-
3	Net Profit for the Period (before Tax and Exceptional Items)	430.37	669.93	85.37	1561.97	620.02	430.37	-
4	Net Profit for the Period before Tax (after Exceptional Items)	430.37	669.93	85.37	1561.97	620.02	430.37	-
5	Net Profit for the period after Tax (after Exceptional Items)	310.37	493.37	63.88	1135.20	453.72	310.37	-
6	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [(Comprising Profit) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	310.37	493.37	63.88	1135.20	453.72	310.37	-
7	Equity Share Capital	1133.00	1133.00	1133.00	1133.00	1133.00	1133.00	-
8	Reserves	6129.21	5818.84	4720.45	5818.84	4656.57	6129.21	-
9	Earnings Per Share (of ₹10/- each) Basic & Diluted:	2.74	4.35	0.56	10.02	4.00	2.74	-

Notes :

- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosures Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Financial Results are available on the website of Stock Exchanges at www.bseindia.com and also on Company's website at www.jaschindustries.com.
- The financial results of the Company have been prepared in accordance with Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS).
- Figures for the previous periods have been regrouped, wherever necessary, to conform to the current period's classification.
- *The Financial results of Jasch Industries Ltd ("JIL") have been consolidated with that of Jasch Gauging Technologies Ltd ("JGTL" - a wholly owned subsidiary of JIL) which was incorporated only on 25-05-2021 and received approval to commence business on 06-07-2021. Therefore, standalone and consolidated figures as at 30-06-2021 are the same. Since JGTL was not in existence on 31-03-2021, a dash ("-") appears in the relevant column of consolidated data as on 31-03-2021.

Sonipat, 24th July 2021 Sd/- (J. K. GARG) **CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR**

PM Modi launches digital payment solution e-RUPI

Initiative starts with facility for health services

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday launched e-RUPI, a person and purpose specific digital payment solution that is aimed at improving transparency and targeted delivery of benefits. Over the years, several programmes have been launched to ensure that the benefits reach its intended beneficiaries in a targeted and leak proof manner, with limited touch points between the Government and the beneficiary. The concept of electronic voucher takes forward this vision of good governance. To begin with e-RUPI facility is available for health services and will be expanded to other segments.

"Today the country is giving a new dimension to digital governance. ERUPI voucher is going to play a huge role in making digital transactions, and DBT more effective. This will help everyone in



Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches e-RUPI in New Delhi

PTI

targeted, transparent and leakage free delivery," the Prime Minister said while launching e-RUPI.

Not only the government, if any general organisation or organisation wants to help someone in their treatment, in their education or for any other work, then they will be able to give eRUPI instead of cash, he said. This will ensure that the money given by him is used for the same work for which that amount has been given, he added.

e-RUPI is a cashless and contactless instrument for dig-

ital payment, an official statement said, adding, it is a QR code or SMS string-based e-voucher, which is delivered to the mobile of the beneficiaries. The users of this seamless one-time payment mechanism will be able to redeem the voucher without a card, payments app or internet banking access, at the service provider. e-RUPI is developed by the National Payments Corporation of India on its UPI platform, in collaboration with the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and National Health Authority.

Markets march higher on strong earnings, global cues

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks opened the week with robust gains on Monday as strong corporate results, supportive macroeconomic data and a bullish trend overseas turbocharged sentiment.

Auto stocks were propelled by recovery in July sales numbers, while IT counters also saw brisk buying.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rallied 363.79 points or 0.69 per cent to finish at 52,950.63, while the broader NSE Nifty surged 122.10 points or 0.77 per cent to 15,885.15.

Titan was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, spurring 3.25 per cent, followed by M&M, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, TCS, Maruti and Infosys.

HDFC gained 0.88 per cent after the country's largest mortgage lender reported a 31 per cent jump in its consolidated net profit at Rs 5,311 crore for the June quarter.

On the other hand, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, NTPC, Dr Reddy's and HDFC Bank were among the laggards, shedding up to 1.66 per cent.

Domestic equities recov-

Rupee gains 8 paise to close at 74.34 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee gained 8 paise to close at 74.34 against the US dollar on Monday, supported by a firm trend in domestic equities and a weak American currency.

Forex traders said the rupee is trading in a narrow range as investors are awaiting the RBI's monetary policy meeting outcome for further cues.

erred sharply as positive cues from global equities and strong rebound in auto supported benchmarks, said Binod Modi, Head-Strategy at Reliance Securities.

Further, modest recovery in financials, IT and pharma also supported market, he said, adding that realty stocks were in focus after sharp improvement in property registrations in Mumbai for July.

Reliance slips 59 places on Fortune list, SBI jumps 16 notches

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's oil-to-telecom conglomerate Reliance Industries Ltd slipped 59 places to rank 155th on the 2021 Fortune Global 500 list released on Monday.

Reliance took a beating on the rankings as revenues dropped owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. This is its lowest ranking since 2017.

Walmart continues to top the Fortune list with a revenue of USD 524 billion, followed by China's State Grid at USD 384 billion.

With USD 280 billion revenue, Amazon came in at the third spot, replacing Chinese giants. China National Petroleum was ranked fourth and Sinopec Group fifth.

Reliance's revenue fell 25.3 per cent to USD 63 billion, mostly because oil prices plunged in the second quarter of 2020 when the global spread of the pandemic wiped away demand.

Other Indian oil companies on the list too slipped ranks as their revenues tumbled because of the fall in oil prices. State Bank of India (SBI)

Exports up 47.91 pc in July to \$35.17 bn

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country's exports grew by 47.19 per cent to USD 35.17 billion on account of healthy growth in the out-bound shipments of petroleum, engineering, and gems and jewellery, according to the provisional data of the commerce ministry.

Imports during the month also rose by 59.38 per cent to USD 46.40 billion, leaving a trade deficit of USD 11.23 billion. Exports of petroleum, engineering, and gems and jewellery in July increased to USD 3.82 billion, USD 2.82 billion and USD 1.95 billion respectively, the data showed.

However, exports of oilseeds, rice and meat, dairy and poultry products have recorded negative growth in the month under review.

Imports of petroleum, crude, and products rose by 97 per cent to USD 6.35 billion. Similarly, imports of gold were up by 135.5 per cent to USD 2.42 billion and pearls, precious and semi-precious stones inbound shipments stood at USD 1.68 billion in July.

However, imports of transport equipment, project goods and silver have recorded negative growth in July.

Net tax revenues rise 5 pc in FY21: FM

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government's net tax revenues grew 5 per cent in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday.

The net tax (sum of direct and indirect taxes) revenue in 2020-21 was over ₹14.24 lakh crore, a nearly 5 per cent growth from ₹13.56 lakh crore in the previous financial year. In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Sitharaman said the Government has taken many steps to boost both direct and indirect tax revenue collection, through curbing tax evasion, widening/deepening tax base, promoting voluntary compliance, reducing litigation and promoting digital transactions. However, non-tax revenue collection dipped 36 per cent to ₹2.08 lakh crore in 2020-21 from over ₹3.27 lakh crore in 2019-20. The government's net revenue (tax+non-tax) collection in the last financial year declined 3.09 per cent to ₹16.32 lakh crore.

Mini Ipe takes charge as Managing Director of Life Insurance Corporation of India

Mini Ipe has taken charge as Managing Director of Life Insurance Corporation of India on 2nd August, 2021. She was appointed as Managing Director vide Government of India notification dated 5th July, 2021.

Mini Ipe is a post graduate in Commerce from Andhra University and has joined LIC in 1986 as a Direct Recruit Officer.

She has rich and diverse experience in LIC having worked in various capacities. Prior to taking charge as Managing Director, she was Executive Director, Legal Department, LIC of India. Mini Ipe was the first woman Zonal Manager (In-charge) of LIC and headed SCZO, Hyderabad. She has also worked as Executive

Director (International operations), Director & CEO of LICHL Financial Services Ltd. and was instrumental in taking LICHL Financial Services Ltd. to new heights in business revenue and profits during her tenure. She has also worked as Regional Manager (P&R) and Regional Manager (Estate) of Western Zone.

Govt sanctioned prosecution in 366 cases related to CSR norms violations: Sitharaman

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prosecution proceedings have been sanctioned in 366 cases related to violation of CSR provisions under the companies law, the Government said on Monday. Under the Companies Act, 2013, certain class of profitable entities is required to shell out at least two per cent of their three-year average annual net profit towards CSR (Corporate Social

Responsibility) activities.

As part of amendments to the Act, non-compliance with CSR provisions has been made "civil wrong" with effect from January 22, 2021. "Whenever any violation of CSR provisions is reported, action against such non-compliant companies are initiated as per provisions of the Act after due examination of records and following due process of law. All CSR related defaults are compounding.

LS passes Bill to amend general insurance law without debate

New Delhi: A bill to amend the general insurance law to allow the government to pare its stake in state-owned insurers was passed on Monday by Lok Sabha without a debate amid continuing protests by opposition parties on the Pegasus snooping and other issues.

The General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021 is aimed at generating required resources from the Indian markets so that public sector general insurers can design innovative products.

PTI

17.94 lakh Covid related health insurance claims settled

New Delhi: As many as 17.94 lakh Covid-related health insurance claims amounting to ₹21,837 crore were settled in about last 15 months till July 15, 2021. In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad said health insurance claims are settled by insurers as

per terms and conditions of the health insurance policy contract. Since the onset of the pandemic, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has taken several steps for speedy settlement of Covid-related health insurance claims.

PTI

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Roshni, D/o Jai Narayan, R/o H.No. 2543 Gali No. 4, R.P. II, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi, Age: 17 years, Height: 5', Complexion: Shallow, Build: Thin, Face: Round, ID Mark: Old scar mark on right eye, wearing Sky Blue colour Kurta, Black colour Pajami,** has been missing from

her house since 23.07.2021 at 13:30 Hrs. In this regard a **FIR No. 332/21 U/s 363 IPC, dated 24.07.2021 has been registered at P.S. Gandhi Nagar, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform undersigned.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/515/SHD/2021 Ph. No.: 011-22082235, 22072761

SHO

P.S. Gandhi Nagar, Delhi

Notice Inviting e-Tender

No. SS/HRMIS/1383/2020/ 7147 Date : 02.08.2021
Mission Director, Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhijan (Samagra Shiksha), Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19 invites tender through e-Tendering process from Reputed Registered Companies for Development of Human Resource Management Information System (Transfer & Posting of Teachers) and Implementation, Support and Maintenance.
To participate in the tender process through e-procurement document, bidders should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves. The Bidders who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender processing fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/ Bankers Cheque in favour of Mission Director, Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhijan, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/Scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

Sd/-Mission Director,
RMSA, Assam
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19



NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE (Through e-Tendering)

Name of work with its location	Provision of Automatic fire suppression for more than 400 route station of Delhi Division.
App. Cost of the work	Rs. 2,04,30,214/- only
Address of the office	Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annex-1, DRM Office, New Delhi-110055.
Date & Time for upload the tender/closing of tender	Tender uploading/closing date & time- 25.08.2021 up to 15.00 hrs.
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.	See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055.
No.: 558-Sig-16-M-TENDER-1364	Dated: 02.08.2021 1726/2021

Serving Customers with a Smile

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is to inform to the public at large that Mohd. Helaluddin S/o Mr. Mohd. Zahuruddin who had purchased the Residential House No. N-16, land area measuring 66 sq. yds., out of Kharsa No. 1624, 1560 & 1563 Situated at Shalimar Housing Complex, Village Pasanda Pargana Loni, Tehsil & Dist. Ghaziabad, U.P. from Mrs. Kamla Sharma W/o Mr. Bhaskar Sharma through Sale Deed as Document No. 3696, registered on 19.05.2015 with SR-II Ghaziabad and same to be financed by Utkarsh Small Finance Bank Limited. That, Original Sale Deed executed by Mrs. Mahalakshmi Land and Finance Co. Pvt. Ltd. In favour of Mrs. Sharda Gupta W/o Mr. Mahesh Chand Gupta in respect of House No. in type N-16, built Kharsa No. 1624, 1560, 1563 has been lost/or not available. If any Person having any type of claim/right/ (unlabeled) on the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below within a week, about his objections, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc.
Lucem Legal LLP
Office No. G-03, at Ground Floor, on Plot No.61, Sector-2, Noida, UP-201301
Contact: 0120-4130438

RAMPUR FERTILIZERS LTD.
CIN: L15136UP1988PLC010084
Email id:- info@rampurfert.com
Regd. Off.: Judges Bareilly Road, Rampur-244901 U.P.
NOTICE OF BOARD MEETING
In pursuance of Regulation 47 of SEBI (LODR) 2015, Notice is hereby given that the meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Monday, the 9th Day of August, 2021, at 4.00 PM. at its H.O.: 319-A, Hemkunt Chambers, 89 Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019, inter alia, to consider, approve and adopt Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter ended on 30th June, 2021 pursuant to Regulation 33 of (LODR) 2015. The said information is also available on the Company's website at www.rampurfert.com and the same has been also sent to CSE to upload on its website i.e. www.cse-india.com and MSE on its website i.e. www.mse.in.
By order of Board Sd/-
Place: New Delhi Anshuman Khaitan
Date: 02.08.2021 (Managing Director)

N K Textile Industries Limited
Registered office: Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola, New Delhi-110025
CIN: L17299DL1983PLC163230, Tel: +91 11 61119313
Email ID: n.ktextiles123@gmail.com,
website:www.nktil.com

NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that the meeting no. 03/2021-22 of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on 13th August, 2021(Friday) at the registered office of the Company at Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola, New Delhi-110025 at 4.00 P.M to discuss following agenda items:
i. To take on record the Unaudited Financial Results of the Company for the Quarter ended on 30th June, 2021 in terms of Regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirement) Regulation, 2015.
ii. To discuss and approve the Director's Report for the Financial Year ended on 31.03.2021.
iii. To fix the date of the next Annual General Meeting of the Company.
iv. To consider and decide the period of closure of register of members for record purpose.
v. To avail services of Electronic Voting Platform from National Securities Depository Limited.
vi. To consider appointment of Scrutinizer for the purpose of e-voting at ensuing Annual General Meeting.
vii. To table and approve the draft of the Notice convening the next Annual General Meeting.
viii. To discuss any other business with the permission of Chair.

By Order of the Board
For **N K Textile Industries Limited**
Sd/-
Place: New Delhi (Balbir Singh)
Date: 02.08.2021
DIN:00027438 Director

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform to the general public that my clients Sh. Sukhbir Sharma S/o Sh. Balmukund Sharma and Smt. Mamta Sharma, R/o A-1/35, Gali No.-2, Prem Vihar, Shiv Vihar, Delhi-94 have Disowned and Disinherited their Son Govind Sharma @ Vinay and his wife Kajal Sharma from their all immovable and movable assets whatsoever/wherever situated and severed all their Connections with them and whoever dealing with them shall be doing so at their own risk & consequences and my clients shall not be held responsible/liable for their acts and deeds.
Mohit Bansal & Associates (Advocates)
F-303, Karkardooma Court Complex, Delhi-110032, Mb: 9999777147

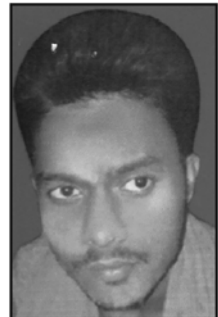
PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General public that Mrs. Balvinder Kaur (50% share), Mr. Prabhjeet Singh (25% share) & Mr. Gurdeep Singh (25% share) are the owners & in possession of Third floor, with roof rights on Eastern Side front Portion of Property No. S-246, Part of Plot No. B- 68, Kharsa No. 6 Village Nangli Jaleo, Old Manavir Nagar, New Delhi "Sale property". Further, Will dated 16.11.2005; Death Certificate of Mr. Jagjit Singh and SMC in favour of Mr. Prabhjeet Singh, Mr. Gurdeep Singh and Mrs. Balvinder Kaur in respect of the said property are lost. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owners intend to sell the said property to someone who wants to purchase the same by taking Home loan from our client i.e. Jana Small Finance Bank Ltd. by mortgaging the said property to our client. If anybody has any objections upon said property its ownership & title its Sale & Mortgage, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.
Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
205, 2nd Floor, 20, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, N. Delhi-16 Ph: 011-41112527-28 kumarassociatesadvocate@gmail.com

UJVN LIMITED
(An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprise)
H.O. "UJJWAL" MAHARANI BAGH, GMS ROAD, DEHRADUN - 248006. CIN No. U48101UR200150C023866
Tele: 0135-2783508, 2783888, Fax: 0135-2783507; website: www.ujvn.com

Tender Notice
Date : 02.08.2021
No. 545
The office of Executive Engineer (Maintenance), Maneri Bhali Stage-II, Chinyalisaur (Uttarkashi) invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tenders is given below:
Tender No: NIT-28/EE(M)/MB-II/21-22
Name of work: Providing and fixing of oil collection tray at Dharasu Power House.
Estimated cost: ₹ 692000 Only + Taxes extra
Date of availability of bid document on website: - 03.08.2021
Last date for submission of tender:- 25.08.2021 up to 11:00 Hrs.
For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "www.ujvn.com"
Executive Engineer (Maintenance)

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that a boy namely **Tota Ram, S/o Naubat, R/o H.No. 29, Dharam Colony, Nangloi, Delhi, Age: 20 years, Height: 5'4", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Long, Identification Mark: Mentally Disturb, Wearing: Black and Yellow Colour T-Shirt, Khaki Colour Pant and Hawaii Chappal** in his feet has been missing/ kidnapped from the area or P.S. Nangloi since **23.06.2021**. In this regard a case vide **DD No. 38A, dated 26.06.2021** has been registered at **PS. Nangloi, Delhi**.

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

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639
SHO
P.S. Nangloi, Delhi
Ph: 011-25947225, 25949470
DP/1019/OD/2021

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that a lady namely **Laxmi Yadav, W/o Ramnaresh Yadav R/o H.No. 3, Gali No. 22, B Block, Dasso Garden, Ranholha, Delhi, Age: 26 years, Height: 5'1", Face: Round, Complexion: Fair, Wearing: Unknown and Chappal** in her feet has been missing/kidnapped from the area of P.S. Ranholha since **05.07.2021**. In this regard a case vide **DD No. 83A, dated 06.07.2021** has been registered at **P.S. Ranholha, Delhi**.

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

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639
SHO
PS Ranholha, Delhi
Ph. : 011-28363001, 28363002, 28363003
DP/1035/OD/2021

AXIS BANK
Retail Asset Centre: SME Center Delhi 1 III Floor, Red Fort Capital Parswanath Tower, Bhai Veer Singh Marg, Near Gate Market, New Delhi -110001. Also at: Axis Bank Ltd., Axis House, Tower T-2, 2nd Floor, I-14, Sector-128, Noida Expressway, Jaypee Greens Wishtown, Noida (U.P.)-201301
Corporate Office: 4-7C, DDA Shopping Centre, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110025; **Website:** www.modirubberlimited.com
Email: investors@modigroup.net; **Phone:** +91-11-47107398

POSSESSION NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002
Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Axis Bank Ltd. under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notice upon the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagee(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagee(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagee(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates.
The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagee(s) in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Axis Bank Ltd.
The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagee(s) attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Name of Borrower / Co-borrower	Description of Property	1.Date of Demand Notice 2.Date of Possession 3.Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)
1.M/S Ganga Jeans Pvt. Ltd. Registered Office: 10, Abadi Mahila Colony Gandhi Nagar, South Chiragh Illaga Shahdara, Delhi-110092 Through its Directors (Borrower)	1.Equitable mortgage of Buildup Free Hold Residential Commercial Property with mixed land use bearing no 10 with all roof/terrace rights, Build on Area Measuring 222.23 Sq Yards, i.e 185.87 Sq Mtrs, Situated in Mahila Colony Gandhi Nagar Illaga Shahdara Delhi -110095 in the name of Mr. Hanuman Mal Jain S/O Late Shri Sohan Lal Jain and Smt. Sanyam Lata Barmecha W/o Mr. Narendra Barmecha.	1. 20.07-2020 2. 30.07-2021 3. Rs.5,22,44,619/- (Rupees Five crore Twenty Two lakh forty Four Thousand Six Hundred Ninety And Sixty Eight Paise Only)
Also At :- M/S Ganga Jeans Pvt. Ltd. 6405 Mukherji Gali, Gandhi Nagar, New Delhi - 110031		
2.Mr.Narendra Barmecha S/O Shri Hanuman Mal Jain Director M/S Ganga Jeans Pvt. Ltd. 10, Abadi Mahila Colony Gandhi Nagar, South Chiragh Illaga Shahdara, Delhi-110092 (Director/Guarantor)		
Also At :- Mr. Narendra Barmecha S/O Shri Hanuman Mal Jain, R/o- D-15, Ashoka Niketan Delhi -110092		
3.Ms. Sanyam Lata Barmecha W/O Mr. Narendra Barmecha Director M/S Ganga Jeans Pvt. Ltd. 10, Abadi Mahila Colony Gandhi Nagar, South Chiragh Illaga Shahdara, Delhi-110092 (Director /Guarantor/Mortgagor)		
Also At :- Ms. Sanyam Lata Barmecha, W/O Mr. Narendra Barmecha R/o- D-15, Ashoka Niketan Delhi -110092		
4. Mr. Siddarth Barmecha S/O Mr. Narendra Barmecha Director M/S Ganga Jeans Pvt. Ltd. 10, Abadi Mahila Colony Gandhi Nagar, South Chiragh Illaga Shahdara, Delhi-110092 (Director /Guarantor)		
Also At :- Mr. Siddarth Barmecha S/O Mr. Narendra Barmecha, R/o- D-15, Ashoka Niketan Delhi -110092		
5.Mr. Hanuman Mal Jain S/O Mr. Narendra Barmecha 10, Abadi Mahila Colony Gandhi Nagar, South Chiragh Illaga Shahdara, Delhi-110092 (Mortgagor /Guarantor)		
Also At :- Mr. Hanuman Mal Jain S/O Mr. Narendra Barmecha, R/o -142, Puspaparnaji, Vikas Marg, Delhi -110092		

The above-mentioned Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagee(s) are hereby given a 30 days' Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days' from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.


Date : 03-08-2021
Place : Delhi
Sd/-,
Authorized Officer,
Axis Bank Ltd.,

DOCYARD


DR SHAILESH JAIN

Principal Consultant,
Neurosciences

NEW DELHI



It's complicated



COVID in the last 18 months has shown a devastating effect on human life. Apart from affecting the lung, it also affected different parts of the body. However, it mainly affects the lung and increases level of ferritin, D-Dimer, CRP and cytokines eg IL-6. High levels of all these chemicals may have catastrophic effect on vital organs.

Neurological involvement is a spectrum of loss of olfactory senses to necrotising encephalitis and involving almost every aspect of central (CNS) and peripheral nervous system (PNS). Prevalence is around 0.1-1 per cent of COVID infections. Most complications are seen by second to fourth week of COVID infection. CNS-related events were more common than PNS manifestations. Common CNS manifestations are headache, disturbance in consciousness, dizziness, acute cerebrovascular disease, ataxia, and seizures. PNS symptoms are impairment in taste, smell, and vision. Musculoskeletal symptoms were observed in form of myalgias and nonspecific pain.

Stroke comprises of 60-70 per cent, encephalopathy 30-40 per cent and neuropathy around 6 per cent and all other neurological complications in 0.1 per cent cases of neurological cases related to COVID.

Neurological involvement is mainly categorised into CNS and PNS involvement. CNS involvements are in form of stroke, encephalopathy, delirium, psychoses, necrotising encephalitis and fungal infections eg. Fungal abscess or rhinocerebral mucormycosis. PNS involvements are facial palsy, acute inflammatory demyelinating neuropathy (AIDP) and paraesthesia in all limbs and myalgia.

Strokes are ischemic type usually due to large vessel occlusion with high degree of morbidity or mortality and it is more prevalent with diabetic, hypertensive and Coronary artery disease. It is also associated with large coronary occlusion or sudden cardiac death upto six-eight weeks after COVID.

Most patients were found to have hypercoagulable state. Encephalopathy or delirium or psychoses were seen by third to fourth week of COVID. It is a non-specific term used to describe the acute impairment of brain function which presents clinically as alteration in the level of consciousness and triggered by viral infections. It is completely reversible with appropriate medications.

Neuropathy may be in form of facial palsy or severe weakness of all limbs in form of G B Syndrome. Both are completely reversible with medications. Headache, myalgia and paresthesia and fatigue are minor symptoms

and it disturbs sleep but didn't cause any disability. These recover with time and medications.

Some unusual complications are necrotising encephalitis and myelitis. They have high level of morbidity and mortality. Encephalitis is a serious condition with significant impact and burden. About 20-50 per cent of encephalitis cases are caused by viruses, and half of the cases have no known etiology. The disease causes a variety of neurological abnormalities, such as altered consciousness, hallucination, confusion, abnormal movement, and aphasia.


Smoking accelerate the process of atherosclerosis all over body and leads to endothelial dysfunction, thrombus formation and hypercoagulable state. It also aggravates dyslipidemia. It increases chances of cardiovascular disease in all forms eg CAD, CVA, PVD. It locally affects the lung parenchyma and make it vulnerable to COVID related lung damage and oxygenation of body. Coexistence of smoking related atherosclerosis and COVID induced hypercoagulable state increases chances of large vessel stroke.

COVIDCARE

COCO:

Cocoa is considered to be one of the best medicinal foods. It is full of flavonoids. It helps control diabetes and cocoa based products are advised to be included in the daily diet to improve the insulin resistance and level of glucose in the body.

Cocoa powder is good for the heart and prevents fatal blood clots. Hence, avoiding severe cardiac problems.



The flavonoid and anti-oxidants in cocoa beans lowers blood pressure and improves the elasticity of veins and blood vessels.

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



Photo: Ranjan Dimri

MONSOON MALADY

With rains come plethora of diseases including leptospirosis, DR TRUPTI GILADA tells SHALINI SAKSENA

Even though the monsoon brings with it the much-needed relief from the scorching heat, it does have a down side as well. Dengue and malaria are some of the diseases that are common during this season. Then there are diseases that come due to flooding and water-logging of low-lying areas. One such disease is leptospirosis.

WHAT IS IT

It is mainly a monsoon associated infection associated with exposure to water, soil or mud contaminated with the urine from infected animals. It is caused by a bacteria called Leptospira. It is carried by many animals. It lives in their kidneys and is found in the urine and faeces.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Anyone who wades through flooded water is at risk. When there is water-logging, the water gets contaminated by bacteria because of the mixing of the stool or urine. The bacteria then enters the body through skin cuts or abrasions when a person wades through this contaminated water, and occasionally through the lining of the mouth, nose and eyes. Farmers are also at high risk as they may get exposed to the urine and excreta of field rats while working.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms usually develop after five to 14 days following exposure. The most common initial symptoms of this disease include either few or all of these symptoms: Fever, severe headache, sore muscles, chills, vomiting, and red eyes. Since these mimic other monsoon-related illnesses like malaria and dengue, clinical diagnosis can sometimes be difficult.

Few people with leptospirosis can develop severe disease and may need hospitalisation.

This can include kidney failure, jaundice, liver failure, bleeding and respiratory complications. Lesser common complications include menin-



ANYONE WHO WADES THROUGH FLOODED WATER IS AT RISK. WHEN THERE IS WATER-LOGGING, THE WATER GETS CONTAMINATED BY BACTERIA BECAUSE OF THE MIXING OF THE STOOL OR URINE. THE BACTERIA THEN ENTERS THE BODY THROUGH SKIN CUTS OR ABRASIONS

gitis where the lining of the brain and spinal cord gets involved and causes altered sensorium.

TREATMENT

This disease is commonly treated with antibiotics. Treatment is thought to be most effective when detected early. The testing can take some time and the disease may be severe in some patients. A doctor may therefore sometimes choose to start antibiotics prior to confirming the diagnosis with tests. However, some people recover spontaneously without antibiotics.

LONG-TERM EFFECTS

Most individuals recover from leptospirosis without further sequelae. But in some individuals who went undiagnosed and untreated in the early and or acute illness, there can be long-term effects. People can have a chronic-fatigue-like illness that lasts for months. Others can have persistent headaches, depression or other neurologic complaints. Occasionally the bacteria can persist in the eyes and cause chronic eye complaints.

PREVENTION

As far as possible, avoid wading through puddles and water-logged areas. Wear well covered footwear in monsoon. Cover any cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressings. Wash hands and legs with soap, as leptospira bacteria are quickly killed by soap, disinfectants, and drying. Rodent control is of paramount importance and requires efforts both at individual and government level. Prompt cleaning up of garbage dumps and removing food sources that are close to housing is essential. Appropriate personal protective gear for those who work with animals or on the farms (like waterproof boots)

Those who may have been exposed to the bacteria because they waded through floods must contact their doctor immediately. The doctor may prescribe certain antibiotics (like Doxycycline) that can be taken to prevent the disease.

A DOSE FOR YOUR CLOTHES

MUSBA HASHMI speaks with SASHA BOSE, Director & CEO of Nanochemiqs Pvt Ltd, about the nano tech application that allows garments to not only be protective in nature but also makes it long lasting

■What was the idea behind the inception of Faibr-x?

Faibr-x was conceptualised on the idea of safespace for every human and child. Clothes are the biggest carrier of virus and bacteria and we strongly believe that clothes can also be the biggest protector against both. Faibr-x was conceptualised to add an element of protection, certified protection in this case, to our daily wear clothes to protect us against virus, bacteria and insects including mosquitoes. And to be honest, this was called for by the situation caused by the COVID pandemic. Now we may have started to move out of our houses but it is still not safe, the pandemic isn't entirely over yet and we do need an extra line of defence against this virus.

■How is it different from already treated antiviral clothes?

Faibr-x uses nanotechnology to impart protective nature to garments against virus and bacteria. The protective finish as added to garments is done on a nano level (1nanometre is 10^-9 metre) wherein the protective finish is applied on the fibre of the cloth. This nano level application allows the garment to not only be completely protective in nature but also makes it long lasting. A once treated garment would remain protective even after 10 washes. Here we are not just fighting a specific virus, we are taking down all kinds of viruses and disease causing bacteria. Along with the bacteria that cause odour. This is what sets the clothes treated with Faibr-x apart from already treated antiviral clothes.

■What are the challenges that you face?

Biggest challenge is to make the end consumer understand and acknowledge our solution. We realise Faibr-x is a first of its kind solution and therefore many people may not be aware of our vision and the impact of our solution. With that said, we are making a constant stride forward, towards brand awareness and making people realise how significant can Faibr-x prove to be during this pandemic.

■How safe are Faibr-x treatments for various individuals?

Faibr-x nanotechnology and its ingredients are certified by OekaTex Class 1 and have been evaluated by CDSO, ISO, and NABL labs human and environment safety. Non metal, non silver, non itching technology is safest not only for various individuals but even for newborn and young toddlers.

■How can one get their clothes Faibr-x treated?

As mentioned above, we have tied up with grocery stores, medical stores, dry cleaners, and departmental stores that act as collection points for us. People can drop their clothes with these stores, from where they would be picked up and sent for Faibr-x treatment. And then returned.

■What has been the people's response to such treated clothes?

People's response to the treated clothes has been positive so far. Our services have been perceived by our customer base as a unique concept of protection. People do feel donning Faibr-x treated clothes acts as a defence mechanism against virus and bacteria. Customers have been happy with the affordability and the accessibility of our services, given we have collaborated with local grocery stores and dry cleaners, we are easily accessible.

Only 0.01 per cent Indians consent to donate

Organ donation in India is only just beginning to take off — reason for the delay being lack of awareness, spiritual belief of life after death, and generally negative attitudes towards organ donation, says RAGHAV KHANNA

Thousands of lives can be improved through organ and tissue transplants, enabling people to live better, and in many cases, survive. So, why are only 0.01 per cent of Indians consenting to donate their organs after their death?

Organ donation is the process of retrieving or procuring an organ legally with the intention of being able to medically help someone in need. Consent is given either by the donor while they're still alive, or after death by their Next of Kin. First the organ is recovered, or harvested, before being transplanted into the recipient in need. Organ donation in India is regulated by the 1994 Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act. The act aims to control the removal, storage, and transplantation of organs and prevents any commercial dealings, while the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation facilitates procurement, allotment, and distribution of organs within India. With a budget of ₹149.5 crore, the Government implemented the

National Organ Transplant Programme for promoting organ donation.

Despite the Government identifying the need for organ donation, there is a disparity between huge demand and low supply. Organ donation in India is only just beginning to take off — reason for the delay being lack of awareness, spiritual belief of life after death, and generally negative attitudes towards organ donation. Donation is encouraged as a charitable act that saves or enhances life; therefore, it requires no action on the part of the religious group.

India's Statistical Data as of 2015 shows that in response to the demand for 1.75 lakhs of kidney transplants, only 5000 transplants were completed. With 50,000 people dying of terminal liver disease, only 1000 got transplants. These statistics are even more distressing in organs like hearts and lungs. About 0.5 million people in India die every year from causes that could have been prevented by organ transplants that were not available to them.

Government should undertake the responsibility for establishing proper infrastructure to facilitate speedy transport and harvesting of organs

Organ donation rates in India sit at 0.01 percent, a miniscule figure in comparison to countries like Croatia's which sits at 36.5 per cent and Spain's at 35.3 per cent.

One donation from a deceased whose brain gave way before their heart can save lives of up to eight people who are suffering from end stage organ failures. If India's donation rates were to be improved to one donation per million deaths, it would satisfy the country's organ requirement completely.

The process of pledging is simple. A donor card is provided to a person who is willing to donate the organs after death. Donor cards are not a legally binding document - it is only an expression of a person's willingness to be a donor. At the time of organ donation, the family of the patient will make the final decision on whether to donate organs or not. Any person willing to donate his/her organs can do so by filling out the donor consent form available on the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India website.

Government of India should undertake the responsibility for establishing proper infrastructure all over India to facilitate speedy transport and harvesting of organs. The official paperwork should be more donor-friendly and convenient. The NGO's along with healthcare providers should run their awareness campaigns in a more intensive way, involving print/social and electronic media.

The writer is a final year student of Shri Ram College of Commerce, University of Delhi

INBRIEF

SIGN OF ENDOMETRIOSIS

Endometriosis is an often painful disorder in which tissue similar to the tissue that normally lines the inside of your uterus — the endometrial — grows outside your uterus. Endometriosis most commonly involves your ovaries, fallopian tubes and the tissue lining your pelvis. Rarely, endometrial tissue may spread beyond pelvic organs.

Dr Neerja Goel, professor and HOD of Obstetrics and gynaecology department, Sharda Hospital, said at the time of endometriosis "complaints of painful menstruation, cramping, painful sex, constipation, back pain, leg pain, pain while urinating, and rectal bleeding. It can affect women of any age. It's a long-term condition that can have a significant impact on any woman's life and also the main cause of ovarian cancer."

Foods rich in Omega-3 fatty acids, fresh fruits and vegetables, avoiding intake of alcohol and caffeine, avoid stress and fatty foods add regular exercise and yoga in your routine that helps in to resolve the problem and if it is not treated on time it leads to infertility or heavy bleeding during the time of menstruation and having pregnancy at an older age. "Primary treatment of this disease and if it is not diagnosed at an early stage then surgical treatment is the option. Usually, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs are used to relieve pain. If symptoms are mild and women do not plan to become pregnant, for most women with moderate to severe endometriosis, the most effective treatment is removing endometrial tissue and endometriosis," says Dr Goel.



PRATIK SUD advises caution against exerting yourself too much after recovering from COVID-19



Exercise is an important part of recovery after falling prey to COVID-19. As the number of COVID-positive cases is on the rise, remember that irrespective of how restless you may feel after being restricted to your home, if you were stricken by the disease, you should take it easy and remember that it is only natural to take some time to achieve the fitness level you possessed before you got infected.

Generally, doctors recommend a break of three-six months, even after the symptoms subside, depending on the severity of the infection in the patient. Provided below are some guidelines to ease your transition to the active lifestyle you once led.

- Always warm up before and cool down after exercising. Begin with breathing exercises and mild walking. You will be shocked to see how you gasp for breath even after walking for 100 metres.
- Wear comfortable clothes that



- Tightness in the chest area
- Increased pain especially in the arms and jaw

The moment you experience any uncommon symptoms, you should stop exercising and contact your doctor immediately. There is no harm in discussing the symptoms with your fitness expert as well. Remember, medical staff and doctors are there for our assistance.

The best way to start exercising is by warming up. Mild exercises can loosen the muscles and increase blood flow. This will help in exercising properly without any room for injuries, soreness or uneasiness in the body.

Few exercising tips that can loosen muscle and increase strength

- Warm-up exercise
- Roll your shoulders slowly to loosen the muscles and increase blood flow. You need to roll them clockwise and anti-clockwise five times consecutively. Continue this motion for five minutes.
- Fitness exercise
- We all have marched during the school graduation ceremony, so, it will not be difficult to march on one spot for 10 minutes. You can also walk/run up and down the staircase for 10 minutes. It helps in improving breathlessness.
- Strength exercise
- Stand facing the wall and raise both hands and place your palms on it. Now push yourself towards the wall, against the force and then return to your position. This exercise helps in building strength in arms and joints.
- Start with mild exercises. Gradually, increase the frequency, intensity and duration of your workout at your ease. This is the best way of challenging yourself by increasing one level further. Breathlessness is normal while exercising, but too much of it can be harmful and should be addressed immediately. Increase the intensity of your workouts according to your tolerance. Fatigue and extreme pain can be signs of over-exertion. It is advised to work out with a fitness expert so that if you feel breathless or are in extreme pain, s/he can provide you with emergency assistance.
- (The author is co-founder of Synq.fit, a one-stop solution for your home workouts.)
- Nausea
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Breathlessness is common while exercising. However, stop if the breathlessness worsens and doesn't subside even after resting
- Excessive sweating

Back in the game

Actor KARTIK AARYAN is all set to star in the forthcoming romantic thriller, *Freddy*. By TEAM VIVA

Who is Freddy, you might ask? This introduction needs a drum roll or rather some suspenseful staccato played at a steadily increasing pace.

Producer Ekta Kapoor, in collaboration with Jay Shewakramani, is all set to kickstart their next production, *Freddy*. The film, directed by Shashanka Ghosh, is a romantic thriller starring Kartik Aaryan in the titular role.

Incidentally, Shashanka's last outing *Veere Di Wedding* with Balaji Telefilms was a super-hit and now they're teaming up again. Full of unpredictable twists and sharp turns, characters in this movie are set to take us on a dark and chilling roller coaster ride, where the lines between love and obsession blur! *Freddy* is jointly produced by Balaji Telefilms and Northern Lights Films.

Ekta, who's known for genre-bending content is excited as the movie is all set to go on floors. "I'm thrilled to have Kartik on board. His choices of the subject have always been unique and this one is no different and collaborating with Jayu makes it even more special," she says.

Jay adds, "It is the first time I am collaborating with Ekta and Kartik on a film and for it to be on a script like this, makes it all the more exciting! *Freddy* is a script we worked on incessantly and we can't wait for Shashanka to bring to life these crazy characters!"

Speaking about the movie, an ecstatic Kartik shares, "As an actor, I crave to explore different facades of entertainment and with *Freddy*, I'm venturing into an uncharted territory which is both exciting and intriguing in equal measures. I look forward to marking my presence in Freddy's world and bring alive this dark romantic thriller. This will be my first collaboration with a visionary like Ekta Kapoor and creative forces such as Jay and Shahshanka. Couldn't have asked for a better team on this new journey."

The director, Shashanka, further adds, "As a filmmaker, there is a lot to play with the genre, like a thriller. I am more than excited to work with an incredible team on a project as inspiring as *Freddy*. I am sure that the film is going to be one of the best thrilling cinematic experiences for the audience across the nation."



The fight for inclusion

SONU SOOD joins Special Olympics Bharat as brand ambassador

Bollywood actor Sonu Sood has joined Special Olympics Bharat as its brand ambassador. At a virtual event attended by over 500 athletes, coaches, families, officials and volunteers, Sonu interacted with the special athletes responding to their queries while admiring and appreciating their sporting achievements.

The inaugural session introduced him to the #WalkForInclusion, an initiative of the Special Olympics Asia Pacific Region, demonstrated by the athletes, marking his entry into the Inclusion Revolution of the Special Olympics movement.

Speaking about his role as the ambassador, Sonu said, "Today is a very special day for me and I am delighted to join this journey of inclusion with Special Olympics Bharat. Through their sporting achievements, each athlete redefines the human spirit that stands tall in the face of every challenge. I wish luck to all of them to do their best and showcase their abilities with confidence which in itself would send a strong message to the world that they deserve to be mainstreamed. I feel privileged to join the Special Olympics Bharat family and vouch to make this platform even bigger and resonate with people all over the country."

Not to be confused with the Paralympics, the Special Olympics is for individuals with intellectual disabilities, whereas the Paralympics is

generally for athletes with any disability, including physical, and only at an elite level. Sonu will lead the team of Special Olympics Bharat Athletes who will travel to Kazan to participate in the Special Olympics World Winter Games in January 2022.

He went on to express his gratitude, "I feel honoured to have this opportunity to be with our team in Russia for the Special Olympics World Winter Games. We will together encourage our athletes to give their best and cheer them on with such enthusiasm that the roar of support will echo back home in India as well."

Speaking on the occasion, Mallika Nadda, chairperson of Special Olympics Bharat, remarked, "I wish to convey my gratitude to Sonu Sood for accepting our invitation to join the Special Olympics family. We are certain that he will play a major role in giving a new direction to the Special Olympics movement in India and help the cause of persons with intellectual disabilities all over the world. Sonu Sood has offered his support to Special Olympics Bharat on several occasions in the past, and we are thrilled that he is now going to lead the Special Olympics movement. We look forward to working together with Sonu Sood in our effort to provide an equal opportunity and the dignity of life for persons with intellectual disabilities."

—IANS



Gauhar Khan has managed to find her fan base in every section of the audience.

From featuring in TV reality shows like *Bigg Boss*, *Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa*, *Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi*, to sharing screen space with Bollywood stars like Ranbir Kapoor, Saif Ali Khan and Vidya Balan in films like *Rocket Singh: Salesman of the Year*, *Begum Jaan* and recently in the web series *Tandav* and her latest film *14 Phere*, Gauhar has done it all.

Even though she is mostly grabbing headlines for her social and personal life on social media, in a recent interview, the actress shares that with time, her parameters on choosing projects, especially films, has changed because she is looking to explore her acting skills now.

"Honestly speaking, I do not look at anything with regret. I do not regret why I could not have the role of the female protagonist opposite Ranbir in a Bollywood film or why directors, producers are not considering me for lead roles. For films, the footage did not mat-

Currently, most of the prominent social media platforms have become vehicles that proliferate negativity, drive divisiveness, and enable cyberbullying. While they each have standards for behaviour outlined for all to see, they are at best inconsistently applied, and at worst completely ignored. The sites have become so toxic that not a day goes by where many regular users are not exposed to some level of negativity. People regularly report the loss of interactions with friends, family and colleagues online.

The call for reform has been side-stepped by these companies. The likes of key social media platforms have held up the freedom of expression flag in their defense, though many believe this is just a way to justify a business model that is lucrative to them and their shareholders. There is little doubt that extreme societal damage has been done from these platforms' unwillingness to make meaningful changes to address these issues. To date, the conversation has largely been about the issues with these platforms. However, now is the time for solutions. It is time to bring about a more positive way to interact online where members can connect in a safe and secure environment openly and freely.

Various new-age networking

Basking in the glory

Model-turned-actress GAUHAHAR KHAN looks back on how she has thrived in the entertainment industry for 19 years



ter to me, the character did. If you look at my character in *Ishaqzaade* and *Begum Jaan*, those scenes and moments in the story were important. For me, it is always about creating something on-screen that resonates with the audience, and it did," expresses Gauhar.

"Initially, for me, I would try to use every opportunity to the best of my ability because I started from zero. It has been around 19 years for me in the entertainment business and I have seen so much change... Especially with OTT platforms, actors like myself are getting the opportunity to showcase their skills, earlier in

cinema chances were limited," she adds.

Gauhar started her journey as a model and was one of the participants in 2002 for the Femina Miss India beauty pageant. She went on gaining popularity with many non-fiction TV shows like *The Khan Sisters*, *Ticket to Bollywood*, *India's Raw Star*, *I Can Do That* and different seasons of *Bigg Boss*. She was the winner of *Bigg Boss 7*.

"The web-series space is interesting for me and I am getting good offers from OTT platforms. *Tandav* was an important show for me that was released on Amazon Prime Video. I have a couple of things lined up for OTT and again, all of them are very versatile and interesting. Now my parameter of choosing a project is to collaborate with directors and storytellers who will use my potential; I want to be challenged with new and exciting roles," shares Gauhar who also appeared in the Hotstar special sitcom show *The Office*.

—IANS

No to negativity

MARC KAPLAN shares how new-age social media platforms are providing users with a revamped experience



platforms are focussing on improving online forums while making concerted efforts to mitigate negativity and cyberbullying. Their sole

aim is to bring about a social revolution that counterbalances the online negativity and toxicity that is perpetuated, enabled and perhaps

unknowingly supported by major social media platforms today.

These modern social networking platforms enable people to give and receive guidance for free and the members help each other in achieving their respective goals. These targets could be related to fitness, career, health, parenting, hobbies, personality development, or any other topic.

These platforms are a community where like-minded people and those who share common interests and goals come together to support each other and render a helping hand to each other. The members in such a scenario can interact and engage one-on-one amongst like-minded individuals or other communities across the globe instantly and seamlessly. They are devoid of ads, negativity, fake news, trolling, and cyberbullying and work beyond the popularity contest approach of garnering maximum likes and shares.

New-age networking platforms leverage the power of content moderation, identity verification, and technology mix to come up with state-of-the-art community-enabled solutions that help resolve all the associated issues. People with real identities facilitate an increased level of trust, credibility, and safety amongst the members and prefer

platforms that provide a safe and protected environment where their privacy is secured.

Trust, respect and genuine connections form the core of these social networking platforms and they are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that their community is free from negativity and toxicity. All they want is to leave a positive impact on the members' lives.

These new-age networking platforms don't function as the usual social media platforms but rather lend a helping hand to solve the problems faced by people in the social space. They aim to come up with a new social contract so that people can interact quickly, easily, and instantly with each other. They are aware that negativity, divisiveness, polarisation and fake news rule the social media space today. However, they wish to take a bold stance and bet on the goodness of the people. They desire to uplift each other rather than tearing each other down. The broader vision of these new-age platforms is to normalise a different online experience and provide an alternative way to spend your time online which is positive, interactive, engaging, and fosters connections!

(The author is co-founder & CEO of ChekMarc, a social platform that enables impactful one-on-one connections.)

TRENDBLAZER



'WE DON'T DESERVE A MEDIA TRIAL'

Actor **SHILPA SHETTY KUNDR** took to social media on Monday to issue a statement, saying she and her family do not deserve a media trial.

"All I will say is, as it's an ongoing investigation, I have full faith in the Mumbai Police and the Indian judiciary. I request everyone to respect my family's and 'my right' to privacy in these times. We don't deserve a media trial. Please let the law take its course. *Satyamev Jayate!*" she said via a post on Instagram.

fairtalk

TIGER SHROFF



"From the time my first film was released people said 'ye ladka hai ya ladki', people commented on my face and said I look like a girl. When it comes to trolling, it is at times scary how a nameless, faceless individual could say anything about anybody without getting caught! As long as love is coming in for me from my fans, I am okay."

dailytalk

ONIR




"I think modern-day slavery is one of the themes prevalent in our society that we do not address as much as we should. It is one of the worst forms of human depravity and since cinema is a powerful medium, we need to take the opportunity to address the matter and provoke the thought in the minds of people."

WHAT A BIG JOB: KIT HARINGTON

Game Of Thrones star **KIT HARINGTON** and his wife Rose Leslie welcomed their first child, a baby boy, five months ago. The actor admits he wasn't prepared for just how 'big' a job raising a family is.

"Everyone goes, 'look, it's big what you're about to go through.' You have no way of knowing that until it happens. What surprises you is that you go, 'Oh, this goes on forever.' Like, you don't get a break from it," Harington told Access Hollywood.





**TOKYO
TIMELINE**

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Hockey:** India beat Australia 1-0 in women's quarterfinal.
- Athletics:** Dutee Chand 7th and last in women's 200m Heat 4; fails to qualify for semifinals. Kamalpreet Kaur sixth in women's discus final with a best throw of 63.70m.
- Shooting:** Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar 21st and Sanjeev Rajput 32nd in men's 50m rifle 3 positions qualification; fail to qualify for final.
- Equestrian:** Fouaad Mirza 25th in eventing jumping individual qualifier; 23rd in final.

IN ACTION TODAY

- Athletics:** Annu Rani in women's javelin throw Qualification Group A. (5:50am)
- Tajinderpal Singh Toor in men's shot put Qualification Group A. (3:45am)
- Hockey:** India vs Belgium in men's semifinal. (7:00am)
- Wrestling:** Sonam Malik vs Bolortuya Khurelkhuu (Mongolia) in women's 62kg. (8:30am onwards)

Live on SONY TEN & SIX Network

PTI ■ TOKYO

A brave and determined Indian women's hockey team etched its name in the history books by entering the Olympic Games semifinals for the first time, stunning three-time champions and world No 2 Australia 1-0 in an intense last-eight tie here on Monday.

A day after the Indian men's team entered the Olympic semifinals following a 49-year gap, the world No 9 women's side also produced a phenomenally gritty performance to make it way into the last four.

Drag-flicker Gurjit Kaur rose to the occasion when it mattered and converted India's lone penalty corner in the 22nd minute to surprise the Australians.

"We are so happy, it is the result of hard work that we put in for several, several days. In 1980, we qualified for the Games but this time, we made the semifinals. It is a proud moment for us," Gurjit said after the match.

"This team is like a family, we have supported each other and found support from the country as well. We are very happy," she added.

But the Indians, determined to prove a point, produced a strong and brave performance to eke out the narrow win over the Hockeyroos.

How much it meant for the team and Indian hockey in general could be gauged from the

HISTORYMAKERS

In a first, Indian women's hockey team enter Olympic semifinals with a stunning 1-0 win over Hockeyroos



Indian players celebrate after Gurjit Kaur (jersey No 2) scores India's only goal against Australia during women's hockey quarterfinal match

@Tokyo2020hi

A movie on self-belief & staying in the moment did trick: Marijne

Tokyo: Watching a movie on self belief after three consecutive losses rebuilt the Indian women's hockey team's shattered morale and helped it to 'aim for the clouds', the side's Dutch coach Sjoerd Marijne revealed on Monday after Rani Rampal and Co entered their maiden Olympic semifinals here.

The Indian team bounced back tremendously in the tournament after successive losses and Marijne said the movie helped psychologically ahead of the must-win pool game against Ireland but did not reveal its name.

"The difference is believing in ourselves and believing in their dreams and then it's about going back to reality focussing on your past. I think that is the main thing and that's what we did," Marijne said after upsetting Australia in the quarterfinals.

"If you lose you don't stop

believing and that's what I told the girls. The most important thing is to stay in the moment. I showed them a movie and that movie is about being in the moment and I think that was really helpful. Against Ireland we kept on referring to that movie," he said.

He said all he asked the team to do was to aim for the highest.

"In India you must think big and that's what I said to the girls. If you aim for the highest, for the clouds, you will fall on the highest mountain. If you aim for the mountain you will fall on the ground," he explained.

"We went for the clouds and I said whatever happens after it doesn't matter, but that's where we have to aim for."

India captain Rani Rampal too credited the movie for the turnaround of fortunes.

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emotions that were on display after the final hooter went off.

The players screamed, hugged each other, and got into a huddle with their Dutch coach Sjoerd Marijne with tears of joy rolling down their faces.

India's best performance in the Olympics came way back in

the 1980 Moscow Games where they finished fourth out of six teams. In that edition, women's hockey made its debut in the Olympics and the sport was played in a round-robin format.

The Rani Rampal-led side will play Argentina in the semi-final on Wednesday.

Kamalpreet finishes 6th in discus final

Tokyo: Discus thrower Kamalpreet Kaur finished a creditable sixth in her first Olympics in a rain-interrupted final while sprinter Dutee Chand ended her campaign on a disappointing note by failing to qualify for the 200m semifinals here on Monday.

The 25-year-old Kaur, who has qualified for the final as second best on Saturday, was never in the running for a medal in the eight rounds of competition which was interrupted by rain for more than an hour.

Her best throw of 63.70m in the third round saw her finished at sixth and equal 2010 Commonwealth Games Gold medalist Krishna Poonia's performance in the 2012 London Olympics.

Throughout the competition, Kaur looked nervous and short of confidence as she lacked international exposure. She has taken part in World University Games in 2017, her lone international competition.

It was a tough competition for all the participants as rain started pouring down towards the end of the second round and a few throwers took time to get their footing. Kaur's attempts in spite of slippery circle.

Rain stopped after an hour but the humidity seemed to have affected the throwers' performance and they have to be cautious as the approach area to the circle was wet.

With her right

shoulder heavily strapped, Kaur began with a 61.62m effort before fouling her next attempt. That put her under pressure and on the verge of being eliminated as she was ninth just before her third throw.

But she gave her best and came up with a 63.70m, that saved her and put her in the sixth position as the bottom four out of the 12 finalists were eliminated after three rounds.

Not much changed in the position of the throwers in the final three rounds. Kaur fouled the fourth throw and then had a 61.37m in her penultimate attempt before sending the discus out of sector in the final one.

American Valarie Allman took the Gold with a first round throw of 68.98m while Kristin Pudenz (66.86m) of Germany and reigning world champion Yaime Perez (65.72m) of Cuba won the Silver and Bronze respectively.

In the morning session, sprinter Dutee ran her season's best in 200m but that was not enough for a semifinals berth as she made a disappointing exit from the Olympics after finishing last in her heat race. The 25-year-old clocked 23.85 seconds to finish seventh and last in Heat 4 and 38th overall out of 41 competitors.

Kaur's performance in the final three rounds was not enough for a semifinals berth as she made a disappointing exit from the Olympics after finishing last in her heat race. The 25-year-old clocked 23.85 seconds to finish seventh and last in Heat 4 and 38th overall out of 41 competitors.

Tokyo: Handling the immense burden of expectations perhaps be the key when the Indian men's hockey team takes on world champion Belgium, aiming to secure a place in the Olympic finals and with it, a medal for the first time in 41 years here on Tuesday.

With 11 Olympic medals, eight of them Gold, in its kitty, India has a rich history in the Games and the Manpreet Singh-led side seems on course to resurrect that glorious past.

The Indians achieved the semifinal slot by beating Great Britain 3-1 in the quarterfinals on Sunday, and are now in touching distance of a medal.

The Graham Reid-coached current side knows very well that another good outing against Belgium on Tuesday would etch its name in the history books in golden words no matter the colour of the medal.

The Indians are on a four-match winning streak after the 1-7 drubbing against Australia

Belgium stand b/w India & final



in their second pool match and come Tuesday, Manpreet and his teammates would look to continue the momentum.

But it would be easier said than done as in Belgium, India face a tough opponent, which has improved leaps and bounds in the last few years.

Besides being current world champions and world No 2 side, Belgium are also the reigning European champions.

Going by rankings, however, there is hardly anything to separate between the two sides as India are currently

ranked third in the world.

The recent head-to-head record also favours India.

India and the Red Lions played each other three times in 2019 during their tour of the European nation and the Asian side came out victorious in all the matches. India

Sonam to begin India's wrestling campaign



Tokyo: Young Indian wrestler Sonam Malik was on Monday placed in the challenging bottom half of the women's 62kg draw, where she will open her Olympics campaign against Asian Silver medalist Bolortuya Khurelkhuu from Mongolia.

The 19-year-old will be the sole Indian wrestler in action on Tuesday. Relatively new to the big stage, every single bout will be a test of character for Sonam, who qualified for the Tokyo Games by making the final at the Asian Qualifier in April in Almaty.

Khurelkhuu is more experienced than Sonam and has stood on the podium on both the occasions she took the mat this season but the Indian is not intimidated.

Sonam came into Olympics after recovering from a right knee injury that did not let her fly to Russia for training in build-up to the Games.

"I am fine. There is no pain in my knee. It's neither tough nor easy draw for me," Sonam, who earned a name for herself by defeating Rio Bronze-medallist Sakshi Malik four times, said after the draw ceremony.

If Sonam manages to cross the first hurdle, she will most likely find 2018 world champion Taybe Mustafa Yusein from Bulgaria in the quarterfinals.

The draw is such that the repechage route may open up for Sonam if she does not go deep on her own.

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Mirza 23rd in individual eventing



Tokyo: Equestrian Fouaad Mirza on Monday finished a creditable 23rd in eventing after he became the first Indian to reach the final of the event here on Monday.

Mirza and his equine Seigneur Medicott sneaked into the top-25 in the morning to make the jumping finals and become the first Indian to do so.

In the final, Mirza incurred

12.40 penalty points for an overall 59.60 that included the points from the three rounds of qualifying events — dressage, cross country and jumping.

It was a creditable performance for the 29-year-old Bengaluru rider Mirza, who was the first equestrian to qualify for the Olympics since Imtiaz Anees in Sydney 2000.

Mirza started off the three

qualifying eventing rounds with a spectacular dressage round by taking the ninth place on Saturday.

On Sunday, Mirza picked up 11.20 penalty points in the challenging Sea Forest Cross Country Course to be placed 22nd.

Mirza and Seigneur finished the cross country run in just over eight minutes after starting a bit late owing to a technical issue.

In the final qualifying event, Mirza knocked two fences in the jumping round to incur eight penalty points en route to finishing 25th with an overall 47.2 penalty points.

The final was once again a jumping round where the top 25 competed.

Germany's Julia Krajewski won the Gold in the event, making her the first female Olympic champion in eventing's history.

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Shooters finish without medal

Tokyo: Indian shooters Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Sanjeev Rajput failed to qualify for the finals of the men's 50m rifle 3 positions event at the Tokyo Olympics here on Monday.

Tomar finished 21st in the qualification while Rajput was placed in 32nd position at the Asaka Shooting Range as the Indian shooting team returned without a medal for the second straight time at the Olympics.

Only the top 8 athletes qualify for the final.

Tomar shot a total of 1167 with 63 inner 10s in the qualification over the stages of kneeling, prone and standing, while Rajput, appearing in his third Olympics, aggregated 1157 with 55 inner 10s.

The cut was made at 1176. With this, Indian shooters failed to win a medal for a second successive Olympics.

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I was blank, my coach was in tears: Sindhu after win

Tokyo: Reigning world champion P V Sindhu on Monday said she was completely blank after winning a second successive Olympic medal and it took her a while to realise the enormity of her historic achievement in the ongoing Games.

The 26-year-old Indian on Sunday etched her name among the all-time greats after winning badminton's women's singles Bronze medal to add to the Silver she won at Rio de Janeiro five years back.

"...I was blank, my coach was literally in tears, it was a big moment. I hugged him and said 'Thank you.' I didn't know what to do for 5-6 seconds, I shouted, so all emotions came together at that moment," she said during a virtual press conference.

In the third-place play-off, Sindhu beat China's He Bing Jiao. The win came after a painful loss in the semifinals to world No 1 Tai Tzu Ying.

Sindhu said coach Park Tae-sang's encouragement helped her to recover from the semifinal loss and claim the Bronze for the country.

"After semis, I was really sad, I was in tears but my coach said it is not over yet. There were mixed emotions, if I should be sad or happy but Park told one thing. He said 'there is a lot of difference between a fourth position and a Bronze' and that really hit me," she said.

"I went with the mindset that I have to give my 100 percent and get that medal."

A lot of questions were raised when Sindhu



PV Sindhu hugs her coach Park Tae-sang after winning women's singles badminton Bronze medal match

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decided to move out of the Pullela Gopichand Academy and train at the Gachibowli indoor stadium which had bigger halls similar to the

Park felt pressure after being assigned to train Sindhu

Tokyo: His phone hasn't stopped buzzing ever since P V Sindhu claimed the Bronze medal at Tokyo Olympics but India's foreign badminton coach Park Tae-sang says he did feel 'little pressure' after being suddenly asked to train the star shuttler for the Games.

The 42-year-old from South Korea was initially

venue in Tokyo.

Sindhu said it was one of the best decisions, especially since drift played a role during the Games at the Musashino Forest Plaza.

"Yeah, from the beginning there was no controversy, I mean, we had this opportunity to play in conditions similar to Olympics, so from February we have been playing there, it has really helped us because drift played a big role and I learnt a lot in Gachibowli, I learnt to control the shuttle better."

"It had international standard courts with air conditioners, which was important. So I feel it was the best decision..."

hired to train the men's singles players but started working with Sindhu after the abrupt departure of Kim Ji Hyun, following the World Championship in 2019.

"I'm really happy because this is the first time my player has got a medal in my coaching career," Park, who competed at the 2004 Athens Olympics before taking up

coaching the national Korean team, said during a virtual press conference.

"When I first started teaching Sindhu, she was already a big Olympic star. I felt little pressure but I tried. My Korean players also didn't get an Olympic medal, so I thought I can try to get her a Gold. We failed but Bronze is also a very big medal."

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GOPi SIR CONGRATULATED, SAINA 'NO'

P V Sindhu said she received congratulatory message from chief national badminton coach Pullela Gopichand but she has not got any such gesture yet from senior shuttler Saina Nehwal.

Asked if she received any communication from Gopichand and Saina after her win, Sindhu said: "Of course, Gopi sir wished me congrats. That's all. I haven't seen the social medal. I am slowly replying to everybody."

When further probed, Sindhu said: "Gopi sir messaged me, Saina no. We don't talk much, so..."

Concussed Mayank out of 1st Eng Test

Nottingham: India's opening batsman Mayank Agarwal was on Monday ruled out of the first Test against England after being concussed by a short ball from teammate Mohammed Siraj during a training session here.

While facing Siraj, Agarwal saw the ball thudding into his helmet when he took his eyes off a short delivery.

The first Test starts here on Wednesday.

"Opening batsman Mayank Agarwal was hit on the helmet while batting during India's nets session at Trent Bridge in Nottingham on Monday," BCCI secretary Jay Shah was quoted as saying in a media release.

"The BCCI Medical Team assessed him, and a concussion test was conducted. He has shown signs of concussion and is ruled out of the opening Test against England. The 30-year-old is stable and will remain under close medical observation," Shah further stated.

When vice-captain Ajinkya



Mayank Agarwal leaves the field after he gets injured during nets

@BCCI

Rahane was asked about the fitness of all players, he did say that Agarwal sustained a head injury.

"Mayank Agarwal got hit on the head. The medical team is looking after him. All others are fit," Rahane told mediapersons.

After being hit by Siraj's delivery, Agarwal was seen in some discomfort as he removed the helmet and sat on the ground with physio Nitin Patel attending to him. He was then seen pressing the back of his head while leaving the nets, escorted by Patel.

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