

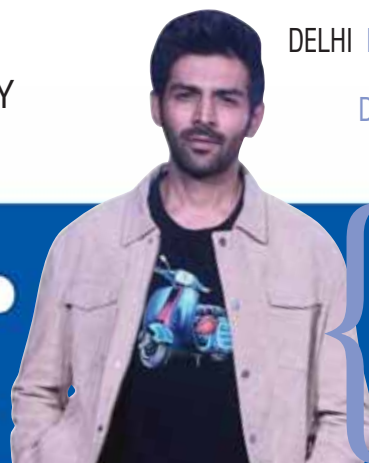
OPINION 8
POLITICS AND THE
MILITARY DON'T GEL**WORLD 11**
AF PREZ SEEKS DEFENCE OF
CITIES AS TALIBAN ADVANCE**SPORT 14**
INDIA TO FACE
BELGIUM IN SF TODAY

LUCKNOW, TUESDAY AUGUST 3 2021; PAGES 14 ₹3



the pioneer

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**CRAVING
TO EXPLORE:
KARTIK ARYAN
13 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.

Drag-flicker Gurjit Kaur



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

PTI

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.

Continued on Page 11

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

CAPSULE

PM LAUNCHES 'E-RUPI' NEW PAYMENT SYSTEM

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 leakproof manner, with limited touch points between the Government and the beneficiary.

INDIA, CHINA AGREE TO RESOLVE LAC ISSUES

New Delhi: The Indian and Chinese Armies have agreed to resolve the remaining issues in eastern Ladakh in an "expeditious manner" and described their 12th round of military talks as "constructive", according to a joint statement on Monday.

DON'T DESERVE MEDIA TRIAL: SHILPA SHETTY

Mumbai: Actor Shilpa Shetty in a statement on Monday requested people to respect the family's privacy, especially that of her children, and let law take its course. "People have put their faith in me and I've never let anyone down. So, most importantly, I request you to respect my family's and 'my right' to privacy in these times. We don't deserve a media trial Satyamev Jayate," she added.

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.

Continued on Page 11



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.

Continued on Page 11

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 vaccine 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.

Continued on Page 11

HS and Inter classes to resume from Aug 16

Higher educational institutes in UP to open from September 1

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

High and intermediate schools in Uttar Pradesh will resume classes from August 16, but with 50 per cent attendance, according to an order issued by the state government on Monday.

Apart from this, instructions have also been issued for commencement of classes in higher educational institutes from September 1, the UP government said in a statement.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the results of all the boards have been declared and classes should be started from the Independence Day (August 15) on which a programme called 'Swatantrata Ka Amrit Mahotsav' should be

organised.

The CM said arrangements of sanitisers, infrared thermometers and masks should be made when the schools reopen and all the institutes should follow Covid-19 protocol to ensure that social distancing is practised. He said all the schools should be sanitised and it should be ensured that classes and washrooms are cleaned. "The Basic Education department must coordinate with the Panchayati Raj and Gram Vikas departments for cleanliness and sanitisation exercise," he added.

The CM also said that with the reopening of the educational institutions, special camps should be organised for the vaccination of students above 18

years. "The Health department should make all the preparations prior to the opening of schools," he said.

Yogi said that in the secondary educational institutes, the admission process should be started for those who have already been promoted to higher classes. The admission process for graduates should start from August 5, he added. He also issued directions for the sessions of all higher educational institutes to commence from September 1.

It may be noted that all the schools were opened after the first wave in October last year but closed again due to the second wave. Because of the pandemic, online teaching method was adopted in schools and colleges.

3rd Covid wave this month, say experts

Cases may soar to 1.5L/day with peak in October

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Experts from IIT Hyderabad and Kanpur have set off an alarm saying that a third Covid-19 wave could hit India in the coming weeks of August itself with 1 lakh daily cases in the best of scenario, or nearly 1,50,000 in the worst scenario. The peak could come about in October.

However, it would not be as brutal as the second wave, where cases rose to 4 lakh on a daily basis before slumping down again, they said.

For the record, 17 States and Union Territories showed a rise in coronavirus cases on Sunday with a total 40,134 new Covid-19 cases and 422 deaths registered as the tally of positive cases reached 3,16,95,958. The Covid-19 cases saw an uptick on a week-on-week basis for the first time since mid-May after the decline in the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic. Kerala has reported the maximum surge during the past week.

Talking to a news agency, the researchers whose prediction is based on a mathematical model said that States reporting a high number of Covid cases like Kerala and Maharashtra may play a significant role in skewing the case count during the third wave.

Earlier in May, Mathukumalli Vidyasagar, a professor at IIT Hyderabad, had predicted that India's coronavirus outbreak could peak in the coming days based on the mathematical model. However, their prediction that the wave would peak by the middle of last month was incorrect. Taking to



People line up to get inoculated against the coronavirus at a Covid-19 vaccination camp in Mumbai on Monday

AP

Twitter, the team of researchers had then justified that it was because of incorrect parameters as "the pandemic was changing rapidly, even wildly, until about a week ago."

Experts have now warned that the Delta variant, which spreads as easily as chickenpox and can be passed on by vaccinated people, can fuel the surge. According to data from the Indian Sars-CoV-2 Genomic Consortium (INSACOG), nearly 8 of every 10 Covid-19 cases in May, June, and July were caused by the highly infectious Delta variant of the coronavirus. Additionally, the medical experts also warned that the Delta variant of COVID-19 can also be passed on by vaccinated people, which can in turn fuel the surge.

Latest data compiled by the University of Michigan's COV-IND-19 study group is no different as it painted gloomy scenario by noting that India's R count has hit 1.01 as on July 30.

This would be the first time since the decline of the second wave -- roughly after May 12 - that India's national R value has again touched the 'one' value.

The R value is an important indicator on Covid-19's preva-

Covid-19 IN INDIA	
TOTAL CASES:	3,17,23,865 (+28,495)
DEATHS:	4,25,206 (+398)
RECOVERED:	3,08,86,690 (+37,008)
ACTIVE:	3,99,410
MAHA:	63,15,063 (+4,869)
KERALA:	34,25,473 (+13,984)
K'TAKA:	29,08,284 (+1,285)
TN:	25,63,544 (+1,957)
UP:	17,08,500 (+24)

lence and spread. This effective reproduction number (Re) points to the number of people who can be infected by an individual. Kerala and the Northeastern States apart — which have been reporting high active cases — Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, have all seen the R count rise up above 1, as per the latest data.

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 medalist 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.

Continued on Page 11

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, Konkani, 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.

Continued on Page 11

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 Nagasen, 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.

Only 25 new positive cases reported across state

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Witnessing the trough in the number of fresh coronavirus cases, Uttar Pradesh recorded only 25 positive cases on Monday, making it the lowest daily case count for the state while no death due to the viral infection was reported in the state for three consecutive days.

The continuing downward trend resulted in the drop in daily Covid test positivity rate (TPR) -- the number of positive cases against the total tests done -- to 0.01 per cent, which was the lowest in the country.

On April 24, this rate was at its peak at 16.84 per cent and now remains even lower than the lowest post-first wave of COVID-19.

The number of active cases now stands at 646, coming down by over 99 per cent from its peak capped at 3,10,783 cases on April 30.

Expressing satisfaction over the situation, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said at a high-level Covid review meeting in Lucknow on Monday, "The state is now left with merely 646 active Covid cases. The decline has been over 99 per cent

CM administered second vax dose

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was administered the second dose of Covid vaccine here on Monday. The chief minister was given the second dose of Covaxin at the SPM Hospital (Civil Hospital) here, said Dr Subhash Chandra Sundariyal.

The first dose was administered to the chief minister on April 5 but after that he was found to be coronavirus positive which delayed his second dose.

since the peak, which recorded 3.10 lakh cases on April 30. We must continue with a better system of prevention and treatment to break the chain of coronavirus infection."

Meanwhile, Additional Chief Secretary (Information) Navneet Sehgal told media persons on Monday, "With 11 districts of the state namely, Aligarh, Amroha, Budaun, Etah, Farrukhabad,

Hathras, Kasganj, Kaushambi, Mahoba, Pratapgarh and Shravasti, adding to Uttar Pradesh's success in bringing down the Covid curve, the state's recovery rate too has climbed up to a remarkable 98.6 per cent. Ramping up daily testing to detect the virus helped in the fight against the second wave of COVID-19. True to the spirit of 'trace, test, and treat' policy, as many as 2.38 lakh samples were tested in the last 24 hours, of which nearly 1.25 lakh were RT PCR examinations."

Sehgal said that out of the 6,700 paediatric intensive care unit (PICUs) to be established in medical colleges across Uttar Pradesh till August 15, as many as 6,572 had already been set up and the state government was imparting training to doctors and paramedical staff for preparing them to fight a possible third wave of COVID-19.

"As many as 14,534 doctors are getting special training and a programme of providing skill training is being conducted, under which, a total of 9,000 paramedical staff, nurses, and technicians are being trained," he said.

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 carried a reward of Rs 50,000 on his arrest, the officials said.

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

"On March 24, 2018, accused persons Arshad Naem, Naseem Ahmed, Mukesh Prasad, Musharraf Ansari alias Nikhil Rai alias Dabloo, Sushil Rai alias Ankur Rai and Dayanand Yadav were arrested," it said.

In this regard, a case was registered on March 25, 2018 under various sections of the Indian Penal Code at the ATS police station in Lucknow and during investigation, Singh's name came to light, it added.

"Accused Dinesh Kumar Singh along with Musharraf used fake documents and his photograph to open accounts in different banks. He used to hand over the accounts to Musharraf, who withdrew money from the accounts and sent it (to Pakistani handlers) through hawala.

"This gang had opened more than 150 accounts using fake documents and carried out transactions worth lakhs of rupees. After withdrawing the money, it was sent to Delhi through other members of the gang and from there it was sent outside (the country) through hawala," the statement said.

"On August 1, Dinesh Kumar Singh was arrested from Gorakhpur by the ATS," it said.

An Aadhaar card, a PAN card, a Delhi Metro card, the registration certificate of a motorcycle, a diary and a purse, among other things, were recovered from him, the ATS said.

"The arrested accused is being presented before a court, and seven days' police remand will be sought for him. During this period, an investigation will be carried out into bank account transactions and people who had helped in opening the bank accounts," the statement said.

UP legislature's monsoon session from August 17

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The monsoon session of the Uttar Pradesh legislature will commence here from August 17.

The meeting of UP cabinet held here on Monday that was presided over by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, approved the proposal to convene the second session (monsoon session) of both the Houses of UP legislature of 2021 from August 17.

The session is expected to be brief with three sittings.

It is to be noted that the last session -- the budget session of UP legislature -- was convened on February 18 and it ended on March 4 after passage of the budget for 2021-22. Thereafter, both the Houses were also prorogued with effect from March 30.

As Clause (1) of Article 174 of the Constitution provides that there shall be not more than a gap of six months between the last sittings of one session of each House of the legislature hence this session is being convened.

Official sources said that the state government was expected to bring the first supplementary budget for the current fiscal. This will be the second last session before the crucial assembly polls in the state early next year. The last

session of the present assembly will be held in February ahead of the elections to approve the vote on account for the first three months of the next financial year 2021-22.

The cabinet also approved a proposal for financial assistance for children/adolescents of 18-23 years of age orphaned by the COVID-19 pandemic after losing one or both the parents to the deadly virus. Such orphaned children, after passing Class 12, will be provided financial assistance to pursue higher studies in a degree college, university, technical institution, JEE, NEET and CLAT. The children of the divorced mother or of parents in jail will also be eligible for financial assistance.



session of the present assembly will be held in February ahead of the elections to approve the vote on account for the first three months of the next financial year 2021-22.

Only two children per family will be eligible for the financial assistance of Rs 2,500 per month.

Home guards and other honorary employees will also be eligible for ex gratia payment to the survivors in case of death and permanent injury. The nominee of the home guard will be given Rs 5 lakh in case of death and Rs 2.5 lakh in case of permanent injury to the eye. The scheme will be implemented with retrospective effect from December 6, 2020.

To reduce the compliance burden on the common citizens and business establishments, the cabinet approved the draft of the ordinance for the repeal of as many as 321 old and obsolete Acts passed by the UP Assembly in the past. The cabinet granted approval to the draft of the 'UP Repeal Ordinance 2021. The seventh UP Law Commission had recommended the repeal of 1,430 Acts, of which 960 Acts remain to be repealed. Of the 960 Acts, the Industrial Development department has recommended the repeal of 297 Acts for ease of doing business (EODB).

PRESS NOTICE INVITING PERCENTAGE RATE e-TENDER

Executive Engineer(C), Postal Civil Division, Lucknow invites on behalf of The President of India, online percentage rate (CPWD-7) e-tenders for the following work :

N.I.T. No. : 24/EE/PCDL/2021-22

Name of Work : **Construction of Post office building at kichhauchha, Faizabad (U.P.).**

Estimated Cost : ₹ 2862930/-.

Earnest Money : ₹ nil

Period of completion - 04 Months.

Last time and date of submission of bid : 12.08.21 18:00 Hrs.

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website www.dopcivil.eunivizardede.com

कार्यालय : अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन-8, जलकल विभाग, नगर निगम, लखनऊ

पत्रांक : 259/EE-8/21-22 दिनांक : 02.08.2021

(अति-अल्पकालीन निविदा-सूचना)

जलकल विभाग में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु अल्पकालिक निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा प्रपत्र किसी भी कार्यदिवस में दिनांक 9.8.2021 को अपराह्न 03:00 बजे तक अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन-8 के कार्यालय के कैश काउन्टर से प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं। सील्व निविदाएं दिनांक 9.8.2021 को अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन-8 के कार्यालय में अपराह्न 3:30 बजे तक सील्व टेन्डर बॉक्स में प्राप्त की जायेंगी। प्राप्त सभी निविदाएं दिनांक 9.8.2021 को उपस्थित निविदादाताओं के समक्ष 4:00 बजे जोन-8 के कार्यालय में खोली जायेंगी।

1. विद्यार्थी व मानसरोवर वार्ड के अन्तर्गत स्थित हिन्दनगर ओएचओटी, सेक्टर-एम-1 ओएचओटी, सेक्टर-एमओओएचओटी व सेक्टर-एल ओएचओटी की सफाई का कार्य, धरोहर राशि रु० 8950 /- एवं निविदा मूल्य रु० 400 /-

**अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन-8
जलकल विभाग, नगर निगम, लखनऊ**



NOTICE

I have changed my name from Shobhit Garg to Shobit Garg all future purpose. Shobit Garg s/o Sri Neeraj Garg R/O 18 -B Pokharpur Lal Bangla Kanpur 208007

NOTICE

I Rajdeep Yadav , resident of village Ekdala, Kalyanpur Baiti, District Raebareilly, hereby state that my father 14428308 N Ex HAV Raj Mohan' army record has my name wrongly registered as Rajdeep Singh which actually is Rajdeep Yadav

NOTICE

I Anuj Rastogi s/o Vimal Kant Rastogi resident of (Address) My laptop bag was stolen from my car on date in which I have lost my builder buyer agreement and payment receipt of unit no B1-127 in DLF my pad Vibhuti Khand Lucknow along with other things in my laptop bag.

NOTICE

In School Records of my son name spelling written as Atha Abbas & Father's name spelling written as Atha Hussain, where as correct name of my son Ata Abbas & father's correct name is Ata Husain. Please correct accordingly. Kaneez W/o Ata Hussain 237/39, Jahageer Beg, Chowk, Lucknow

NOTICE

Be it known to all that My Original Allotment Letter Registration No. 2183864 which was issued by Lucknow Development Authority Plot No 2/424, Vikalp Khand, Gomti Nagar named Sanjeev Bhardwaz has been lost. It's FIR No. 070609/2021 dated 30/07/21. If any person found PI contact to Dr. Sanjeev Bhardwaz 2/424, Vikalp Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow Mo. 9454412941

Another setback for Azam Khan

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In yet another setback to Mohammad Azam Khan, the Samajwadi Party MP from Rampur, a court of Rampur district has ordered demolition of the main gate of Mohammad Ali Jauhar University.

The Jauhar University has also been ordered to pay Rs 63.80 lakh as penalty.

The court has declared the construction of the main gate of the university as illegal construction on government land. Azam Khan is the promoter of the private university.

The court has asked the Jauhar University administration to pay Rs 4.55 lakh per month for continuing the offence till the 'illegal' main gate is demolished.

It may be recalled that in February 2021, a portion of the boundary wall of the Jauhar University, which was allegedly built illegally on government land, was demolished to provide a passage to the farmers to their land on the university campus.

Following an order by the court of Additional District Magistrate JP Gupta, the Rampur district administration

in January 2021 had vested the ownership of 173 acre land of the Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar Trust with the state government and this entry was also registered in state's revenue records.

The trust is run and controlled by Azam Khan and his family.

Azam Khan has been in Sitapur jail since February 2020 with more than a hundred cases registered against him. Azam Khan and his family members, including his wife Tazeen Fatma and son Abdullah Azam, have been booked under charges like land-grabbing, forgery, book theft, statue theft, goat theft, buffalo theft, power theft and others.

His wife has been released on bail while the son is still in jail.

The Samajwadi Party leader had tested positive for novel coronavirus infection on April 30 and was shifted to Lucknow for treatment. Khan was discharged on July 13 after remaining in ICU for several days. However, his health deteriorated a few days later and the SP leader was again shifted to a hospital in Lucknow.

Ex-BSP minister booked for polygamy

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Former minister in the Bahujan Samaj Party government, Chaudhary Bashir, was booked for polygamy as he was getting ready to marry a sixth time in Agra.

A report in this regard was lodged against Bashir by one of his wives' Nagma at Mantola police station in Agra and the police were making further investigations.

As per reports, Bashir's third wife Nagma came to know through a family friend about her husband planning to get married for a sixth time to a woman named Shaista on July 23. A desperate Nagma confronted Bashir at one of his houses, where the husband not only assaulted her but also divorced her with triple talaq before throwing her out of the house.

Nagma later approached the Mantola police station and lodged a report against Chaudhary Bashir for

polygamy and divorce through triple talaq. Subsequently, Chaudhary Bashir was booked under Section 3 of the Protection of Rights on Muslim Women's Marriage Act, 2019 and Section 504 of the Indian Penal Code.

Later speaking to media persons, Nagma said that she got married to Chaudhary Bashir in November 2012 after which they had two sons. She alleged that her husband and sister-in-law had been physically and mentally harassing her since the marriage was solemnised. Nagma also posted a video on social media, requesting help from the police.

Chaudhary Bashir was a minister in the Mayawati government but later switched over to the Samajwadi Party before leaving the outfit. He has not joined any political outfit after that.

The accused politician could not be contacted for his comments.

Proposal to rename Firozabad as Chandwar Nagar

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With barely six months to go for the next assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, the newly-elected zila parishad of Ferozabad has moved a proposal to change the name the district to Chandwar Nagar, arguing that the present name was given by Mughal Emperor Akbar to honour his military official Feroz Shah.

Firozabad is famous for its glassware, particularly bangles. The Yogi Adityanath government has earlier changed the names of Allahabad to Prayagraj, Faizabad to Ayodhya and Mughalsarai to Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Nagar.

A proposal to this effect was moved by Sadar block pramukh, Laxmi Narayan Yadav, who said that the ancient name of Ferozabad

was Chandwar Nagar and hence its original name should be retained. The proposal was passed unanimously and now it would be sent to the state



government to affect the name change in the official gazette.

Samajwadi Party members, however, claimed that it was not a unanimous decision.

"The Bharatiya Janata Party member brought the proposal when none of the opposition members were present. We came to know about the proposal after it was passed

unanimously. In fact, three parties -- Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party and Congress -- have raised objections to the proposal," SP leader Dilip Tyagi told this reporter.

Ferozabad District Congress chief Sandeep Tiwari said that it was unfortunate that the ruling BJP members were not concerned about improving urban facilities as city roads turn into cesspools after light drizzles, the roads are full of potholes and water and power supply are inadequate in the district.

"Instead of looking into these issues, the BJP wants to change the name of the district for political gains because assembly elections are around the corner," he said.

The official website of Ferozabad district administration says, "The ancient name of

this town was Chandwar Nagar. The name of Ferozabad was given during the reign of Akbar by his military official Feroz Shah in 1566. It is said that Raja Todarmal was passing through this town during a pilgrimage to Gaya and he was looted by robbers and at his request Akbar sent Feroz Shah here. The tomb of Feroz Shah and ruins of Katra Pathanan are the evidence of this."

It is reported that Aligarh Muslim University professor emeritus and noted historian Irfan Habib has claimed that there is no historical evidence to prove that Ferozabad was known as Chandwar Nagar earlier. The name Ferozabad came into being during the tenure of Feroz Shah Tughlaq. The point that Akbar changed the so-called ancient name of Ferozabad is incorrect."

Mega vaccination drive in state capital today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A single-day mega vaccination drive with a target of 85,000 jabs will be conducted in Lucknow on Tuesday (August 3), District Immunisation Officer Dr MK Singh said. There will be 85 workplace vaccination centres which people can visit with their ID cards for registration to get the vaccine shots.

“These camps will be in different areas such as Chinhat, Aliganj, Malihabad, Mohanlalganj, Sarojininaragar etc. The remaining 59 centres which are regular ones will keep functioning in the same manner as earlier,” he said.

The target is to administer three times as much shots as in routine drive in the district. Dr Singh said they have also increased the availability of vaccinations at the routine centres. “The target at each of these centres is different. For the district hospitals, a target of 1,500 has been fixed while that of 500-700 for the different CHCs,” he said. Lucknow has the maximum target among all the districts of the state, he pointed out. Meanwhile, a senior official



from the National Health Mission said that since they received an adequate stock of vaccines on Saturday and Sunday, they sent the same to various districts of the states which are now taking their own initiatives to ensure that maximum number of people get vaccinated.

“The demand has increased manifold and the main issue which we are facing is that all the vaccines which are supposed to be used for a certain period goes out of stock in a less time,” he said, adding: “Due to this problem, we have stopped giving a target to the districts as the

demand is so high.”

“We hope that in the vaccinations which take place on Tuesday, UP will cross the 5 crore-mark as it already has administered 4.8 crore doses,” he said. The official pointed out that private hospitals have procured their own vaccines.

“Across the state on Tuesday, the districts will try and carry out the maximum vaccinations and all the clusters will also be covered. Every block has 7-8 clusters. The vaccination centres will not be increased and only the availability of vaccines will be increased at the centres,” he added.

Focused sampling underway in areas under Gosainganj CHC

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

Gosainganj area in Lucknow witnessed 15-20 cases per day in the second wave and the cases went up to 50 in a day during the peak. The Gosainganj CHC has made all preparations to combat the third wave.

CHC superintendent Dr Hemant Kumar said there have been no hotspots identified in the areas under them as there were only one or two cases in each village in the area. Dr Kumar said the works which they did to check the spread of coronavirus cases in the second wave included tracing of 25 to 30 contacts of each patient.

“Now we are carrying out focused sampling in the villages besides keeping a track of street vendors and other categories of people. Besides, we are testing all the villagers who visit the CHC,” he said. He pointed out that rural areas had less Covid cases as compared to urban pockets.

“Those areas in close proximity to urban areas such as Khurrai Bazaar witnessed

relatively more cases in the second wave and then it was Kashipur (which is inhabited by people who are the members of marriage band parties) which also saw quite a few cases. Otherwise, there largely have been no hotspot areas,” he said. Dr added that being a totally rural area, Gosainganj witnessed only a few cases.

The CHC superintendent said that nigrani samitis formed by the Rural Development department are carrying out monitoring to curb the spread of virus. “We carry out the sampling thoroughly so that the virus does not spread,” he said.

The Gosainganj CHC covers a population of over two lakh. The vaccination which was held as a pilot project from June 21 to 26 continued thereafter. The areas were divided into 10 clusters. There are two nagar panchayats in eight clusters and 14 revenue villages in one cluster.

“We have divided 117 villages as per the map of the area. We have covered four clusters and at the mega vaccination camp which will be held on Tuesday. We will be

taking up the vaccination of one more cluster for a target of 4,000 jabs in a single day,” Dr Kumar said.

He said they faced challenges at the start of the cluster campaign when few people turned up on the first day but the crowd swelled slowly as people shed vaccine hesitancy. Dr Kumar said that ASHA workers and ANMs carried out the vaccination. “In the cluster approach, there are two people under whom the jabs are given; one is the vaccinator and the other who verifies the vaccination. Lekhpal also played an active role in the cluster campaign,” he pointed out.

Even before the pilot project, two gram panchayats (Misa and Pairoli) had been covered in the first week of June and the jabs were given at primary schools, he said.

“It was a successful attempt and a report was taken from us and sent to higher authorities after which the strategy of the cluster campaign was chalked out,” he said.

Abducted youth rescued by police

Lucknow (PNS): Two youths abducted their rival over an issued related to a girl outside his house in Indiranagar under Ghazipur police station area. A police team worked on the case and rescued the victim. The police also arrested the accused. Those arrested were identified as Gaurav Ahuja of New Delhi and Akhand Pratap Singh of Gonda. The victim was identified as Roshan.

As per reports, the accused

moving in a car (Honda Civic) reached the house of the victim and asked him to come out. They bundled him into the car and sped off around 5:30 pm on Sunday. They later called Roshan's parents and demanded a ransom of Rs 1.5 lakh. His mother Radha Singh called the police. The number from which the ransom call was made was put on surveillance. The police team traced the location of the accused and rescued the victim.

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

Janasanyog No. CF/817/21

Man intrudes into school's WA group, harasses girl student

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

An unidentified man intruded into a school's WhatsApp group created for online classes and sent lewd messages to a Class IX girl student. He said allegedly harassing the girl for a long time.

In her complaint, the mother of the victim said her daughter is a member of the group created by school teachers for teaching online. “The number by which the harasser was sending the messages and posts appeared to be of a foreign country. The miscreant sent lewd messages to the girl and also proposed to her. “My daughter is stressed and she lost her concentration in studies. The harasser has been at it since June and I also complained about the same to the college administration,” the woman said.

She added that the caller threatened to kill her and other family members and tried to force her into submission. “The harasser said that the law enforcing agencies would never be able to get him,” she said.

The girl is a meritorious student and was honoured by the district magistrate for participating in social work in the past. The woman said that her daughter is traumatised and even fears stepping out even for studies. “We also sought help from the Women Power Line-1090, but in vain. If children are harassed like this, online classes will be hampered,” she said, requesting the police to take action against the accused. The police said a case was registered in this connection and experts had been tasked with working out the case while the girl and her family have been provided security.

Mobile phone, cash looted from UPSRA employee

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two bike-borne unidentified miscreants looted Rs 500, a mobile phone and an identity card from an employee of UP State Road Authority near the office of Uttar Pradesh New and Renewable Energy Development Agency (UPNEDA) in Vibhuti Khand police station area on Monday morning. Luckily though, the robbers did not harm the victim.

Police registered a case of loot in this connection and started further investigation.

The victim, identified as Dalchand of Mantri Awas (A-block) in Vibhuti Khand, was going his office at Kisan Mandi Bhawan in Vibhuti Khand on a bike. Around 9:20 am, the miscreant reached near the victim and stopped him near UPNEDA office (close to an ATM booth). “They looted my mobile phone, Rs 500 which I had in my purse and the identity card issued by the department,” he stated in his complaint. He said as he was scared due to the sudden turns of event, he reached the office where he informed his colleagues about the incident. Later, he lodged a case in this connection.

A police spokesman said a case of loot was registered against unidentified miscreants. “We are scanning the CCTV footage to get a clue about the accused,” the spokesman said.

Meanwhile, a fraudster duped a sub-inspector of Rs 24,999 while impersonating a treasury officer. The victim, identified as Ram Chandra Nishad, lodged a case in this connection.

As per reports, Nishad got a call from an unidentified number and the caller introduced himself as Sanjay Srivastava from the treasury department of UP Police. The caller sought details of Nishad's debit card and later sent him several messages. He then asked Nishad to share the OTP to link his bank account to the pension scheme. After a while, Nishad received a message regarding deduction of money from his bank account.

Nishad is presently deployed in security at the gate number 3 of Vidhan Bhawan and is attached with Gomtinagar police station. The incident took place around 4:42 pm on July 30.



निष्पक्ष एवं पारदर्शी भर्ती प्रक्रिया के अन्तर्गत

उत्तर प्रदेश लोक सेवा आयोग द्वारा आयोजित

सम्मिलित राज्य / प्रवर अधीनस्थ सेवा परीक्षा-2019 में चयनित उपजिलाधिकारियों को

नियुक्ति पत्र वितरण

मुख्य अतिथि

योगी आदित्यनाथ

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश द्वारा

गरिमामयी उपस्थिति

डॉ. दिनेश शर्मा
उप मुख्यमंत्री
उत्तर प्रदेश

सुरेश कुमार खन्ना
मंत्री, वित्त, संसदीय कार्य एवं
चिकित्सा शिक्षा विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

दिनांक: 3 अगस्त, 2021 | समय: पूर्वाह्न 11:30 बजे

स्थान: लोक भवन सभागार, लखनऊ

चयनित उपजिलाधिकारी प्रतियोगी परीक्षाओं की तैयारी करने वाले अभ्यर्थियों को निःशुल्क कोविंग के लिए मुख्यमंत्री अभ्युदय योजना में शैक्षणिक योगदान प्रदान करेंगे

प्रधानमंत्री जी का विज्ञान हो रहा साकार

युवाओं के साथ योगी सरकार

नियुक्ति विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश शासन

कार्यक्रम का लाइव प्रसारण
DD Channels व
Youtube.com/ODNEWS
Youtube.com/oduttarpradesh

पुरस्च एवं
UPGovtOfficial
CMOUttarpradesh
CMOOfficeUP

सोशल मीडिया ऐपडस को माध्यम से देख सकते हैं।

Zardozi worker found dead

Lucknow (PNS): A 28-year-old missing zardozi worker was found dead under mysterious circumstances in Chinhat on Monday. The body was recovered from a water body in Bharwara under Chinhat police station area. Police said he died of drowning. The deceased was identified as Arjun Gautam of Ujariaon in Gontinagar.

As per reports, Arjun had gone to his aunt's house in Malhaur (Chinhat) along with his wife and children on Sunday evening. Preliminary investigation revealed that Arjun took Rs 400 from his wife and went out on Sunday night. He returned home in a drunken state and had a verbal spat with his wife. Later, his aunt asked him to have dinner but he refused and went out.

On Monday, some commuters spotted a body floating in the lake alongside Rail Vihar Colony road in Vikalp Khand-3. A team of police reached the scene and fished out the body. ACP (Chinhat) Anoop Singh said he night have jumped into the lake to end his life following a tiff with his wife.

Meanwhile, a 28-year-old carpenter was found hanging at his house in Saleh Nagar (Ashiyana) on Monday. He was identified as Siraj Ahmad. Siraj was found hanging from the ceiling with a dupatta tied around his neck. Siraj's brother Riyaz Ahmad informed police about the incident which took place around 11:45 pm on Sunday.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
1st CORRIGENDUM
No. 74-W/Tender/Sr.DEN-II/PRYJ
Dated: July 30, 2021
Sub:- 1st Corrigendum to E-Open Tender Notice No. 2520212022-73
Dated 27.07.2021 Date of Opening of E-Open Tender Notice No. 2520212022-73 may be read as: **May be read as: 25.08.2021. Instead of: 18.08.2021** Other terms and condition of tender notice will remain the same.
Security Helpline No.182 854/21(AN)

कार्यालय : अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन-7, जलकल विभाग, नगर निगम, लखनऊ

पत्रांक : 12/EE-7/LJS/21-22 दिनांक : 02.08.2021

(अति-अत्यकालीन निविदा-सूचना)

जलकल विभाग में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु अल्पकालिक निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा प्रपत्र किसी भी कार्यदिवस में दिनांक 10.8.2021 को अपराह्न 03:00 बजे तक अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन-7 के कार्यालय के कैश काउन्टर से प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं। सीलड निविदाएं दिनांक 10.8.2021 को अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन-7 के कार्यालय में अपराह्न 3:30 बजे तक सीलड टेन्डर बॉक्स में प्राप्त की जायेंगी। प्राप्त सभी निविदाएं दिनांक 10.8.2021 को उपस्थित निविदादाताओं के समक्ष 4:00 बजे जोन-7 के कार्यालय में खोली जायेंगी।

1. जलकल विभाग, जोन-7 के अन्तर्गत इन्दिरा नगर सेक्टर-14 स्थित सी०डब्ल्यू०आर० हेतु एम०सी०सी०बी०, स्मैड टर्मिनल व केबिल आदि की आपूर्ति तथा अधिष्ठापन का कार्य, घरोहर राशि रु० 2800/- एवं निविदा मूल्य रु० 100/-

अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन-7
जलकल विभाग, नगर निगम, लखनऊ

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 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)
Adv. No. J.S.V. 238(2021-22)

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

CONTINENTAL CHEMICALS LIMITED.
CIN - L24123UP1984PLC014111
REGISTERED OFFICE: A-7, SECTOR-VII, NOIDA-201301, U.P. Tel : 91-120-2423316
Email: info@continentalsoft.com, nkc@continentalsoft.com, web: www.continentalchemicalsltd.com

Standalone Unaudited Financial results for the quarter 30th June 2021
(Rs. In Lakh except EPS)

Sl. No.	Particulars	3 Month Ended 30.6.2021 (Unaudited)	3 Month Ended 30.6.2020 (Unaudited)	3 Month Ended 31.3.2021 (audited)	Year Ended 31.03.2021 (audited)
1	Income from operations	22.05	19.91	38.37	96.80
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	2.92	2.35	12.44	16.60
3	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	2.92	2.35	12.44	16.60
4	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	3.31	1.20	9.97	14.34
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period (after tax))	3.35	1.01	10.20	14.54
6	Equity Share Capital	224.90	224.90	224.90	224.90
7	Other Equity (excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the Balance Sheet of previous year)				149.41
8	Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/-each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)				
	Basic:	0.15	0.05	0.44	0.64
	Diluted :	0.15	0.05	0.44	0.64

Notes:
1 The above financial result are reviewed by audit committee and thereby have been taken on records by board of Director in their meeting held on 02.08.2021
2 Previous period figures have been re-grouped/reclassified whenever necessary to make them comparable with the current period figures.
3 The Company has considered the possible effects that may arise out of the still unfolding COVID-19 pandemic on the carrying amounts of property, plant & equipment, investments, inventories, trade receivables, etc. For this purpose, the Company has considered internal and external sources of information up to the date of approval of the Financial Results including credit reports and related information, economic forecasts, market value of certain investments etc. Based on the current estimates, the Company does not expect any significant impact on such carrying values. The impact of COVID-19 on the Company's financial statements may differ from that estimated as at the date of approval of Financial Results.
4 These result have been prepared in accordance with the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rule 2015 (Ind AS) prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act 2013 and other recognised accounting practices and policies to the extent possible.
5 The company operates only in one segment

For and on behalf of the Board of
Sd/-
Nareesh Kumar Chibba
Managing Director
Din : 00376963

Place : Noida
Date : 02.08.2021

Congress to observe Dalit Swabhiman Diwas today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

To woo the Dalit community ahead off 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 community, alleging harassment by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party across the state before recently switching allegiance to the saffron outfit.

The Dalit cell of UP Congress will be celebrating '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.

"On this occasion, leaders, workers and supporters of Dalit Congress will take out Dalit Swabhiman Yatra in all 75 districts of the state and go to Dalit settlements and make them aware of how Congress was the first party to respect an honour Baba Saheb and ensure the rights to the Dalit community. We also plan to hold Dalit panchayat soon as well," Prasad added.

Earlier this year, the Samajwadi Party had

announced plans to organise a 'Dalit Diwali' on April 14 to mark the birth anniversary of Dr Ambedkar and also announced the setting up a frontal organisation by the name 'Baba Saheb Vahini' after the Dalit icon.

Meanwhile, the ruling BJP also announced plans to celebrate Ambedkar Jayanti as Harmony Day. Dalit leader linked with the Ram temple movement, Kameshwar Chaupal, was appointed a member of Ram Mandir Nirman Trust in Ayodhya, ostensibly to woo the community. Analysts said that Dalit voters would definitely play a crucial part in deciding the outcome of the 2022 assembly polls in UP and thus every party was attempting to reach out to them.

They also maintained that the Bahujan Samaj Party had lost some of its charm among the community, opening up opportunities for others to step in.

CITYBRIEFS



CLAT STUDENTS FETED

As many as 47 students of City Montessori School have cracked the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT-2021), which is the largest number by any school in the country.

Minister for Law and Justice Brajesh Pathak felicitated these students at a ceremony organised at the Gomti Nagar Campus I auditorium on Monday. Parents of these students, teachers and principals of various CMS campuses were present on the occasion. Pathak said that these students would make a significant contribution to the judicial system and would lay the foundation for world unity, world peace and world parliament.

AWARD

Director of Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany (BSIP) Vandana Prasad has been selected by the Ministry of Earth Sciences for the Women Scientist Amma Mani National Award for significant contribution to the field of evolutionary biology, high-resolution biostratigraphy and quaternary palaeoclimatic studies. The award carries an award amount of Rs 1 lakh and a citation. The cash award will be shared with Dr Thara Prabhakaran, the co-recipient of the award.

'Akhilesh remark on ropeway baseless'

Lucknow (PNS): Responding to tweets posted by SP chief Akhilesh Yadav on the inauguration of a ropeway by Home Minister Amit Shah at Vindhyachal Dham in Mirzapur on Sunday, UP minister Sidharth Nath Singh flayed the SP chief for making irresponsible statements. In his tweet, Akhilesh had attributed the credit for conceptualising 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 perturbed over his party's predictable defeat. Samajwadi Party's defeat in the 2022 elections is a foregone conclusion," he said.

Lalu Yadav meets Mulayam Singh

New Delhi: RJD supremo Lalu Prasad Yadav and Samajwadi Party (SP) patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav met here on Monday. SP president and Mulayam Singh Yadav's son Akhilesh Yadav was also present in the meeting.

In a tweet in Hindi, Lalu said, "Met the country's senior most socialist friend Shri Mulayam Singhji and enquired about his wellbeing. We have common concerns and fight about farmers, inequality, the poor and the unemployed." He also tweeted pictures of the meeting, and said, "Today, the country is in dire need of equality and socialism, not capitalism and communalism." Akhilesh Yadav also tweeted pictures of the meeting. Sources in both parties said the meeting took place in the national capital. Earlier in the day, Akhilesh Yadav attended Lok Sabha proceedings. PTI



Khet Talab Yojana to quench thirst of parched Bundelkhand region

Lucknow (PNS): Efforts are on to make water available in the parched and rugged Bundelkhand region where the Uttar Pradesh government has set a target to set up 10,000 ponds under Khet Talab Yojana at an estimated cost of Rs 10,000 crore.

"People of Bundelkhand will no longer be thirsty as the Yogi Adityanath government is trying diligently to ensure optimal use of every drop of water in the region through various projects, including sprinkler irrigation and Khet Talab Yojana. The state government plans to build 10,000 farm ponds at a cost of Rs 100 crore in the 2021-22 financial year. Government agencies have already dug 4,400 farm ponds at a cost of Rs 49.56 crore so far as part of the 'Other

Intervention' component of its 'Per Drop More Crop' scheme. Most ponds have been constructed in Bundelkhand and Vindhya regions. Besides geo-tagging of these ponds, 50 per cent subsidy is given to the farmers through direct benefit transfer (DBT). Water saved in these ponds during the rainy season will be used for irrigation purposes and as drinking water for the cattle in the rest of the season," a government spokesman said in Lucknow on Monday.

In this context, the Yogi government has been working on three sprinkler projects, including Masgaon Chilli (Hamirpur), Kulpahar (Mahoba) and Shahzad (Lalitpur) projects, as a model to irrigate more areas with less water. "The projects are like-

ly to be completed this year. There is also a plan to connect other irrigation projects with sprinklers later. The Arjun Sahayak Canal Project, which is going to be completed this year, will not only facilitate irrigation of 44,381 hectares of land in Banda, Hamirpur and Mahoba, but also make drinking water available to people," the spokesman said.

According to an estimate, around 20 million cubic metre of drinking water will be available to the people of Mahoba. Aiming to realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's slogans such as 'Per Drop, More Crop' and 'Water to Every Field', the BJP government in the state has been intensively working on these projects since taking over four years ago.

Case against girl after 3 youths booked for breach of peace

Lucknow (PNS): A day after challaning three youths for breach of peace in a road rage incident in which a girl was seen repeatedly slapping one of the accused, the police also registered a case against the girl.

A spokesman said a case under sections 394/427 of IPC (committing or attempting to commit robbery, voluntarily causing hurt and committing mischief and thereby causing loss or damage to the amount of Rs 50 or more) against the girl who was identified as Priyadarshini aka Lakshmi of Kesari Kheda in Krishnanagar.

The case was lodged on the complaint of Shahadat Ali of Wazirganj. Shahadat and his friends (Inayat Ali and Dawood Ali, both of Wazirganj) were earlier booked for breach of peace on Sunday.

Student found dead in Gkp univ; dept head, assistants booked

Corakhpur: The head of the DDU Gorakhpur University home science department and her assistants were booked for murder after the body of a third-year student was found hanging in the institution, police said on Monday.

As per reports, Priyanka Kumari, a student of the department, had gone to the university on Saturday to sit for an examination but her body was

found hanging in a storeroom later in the day.

"On the basis of a written complaint of the father of the deceased student, a case under section 302 (murder) has been registered against the head of the home science department of DDU Gorakhpur University and also against her assistants. Police have initiated the probe, and soon the truth will be revealed," Superintendent of

Police (City) Sonam Kumar said. Earlier, police and the university administration were treating it as a case of suicide.

The post-mortem was conducted by a panel of doctors and videography as per the norms was performed. According to the report, the cause of the death has been stated to be asphyxia as a result of ante-mortem hanging, Senior Superintendent of Police

Dinesh Kumar P said. However, on the basis of the written complaint by the victim's father, a murder case was registered, the SSP said. On the request of the family, a panel of five doctors constituted by the Chief Medical Officer will review the video of post-mortem, he added. He said instructions have been issued to Circle Officer Chauri Chaura for conducting an impartial probe into

the matter and submitting the report at the earliest. The complainant has raised many questions such as why the student's feet were touching the ground while her body was hanging by a dupatta, why her clothes were dirty with dust and mud, and why her sandals were lying far away from the body in the room, police said. The family members cremated the body on Monday, they said. PTI

AIMIM will be blown away in the face of SP storm: Abu Azmi

Bhadohi: Samajwadi Party leader Abu Asim Azmi Monday said the Asaduddin Owaisi-led AIMIM will be "blown away by an SP storm" in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls next year. He claimed that Owaisi and other leaders like him were propped up by the BJP and the BSP to divide the Muslim votes knowing fully well that they are losing the polls. Talking to reporters after a meeting here of party organisations, Maharashtra SP president Azmi said, "Owaisi's party (AIMIM) will be blown away in the face of an SP storm in the coming elections."

"Since the BJP knows that it is losing, it wants some Owaisis or Azads to enter the electoral fray or the BSP fields Muslim candidates to divide their votes. But the people are now alert," he said.

The AIMIM has announced it would contest 100 seats in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls in 2022. Praising Samajwadi Party's national president Akhilesh Yadav, Azmi said Uttar Pradesh can achieve development only if he leads the state as its chief minister. Speaking about the Congress, Azmi said there is a need for the party to improve its organisation.

It should have a leader who is aware of the conditions prevailing in the country, who talks about farmers and knows how to speak Hindi well, he said. He said the Congress demanded from its allies and contested 70 seats in Bihar and performed poorly. It did similar things in West Bengal, he said.

"The Congress is not realising the present reality. We want a national party like the Congress to be strong. It has to first strengthen itself in places where there are no other parties like the SP," he said. Azmi also faced opposition from a section of the SP leader in the district with a faction led by corporator Danish Rumi Siddiqui taking out a procession and raising slogans against him. PTI

Power employees' 4-day satyagraha from today

Lucknow (PNS): On the call of National Coordination Committee of Electricity Employees and Engineers, the power employees and engineers will hold a four-day satyagrah at Jantar Mantar in the national capital from August 3 in protest against the unilateral announcement of the Central government to pass the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in current monsoon session of Parliament.

All India Power Engineers Federation (AIPEF) chairman Shailendra Dubey said here on Monday that the power employees of northern region would participate on in the satyagraha on August 3, those of eastern and north

eastern on August 4, of western region on August 5 and the power employees of southern region on August 6.

He said that power employees and engineers across the country were agitating against the unilateral approach of the Central government to rush through the Bill in Parliament. He said many provisions of the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2021 were anti-people and anti-employees and if enacted it would have far reaching adverse consequences.

Dubey said that the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2021 should not be passed in Parliament in haste and it should be referred to the Standing Committee on Energy of Parliament. He

further said that the main stakeholders of the power sector namely electricity consumers and electricity employees should be given proper opportunity to express their view point on the Bill before placing it in Parliament.

Dubey said that after the four-day satyagrah in Delhi, about 1.5 million power employees and engineers would resort to one-day strike/work boycott on August 10 across the country. He said if the Central government placed the Bill before August 10 then the strike would be preponed and all power employees and engineers would be forced to proceed on strike the same day the Bill is tabled in Parliament.

Breather in Kerala, Covid storm abates

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Kerala, which has been reeling 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 pandemic from the front line.

The Minister's plea to the people of the State for the last one week to abide by the guidelines 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 average 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 succumbing to the disease. The death toll till date reached 16,955 (excluding the 7,000+ under reported cases). George said 1,27, 903

samples were tested during the last 24 hours. Thrissur topped the table of districts with the highest 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 (represented 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 capability 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.

BJP attacks Mamata Govt for identifying convicts by religion

PNS ■ KOLKATA

In a "bizarre presentation" of Statistics for the number of ageing "life convicts" being released from Bengal jails the Trinamool Congress Government on Monday disclosed their caste and religious identities apart from mentioning their age and sex leading the BJP to come down heavily on the ruling Trinamool Congress saying "this list of convicts being released is the greatest example of the kind of 'secularism' being practiced by the TMC Government."

Speaking on the issue State BJP spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya on Monday said that "we have always known that the criminals have no caste, creed or political affiliation ... they are only criminals ... but here the TMC Government has prepared a list in which they have claimed that out of those being released 5 are SCs, 3 are STs, 2 are OBCs, 53 are General caste, 51 are Hindus and 12 are Muslims ..."

He added, "by classifying the convicts according to their religion the TMC is only pursuing its divide-and-rule politics

... based on communal and caste lines ... Nowhere in India the convicts have been released by identifying them by their castes or religion ... It is nothing but a way to show that 'look in Bengal more number of Hindus are criminals than the Muslims... and when we will raise this issue they will call us names.' The Mamata Banerjee government on Monday said that it had ordered the release of 63 life convicts from Bengal prisons so that the prisons could be decongested ahead of the third wave of the corona pandemic.

A senior official said that "there was a need to decongest the prisons because of the prevailing Covid-19 situation. Section 432 of the CrPC (Code of Criminal Procedure) empowers the state government to consider the premature release of life convicts who have already served 14 years in jail." The release of the convicts serving life sentence was recommended on humanitarian grounds by the state sentence review board. Accordingly 61 male convicts above 60 years and two female convicts aged above 55 years would be released before the Independence Day.

Devotees queue up for darshan at Kashi Vishwanath temple

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Lakhs of devotees offered prayers at one of the dwadasa jyotirlingas, Kashi Vishwanath, and about a dozen other famous temples of Lord Shiva located in the city and its outskirts here on second Monday of Shravan month amidst tight security arrangements and Covid-19 restrictions.

However, social distancing norms were rarely followed at any of the temples. In comparison to last Monday, heavy rush was seen at Kashi Vishwanath temple, right from Dashaswamedh Ghat. A one-km long queue was witnessed during the day.

Like the last week at many temples, the devotees were not allowed to touch the Shivling as they offered jalabhishek from outside the garbhagriha (sanctum sanctorum) through metal structures. However, at Sarang Mahadev temple in Sarnath, the devotees were allowed this time to touch the Shivlings as there are two such Shivlings in its garbhagriha.

At Kashi Vishwanath temple, right from the wee hours after Mangla Aarti, the devotees started thronging the temple and the lines of devotees were witnessed on both sides of the temple crawling towards the temple from Maidagin and



Line of devotees near Godowlia for offering prayers at Kashi Vishwanath temple on second Monday in month of Shravan.

Godowlia.

Elaborate security arrangements were made and no vehicles were allowed to move between Godowlia and Maidagin throughout the day. To maintain law and order, the devotees were checked at many places through metal detectors. Senior administrative and police officers were present there to keep a watch at Gyanvapi premises. All the activities were also watched through various CCTV cam-

eras. To avoid congregation the devotees were asked to move towards Gyanvapi only through barricading and Rapid Action Force (RAF), para-military and PAC jawans were deployed both inside and outside of the premises.

Apart from Kashi Vishwanath temple, rush of devotees was also seen at Tilbhandeshwar (Pandey Rameshwar), Sarang Mahadev (Sarnath), Vishwanath (Banaras Hindu University),

Maha Mrityunjaya Mahadev (Daranagar), Gauri Kedarashwar Mahadev (Kedar Ghat), Jogeshwar Mahadev (Ishwarganji) and many others in the city areas while Markandey Mahadev (Kaithi near confluence of rivers Ganga and Gomti), Shooltankeshwar Mahadev (Madhopur) and Kamdeshwar Mahadev, Bhim Chandi, Rameshwar Mahadev (Rameshwar), Paanch Pandav (Shivpur) and Kapildhara on Panch Kosi Marg.

Ganga inches closer to danger mark

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Intermittent rains in the past couple of days again led to a rise in the level of Ganga. The water level is closer to the warning levels in many parts of Purvanchal (eastern UP) belt as during the last 24 hours, the rising speed was more than double. In the city, the water level increased by 2.16 metres, indicating that the river was rising nine centimetres per hour in comparison to four and 3.6 cms during the previous two days respectively. This intensified uptrend increased the concerns of thousands of residents living in low-lying areas.

In downstream Ballia, the river was recorded at 55.38 metres at 8 am as per the report of local office of Central Water Commission (CWC) on Monday which shows that it is flowing just around one metre



Water level of river Ganga rising speedily in Varanasi on Monday.

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above than the warning level at 56.61 metres.

In Varanasi, the river was at 66.52 metres against 64.36 metres a day ago against the warning level of 70.26 metres. Due to the high level of the river has already disconnected the links between the ghats and many low-lying temples locat-

ed at ghats were submerged into the water apart from posing problems for cremation at Manikarnika and Harishchandra ghats. The venues of regular Ganga-Aarti have already shifted upstairs. Not only this, the water has started entering several low-lying areas. If the same trend

continues for a couple more days more, the flood situation in this region would start turning grim.

The Ganga river continued to rise right from Phaphamau to downstream Ballia including Allahabad, Mirzapur, Varanasi and Ghazipur.

The rising trend of river Gomti in Maighat has also increased the pulse rates of the residents of several villages of Daab area surrounded by rivers Ganga and Gomti near their confluence at Kaithi about 25 kms from here.

However, there is some relief as the river is recorded steady at upstream Jaunpur. Though in Sonbhadra district, rivers like Sone, Rihand and Kanhar were either steady or receding in their upstreams. Besides, Choti Sarju which created havoc last year was steady both at Azamgarh and Mau.

Minister reviews progress of development works

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

UP Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Women's Welfare, Child Development and Nutrition Swati Singh reviewed the progress of department works in a meeting held at Circuit House here on Monday. She instructed the officers to provide the benefits of pension and other schemes to all the eligible women of the district by holding camps.

In the meeting, she was informed that last year 54,651 widows were given pensions in the district and this year, 749 pensions have been sanctioned so far.

She asked the officers to

discuss suitable place for camps with. She was also informed that last year 2,929 were given benefits under Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana. The Minister directed that a door-to-door campaign should be launched to fill the forms. "This is an ambitious scheme of the government to develop positive thinking in the society towards the girl child and there is a provision of financial assistance of Rs 15,000 in six stages from the birth of the girl child till the time of her graduation," she said.

While reviewing the progress of Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana, she was informed that 159 children have been benefited from the

scheme and in addition to this, 26 children are being benefited from Rs 2000/- per month under the sponsorship scheme and action is being taken to identify 235 new children and benefit them. The problems of women and girls are being resolved by the One Stop Center operated in the district. In this financial year so far 173 women/girls have been provided services. The concerned officers informed her that most of the complaints received at the centre were of domestic violence against the woman.

Under the Uttar Pradesh Rani Lakshmi Bai Mahila and Bal Samman Kosh, compensation has been provided to 69 victims so far. While reviewing

the ICD's, she was informed that there are 45,034 yellow category and 5,460 red category malnourished children in the district. She directed that every Anganwadi centre should ensure that at least one child of each category has to be freed from malnutrition every month so that in a few months the entire district would become malnutrition free.

She said a total of 838 Anganwadi centres have been adopted by MLAs, officers and others. She also reviewed the progress of many other schemes. District Probation Officer Praveen Kumar Tripathi, District Program Officer, CDPO etc were present in the meeting.

Devotees throng Shiva temples

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

A large number of devotees formed a beeline outside the city temples to pay obeisance to Lord Shiva on the second Monday of Shravan month. There was a rare combination of Navami Tithi, Kritika Nakshatra, Gar Karan and Sarvartha Siddhi Yoga on Monday.

Dharmacharyas said that in this holy time, Lord Shiva showers his blessings on the devotees who pray sincerely. Lord Shiva is pleased by worshipping and performing Jalabhishek amid vedic of chanting mantras.

Despite the ban, the kanwariyas in small groups left to perform jalabhishek at the Vishwanath temple in Varanasi. After taking a dip in the Sangam and the Ganga, the kanwariyas performed jalabhishek at Pagoda.

After offering milk, bel leaves, fruits, flowers and sweets to the idol of Lord Shiva or Shivling in the ancient Pagoda, devotees performed



Devotees offering rudrabhishek prayers on the occasion of second Monday of Shravan month in Prayagraj

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aarti.

On August 9 (3rd Monday), Shlesha Nakshatra, Variyan Yoga, Pratipada Tithi

of Shukla Paksha, Kimstughna and Bar Karan will remain effective. Similarly, the fourth Monday on August 16 will

have the impact of Anuradha Nakshatra, Brahma Yoga, Yayjay Yoga, Sarvartha Siddhi Yoga.

NCR GM holds meeting of officers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

On his arrival at Prayagraj after taking charge as GM/NCR Pramod Kumar addressed the meeting of officers at NCR headquarter office. All PHODs, senior officers of NCR were present in the meeting and DRMs of all the three divisions along with branch officers joined through video conferencing.

Earlier, Pramod Kumar conducted window trailing inspection of Manikpur-Prayagraj section of Prayagraj Division. DRM/Prayagraj Mohit Chandra accompanied

him during the inspection. It is to be informed that Window-trailing inspection is a specialised inspection in the Indian Railways in which the track and its surrounding installations like signals, OHE, platforms etc are inspected from the rear window of an inspection car attached to a moving train. During the inspection, important parameters like cleanliness and overall condition of stations falling en-route, riding quality of the train-especially on points and crossings, improvement in Track Geometry Index (TGI), OHE status,

Condition of level crossing gates en-route etc were observed by the General Manager/North Central Railway. General Manager expressed satisfaction over the overall upkeep of the section and announced a group award for the Prayagraj Division.

After reaching Headquarter office, Subedarganji, while addressing the officers Pramod Kumar expressed his feeling of satisfaction for getting opportunity to serve again at Prayagraj. While highlighting about his priorities Kumar said that

safe and punctual train operations, enhancement in asset reliability along with building a cohesive atmosphere for our most precious asset i. e. human resource are utmost priorities. He said, a satisfied employee is the key for a shining organisation so we should create a positive working environment. He also said that together we will be doing a lot of positive things & we will have to work as a cohesive team. He appealed to all officers to perform more than their capacities to bring laurels for NCR and in turn for Indian Railways.

CCTV cameras to monitor TTE lobby

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

There was panic among the railway employees after the case of imposition of duty in TTE lobby came to the fore in Prayagraj Junction. Now, CCTV cameras are being installed to keep a watch on the employees. The officers of the department and the team of vigilance are investigating the matter. If sources are to be believed, many big officers can also come under the ambit of the investigation. At the same time, modernisation has been started by railways for damage control.

The investigation started after the matter of taking salary and allowances of many TTEs sitting at home through fake signatures on the roster came to light. It was alleged that in the name of roster, the game of imposing duties of the loved ones in their desired trains was underway. To

improve this system, digitisation of the TTE lobby is also being done. In this sequence, a roster is being made online to avoid tampering. The data (name, designation) of the employees is being uploaded in the e-lobby software.

Apart from this, CCTV cameras are being equipped to monitor the TTE lobby. Biometric attendance system has also been started for the attendance of the employees. However, about 80 percent of the work has been completed.

According to Senior DCM-2 Vipin Kumar Singh, apart from Prayagraj Junction, CCTV cameras are also being installed in Prayagraj Chheoki and Tundla. The process of a breath analysis test was also started a fortnight ago.

After the action in Prayagraj, a confidential investigation began in other divisions of the zone. After the mistakes on the roster in

Prayagraj came to light, many employees were questioned in the CIT line. When the matter came into the limelight, the CIT was also suspended. Now on the basis of the complaint, investigation is being done in Kanpur, Tundla, Jhansi and Agra.

PRO of Allahabad division Amit Kumar Singh said that CCTV has been installed in the TTE lobby. The location of the roster will be monitored. Biometric attendance has also started.

Meanwhile, the Railway Recruitment Cell (RRC) has made preparations for the departmental examination of railways to be held from August 4 to 6. For the first time, jammers will be installed in all examination centres. So that no railway employee can use any electronic device during the examination. A control room of 58 centers has also been set up in the RRC office

for this examination to be held in 11 cities including Prayagraj.

Actually, 339 vacancies are to be recruited under General Department Competitive Exams (GDCE). 29005 railway personnel working in North Central Railway and Diesel Locomotive Workshop (now BLW) have applied for promotion. For this, the online examination of all these railway employees is to be held from August 4 to 6. In view of the large number of railway personnel appearing for the examination, this examination will be held in the cities of Prayagraj, Kanpur, Agra, Mathura, Noida, Lucknow, Ghaziabad, Jhansi, Greater Noida, Varanasi and Gwalior. Admit cards for Computer Based Test (CBT) in three shifts can be downloaded from the website of Railway Recruitment Cell (RRC).

NCR GM congratulates Gurjeet Kaur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Indian women's hockey team scripted history by making their maiden entry into the semi-finals of Tokyo Olympics on Monday. Gurjeet Kaur of North Central Railway (Prayagraj division) became a shining star after scoring the

only goal against Australia to lead the team to victory on Monday morning. Gurjeet scored the all-important goal in the 22nd minute of the game, while the Indian defence, particularly the goalkeeper did not allow Australia to let the ball into the net. Gurjeet Kaur is from the Prayagraj division

of North Central Railway and is known as a solid defender. She is also considered to be a penalty expert, and she showed her mettle against a strong opponent. It was Gurjeet's first goal in the Olympics. Besides Gurjeet, Nisha of the Prayagraj division of NCR is also an active member of the Indian

women's hockey team for Tokyo Olympics. NCR General Manager Pramod Kumar and the CPRO congratulated the hockey team for making the semis. The GM reached the selfie point at the Prayagraj station and posed for a picture to boost the morale of the hockey teams.

FDP on cyber security of critical infrastructure

ALLAHABAD (PNS): Building trustworthy autonomous systems goes far beyond the current artificial intelligence vision. To reach this vision, we need a new scientific foundation enriching and extending traditional systems engineering with data-based techniques. These views were expressed by Turing Award Laureate Prof Joseph Sifakis while delivering the inaugural talk in the ATAL online Faculty Development Programme on 'Cyber security of Critical Infrastructure' organised by Indian Institute of Information Technology, Allahabad, on Monday.

Speaking on the topic "Autonomous systems and Self-driving cars" Prof Joseph clar-

ified why self-driving was so hard. Despite the enthusiastic involvement of big technological companies and the massive investment of billions of dollars, all the optimistic predictions about self-driving cars "being around the corner" went utterly wrong. He argued that these difficulties emblematically illustrate the challenges raised by the vision for trustworthy autonomous systems. These are critical systems intended to replace human operators in complex organisations, very different from other intelligent systems such as game-playing robots or intelligent personal assistants. I discuss complexity limitations inherent to autonomic behavior but also to integration in

complex cyber-physical and human environments, added Prof Joseph. The AICTE approved FDP was formally inaugurated by Professor P Nagabhushan, Director of IIIT Allahabad who addressed the participants while highlighting the significance of cyber security in today's world. Professor Nagabhushan also enthused the participants for high quality research in the related areas of Cyber security while extending his warm welcome to the eminent Computer Scientist Professor Sifakis, Director also requested Professor Sifakis to keep his association with IIIT Allahabad for future also.

Prof Vijayshri Tewari, Registrar urged the participants to keep connecting the

teachings with good quality research and to take inspiration from the path breaking research work of Prof Sifakis.

Prof Pawan Chakraborty, Head of the Department expressed his gratitude towards Turing award laureate Prof Sifais while requesting him to extend his long term relation with IIIT Allahabad into a more formal level. At the end of the event, the program coordinator Professor OP Vyas gave the outline of the workshop by citing many examples of recent cyber attacks and specially in the view of emerging automated systems and smart cities in the country, the possibility and frequency of cyber attacks is going to be more real and increasing so worth addressing.

Foodgrains trader's murder was plotted by daughter

VARANASI (PNS): It was none other than the daughter of a foodgrains trader who hatched a conspiracy to eliminate her father with the help of her lover after he disapproved of her wedding plans. Police took the daughter, her lover and one of his associates into custody. It is noteworthy here that Rajesh Jaiswal, who was a resident of Tamachabad in Mirzamurad, was shot dead on July 29 evening on his way to a private hospital in Bhadvar, where his mother-in-law was admitted. When he was on the national high-way in Mirzamurad, two motorcycle-borne criminals overtook his bike and opened fire targeting him. He died on the spot. The police had recovered four used shells of the pistol of .32 bore.

The wife of the trader had lodged an FIR against Vijay Jaiswal, his wife and three sons in this connection.

During the investigation the crime branch personnel and Rohania police scanned footage of CCTV cameras installed near the crime spot and also took help of electronic surveillance. They came to know that the daughter of a trader had fallen in love with a youth of the same village. She had applied for the passport about a year ago and mentioned the mobile number of her lover Javed instead of her father. During the investigation it surfaced that the trader earlier expressed annoyance over daughter's love affair and also scolded her lover's parents. Both daughter and her lover

started mounting pressure on the trader for the marriage but he often denied it.

Then, the daughter of the deceased hatched a conspiracy with her lover Javed to eliminate her father from their way to get married. And as per conspiracy, Javed along with one of his aides Aqib Ansari overtook the bike of the deceased and shot him dead. After committing crime, Javed had also informed the daughter of deceased about the murder.

The joint teams of crime branch and Rohania police nabbed Javed, Aqib Ansari and daughter of the trader. The crime branch and police teams also recovered a pistol and bike used in the crime by the criminals besides three mobile handsets from their posses-

sions. During the interrogation, Javed informed the crime branch and police teams that he had purchased a pistol from Vikramganj in Bihar about six months ago, the SP Rural Amit Verma informed while producing the criminals before the media persons at police line here on Monday.

FIRE BREAKS OUT AT BIKE SHOWROOM: A major fire broke out at a motorcycle showroom in Aktha, Pahadia under Pandeypur-Lalpur police station on the intervening night of Sunday and Monday. Short circuit was said to be the reason. The showroom owner suffered losses to the tune of lakhs but no life loss was reported. Firefighting personnel had to work hard to douse the flames.

DC inspects progress of ‘Palika Stadium’ works

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Dr Raj Shekhar, who inspected the Smart City works on Monday, said that as per the directive of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the progress of the development works under Smart City project must be reviewed every week. He said to maintain quality of the ongoing works, the Smart City Corporation had appointed HBTU for concurrent quality checking of the project.

He said although the first quality check was to be carried out two months back, the CEO of Smart City was directed to get the second quality check carried out by next week and submit the report to the divisional commissionerate. He said the objective was to ensure the development works were carried out timely so that the benefits reached the grassroots level.

The divisional commissioner was accompanied by Kanpur Municipal Commissioner Dr Shivasharanappa GN, CEO of Smart City and executive engineers of Smart City and Kanpur Nagar Nigam and together they reviewed the ‘Palika Stadium New Sports complex’. He said the physical progress of the project was around 25 per cent and directed the authorities concerned to complete the first phase (administrative building, banquet hall etc) by



Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Dr Raj Shekhar, inspecting the development works of Smart City at Palika Stadium on Monday.

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November this year and the various sports facilities like swim pool, badminton courts, gym, table tennis, by March 2022.

He said it would be a green building with provision of ample natural light, rain water harvesting system, water recycling, sewage treatment system and adequate plantation on the campus.

He directed the CEO to assess and work out the addi-

tional electricity load and infrastructure required along with parking area identification for nearly 200 to 300 vehicles. He said currently it had a provision to park just 80 to 100 vehicles. He also stressed on widening of the front road of the Palika Stadium for easy movement of vehicles.

Dr Shekhar also ordered the preparation of a request for proposal for operations and maintenance of the sports com-

plex in the next 15 days and also to float the RFP by August end. He also asked the officials to take feedback from state and national level sports associations for ensuring that the RFP for the operation and maintenance was prepared well. He added that the cricket stadium side of the multi-sports complex would have a viewers gallery of 250 to 300 persons and changing rooms for cricket players.

Officials asked to ensure tap connection in every house

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Chairman of District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee, AK Rawat, while addressing a meeting at Vikas Bhawan, said the UP and Central governments had launched a prestigious scheme to ensure every house had a tap connection.

He said all the pending work in this direction should be accomplished at the earliest.

He said all the leakage in water pipe lines should be repaired and places where the water pipe line was to be set up should finalised at the earliest.

He asked the officials to prepare a list of repair works underway and get it verified. He said laxity in this regard would be dealt with strictly.

He said the Central gov-

ernment was also emphasising upon water conservation and rainwater harvesting projects and under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana all the beneficiaries should be asked to strictly stop wastage of water and also make efforts for conservation of water.

He said the officials concerned should motivate farmers and end users to adopt new methods like sprinkler irrigation and to conserve ground-water as well.

He said no village should be left out from the electrification project under the Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana. He said every home must have an electricity connection.

He said there were many complaints that if any transformer developed a snag, it took several days to replace it

and said the out of order transformer should be replaced immediately.

He said all electricity poles that were in a dilapidated shape should be replaced or set right at the earliest.

He took feedback from the officials regarding the Covid vaccination drive under the National Health Mission and said that the chief medical officer should be informed about the pace of the vaccination drive and the focus should be on vaccinating the maximum number of people.

Rawat said the national old age pension and national family pension benefits of Rs 6,000 per year should be provided to all eligible beneficiaries and no one should be left out from the scheme. He stressed on transparency and warned against any irregulari-

ty.

He directed the NHAI officials to ensure that the water-logging issue of Ghatampur was resolved soon. He took feedback of all the government schemes and projects and directed officials to ensure that they were completed on time with full transparency.

He then distributed devices to beneficiaries of BC Sakhi under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana and National Rural Livelihood Mission.

Prominent among those who took part in the meeting were DS Bhole, SD Pachauri, Mayor Pramila Pandey, MLCs Arun Pathak, Salil Vishnoi, Surendra Maithani, District Magistrate Alok Tiwari, CDO Dr Mahendra Kumar, Municipal Commissioner Dr Shivasharanappa GN and several others.

Substantial rise in brain fog complaints after COVID-19

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Director of University Institute of Health Sciences, CSJM University, Kanpur, Dr Pravin Katiyar, said there had been a substantial rise in brain fog complaints after the infection by novel coronavirus that caused COVID-19.

Addressing a virtual session on ‘Brain Fog’ on Monday, Dr Katiyar said researchers were trying to co-relate the brain problem with the coronavirus and of late cases have been reported of as altered consciousness or damage to brain. He said a recent study carried out in April 2021 found increased levels of inflammatory cytokines in the fluid surrounding the brains of people weeks after they contracted COVID-19. He said inflammation in the brain hindered the ability of neurons to communicate with each other and this may be one of the factors that contributed to brain fog. He said in common terms the symptoms that surfaced in people who suffered an attack of COVID-19 was poor sleep quality, loneliness, depression, increased stress or anxiety, dietary changes and decreased physical activity.

He said there were many ways that COVID-19 could damage the brain. He said apart from this there could be



Lawyer Arvind Dimri being felicitated on Monday.

Pioneer

indirect impact like fatigue, body aches, inability to exercise, headache, and difficulty sleeping. He said the first and most important thing to do was to visit with a doctor and share all of the lingering symptoms one was experiencing. He said medical experts felt that to help clear the brain fog one should avoid alcohol and drugs and stop smoking and give the brain the best chance to heal by avoiding substances which could adversely affect it. He said the best was to sleep well and this was the mantra as the brain and body cleared out toxins and worked towards healing. He said those heavily addicted to mobile phone and computer viewing also faced similar brain fog symptoms and added that excessive screen time could cause long-term vision problems and other eye health issues. He said computer vision syndrome (CVS), also

known as digital eye strain, was associated with activities that stressed the near vision such as using computers, cell phones and other devices. Dr Katiyar said the problematic use of cell phones had been associated with anxiety, stress, and even depression and these habits were causing “digital dementia,” harming important right-brain functions, including short-term memory, attention, and concentration in ways that may or may not be reversible. He said one should spend less time on the computer and mobile phone and take frequent breaks and adopt a positive attitude and reduce stress. He said seven-hour sleep was mandatory along with regular exercise and reduction in alcohol, coffee and other caffeine drinks.

ADHIVAKTA KALYAN SANGHARSH SAMITI FELICITATES LAWYER: The Adhivakta Kalyan Sangharsh

Samiti felicitated lawyer Arvind Dimri at a function organised in Kanpur Bar Association hall here on Monday.

Dimri was felicitated for his effective follow-up of the murder case of his colleague Prashant Nishad which led the court to award life sentence to the accused Rajiv Tewari on Monday. Assistant government counsel Arvind Dimri is also a former secretary of Kanpur Bar Association. General secretary of Kanpur Bar Association, Rakesh Tewari, while felicitating Arvind Dimri, said with the life sentence awarded to the accused in the Prashant Nishad murder case, he gave a message to society that all perpetrators would be convicted as per the laws of the land. Vice-president of KBA, Madhu Yadav, said the legal fraternity would unitedly fight for the conviction of people committing crime against the lawyers. Convener of Adhivakta Kalyan Sangharsh Samiti, Pt Ravindra Sharma, said the Prashant Nishad, after being drugged and looted, was pushed before a speeding train about 21 years ago due to which he had died on the spot. He praised the efforts and vigorous follow-up of the case by Arvind Dimri which, on Monday, convinced the court to award life sentence to the murderer Rajiv Tewari.

Police tracing Rohingyas, Bangladeshis living illegally in Kanpur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The police have launched a drive to zero-in on Rohingyas and Bangladeshis living in the city and their activities.

During the drive, the police have found 16 suspicious persons living in various localities in South City who identified themselves as natives of Barpeta (Assam). On the basis of details collected from them, police have now contacted the Assam police and are verifying their names, addresses, relatives and other information related to them.

It may be recalled that after the arrest of two Al-Qaeda terrorists in Lucknow by the Anti Terrorist-Squad (ATS) a few days ago, several startling revelations had come to fore during investigation and their strings were found to be connected to Kanpur.

During investigation, the city police came across the suspects living in Panki and other localities of Kanpur South. The drive was launched on the directive of the Commissioner of Police Asim Arun who deputed a team to carry out a verification campaign of foreign nationals living in the city in order to nail down the anti-national elements, if any. The team was also asked to verify the identity cards of such suspects. The drive yielded results after South City police spotted 16 suspects in Machhariya locality under Naubasta police station and other nearby pockets.

“During the identification drive, the suspects showed their Aadhaar cards and other documents that had a mention of their address in Barpeta (Assam),” said Additional Commissioner of Police (South) Deepak Bhuker.

Commissioner of Police Asim Arun said, “On the basis of the documents collected from the suspects, the Assam police were being contacted to get their credentials cross-checked. If their documents are found to be fake, action will be initiated against them.”

Two liquor smugglers arrested

KANPUR (PNS): The Maharajpur police have busted a gang involved in smuggling of illicit liquor with the arrest of two persons and recovery of 102 cartons of country-made foreign liquor from them on Monday. Station House Officer Raghendra Singh said on a tip-off, he raided the spot along with police force and seized the truck carrying 102 cartons of illicit liquor being smuggled from Haryana to Jharkhand. The identity of the arrested persons could not be ascertained.

No action yet in kidnapping of teenage sisters

KANPUR (PNS): Nanhu Singh of Purvamir village, Maharajpur, while addressing media persons on Monday, said his two minor daughters, Raksha and Radha, were kidnapped by two village youths Rahul and Sushil on June 28 but the cops were taking no action in the case. He also alleged the involvement of Radha and her sons Hansraj and Ram Milan of Jausahan Kheda village in the kidnapping. Nanhu said that despite his repeated visits to Maharajpur police station, the cops had registered the FIR against only the two accused. He said as the accomplices of the accused were always in contact with the Maharajpur police, the cops had not taken any action against the kidnappers. He alleged that one of the sub-inspectors had even asked him to trace the missing daughters himself as he was unable to get any clue of their whereabouts. He said on contacting the SP (Outer) Ashtabhuj Prasad Singh, the officer had set a time of seven days to work out the case but nothing had been done so far.

NER registers increase in loading

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The sequence of continuous better performance in the field of loading of goods by the North Eastern Railway (NER) is going on.

This achievement is a result of the Business Development Units (BDUs) better marketing strategy at various levels besides availability of advanced facilities being provided for loading of goods and continuous increase in the speed of goods trains etc. In NER in July this year 0.2956 million tonnes (MT) of goods were loaded which compared to the goods loading of 0.1654 million tonnes in the corresponding period last year is



78.71 per cent more, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh said. Similarly, against the set target of 0.2700 million tonnes for July this year 9.48 per cent more loading of goods was done. In the current financial year up to July total 1.1901 million tonnes loading of goods was done which compared to 0.5595 million tonnes in the corresponding period in the last financial year is 112.70 per cent more. In the current financial

year against the set target of 1.1800 million tonnes by July, in NER success has been achieved in loading 0.86 per cent more goods.

NCL director (finance) given additional charge

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

Director (Finance) of Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) Ram Narayan Dubey, has been entrusted with the additional charge of director (personnel) of the company. He replaces former Director (Personnel) of NCL Bimlendu Kumar who superannuated last month. Dubey has been serving as Director (Finance) in NCL since June last year. With 33 years of vast experience in the financial sector, Dubey was working as General Manager (Finance) at Coal India Limited (CIL) headquarters, Kolkata before joining NCL. Dubey started his journey in Coal India in 1987 from CILs Chattisgarh-based



subsidiary SECL. After that in 1988, he was posted in BCCL. From the year 2013 to 2020, he rendered his invaluable services at Coal India HQ, Kolkata. With his managerial skills, he has contributed significantly in the implementation of various projects and plans in Coal

India and NCL.

Meanwhile from NCL family in July including company's director (Personnel) Bimlendu Kumar, General Manager (Materials Management) AK Singh, six officers and 76 employees retired. At a ceremony organised at NCL headquarters recently Satyanarayan (driver/mechanic), Roop Narayan Sahu (pump operator), Millu Ram, (photocopy operator) were present. Addressing the function Director (Technical/Projects & Planning) SS Sinha wished the retired personnel a successful and healthy life. Besides, in all the projects and units of NCL, functions were organised in honour of the retired personnel.

Four criminals arrested

CORRESPONDENT ■ CHANDAULI

Police arrested four criminals following encounters which took place in areas under three different police stations in one night. According to information, during checking near Katsila Mod under Sadar Kotwali area around midnight on Sunday when the police signalled the motorbike-riding miscreants to stop one of them fled while the other opened fire on the police team. At this the police retaliated during which the bullet hit the miscreant's leg and he was immediately taken to the district hospital. He was identified as Piyush Singh of Zamania, Ghazipur. Besides the Sakaldiha Kotwali police and crime branch had an encounter with the other miscreant. However as he was trying flee by firing on the Sakaldiha police team the latter retaliated. As a result the bullet hit Krishnanand Vishwakarma of Kamalpur on his left leg and the police



got him admitted to the district hospital. Meanwhile during the checking near Mathela Road by the Balua police team two persons on a motorcycle were signalled to stop but they did not do so and started running towards Dhanapur. The Balua police station incharge while chasing and encircling them informed the Dhanapur police. Thereafter the police team started checking. The police signalled the bike-borne miscreants to stop at which they started firing on the team as a result of which a constable was injured. When the police

team fired in retaliation, one miscreant was shot in his right leg and the other in the left leg. Along with a motorcycle, one pistol and another of 32 bore were recovered from them. The injured miscreants were taken to the hospital for first aid by the police. Regarding the incident, Superintendent of Police (SP) Amit Kumar said that three miscreants were arrested during the day. After information received from them, four miscreants were arrested late at night. Around three dozen cases have already been registered against them.

One killed in accident

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

One person died in a road accident under Padari police station on Saturday night. Arvind Kumar Singh Patel, a resident of Bargavaan village under Chunar police station, was on the way on Mirzapur-Chunar road on his scooter that he was hit by a unknown vehicle at Dagmagpur as a result he died on the spot. On getting information Padari police reached the spot, informed the family of the victim and took the body into custody for completing the legal formalities.

Meanwhile on person who was injured in a road accident died during treatment on Saturday night. Ashok Kumar Sahni (54), a resident of Sarainya Kamarghata village under Padari police station, was

on the way on his bicycle when he was hit by a tractor at Sindhora Tiraha near Amba Devi temple under Padari police station. He was brought to a hospital in Varanasi in an injured condition where he died in the hospital during treatment in late at night. On getting information the Padari police reached the hospital and took the body to complete the legal formalities.

BOY RECOVERED: The Jigna police on Sunday recovered a missing boy. The locals found a missing boy at Bhaanvaan Chauraha under Jigna police station and handed over him to the police. He disclosed his name as Rajkumar, a resident of Sihawal village near Renukoot, Sonbhadra. The police was trying to find out about the parents of the boy for handing

him over to them.

THEFT: Some thieves stole ₹20,000 in cash besides fruits from a fruit shop on Hargarh road under Jigna police station on Saturday night. Babloo Sonkar, a resident of Gonaura under Jigna police station, has the fruit shop. On Sunday morning he found the lock of his kiosk broken and ₹20000 cash had been stolen along with fruits. On his information the police reached on the spot and inquired about the matter. Meanwhile goods kept in a kiosk in Majhiyar village on Lalganj-Halia road under Halia police station were reduced to ashes when a fire broke out there on Friday night. As a result gas cylinder kept there too exploded. On getting information its owner, Kamlesh Pal, reached the spot but by then everything had been reduced to ashes.

291 doses of Covid vaccine administered

PNS ■ VARANASI

Under the direction of Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Varanasi Vijay Kumar Panjari vaccination for the prevention of coronavirus infection in Varanasi division is going on continuously.

In this sequence under the leadership of Additional Chief Medical Superintendent Dr RR Singh, at North Eastern Railway Divisional Hospital, Lahartara, here on Thursday the Covid vaccination work of contract employees working at various railway stations at the division besides associated with railway service through other means was being done in the form of a campaign by the railway medical team and the one

constituted by the state government. In collaboration with the district administration, a total of 291 doses of Covid vaccine were administered on Thursday, in which Varanasi division's eight employees, family members of 30 employees, including two contract labourers and 251 non-railway people were administered the Covid vaccine. At the Divisional Hospital vaccination of aged, physically disabled and sick persons is being done in their private vehicles in its lobby. Besides, employees and their family members were also informed to follow the coronavirus prevention guidelines i.e. proper wearing of masks, washing hands frequently and thoroughly besides maintaining physical distanc-

ing. Apart from it in various rail sections, station premises, stations and trains of the division deep cleaning, sanitisation and cleanliness was being done daily. Moreover in the main stations of the division for railway passengers and in the station premises for awareness of passengers and employees messages related to the prevention of coronavirus infection and vaccination against it are being displayed through posters. Marking have been made in stations and railway premises for following social distancing. Compliance of Covid-19 prevention protocol is being ensured in the station premises and trains and strict action is being taken against the violators, Public Relations Officer (PRO) Ashok Kumar said.

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

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.

are Made in India by Defence Shipyards.

During the deployment in the Indo Pacific, the ships are scheduled to participate in bilateral exercises with Royal Malaysian Navy (Samudra Laxmana), Vietnamese



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.

Peoples' Navy, Republic of Philippines Navy, Republic of Singapore Navy (SIMBEX), Indonesian Navy (Samudra Shakti) and Royal Australian Navy (AUS-INDEXX).

Further, they will also participate in multilateral

exercise MALABAR-21 alongside Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, Royal Australian Navy and the United States Navy in Western Pacific.

The Indian Navy undertakes regular deployments to

friendly foreign countries and Indian and the Pacific Ocean regions in furtherance of the Prime Minister's initiative of 'Security and Growth for All in the Region – SAGAR'.

Further, such engagements build 'bridges of friend-

ship' and strengthen international cooperation. These maritime initiatives enhance synergy and coordination between the Indian Navy and friendly countries, based on common maritime interests and commitment towards

Freedom of Navigation at sea.

Besides regular port calls, the task group will operate in conjunction with friendly navies, to build military relations and develop interoperability in conduct of maritime operations.

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 Nagaland 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.

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 naive, 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 naive 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 (EUs) in 16 countries including, India, Philippines, Iran, Mexico, with EUs 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.

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 Prabhatpuri 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 alerting 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 protesters 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 legislature 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 aunties 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 hoodligans? 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

BEWARE 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 Mathukumalli 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

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.

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

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

SOUND BITE

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 Marjine

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



UTTAM GUPTA

Unshackling of discoms will take away the leverage parties enjoy to serve their populist goal of giving cheap/free power to people 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 flat 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, avoiding, and distribution, thereby wheeling 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 ₹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 divested. 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.

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



Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches e-RUPI in New Delhi

PTI

everyone in 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 digital 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 recovered sharply as positive cues from global equities and strong rebound in auto

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.

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 while decent improvement in monthly auto sales volume aided original equipment manufacturers (OEMs).

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) moved up 16 places to rank 205 but Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) dropped 61 places to 212th rank.

This is the second straight year of SBI improving its ranking. It had moved up 15 places last year.

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) was ranked 243rd, 53 notches lower than last year's ranking.

Rajesh Exports was another firm that improved its ranking with a massive 114 positions jump to 348th rank.

Tata Motors slipped 20 places to rank 357 and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) fell to 394 from 309 last year. Fortune said companies are ranked by total revenues for their respective fiscal years ended on or before March 31, 2021.

While SBI had a revenue of USD 52 billion, IOC had revenue of USD 50 billion. ONGC had revenue of USD 46 billion and Rajesh Exports USD 35 billion.

“Walmart claimed the top spot for the eighth consecutive year, and for the 16th time since 1995,” Fortune said.

Exports up 47.91 pc in July to \$35.17 bn

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country's exports grew by 47.91 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.

NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	15874.90	15892.90	15834.65	15885.15	122.10
TITAN	1728.00	1776.00	1725.00	1776.00	61.45
SHREECEM	28280.20	29375.00	28280.20	29260.10	994.35
BPCL	448.05	459.00	446.50	459.10	13.60
ADANIEXPORTS	682.00	695.00	678.00	694.25	19.75
EICHERMOT	2558.80	2615.00	2535.30	2603.50	73.25
IOC	104.50	105.85	103.65	105.85	2.70
GRASIM	1565.00	1614.20	1558.65	1591.00	39.65
BRITANNIA	3446.70	3542.00	3440.05	3505.05	81.65
M&M	750.00	759.05	744.60	757.10	13.90
ONGC	114.95	117.15	114.80	117.15	2.15
TCS	3180.00	3224.90	3167.00	3220.00	52.55
RELIANCE	2054.30	2079.40	2041.15	2068.50	33.20
AXISBANK	715.00	725.55	712.00	720.35	11.45
MARUTI	7100.00	7107.45	7031.00	7073.00	95.30
WIPRO	588.20	595.40	582.25	595.00	7.85
INFY	1627.45	1634.75	1619.20	1632.00	21.50
JSWSTEEL	741.40	751.75	733.50	746.60	9.65
HCTECH	1034.00	1039.00	1023.05	1036.35	11.40
ITC	206.45	207.50	205.45	207.20	2.25
HDFCLIFE	669.00	671.45	665.40	670.35	6.30
TATAMOTORS	299.15	299.40	295.60	296.70	2.75
INDUSDBK	91.80	99.15	98.45	99.00	9.00
IT	1606.30	1618.00	1602.05	1616.00	14.55
HEROMOTOCO	2770.10	2796.80	2765.25	2787.80	24.50
HDFC	2466.00	2487.00	2452.10	2462.55	21.40
ULTRACEMCO	7622.05	7718.80	7621.30	7649.00	66.80
KOTAKBANK	1665.00	1677.30	1657.50	1668.00	13.20
ASIANPAINT	2985.60	2986.80	2960.65	2978.00	19.55
BHARTIARTL	566.00	569.95	560.00	562.20	3.35
SBI	111.05	112.80	110.95	110.25	6.65
SAIL	434.75	436.70	431.80	434.35	2.55
TATACONSUM	763.00	771.00	756.60	759.70	3.45
CIPLA	928.30	933.60	913.40	923.55	3.50
HINDALCO	448.00	452.25	442.70	446.00	1.20
BAJAJ-AUTO	3874.00	3880.00	3813.20	3888.00	8.40
COALINDIA	144.30	144.90	143.10	143.60	0.30
DIVISLAB	4893.50	4962.15	4893.50	4915.40	9.30
NESTLEIND	17795.80	17900.80	17675.00	17701.00	-1.65
HINDUNILVR	2342.00	2353.40	2324.60	2332.95	-0.35
POWERGRID	171.50	172.00	169.30	171.10	-0.05
ICICIBANK	684.05	688.00	677.00	682.00	-0.50
HDFCBANK	433.00	435.00	416.25	423.80	-2.65
DREDDY	4739.00	4750.50	4687.60	4701.50	-9.70
NTPC	118.60	118.75	117.10	117.90	-0.30
SUNPHARMA	785.00	801.90	764.10	772.00	-1.95
TECHM	1210.00	1214.00	1195.55	1206.00	-3.55
BAIFINANCE	6270.00	6283.95	6170.00	6202.45	-25.65
BAJAJFINSV	14375.00	14399.95	14082.55	14134.00	-88.20
TATASTEEL	1446.00	1447.00	1405.50	1413.00	-21.30
UPL	808.55	810.65	785.05	790.35	-18.20

NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	39607.60	39577.20	39485.95	39721.35	357.70
PEL	2347.35	2500.00	2337.00	2486.00	167.40
HINDPETRO	262.30	274.30	261.95	273.80	12.65
DLF	340.00	354.90	337.95	351.00	13.35
VEDL	303.10	319.55	300.00	312.90	11.05
PNB	39.75	40.95	39.60	40.90	1.40
BANDHANBNK	294.90	307.80	294.25	299.95	8.70
ABBOTINDIA	1900.00	1999.70	1899.00	1955.00	537.25
GAIL	140.95	143.30	139.35	142.95	3.40
BOSCHLTD	15073.05	15347.00	15005.10	15270.00	301.75
AMBUJACEM	412.00	419.95	415.45	419.25	8.10
MUTHOOTFIN	1565.90	1595.50	1557.00	1584.00	29.25
ADANITRANS	911.35	927.65	885.00	910.00	16.55
LUPIN	1114.80	1127.00	1110.10	1126.00	18.60
NAUKRI	5250.00	5349.00	5240.90	5300.00	85.20
ADANIENT	1435.00	1455.00	1424.10	1443.15	22.90
MCDOWELL-N	647.00	654.50	642.00	650.70	9.95
SIEMENS	1961.80	1980.00	1947.40	1979.40	26.20
ACC	2395.00	2434.40	2381.20	2424.00	29.90
HAVELLS	1180.00	1205.00	1176.55	1184.95	11.30
INDIGO	1657.00	1674.90	1650.00	1663.00	15.65
CALIDAH	590.00	593.75	584.75	591.50	5.40
BIOCON	387.30	391.80	386.45	389.80	3.45
PETRONET	220.85	220.85	218.05	220.00	1.75
UPL	1438.25	1450.00	1430.25	1438.50	9.90
MRF	8049.00	8149.95	8013.30	8040.00	532.55
HDFCAMC	2890.00	2894.00	2833.15	2871.00	16.85
ALKEM	3455.00	3500.00	3432.05	3473.00	19.40
APOLLOHOSP	4059.65	4092.95	4035.05	4055.00	20.00
GODREJCP	990.05	1007.25	990.05	992.45	4.65
TORNTPHARM	3088.00	3105.00	3058.10	3085.10	13.90
LTI	4737.00	4775.35	4684.85	4705.15	20.80
YESBANK	12.85	12.90	12.70	12.80	0.05
SBCARD	1038.00	1044.45	1029.95	1040.05	3.30
INDUSTOWER	225.00	225.30	220.20	222.70	0.60
AUROPHARMA	920.10	924.70	912.65	918.00	2.00
DMART	3524.80	3524.80	3486.00	3506.95	6.15
ICICIPRULI	640.80	645.00	631.00	634.00	1.05
IGL	562.00	562.00	551.85	554.05	0.70
GLAND	3958.90	401.00	3880.00	3993.00	2.55
PGHIL	12690.00	12770.00	1245.05	12685.00	4.40
BERGEPAINT	845.00	849.30	838.30	841.80	-1.75
ADANIGREEN	882.40	900.00	874.80	879.95	-2.35
DABUR	605.00	609.00	594.00	599.00	-1.70
JUBLFOOD	3770.00	3774.80	3725.00	3750.95	-24.20
NMDC	182.35	183.50	177.15	180.00	-1.20
BAJAJHLONG	4025.00	4040.40	3966.55	3990.00	-33.05
PIDILITIND	2299.90	2299.90	2255.80	2259.00	-19.80
ICICI	1477.30	1488.60	1466.00	1457.00	-14.75
COLPAL	1705.00	1716.00	1670.00	1681.95	-22.45
MARICO	550.00	552.15	532.75	536.50	-10.20

BSE 500

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP
GRANULES	382.00	390.80	378.50	383.20
TATAPOWER	126.70	133.95	125.50	133.45
RELIANCE	2047.20	2079.00	2041.00	2071.50
TATASTEEL	1448.90	1448.90	1405.90	1409.95
IRCTC	2474.00	2512.00	2423.00	2468.35
CHOLAFIN	475.90	528.80	470.00	526.35
SUNPHARMA	781.00	799.60	764.70	774.45
SBIN	435.40	436.60	431.85	434.85
IDEA	8.33	8.54	8.20	8.25
TCS	3173.55	3224.65	3166.05	3217.90
BHEL	57.70	61.30	57.20	59.85
DLF	340.50	354.75	337.90	351.80
BAJFINANCE	6270.00	6278.80	6170.75	6198.95
ADANIANT	1435.55	1444.00	1424.00	1437.25
SRF	8660.00	9072.00	8649.95	9018.00
ULBHSGFIN	278.45	291.50	276.55	286.80
ESCOLTS	1178.25	1204.00	1158.00	1200.15
VEDL	304.00	319.40	300.20	313.10
ADANIEXPORTS	683.00	695.00	678.00	692.05
BHARTIARTL	565.05	570.00	559.65	565.05
SAIL	143.30	143.50	139.00	139.45
BANDHANBNK	292.50	307.70	292.50	299.60
AUOBANK	1230.00	1231.55	1207.75	1220.30
PEL	2348.00	2500.05	2337.95	2480.15
HDFC	2461.00	2487.55	2425.40	2462.30
CONCOR	657.60	696.00	654.40	691.20
GUJGAS	721.00	766.05	720.70	754.65
CIPLA	925.95	933.05	913.50	921.80
AXISBANK	714.20	725.50	712.50	720.95
BRITANNIA	343.50	354.00	342.00	350.75
TATAMOTORS	300.40	300.40	295.55	296.80
PIIND	2980.00	3355.00	2962.00	3318.90

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 has 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 MSE, 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 rejoin peace talks. **AP**

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**

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,

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**

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, 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**

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. **IANS**

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. **AP**

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**

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 minister for the Middle East, sum-

moned Mohsen Baharvand in response to the attack on MV Mercer Street on Thursday, which killed a British national and a Romanian. "Minister Cleverly reiterated that Iran must immediately cease actions

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

FROM PAGE 1

CHAK DE INDIA MOMENT IN TOKYO

India's undeniable woman power in sports also came to the fore in athletics where discus thrower Kamalpreet Kaur finished a creditable sixth in her first Olympics in a rain-interrupted final.

The 25-year-old Kaur, who 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 finish sixth and equal 2010 Commonwealth Games Gold-medallist Krishna Poonia's performance in the 2012 London Olympics.

The youngster, who was without her personal coach, looked nervous and short of confidence, perhaps due to lack of international exposure but she did hold her own in a field where the gold-medallist Valarie Allman produced a 68.98m throw.

Sprinter Dutee Chand, however, ended her campaign on a disappointing note by failing to qualify for the 200m semifinals.

Equestrian Fouaad Mirza, meanwhile, finished a creditable 23rd in eventing after he became the first Indian to reach the final of the event.

Mirza and his equine Seigneur Medicott sneaked into the top-25 in the morning to make the jumping finals.

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, who was the first equestrian to qualify for the Olympics since Imtiaz Anees in Sydney 2000.

It was finally an end to their misery as Indian shooters ended their campaign at the Games. Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Sanjeev Rajput failed to qualify for the finals of the men's 50m rifle 3 positions event, finishing 21st and 32nd respectively at the Asaka Shooting Range.

The Indian shooting team will be returning without a medal for the second straight time at the Olympics.

On Tuesday, the men's hockey team will compete in its semifinal against world champion Belgium, aiming to book its first Olympic medal in over 40 years.

Also, the wrestling contingent will begin its campaign with medals expected from the likes of Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat. Apart from Bajrang (65kg) and Vinesh (53kg), Ravi Dahiya (57kg) is expected to deliver at the biggest stage in the next few days.

The 19-year-old Sonam Malik will be first to take mat in the 62kg category, pitted against Mongolia's Asian Championship silver medallist Bolortuya Khurelkhuu.

RAHUL INVITES OPP LEADERS TO PLAN STRATEGY ON PEGASUS ROW

The meeting is being held to forge unity among the opposition ranks on the issue. Asserting that "the voice of the Opposition is being suppressed in Parliament", Rahul Gandhi has accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah of tarnishing India's democracy by "using Pegasus against India, its institutions". Rahul and other Opposition leaders have questioned why the issue cannot be discussed in Parliament. They have stressed that the Opposition is not disturbing Parliament proceedings by raising the issue but "only fulfilling our responsibility."

The Supreme Court is also scheduled to take up on August 5 petitions seeking an independent probe into allegations of surveillance using the Pegasus software made by Israeli cyber security firm NSO Group. The petitions have been listed before a bench of Chief Justice NV Ramana and Justice Surya Kant. There are three petitions before the court in the matter, one filed by senior journalists N Ram and Shashi Kumar, another by advocate ML Sharma, and a third one by CPI(M) Rajya Sabha MP John Brittas.

NITISH BACKS OPP DEMAND FOR PROBE INTO SNOOPGATE

Addressing reporters in Patna, the Bihar Chief Minister said people know only what's been said in Parliament and what the media is showing, but to know the whole truth, the matter should be probed.

"In today's time, people can misuse technology. There should be a probe so that this can't be misused to exploit anybody. If the Opposition is demanding discussion for so many days, then there should be a discussion on the matter," Nitish

Kumar said.

CHARGESHEET AGAINST SUSHIL, 12 OTHERS FILED FOR WRESTLER'S MURDER

Sushil Kumar and his associates had allegedly assaulted 23-year-old wrestler Sagar Dhankar and two of his friends Sonu and Amit Kumar on the intervening night of May 4 and 5. Sagar succumbed to the injuries later.

Police had earlier called Sushil the main culprit and mastermind of the murder and said that there is electronic evidence wherein he and his associates could be seen beating Dhankar with sticks.

Sushil, facing charges of murder, culpable homicide, criminal conspiracy among others offences, is currently lodged in Tihar Jail.

Delhi Police had filed an FIR in the case under sections 302 (murder), 307 (attempt to murder), 308 (culpable homicide), 364 (kidnapping), 365 (kidnapping), 325 (causing grievous hurt), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 341 (wrongful restraint), 342 (wrongful confinement) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

The case has also been registered under 452 (house trespass), 188 (Disobedience to order by public servant), 269 (negligent act likely to spread infection of disease), 120-B (criminal conspiracy) and 34 (common intention), 147 (rioting), 148 (unlawful assembly) of the IPC.

It also includes sections 506 (criminal intimidation), 392 (robbery), 394 (voluntarily causing hurt in committing robbery), 397 (dacoity), 411 (dishonestly receiving stolen property) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC and various sections under the Arms Act.

RAINS LIKELY TO BE NORMAL IN AUG, SEPT: IMD

Every year, the IMD issues forecast for the second half of the southwest monsoon, for August and September. The spatial distribution suggests that below normal to normal rainfall is likely over many parts of the north, east and northeast parts of the country. Normal to above-normal rainfall is most likely to be experienced over most parts of peninsular India and adjacent central India, the IMD said. The IMD has also started issuing a month-wise forecast for the four-month rainfall season from this year. For August, it said, "Rainfall averaged over the country as a whole is most likely to be normal (94 to 106 percent of LPA)." The LPA of the August rainfall over the country as a whole for the period 1961-2010 is 258.1 mm.

Mohapatra added that currently the Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs) and the atmospheric conditions over the equatorial Pacific Ocean indicate neutral ENSO (El Nino) conditions. The SSTs are one of the major factors that influence the Indian monsoon. The SSTs over central and east equatorial the Pacific Ocean are showing a cooling tendency.

The latest forecasts suggest that ENSO neutral conditions are likely to continue during the remaining part of the monsoon season and increased the possibility of re-emergence of the La Nina conditions in the end of the monsoon season or thereafter. La Nina is associated with the cooling of the Pacific Ocean waters, while El Nino is linked to its heating. Mohapatra said it has been observed that if October, November and December have La Nina conditions, then it helps in cyclogenesis (development or strengthening of cyclonic circulation in atmosphere) over the Bay of Bengal.

Rainfall between 96 per cent and 104 per cent of LPA is considered "normal"; between 90 per cent and 96 per cent is considered "below normal" and between 104 per cent and 110 per cent is considered "above normal" by IMD.

J&J TAKES BACK PLEA FOR VAX NOD IN INDIA

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.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the Johnson & Johnson vaccine's efficacy was 66.3 per cent for mild to moderate Covid-19 and 76.3 per cent for severe to critical infection. Additionally, it provides 100 per cent protection from hospitalisation for Covid 28 days after vaccination.

Johnson & Johnson has said its single-shot vaccine showed strong promise against the Delta variant and other emerging strains.

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 chickungunya.

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.

Sena workers damage 'Adani Airport' signboard in Mumbai

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

An irate group of Shiv Sainiks vandalised a brand new "Adani Airport" signboard erected by Adani Airport Holding Ltd. (AAHL). "It is Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport. We had undertaken an agitation and had the city named as CSMA. We do not accept if the airport is named after any industrialist. It will remain as CSMA," 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 reservations 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 afternoon," 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 trying to destabilise Mumbai and Maharashtra by resorting to this kind of

Sena MP and party spokesperson Sanjay Raut over the renaming over the CSMA as Adani Airport Holding Ltd. (AAHL).

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acts? And for what?," Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar asked.

Meanwhile, reacting to the Shiv Sena's protests, an AAHL spokesperson 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 merely 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 CSMA 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 subsidiary 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.

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 mucormycoses. 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 paraesthesia 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.

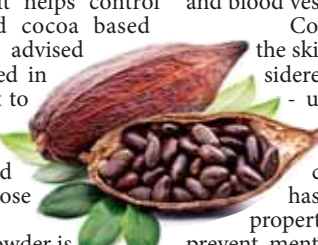
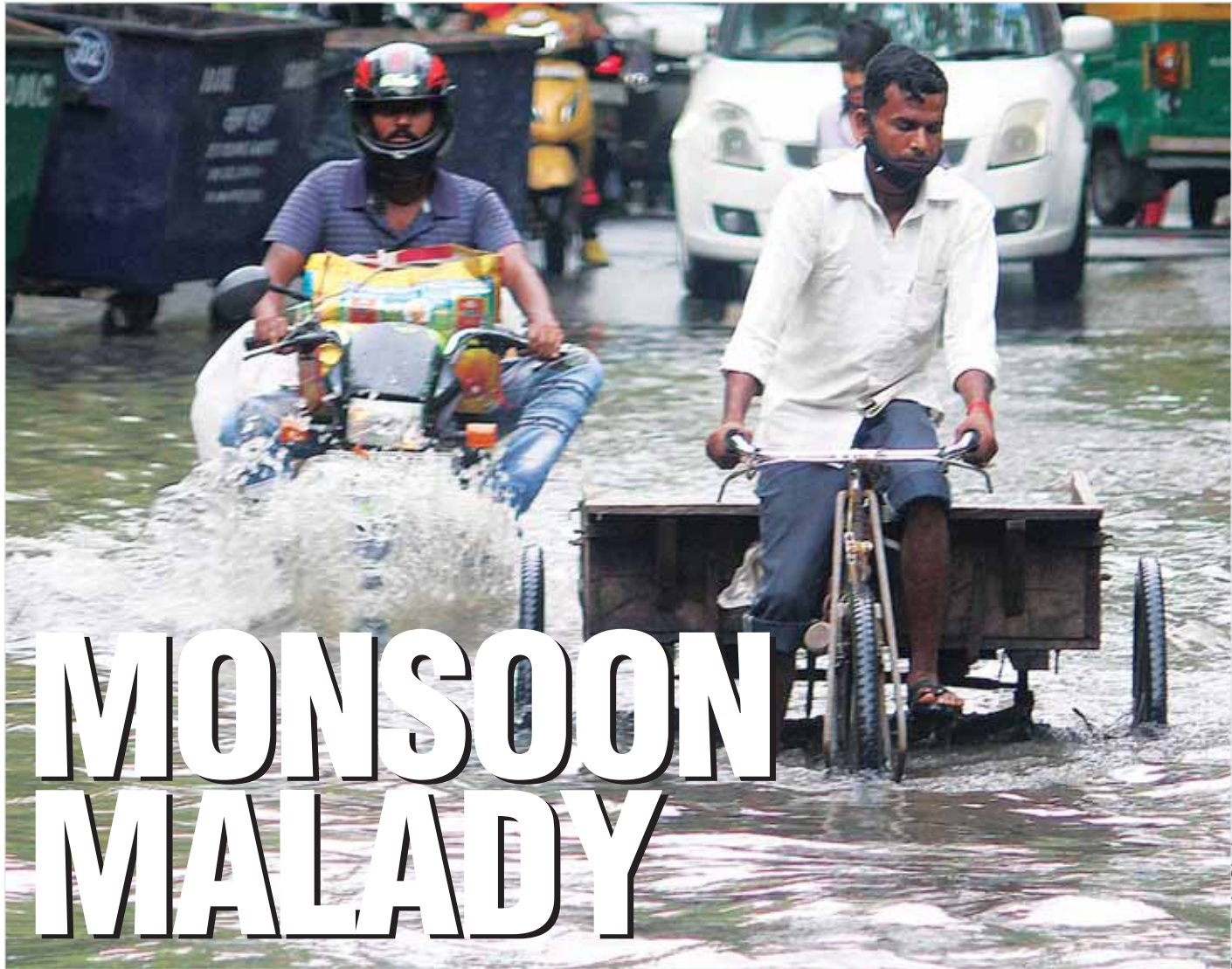
COVIDCARE

COCOA: 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 cure cancer - used particularly in the cure of prostate and colon cancer. It has anti-depressant properties that can help prevent mental exertion and facilitate certain physiological processes and elevate the mood.

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 CDSCO, 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. 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 deci-

sion 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.

RE-TENDER NOTICE

No.SSA/CW/KGBV-VI to X/254/2020/ 7042



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



ONE STEP AT A TIME

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 Syng.fit, a one-stop solution for your home workouts.)

circulate air to help you breathe normally. Also, wear comfortable shoes for free movement.

- Eat healthy and nutritious food in sufficient quantities an hour before the exercise. Forget about dieting post-COVID19 illness.
- Staying hydrated while recovering from the illness is imperative. Ensure that you drink ample water before and after exercising.
- Don't exhaust yourself by exercising in hot weather. Try working out early in the morning or in the evening. If by chance you can't work out in the morning, then meditate during the afternoon, but don't indulge in rough workout sessions.
- At the same time, avoid exercising indoors with the air conditioner on. Extreme cold weather can leave you breathless which can lead to an uneven flow of blood in the vessels and stressed muscles.
- Doctors claim that weakness can last up to six months after recovering, depending on a person's immune system and energy levels. If your friend can run 20-25 laps of the field post-recovery, doesn't mean that your body can also tolerate the same.
- Immediately stop working out if you experience any of the following symptoms:
 - 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 Shashanka. 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 GAUHAH 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.

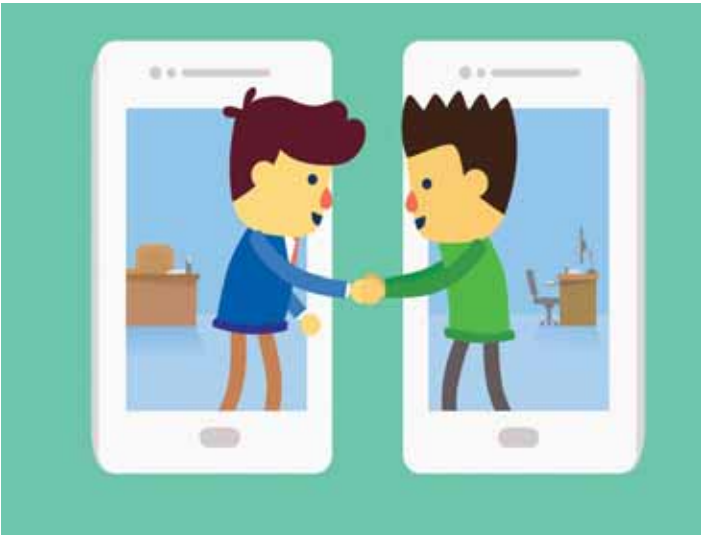
Gauhar started her journey as a model and was one of the participants in 2002 for the Femina Miss India beauty pageant. She went on gaining popularity with many non-fiction TV shows like *The Khan Sisters*, *Ticket to Bollywood*, *India's Raw Star*, *I Can Do That* and different seasons of *Bigg Boss*.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





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)
 - **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. **PTI**

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 semifinal 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 taking their 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 semifinal 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 would 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 manges 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. **PTI**

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 Intiaz 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. **PTI**

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. **PTI**

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

PTI

decided to move out of the Pulella 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. **PTI**

GOPI SIR CONGRATULATED, SAINA 'NO'

P V Sindhu said she received congratulatory message from chief national badminton coach Pulella 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. **PTI**