

WORLD 6
XI MEETS TOP MILITARY OFFICIALS IN LHASA

MONEY 7
INDIA IN EXCITING PHASE OF GROWTH: PAYTM CEO

SPORT 8
MANPREET & CO START WITH WIN

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India rejoices at Chanu's feat

21-year-long wait for weightlifting medal at Olympics ends



Mirabai Chanu reacts during a successful attempt in the 49 kg category of Women's Weightlifting event of the Summer Olympics 2020 in Tokyo on Saturday. PTI

PTI ■ TOKYO

A confident smile never leaving her face, Mirabai Chanu ended India's over two-decade long wait for a weightlifting medal at the Olympics, clinching the 49kg category silver medal five years

after leaving the same platform in tears following a disastrous debut. With her historic triumph, she ensured that India was second on the medals tally for a brief while, a feat that has never been achieved before by the country. It was also the first time that India managed to win a medal on the opening day competitions.

The diminutive iron lady from Manipur lifted a total of 202kg (87kg+115kg) to better Karnam Malleswari's bronze in the 2000 Sydney Olympics. With this, she exercised the ghosts of the 2016 Games where she had failed to log a single legitimate lift, leaving her shattered. "I am very happy, I have been dreaming of this for the

past five years. I am very proud of myself right now. I did try for gold but even silver is a great achievement for me," Chanu told reporters after her career-defining triumph for which she had been training in the US for past few months. The 2016 experience was a watershed in her career and Chanu had spoken about how

Mother in tears as Mirabai sports 'good luck' earrings

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A historic silver medal and a radiant smile were not the only eye-catching things about Mirabai Chanu on Saturday, her gold earrings shaped like Olympic rings were as striking, a gift from her mother who sold her own jewellery for them five years ago. The hope was that the earrings would bring her 'good luck'.

It didn't happen in the Rio 2016 Games but Chanu made the little sacrifice count in confused she had felt during her debut at the biggest stage. There was none of those nerves to be seen on Saturday, just a very composed and focused athlete who knew she was destined for the podium.

"I am very happy to win the first medal for India at these Games. I don't just belong to Manipur, I belong to the whole country," she said in response to a query on what it meant for her as a Manipuri. "I would like to thank my coach Vijay Sharma and the support staff for their continuous hard work, motivation and training," she added.

Tokyo this morning with a silver medal and Saikhom Ohngbi Tombi Leima has struggled to stop her tears from flowing ever since. "I saw the earrings on TV. I gave them to her in 2016 before the (Rio) Olympics. I have made it for her from the gold pieces and savings I have so that it brings luck and success," Leima told PTI from her home in Manipur where a considerable number of relatives, friends and well-wishers gathered to watch Chanu script history in Tokyo.

Could not have asked for a happier start to Tokyo2020! India is elated by Mirabai Chanu's stupendous performance. Congratulations to her for winning the Silver medal in weightlifting. Her success motivates every Indian. — Narendra Modi

Heartiest congratulations to Mirabai Chanu for starting the medal tally for India in the Tokyo Olympics 2020 by winning silver medal. — Ram Nath Kovind

Better safe than sorry: Embassy to Indians in Af

'Avoid travel as Af situation dangerous'

As fighting rages in Afghanistan, the Indian embassy there on Saturday said the situation "remains dangerous" and advised all Indian nationals there to exercise caution. The advisory came days after the IAF planes evaded more than 50 diplomatic staff of the Indian consulate in Kandahar.

The note of caution by the embassy in Kabul on Saturday urged Indians staying, visiting, and working in Afghanistan to exercise utmost vigilance at all times and avoid all non-essential travel as security situation in Afghanistan remains dangerous. It also warned Indian nationals are not exceptions, and they additionally face a serious threat of kidnapping. The detailed advisory also asked the Indian nationals to remain vigilant with security at workplace, place of residence and also during movement to their places of work. It is recommended that all types of non-essential movements be avoided. Movements especially during peak commuting hours should also be avoided. While traveling on roads, maintain distance from possi-



ble targets like military convoys, official vehicles of Government and Ministries, high ranking officials, law enforcement agencies, it cautioned. Indians were also asked to refrain from going to crowded markets, shopping complexes, restaurants and other public places. All essential movement may please be kept as discrete as possible, it said. It also advised traveling outside the main cities should be strictly avoided. Moreover, all Indian nationals arriving in Afghanistan are advised to register with the Embassy.

CAPSULE

BATLA HOUSE CONVICT ARIZ KHAN MOVES HC
New Delhi: Ariz Khan, who was awarded the death penalty for the murder of decorated Delhi Police Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma in connection with the sensational 2008 Batla House encounter case, has moved the Delhi High Court challenging this conviction.

ARMY JAWAN DIES IN MINE BLAST ALONG LOC
Jammu/Hamirpur: A 27-year-old Army jawan was killed in a mine blast along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said on Saturday.

MARKETS

SENSEX: 52,975.90 (+136.56)
NIFTY: 18,938.05 (+32.88)
GOLD: 47,472.58 (+162.06)
SILVER: 67,135.90 (+208.64)

WEATHER

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Delhi Metro, buses to run at full capacity; theatres at 50%

But no standing allowed in Metro

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In the latest unlock guidelines issued on Saturday for the national Capital, the Delhi Metro and public buses in the city will operate at full seating capacity, while cinema halls, theatres and multiplexes will open with 50 per cent occupancy from Monday. The city witnessed an unprecedented surge of cases and deaths during the second wave of coronavirus in April and May. The situation seems to have been improving over the past few weeks, allowing the Government to reopen the city in a phased manner. The latest unlock guidelines by the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) said the Delhi



Metro, the city's lifeline, will be allowed to operate with 100 per cent seating capacity from Monday but no standing passenger will be allowed. Cinema halls, theatres and multiplexes will be allowed to open with 50 per cent seating capacity from July 26, while

business-to-business (B2B) exhibitions will also be allowed, but only with business visitors, the guidelines said. The order also directed that the number of people allowed at marriage functions and last rites will be raised to 100 from Monday. Spas can also open from July 26 but their employees have to be fully vaccinated or undergo RT-PCR test fortnightly, the DDMA said. Delhi faced a brutal second wave of the pandemic that claimed a large number of lives daily. The rapid rise in the number of cases led to a shortage of medical oxygen at various city hospitals. On April 20, the city had reported a record 28,395 cases. On April 22, the case positivity rate was 36.2 per cent, the highest so far. At 448, the highest number of deaths was reported on May 3.



People stranded in floodwaters watch others being rescued at Kolhapur in Maharashtra on Saturday. Officials say landslides and flooding triggered by heavy monsoon rain have killed more than 100 people in western India. AP

CBI raids 40 locations in fake arms licence case

Premises of 20 gun dealers, IAS officers in J&K, Delhi searched

PTI ■ JAMMU

The CBI on Saturday conducted searches at around 40 locations in Srinagar, Jammu, Udhampur, Rajouri, Anantnag, Baramulla and Delhi, including the premises of two IAS officers, in the ongoing investigation of a case related to arms licence racket. The CBI teams searched the premises of around 20 gun dealers and other public servants from early morning across multiple locations. Some officials in connivance with gun dealers were involved in the issuance of more than 2.78 lakh arms licences to the non-entitled persons.



According to a statement issued by the CBI headquarters, "CBI had registered two cases on the request of J&K Government and further notification from Government of India, and taken over the investigation of two FIRs i.e No. 18 of 2018 dated 17.05.2018, earlier registered at Police Station Vigilance Organisation Kashmir (VOK), and FIR No. 11 of 2018 dated 17.05.2018 of Police Station Vigilance Organisation Jammu (VO) on the allegations of bulk issuance of arms licences in the erstwhile State of J&K during the period 2012 to 2016." The CBI collected documents about the issuance of these arms licences allegedly spread over 22 districts of J&K.

During investigation and scrutiny of documents, the CBI reportedly found that certain gun dealers in connivance with District Magistrates were allegedly issued such illegal arms licences. The persons who got these licences were not residents of the places from where the said arms licences were issued. Senior IAS officer Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, who served as DM in three districts of Reasi, Udhampur and Kathua during the said period of investigation, posted a tweet confirming the raid at his residence. "With reference to media reports I've to confirm that CBI did search my residence and found nothing incriminating in the ongoing arms licence probe. Media friends may note the probe covers 4 years across all dists. I am fully answerable to CBI for my tenure," Dr Shahid Iqbal wrote giving details of total arms licences issued during his tenure.

Blinken: Will discuss human rights in India as we share values

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Secretary of State Antony Blinken will raise issues of human rights and democracy with Indian officials during his first visit to New Delhi as the two nations have more values in common on those fronts than otherwise, according to a senior US official. Blinken is scheduled to arrive in New Delhi late on July 27. During his stay in the country, he will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. The Ministry of External Affairs said in New Delhi that National Security Adviser Ajit Doval will also meet Blinken. "With respect to the human rights and democracy question, yes, you're right; I will tell you that we will raise it, and we will continue that conversation, because we firmly believe that we have more values in common on those fronts



than we don't," Dean Thompson, the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, told reporters during a conference call ahead of the visit. "We believe India is going to be a really important part of continuing those conversations and building strong efforts on those fronts in partnership as we go forward," Thompson said in response to a question. India has previously rejected criticism by foreign governments and human rights groups on allegations that civil liberties have eroded in the country.

Massive evacuation in rain-ravaged Maha

89,000 moved to safety; relief ops continue

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

More than 89,000 people were evacuated from the rain-ravaged coastal Konkan region and several parts of western Maharashtra as multiple agencies continued rescue and relief operations in the flood-affected areas of the State on Saturday. Despite a let-up in the rain in most parts of the State, large parts of western Maharashtra districts of Satara, Sangli and Kolhapur remained thick sheets of floodwater, while the towns of Chiplun, Khed in Sangli district and other areas in coastal Konkan region continued to reel under inundation. Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray visited Talai village in Mahad taluka of Raigad district where

more than 50 people were killed in a massive landslide on Friday. He assured the affected people that the State Government would, apart from giving compensation to the affected families, undertake rehabilitation of the displaced people across the coastal Konkan region and other parts of the State. As many as 89,333 people were rendered homeless as they were evacuated in various flood-affected districts of coastal Konkan region and several parts of Western Maharashtra. Sangli district in western Maharashtra bore maximum brunt of the flood situation arising from the heavy rain battering the region for the past four days. While 40,573 people have been evacuated to safer places in Sangli district, the neighbouring Kolhapur district accounted for the evacuation of 40,882 people. As many as 2,681 marooned people were shifted to safer places in Thane district, there were evacuation

of people in other districts like Ratnagiri (1200), Raigad (1000), Satara (734) and Pune (263). Due to heavy rainfall in the district and heavy discharge from the Koyna dam, rivers in the district, including the Panchganga breached the danger mark and contributed to inundation in many areas in Sangli and Kolhapur districts. On its part, the district administration evacuated people from low-lying areas with help of NDRF and local teams. Apart from the heavy rain, the discharge of huge volumes of water from Almati dam is contributing to the flood situation in Kolhapur district. The authorities have sounded high alert and deployed more teams to face any eventuality. Earlier in the day, the State Disaster Management Authority pegged the current rain-flood toll at 76, while another 59 have gone missing and 38 others were injured in the flood, landslides and other rain-related tragedies.

'Playing an asura came with challenges'

SIDDHARTH NIGAM, who plays a 2500-year-old asura in Hero-Gayab Mode On on Sony SAB, speaks with **SHALINI SAKSENA** about his reaction on getting this role and challenges faced

■What was your reaction when you were offered to play a 2500-year-old asura?

When I was approached for the project, I was not told that character I was being offered. I was only given the brief. They told me that they already had their main lead. And now they were looking for a person who can make the hero a superhero. I was interested. I felt that the show was unique. I have always tried to do projects where I could be different from what I had done in the past. When I was offered this role, I was excited. However, when I was told that I would be an asura, I was taken aback a bit but I was told that I would remain in my human form; just that I would have superhuman powers. The best part was that I would get to be part of the project with my brother.

■How did you come on board the project?

I was lucky that I didn't have to audition for this project. The producer of Peninsula Pictures, Alind Srivastava offered me the role. He said that he wanted me to be part of this show and play Shivaya. I agreed and here I am.

■What are the challenges that come with playing Shivaya?

There were quite a few. First, Shivaya's voice is a bit heavy. I am unlike Veer Nanda (Hero) who is street-smart. I am all-powerful and strong. Then there is the look. I have tattoos and initially it would take up to two hours to get ready. Now, of course, it doesn't take that long. Also, the dialogue delivery is different; he is extremely intelligent. Whatever he says has deeper meaning. How this has to be conveyed had to be practiced.

■Do you get into fights with your brother — off-screen?

Offscreen, I am obviously trying to turn him into a superhero, so there are fight sequences. Off-screen, sometimes we have differences of opinion and get into verbal fights, as is normal. We sometimes end up in a WWE kind of situation. But we are brothers and respect each other. The good part is that we have no

ego clashes.

■How did you get into acting?

I never wanted to be an actor. My background as a gymnast left very little time for any recreational activities. If I ended up on the news, that was enough for me. I was in the hostel. I didn't have a mobile; we had to practice for eight hours a day. That left little time for anything else. It never occurred that I would end up acting. I have a Gold in parallel bar and a Silver in high bar at 58th National School Games, Pune and during one of the games I was spotted and was approached for the audition of Bouravita ad. That is how I came into the industry. It was destined.

■Was it tough to do the ad?

It was tough. I had no acting background. I have never taken any classes. It was difficult to face the camera, well-known actors and memorise dialogues and deliver them with emotion was so alien to me. This made me nervous. But I was determined that since I was offered to play a part I would do it to the best of my abilities. So, I worked really hard.

■You have done a couple of movies. Why not pursue Bollywood?

I am sure that there is something really big that will come my way from Bollywood. I am also looking at roles that I can play in web series. Since I came into this industry I have always tried different roles. I know only one thing however big or small the screen may be, my job is to give my best.

■You have done a few music videos. How has the experience been?

Doing music videos is so different from serials. There are two types of music videos. One where there is a song and there is a boy and or a girl and they are dancing about. Then there are videos that tell a story. What I have done comes under the second category. I love doing such music videos since they are shot within two-three days; it is a stress-buster. Listening to music and performing it is very relaxing.



Plan Your Sunday

It's hard to say no to coffee especially in this rainy season. How about making it yummiest and healthier coffee with available ingredients in your kitchen? These hot coffees has the goodness of natural ingredients and spices like cinnamon and ginger that boost your immunity.

SPICY CINNAMON COFFEE WITH ORANGE ZEST

This a Perfect monsoon coffee with extra dose of caffeine. Natural ingredients like cinnamon, ginger and orange zest pairs beautifully with this creamy black coffee.

Ingredients:

- ◆3 tspb ground coffee
- ◆2 tspn grated orange zest
- ◆2 tspn chopped crystallized ginger
- ◆Pinch of cinnamon powder
- ◆3 cups hot water

◆Whipped cream, cinnamon sticks and/or additional orange zest, optional

Preparation:

- ◆Combine the coffee, orange zest, ginger



and cinnamon; pour into a Frenchpress and brew it for

4-5 minutes.

◆Pour into mugs; if desired, garnish with whipped cream, cinnamon sticks and orange zest.

PARISIAN CHOCOLATE COFFEE

This Parisian Hot Chocolate Coffee is an indulgent blend of thick and creamy hot chocolate and bold hot French roast coffee. The perfect brunch or dessert beverage for rainy day.

Ingredients:

- ◆1 cup freshly brewed French press coffee
- ◆1 cup full cream milk
- ◆½ cup heavy cream
- ◆2 tspn powdered sugar
- ◆60gm bittersweet chocolate
- ◆whipped cream
- ◆chocolate shavings

Preparation:

◆In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, whisk together the milk, cream, and sugar and heat until bubbles start to form on the outer edge. Do not boil.

◆Remove from heat and add in chopped chocolate, let set for 2 minutes, then whisk until a rich chocolate color forms. Let set for about five minutes.

◆Pour hot coffee into two mugs, half each cup. Top with hot chocolate to the coffee and finish off with whipped cream and chocolate shavings Note: Store in temperature of 20 degree C and humidity less than 5 per cent, away from foreign odours, for up to three weeks.

Courtesy: Abdul Sahid Khan, Head Trainer, Lavazza India

TELLYTALE

WIRENDRA SAXENA IS BACK ON THE SMALL SCREEN

After several extremely successful collaborations such as *Hum Paanch*, *Pavitra Rishta*, *Jodha Akbar*, *KanKum Bhagya*, *Kundali Bhagya*, *Zee TV* and *Balaji Telefilms* are set to present viewers with an exciting story about life, love, karma and destiny. Set against the backdrop of Mumbai, *Zee TV's Bhagya Lakshmi* will follow the journey of Lakshmi, a selfless girl of limited means, who despite her humble background and the curvaceous life she has thrown at her, always puts others' needs before hers. While TV actress Aishwarya Khare has been paired opposite the heartthrob television actor Rohit Suchanti to play the lead characters, featuring alongside them will also be the veteran television, film and theatre actor, Wirendra Saxena.

With several notable characters and shows to his name, Wirendra Saxena is definitely a prominent personality in the industry. The actor's work has been recognised across fields and he is all set to once again enthrall his fans, bringing yet



another interesting character to life with all his efficiency and artistry. Wirendra who was last seen as a part of a show in 2010 is all set to return to the small screen after more than a decade with the role of Lakshmi's father, Manoj Bajwa, who has a rustic

charm and shares a great bond with his daughter. Wirendra Saxena said, "A good story always impacts the audience and their lives, and I'd like to believe *Bhagya Lakshmi* would do the same. I've been keeping away from TV for quite some time now, because the kind of stories that has been happening and the kind of roles I've been getting over the years had somehow bored me. In fact, when I got the offer for this show also, I wasn't very curious, but when I read the script, I couldn't say no. Also, when I got to know that Ekta Ji (Kapoor) wanted me to play this role, there was no way I could say no to the project because I have always had this huge respect for her for the person she is."

Working with Balaji has always been a treat because the investments they do for their projects are really unfathomable."

NEW KHATARNAK CHALLENGE FOR KHLIDIS

Colors' much-awaited stunt-based reality show, *Khatron Ka Khlidi* is back with bang as it has already captivated the viewers with its dare, dare and endless drama. This season is bigger, badder, and wilder as we are back in Cape Town. "Yeh Hai Darr aur Dare ka battleground, welcome to Cape Town". *Khatron* ke real *Khlidi* and the master of action, Rohit Shetty, and the makers of the show have left no stones unturned to make the show better than ever.

In the upcoming episode, Rohit Shetty will give another interesting challenge to the contestants to win the K medal. The winner will get the golden opportunity in the future challenges to skip one of the tasks and also choose any other contestant to perform the same on their behalf.

Vishal Aditya Singh, Shweta Tiwari & Divyanka Tripathi Daahiya will be chosen

CENTURY OF CELEBRATION

Adding to the monsoon cheer and continuing to spread the Khushiyon Wali Feeling, Wagle Ki Duniya - Nayi Peadhi, Naye Kisey has continued to entertain the audience. To celebrate 100 episodes and to thank the viewers for declaring it the 'best show on television currently', lead actors Sumeet Raghavan, Pariva Pranati and new entrant Anju Jadhav, who comes in as Sumeet's new tough boss, engaged in a candid chat.

Delighted by the appreciation shown by the fans, Sumeet Raghavan said, "There are many reasons the audience love us so much. The credit goes out to the storyline and the atmosphere that we have all built on the sets. From making a conscious decision to avoid preachy content to building amazing bonds offscreen, it all reflects well on screen to the interest of all generations. Anjanji and Bharati ji on the sets never fail to surprise us with the hard work and motivation they bring daily. The way Anjanji ji comes so well prepared with all his lines learnt continues to inspire me to be a better actor."

ADDING TOUCH

Adding further, Pariva Pranati said, "I'm glad that we continue to inspire more and more people by the day. Recently a fan from the US got in touch with us, mentioning how we have impacted her and her family's life, it was truly surprising and unexpected. We continue to keep the episodes realistic and contribute from the nuances of daily life, ensuring we always stay connected with our fans. Also, a huge amount of credit goes to our bond that has been built over time. We bond over food, music and loads of *noh jhok*."

The upcoming track adds more thrill and excitement. Anju Jadhav on her entry in the show said, "Kara Tejwani as a character is a business-minded individual who doesn't appreciate mixing emotions with work. Kara enters the show as Shah Rukh Wagle's new boss, and she is here to take the company to new heights. The role and the show is what amazed me to accept this offer. It allows me to explore many emotions at a go. It is also something that I haven't explored before, and I truly believe I am blessed to have received this opportunity."

'I don't have fans, they are my friends'

ZAKIR KHAN, who has recently collaborated with **KARAN JOHAR** for a campaign film by **Britannia Good Day**, tells **MUSBA HASHMI** about the concept, what made him swap his look with **KJo** and that he misses stage

■How was your experience working with Britannia Good Day?
It was beautiful. We were going to start before the second lockdown, but the situations that arose caused a delay. Finally, we were able to come up with this film and I am happy and excited. I love the concept, so I was dying to be a part of it.

■How was your experience collaborating with Karan Johar for the campaign film?

It is a beautiful opportunity for me. He is someone I have seen him as a fan. He is an icon for a lot of us, over the years. I remember watching *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*. I remember watching his interview on *Doordarshan* after the film. In our memory, it is always a magical moment when we meet a person we have seen on TV in real life. So, it is a magical moment for me. Someone I have seen giving interviews as a kid, today I am getting to see them work in real life.

■What made you guys come up with the idea of swapping. And how difficult or fun was it for you?

The idea itself is fun. As an artist I would like to say that image is for under confident people who are not sure of themselves. Protecting image is something you do when you are very insecure. I assume Karan as well as me, though we are two distinguished personalities, we have full faith in what we do in our separate fields. Thus, we didn't refrain from looking like someone else. The experience of swapping was so exciting that there was no second thought about doing it or not.

■A trait of Karan Johar that you would like to swap with yours.

I think his access to Shah Rukh Khan and all the actresses in the world. I am a huge Shah Rukh Khan fan and somebody who can be in his first circle is something that I would like to exchange. I can give him my cricket gang from Bombay in exchange for it, or my Anvar Kranti from *Chacha Vidhaya Hai Humare*. So, he can give me Shah Rukh Khan and I can give him Anvar Kranti.

■How do you think your fans will react when you swap your personality?

I think first of all I have no fans, all of them are my friends. And everything is fine in front of friends. Max to max, they will make fun of me and there is no harm in it. And I do not think that

Protecting image is something you do when you are very insecure. I assume Karan as well as me, though we are two distinguished personalities, we have full faith in what we do in our separate fields. Thus, we didn't refrain from looking like someone else. The experience of swapping was exciting



my fans see me like that. They know me in many different avatars. They know that I am a musician, I have played *sitar* for 21 years of my life and I do stand-up comedy. So, I keep doing things which are pole apart, in my life. The people who know me are not affected by it and the people who do not know me, I am not affected by them.

■While Karan and you are both writers, you both have very different personalities. Did you take any time to prepare or study each other's personality to execute this better?

Of course, I saw some of his interviews and tried to understand how he talks. Secondly, as an iconic figure, I somehow knew how he talks to a certain extent. But yes, some days before the shoot I tried to understand how he works. And as an artist, I am not a very good mimic but I can imitate. So, I was just trying to look at the kind of mannerisms I can pick, and what will look nice. There are some things which you pick, but they do not look good on you. So, the idea was to pick things which will look okay on me.

■You have been one of the most popular faces in Indian stand-up comedy. Do you think that now we have a wider audience to appreciate your field of art?

I feel even when the audience was less, it was wide for me. Because, the art form is so new that we still do not know what is its full potential. My aim is to explore and to reach to more and more people so that there comes a time when we know exactly the number of people that are there in the audience.

■Do you miss the stage? How difficult is it to perform on a virtual platform?

Stage is different from a virtual platform. It is like meeting someone you love in person and talking to them on video call. They are exactly two very different things. The affection there of course, but the warmth is definitely missing. That hype, that rush of being on stage is definitely not there, though, the rush of good conversations is always there on an online platform. But not as great as what it is on stage. It is like asking someone that how do they feel catching the scent of *biryani* as compared to actually getting to taste it. Of course, having *biryani* is more satisfying than just getting to smell it.

Dhami receives rousing welcome in home district

PNS ■ PANTNAGAR

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami attended various programmes on the second day of his tour of his home district. Udhm Singh Nagar on Saturday. He planted a sapling at Pantnagar annexe and cycled as part of an event while also wishing the best to sports persons. He then boarded a vehicle which was accorded a welcome by local BJP workers in Nagla area. Inaugurating the martyr Amar Dev Bahadur memorial gate at Kanakpur, he announced naming of the government inter college after the martyr. He also



assured the parents of the martyr of all possible assistance from the government. He was welcomed in various localities even as he attended various small events along the way. He

Sahib where he prayed for peace and prosperity of the people. Dhami said that he had received the affection of the youths and party workers in the district. He exhorted the youths to cooperate with him in achieving the development of the state.

Cabinet minister and minister in-charge of the district, Yatishwaranand, Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation chairman Suresh Parihar, MLAs Rajkumar Thukral, Rajesh Shukla, Saurabh Bahuguna, Prem Singh Rana, Kumaon commissioner Sushil Kumar and others were also among those

present on the occasion.

It is pertinent to mention here that this is Dhami's first visit to his home district of Udhm Singh Nagar after taking charge of the state's chief minister. Earlier on Friday, the chief minister had participated in a road show in Rudrapur and interacted with local members and office bearers of the BJP. After the roadshow with local MLA Saurabh Bahuguna in Staraganj, the chief minister departed for his home town Khatima. Earlier, the local Congress workers displayed black flags in protest at Staraganj and were detained by the police.

Covid19: U'khand reports 33 new cases, 28 recoveries on Saturday



PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The State Health Department reported 33 new cases of the novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) and 28

recoveries from the disease in Uttarakhand on Saturday. Death of no patient was reported by the department from the disease on the day.

The cumulative count of Covid-19 patients in the state is now at 3,41,673 while a total of 3,27,692 patients have recovered from the disease so far. In the state 7359 people have lost their lives to Covid -19 till date. The recovery percentage from the disease is now at 95.91 per cent and the sample positivity rate on

Saturday was at 0.12 per cent in the State. The authorities collected 26,445 samples in different parts of the state on Saturday.

The State Health Department reported 11 new patients of Covid 19 in Pithoragarh, eight from Dehradun, four each from Nainital and Udhm Singh Nagar, three from Uttarakashi, two from Bageshwar and one from Haridwar on Saturday. No patient was reported from Almora, Chamoli, Champawat, Pauri and Tehri districts on the day. The State now has 611 active patients of the disease. Dehradun district is at top of the table in the list of active cases

with 255 patients while Haridwar in the second position with 65 active cases. Pithoragarh has 59, Nainital 49, Udhm Singh Nagar 45, Chamoli 34, Champawat 33, Rudraprayag 21, Uttarakashi 19, Pauri 11, Tehri 10, Bageshwar seven and Almora four active cases of the disease.

The State reported no new case of Mucormycosis (Black fungus) and no death from the disease on Saturday. A total of 549 patients of Black Fungus have been reported till date in the state and out of them 121 have died. The ongoing vaccination drive 25,729 people were vaccinated in 438 sessions held on the day.

Probe ordered in admission scam of Sridev Suman U'khand University

Some colleges had admitted more students than the approved number of seats

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Uttarakhand Government has ordered a probe on the complaint that some of the colleges affiliated with Sri Dev Uttarakhand Suman University have admitted more students than the approved number of seats.

Taking a stern account of the episode, the higher education minister Dhan Singh Rawat has constituted an inquiry committee at the level of the state administration to investigate the issue. The com-

mittee has been directed to complete its investigation within two weeks and submit its report. In a statement released on Saturday Rawat said that admission of more students than the stipulated numbers by some institutes of higher education affiliated to Sridev Suman University is against the norms and the state government has taken immediate cognizance of the issue. He said that a high level inquiry has been ordered.

The minister assured that strict action would be taken against those found involved in the scam. He said that action against the private colleges would also be taken if they are found guilty. The minister however assured that the interests of the students would be protected.

Encourage public involvement in protecting environment: Trivendra



PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Former Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat said that the public involvement should be increased in the cause of protecting the environment. Giving the examples of Gaura Devi of Rani village of Chamoli district and the sacrifice of hundreds of women in Khejadi village of Rajasthan

in the year 1731 Rawat said such sacrifices inspire everyone.

He was speaking at a ceremony organised to release a book on environment written by Deepak Kumar Bhatt and Kamal Joshi in Doon University on Saturday. Rawat said that the pandemic of Covid-19 has further highlighted the importance of the

environment. The higher education minister Dhan Singh Rawat said that the role of teachers is of paramount importance in guiding the society.

The Vice Chancellor (VC) of Sridev Suman University P P Dhyani, VC of Doon University Surekha Dangwal and others were present on the occasion.

New academic session in varsities, colleges to start from October 1



All the institutes should declare their examination results till October 30: Minister

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The higher education minister Dhan Singh Rawat has said that the new academic session in the universities and colleges of the state would start from October 1. The minister held a meeting with the representatives of the universities and officials of the higher education department at the secretary on Saturday. In the meeting it was decided that admissions for the first semester and first year in the

higher education institutes would commence from September 1. The minister said that as per the guidelines of the University Grants Commission (UGC), the new academic session would commence from October 1. Rawat said that all the institutes should declare their examination results till October 30.

He said that the government has accepted the demand that the medical, paramedical and nursing colleges of the state should open from the month of August. In the meeting the minister directed the task force constituted for implementation of new education policy to start its work.

He also directed all the Vice Chancellors (VC) to set up units of National Cadet Corps (NCC), National

Service Scheme (NSS) and Redcross society in their universities. He said that seminars on decreasing sex ratio should be organised and nodal officers for 3-D painting under Namami Gange project should be appointed. Rawat said that seminars should be organised under the aegis of National Library Kolkata for opening libraries at block level in the state.

He also said that all the government and private universities should organise convocation ceremonies in the month of October. The meeting was attended by Secretary higher education Deependra Chaudhary, VCs OPS Negi, P P Dhyani, K Joshi, N S Bhandari, Surekha Dangwal, director higher education Kumkum Rautela and others.

Give importance to every leader in posters: Harish Rawat



Says the leadership has not changed in Uttarakhand Congress

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In an apparent attempt to bring truce between the warring factions and give a message to the leaders airing their differences in public, former Chief Minister and general secretary of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) Harish Rawat has asked the Congressmen to refrain from creating adverse situation for the party in the state.

Rawat, who was recently nominated as the head of the election campaign committee said that nothing has changed in the party except the position of President of Pradesh Committee (PCC).

He said that the leadership of the Congress party has remained the same in the state. Rawat asked that leaders in

their posters and behaviour should give respect and importance to every leader. "Leadership is not built in one day and it remains unaffected by presence or absence on a poster. But it does pollute the environment so no one should willingly or otherwise engage in such activities," he said.

Issued in the backdrop of the media reports that some leaders are not happy at the recent change affected by the party in its leadership in the state, Rawat's statement is being viewed as an attempt to forge unity in the party.

It is worth mentioning here that after appointment of Ganesh Godiyal who is considered as a protégé of Harish



Students in Dehradun gesture in happiness after declaration of ISC and ICSE results on Saturday. Pioneer photo

कार्यालय नगर निगम हरिद्वार
 2021-22
 24-07-2021 17:00
 24-07-2021 18:00
 29-07-2021 11:00
 02-08-2021 11:00
 10-08-2021 17:00
 11.08.2021 14:00
 11.08.2021 15:00



Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami cycles during a programme in Pantnagar on Saturday

Pioneer photo

स्वतन्त्रता संग्राम के अग्रदूत
 अमर शहीद श्रीदेव सुमन को
 उनकी पुण्यतिथि पर उत्तराखण्डवासियों की ओर से शत-शत नमन
 25 जुलाई
 सूचना एवं लोक सम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तराखण्ड द्वारा जनहित में जारी
 www.uttarakhand.gov.in | uttarakhandDPR | DIPR_UK | uttarakhand@gmail.com | uttarakhandDPR
 सी.एम. हेल्लोलाइन नंबर - 1905

BHEL carries out turbine Model Test

For 12x8 MW Polavaram Hydro Electric Project in AP

HEP-Bhopal) handed over a copy of 'Model Test Results' to K Ratna Babu, ED, Civil, APGENCO in presence of senior officials from APGENCO, WAPCOS & MEIL. The project has 12 Turbine-Generator Sets, each of 80 MW rating Kaplan type turbine operating under rated head of 27.0 m. The design and development of turbine suitable for this project was carried out by COE-HM (Hydro Lab) Engineers of BHEL, Bhopal. The test proved the turbine capability to meet the guaranteed efficiency, output and other guaranteed parameters. In order to prove the guaranteed parameters of Hydro machinery, BHEL's Bhopal Unit is equipped with unique facility for manufacturing & testing of prototype model of Hydro equipment at its 'Centre Of Excellence (Hydro Machinery)' in which more than 66 models have successfully fulfilled the contractual guarantees. K. Ratna Babu Executive

Director, Civil (APGENCO) congratulated BHEL and Hydro Laboratory group in particular for completing the 1st milestone as per contract schedule exceeding the guaranteed efficiency values. He further desired that BHEL would also meet all its future commitments in time. BHEL capability in On-Spot solution for Hydro-Electric Power Projects, covering the Development, Engineering, Manufacturing, Erection & Commissioning of all equipment of Hydro Power Station including after sales services and spares. BHEL supplied Hydro Sets account for more than 45% of the total Hydro Power sets in India. BHEL has successfully executed hydro projects of more than 500 sets totalling supply of 3000 MW of Hydro Power equipment globally which is a testimony of BHEL's market leadership in the hydro business segment.



Senior BJP leader Umashankar Gupta felicitates BMC Commissioner VS Choudhary Kolsani during corona warriors felicitation programme at Manas Bhawan in Bhopal on Saturday

Body of woman found in sack at Bhoari Bangal

Chouhan on Saturday dedicated the website of Madhya Pradesh IAS Officers Wives Association (IASOWA) at Minto Hall

Sensation prevailed in the area after a body of a woman was found in white sack near a nullah at Bhoari Bangal area under Khajuri Sadak police station area in the morning on Saturday. After the body was spotted, locals informed the police and on the receipt a police team reached the spot and started investigation. The body was found at around 10.30 in the morning and blood stains were seen over the sack. The investigation suggests that the woman was killed and body was dumped.

After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem. The police have registered a case under section 302 of the IPC and started further investigation.

The identity of woman remained undisclosed as the locals failed to recognize. A nearby police station do not have any missing complaint of any woman in the past two days. Police said that the body was dumped after being killed, injury marks of sharp edged weapons were found over the body.

Circumstantial evidences suggests that the woman was sexually assaulted before she was stabbed to death. At the spot police have not found any signs of struggles which points that she was raped and killed at some other place and later dumped near the nullah at the bushes.

Chouhan lauds IASOWA's efforts during pandemic

Chouhan said that the members of IASOWA set an excellent example of social service during the Corona crisis. They not only fed people with home cooked food, but also served the society in many other ways. IASOWA markets the products of women self-help groups through its website, they will get a good market.

Chouhan on Saturday dedicated the website of Madhya Pradesh IAS Officers Wives Association (IASOWA) at Minto Hall. On this occasion, Mrs. Sandhya Singh also released IASOWA e-magazine 'Vistara'. Chouhan said that it is true that behind the success is a big hand in a woman. My wife has a big hand behind my success too. She has helped me

in every task. The Chief Minister said that this important fact of life comes to the fore in the questions and answers of Yuddhishtira and Yaksha that every person knows that he will die one day, still he continues to act as if he has to live forever.

This is the biggest surprise. A person should make better use of each and every moment in his life to make his life precious and important. I also constantly try that every moment of mine should be spent for the welfare of the people and development of the state.

Chouhan said that IASOWA continues to do social service. Serving others is the greatest virtue. The winner is the one who works for the country, society and others. Chouhan said that trees are living oxygen plants. By planting more and more trees we can enrich the environment. I plant a sapling every day. Ankur campaign is being launched for tree plantation in Madhya Pradesh. Under this, you may upload your photographs while planting sapling.

Chouhan visited the home Assembled Constituency of Seraj and showers it with several projects as he inaugurated and laid foundation stones of developmental projects worth Rs 5 crore. He inaugurated Lift Irrigation Scheme (LIS) Latogali in Gram Panchayat Saroa and Lift Irrigation Scheme Sawla in Gram Panchayat Tandi and Rs. 33 lakh CAD LIS Kulkadi in Latogali in gram Panchayat Saroa in Seraj Vidhan Sabha area of Mandi district.

Thakur also inaugurated Rs. 1.23 crore Forest Rest House Dharon, Rs. 78 lakh LIVWS Bassi Dharon, Rs. 42.40 lakh FIS Chandrodhar and Dharon and Rs. 43.06 lakh Forest Rest House/Inspection building of Government Senior Secondary School Dadoh. He addressed public meetings at Saroa, Bara, Keolihar and at Dadoh in Seraj Assembly Constituency.

Addressing a public meeting at Saroa, he said that this area was once part of Nachan Vidhan Sabha area and today was part of Seraj Vidhan Sabha area after delimitation and thanked the people of the area for giving their wholehearted support to him.

He said that despite the state corona pandemic, the State Government ensured that pace of development goes uninterrupted. He said that the State Government took effective steps for Covid-19 management and ensured that there were adequate facilities for

of the Indian Army descended into the battlefield with deadly cannons vowing to annihilate the enemy, nothing is seen in the enemy area except talw and smoke. The heavier they are, the stronger they appear. When an ordinary young man dedicates himself to goading the common man and state thinking for the country, just like the flaming ammunition coming out of the cannon, sparks the enemy's wipe out of his eyes.

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Movie 'The Gunners' screened at Shaurya Smarak

A movie based on the fight-ers of Indian Army 'The Gunners' was screened at Shaurya Smarak on Saturday. The film was produced by Neil Gokhale, presented by the Films Division of India, focusing on the artillery gunners of the Indian Army. The script writer and director is Vijay B. Chand.

The film is based on the courageous and exciting work of Gauthaker of National. Presented by the Films Division of India, the film has been produced by Prem Vaidya and directed by MS Patwani. When the artillery soldiers of the Indian Army descended into the battlefield with deadly cannons vowing to annihilate the enemy, nothing is seen in the enemy area except talw and smoke. The heavier they are, the stronger they appear. When an ordinary young man dedicates himself to goading the common man and state thinking for the country, just like the flaming ammunition coming out of the cannon, sparks the enemy's wipe out of his eyes.

Himachal CM visits his own Assembly constituency, showers it with projects

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur visited his home Assembled Constituency of Seraj and showers it with several projects as he inaugurated and laid foundation stones of developmental projects worth Rs 5 crore. He inaugurated Lift Irrigation Scheme (LIS) Latogali in Gram Panchayat Saroa and Lift Irrigation Scheme Sawla in Gram Panchayat Tandi and Rs. 33 lakh CAD LIS Kulkadi in Latogali in gram Panchayat Saroa in Seraj Vidhan Sabha area of Mandi district.

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Marathi Sahitya Akademi, MP Sanskriti Parishad broadcast 'Bhav Sangeet'

Marathi Sahitya Akademi, Madhya Pradesh Sanskriti Parishad, Bhopal broadcasted 'Bhav Sangeet' on Saturday. The artists of Gwalior gave a spontaneous performance on the Department's YouTube channel. Bhav Sangeet has an important place in the Marathi bhawan tradition. Under this, the presentation of the popular Marathi Bhav Sangeet by the artists of Swar Gandhari, Gwalior was held.

In the programme, special songs performed on the occasion of Sawan season by main artists Ku Purvi Sandeep and Piyush Gore, San Gauri Gore in the main form. 'Soor Naragas Ho, Shrivatan Ghan Nila Barsala. The presentation of Chandane Shimpit Jashi Chaita Tu Chanchale, Pratham Tu Pahala.

The artists was accompanied by Ankur Dharker on Violin, Narayan Kate, Vikas Vipat on Tabla, Deep Gaud on Guitar and Ankur Dharker accompanied in singing. The programme was successfully organized under the guidance of Uday Paranjape, Director, Marathi Sahitya Akademi. Meanwhile, on the occasion of Guru Purnima, the Directorate of Culture, Madhya Pradesh Government organized Guru Purnima festival at Ravindra Bhawan auditorium, in which first Raag Bhairavi and Raag Megh were presented by Akash Gantwari and his disciples. He was accompanied on Tabla by Manoj Patidar and on Harmonium by Jitendra Sharma. The other performance was given by V. Anuradha Singh. She performed Kathak dance. Anuradha composed Guru Vandana, Shiv Vandana, five rhythms, Kathak in three rhythms, Raga Mini Malhar composed 'Barsan Lagi Badariya Sawan Ki' followed by Thumri based on Raga Kalavati 'Mohe Chhedo Na' and Raga Hansdhwani. He ended his presentation with 'Bansuri'. The event was concluded by Pandit Kiran Deshpande presented the Rukpak Taal on the tabla, followed by Raga Madhmad in Sarang, Jhaptaal.

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E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE (UNDER SARFAESI ACT)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL AND IN PARTICULAR TO THE BORROWER(S) AND PROVIDENT OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002 READER TO PROVISION TO RULE 5 (E) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and the Secured Creditors, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS", "WHAVER THERE IS" and "WITHOUT RESPECT OF BASIS" on 10.08.2021 in between 10:00 A.M. to 03:00 P.M. for recovery of respective amounts due to Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) from the respective Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned below. The Reserve Price and Earnest Money Deposit will be as mentioned below. For details terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the provided in Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) website i.e. www.unionbankofindia.co.in. Bidder may also visit the website www.bids.in. Under the mentioned properties will be sold by Online E-Auction through website www.mstccommence.com for recovery of respective amounts due to Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) from the respective Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned below. The Reserve Price and Earnest Money Deposit will be as mentioned below. For details terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the provided in Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) website i.e. www.unionbankofindia.co.in. Bidder may also visit the website www.bids.in. Under the mentioned properties will be sold by Online E-Auction through website www.mstccommence.com for recovery of respective amounts due to Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) from the respective Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned below. The Reserve Price and Earnest Money Deposit will be as mentioned below. 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Booster shot with 2nd gen vax needed: AIIIMS



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

An India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Director Dr Randeep Guleria on Saturday said that India might have to adopt a booster dose with second-generation Covid-19 vaccines as the Delta variant of the coronavirus has swept across the world and driven up infections in several countries.

He further said Bharat Biotech's Covaxin trials for children are presently underway and the results are expected to be released by September. "It seems that we probably need the booster dose with the passage of time the immunity tends to fall," Dr Guleria said. "There is waning immunity. We would like to have a booster dose that will cover for various emerging variants," Dr Guleria said adding that the booster dose will be a second-generation vaccine.

"We will have second-generation vaccines which would be better in terms of the immunity they give, covering of the new variants and a having a



better overall efficacy," Dr Guleria said.

On Covaxin trials on children, he said: "The Bharat Biotech's Covaxin trials should be over by August or September, and by that time we should get an approval. Pfizer vaccine has been already approved by the FDA (US regulator - Food and Drug Administration). Hopefully, by September, we should start vaccinating children, and that will be a big boost as far as breaking the chain of transmission is concerned."

Dr Guleria's statement comes as the second dose of Covaxin is likely to be administered to children aged 2-6 years in trials next week. "We need to get our own vaccines too - that's why both Bharat Biotech and Zydus are impor-

tant. Getting the Pfizer vaccine will also be helpful, as there is enough data to suggest it's safe... but we can't be sure if we will get required numbers. We will hopefully have more than one vaccine for children by September," he said. The second dose of Covaxin has already been given to children between the ages of 6-12 years at the Delhi AIIMS. Besides Covaxin, the trials for Zydus Cadila's vaccine for children are also currently underway in the country.

On June 7, Delhi AIIMS started screening children between the age of 2 to 17 for trials of Covid-19 vaccine. On May 12, the DCOI granted permission to Bharat Biotech to carry out phase 2, phase 3 trials of Covaxin on children as young as two.

ICSE declares Class 10th, 12th Board results



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Council of Indian School Certificate Examination (CISCE), which conducts the exams for the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE), or Class 10, and Indian School Certificate (ISC), or Class 12, on Saturday declared the results of the cancelled exams.

The overall pass percentage for this year is 99.98 per cent for ICSE results and 99.76 per cent for ISC results.

The CBSE is scheduled to declare the results any day next week.

The Southern region has secured the best pass percentage for the Class 10th and Class 12th exam results followed by the Western region in Class 10th results and Northern region for Class 12th results. While the pass percentage for the Southern region in ICSE results is 100 per cent, it is 99.91 per cent for ISC exams.

Delhi NCR has recorded a pass percentage of 100 per cent. In ICSE Class 12 results, Delhi has also recorded 99.93%.

The overall pass percentage in West Bengal for ICSE is 99.98 per cent and it is 99.63 per cent for ISC Class 12th. As many as 39,520 and 26,859 students have enrolled for Class

Delhi NCR has recorded a pass percentage of 100%. In ICSE Class 12 results, Delhi has also recorded 99.93%.

10th ICSE and ISC Class 12th exams respectively.

Odisha has recorded a pass percentage of 99.98 per cent in the ICSE results while in ICSE Class 12 results, the state has recorded 99.83 per cent. In this year, 8,935 students have appeared for the ICSE examination. For ISC exams, 1,813 have appeared this year.

The overall pass percentage in Punjab for ICSE is 99.99 per cent and it is 99.79 per cent for ISC Class 12th. As many as 13,773 and 2,796 students have enrolled for Class 10th ICSE and ISC Class 12th exams respectively.

Karnataka has recorded a pass percentage of 100 per cent in the ICSE results while in ICSE Class 12 results, the state has also recorded 99.95 per cent. The analysis of results of other States were being examined till the report filed.

Cong appoints new State chiefs in Assam, Manipur

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday made changes in its Assam and Manipur units. While Bhupen Bora was appointed as chief of its Assam unit by replacing party's Rajya Sabha member Ripun Bora for the post, Loken Singh was appointed interim president of the Manipur Pradesh Congress with immediate effect till a full-time chief is named.

With this the Congress has effected changes in four States within a week's time including Punjab and Uttarakhand. Of the changes done, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Manipur goes to assess the Manipur Pradesh Congress with immediate effect till a full-time chief is named.

The party appreciates the contributions of outgoing APCC president Ripun Bora, the statement said.

Bhupen Bora and Rana Goswami are being relieved from their present responsibilities as All India Congress Committee secretaries, it said.

In another appointment, Loken Singh was appointed

interim president of the Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee with immediate effect till a full-time chief is named.

AICC general secretary Organisation K C Venugopal in a statement said the Congress high has appointed Nametarakpam Loken Singh as the interim president of the Manipur unit of the party. The development took place following the resignation of party leader Govind Das Komthoujam as the MPC president a few days ago. The appointment of Loken Singh, senior vice-president of the MPC, comes into force with immediate effect. Venugopal said that Loken Singh, also an MLA, will be in his new position till a full-time state unit president is appointed.

Also, the party named Arya Kumar Jaanendra as chief organiser for the Odisha Pradesh Congress Seva Dal.

The party appreciates the contributions of outgoing APCC president Ripun Bora, the statement said.

Bhupen Bora and Rana Goswami are being relieved from their present responsibilities as All India Congress Committee secretaries, it said.

In another appointment, Loken Singh was appointed

Classic case of missing spine: Rahul at Govt's vax drive timeline comment

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the Government informed Parliament that no fixed timeline can be indicated at present for the completion of the vaccination drive, former Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Saturday took a swipe saying people's lives are on the line and it's a classic case of a missing spine.

In a tweet he said, "People's lives on the line, Government admits no timeline, classic case of missing spine." He tweeted with the hashtag of #WhereAreVaccines. His remarks came a day after the government said that no fixed timeline can be indicated at present for the com-



pletion of the vaccination drive.

The Government said it is expected that beneficiaries aged 18 years and above will be vaccinated by December 2021. Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Bharat Pravin Pawar in response to Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and Lok Sabha MP Mala Roy's unstarred question said, "The Covid-19 vaccination is an ongoing and dynamic process, which is being guided by National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for Covid-19 (NEGVAK) on the basis of concurrent scientific evidence."

She said that in view of the dynamic and evolving nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, "no fixed timeline at present can be indicated for the completion of vaccination drive."

Pawar said, "However, it is expected that beneficiaries aged 18 years and above will be vaccinated by December 2021."

SC to hear plea on premature release from jail

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a plea that has raised a legal issue as to whether the policy for premature release from jail existing at the time of conviction or the subsequent one which is in existence at the time of consideration of such relief would be applicable.

The apex court sought the response of the Madhya Pradesh government and others within four weeks on the plea filed by a convict who is serving a life term and is seeking directions to the state to release him from jail on the grounds that he has undergone a sentence of over 20 years including the period of remission.

The petitioner has said that he also qualifies under the policy for premature release which was applicable at the time of his conviction in the case.

The plea came up for hearing on Friday before a bench of justices L. Nageswara Rao and Hrishikesh Roy which issued a notice seeking the response of the state government and others.

"Issue notice returnable in four weeks," the bench said. The petition, filed through advocate Rishi Malhotra, said the petitioner was convicted by a trial court in a case in 1992 along with others and was sentenced to life imprisonment in September 2005.

The plea said at the time of his conviction, the policy for premature release was applicable. December 4, 1978 was applicable.

"However, for the first time on January 10, 2012, there was a substantial change/departure from the said policy wherein it stipulated that such prisoners who are facing life imprisonment shall have to undergo actual sentence of 20 years with a total sentence of 26 years," it said.

The plea said as per the December 1978 policy, any convict who has been sentenced to life imprisonment after December 18, 1978 and has undergone 14 years of the actual sentence and completed a total sentence of 20 years would be entitled to premature release. PTI

MP, Gujarat likely to get intense rainfall in next 2-3 days: IMD



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Parts of central and adjoining west India, particularly the States of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, are likely to have some intense rainfall activity for the next two-three days. The India Meteorology Department (IMD) on Saturday said rainfall intensity along the west coast is expected to decrease over the next 24 hours, in a much needed relief to rain-battered Maharashtra and Goa. Rainfall activity will increase over the north Indian plains and hills from July 25, it said.

Having already drenched Chhattisgarh, Telangana, east Madhya Pradesh and central Maharashtra, the system has now shifted its focus on to the western half of Madhya Pradesh. The IMD has indicated that the system will produce isolated extremely heavy falls over west Madhya Pradesh on Saturday, July 24.

Therefore, a red warning has been issued for that division for the day, as it instructs the residents to 'take action' to protect themselves from a rough weather. Meanwhile, since the beginning of the monsoon period on June 1, both Madhya Pradesh

and Gujarat have received below-average rainfall. "Further reduction in rainfall intensity is very likely along the west coast, including Konkan, Goa and adjoining interior Maharashtra, during the next 24 hours," the IMD said. "Fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy falls (a r e) very likely to continue over west coast, including Maharashtra, on July 24 and isolated heavy falls thereafter," it said. Extremely heavy rains have killed scores of people in Maharashtra over the past few days, submerging several areas and damaging property.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has enhanced the number of its teams from 26 to 34 for undertaking rescue operations in the coastal areas of Maharashtra that have been hit by landslides and floods triggered by heavy rainfall.

A spokesperson for the federal contingency force said these teams are being deployed in affected areas of Mumbai, Ratnagiri, Thane, Palghar, Raigad, Satara, Sangli, Sinhadgaon, Kolhapur, Pune and Nagpur for rescue and relief work after consultation

with the state administration. "In view of the severity of the situation, additional eight NDRF teams have been airlifted from Kolkata and Vadodra base which are being deployed in affected areas of Maharashtra," the spokesperson said. "This will take the total NDRF deployment to 34 teams," the spokesperson said. The IMD said scattered to fairly widespread rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy falls are likely to continue over east Rajasthan till July 26 and reduce thereafter.

In north India, rainfall activity is likely to increase over northwest India from July 25. "Fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy falls (are) likely over Uttarakhand during July 25-28; Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and West Uttar Pradesh during July 26-28, and Punjab and east Uttar Pradesh on July 27 and 28," the IMD said.

Isolated extremely heavy falls are also likely over Uttarakhand on July 27 and 28, it added.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI

LEVEL 6th, C-WING, DELHI SECRETARIAT, NEW Delhi-110002

PUBLIC NOTICE

Ban on sharp synthetic/nylon kite flying thread including popularly known "Chinese Manjha"

This is for the information of the general public that in order to prevent the adverse effects on human beings, cattle population, birds, soil and ecology and in exercise of the powers conferred by section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (29 of 1986) read with Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs' Notification No. SO 667 (E), dated 10th September, 1992, a Notification was issued on 10.01.2017 by order and in the name of the Hon'ble Lt. Governor of the NCT of Delhi with the following directions:-

1. There shall be complete ban on the sale, production, storage, supply, import, and use of kite flying thread made out of nylon, plastic or any other synthetic material including popularly known as "Chinese manja" and any other kite-flying thread that is sharp or made sharp such as by being laced with glass, metal or any other sharp materials in the National Capital Territory of Delhi.
2. Kite flying shall be permissible only with a cotton thread, free from any sharp/metallic/ glass components/adhesives/thread strengthening materials.

Any breach of the above directions may be reported to the office of the following:

S. No.	Designation	Email ID	Helpline Number
1.	The Commissioner of Police, Delhi Police	cp.snsrivastava@delhipolice.gov.in	100
2.	The Divisional Commissioner, GNCTD	divcom@nic.in	1077
3.	The Chief Wildlife Warden, GNCTD	cclgnctd@gmail.com	1800118600
4.	The Commissioner, North Delhi Municipal Corporation	comm-northdmc@nctd.nic.in	155304
5.	The Commissioner, South Delhi Municipal Corporation	commissioner-sdmc@nctd.nic.in	155305
6.	The Commissioner, East Delhi Municipal Corporation	commissioneredmc@gmail.com	155303

Note:-
The violation of directions issued under section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, or the rules made thereunder shall be punishable under section 15 of the said Act which includes imprisonment upto five years and/or with fine which may be extended to Rs. One Lac or with both.

The above said NOTIFICATION is available at: www.environment.delhigovt.nic.in

Sd/-
Dr. K.S. Jayachandran
Special Secretary (Env.)

DIP/Shabdarth/0174/21-22

Peace in Af possible only through political solution: US
'The US will continue to provide, humanitarian and security support to Afghan govt'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US administration, led by President Joe Biden, believes lasting peace in Afghanistan is possible only through a political solution, the White House has said, noting the ongoing dialogue between the Government of the war-torn country and the Taliban.

'We believe a political solution is the only outcome to bring peace in Afghanistan, but

we will continue to provide support to the Government in the form of humanitarian support, security support, training.

'We will also continue to encourage them to take a leading role in defending and protecting their own people,' she said.

In an interview to MSNBC, Secretary of State Tony Blinken said the US is determined that Afghanistan does not become a training ground for terrorism directed against the United States or its allies and partners.

'That's exactly why we went there in the first place, which is important to remember. We were attacked on 9/11, we went to Afghanistan to get the folks — who attacked us — to bring them to justice. Osama bin Laden was brought to justice 10 years ago, and the group, al-Qaida, responsible

for those attacks has been dramatically diminished in terms of its capacity to attack anyone from Afghanistan," he said.

'We're going to make sure that we keep our eyes on that. If we see the threat re-emerging, we're going to be in a position to take action against it. But that's why we were there, and now we're 20 years and a trillion dollars and thousands of Americans lost later in that campaign. I think the reason we went there is what we have to keep the focus on, and we've largely succeeded in doing what we needed to do," Blinken said.

The United States, he said, does have deep concerns about the actions the Taliban is taking, indicating that it may be trying to take the country by force.

Senior American military

officers have admitted that the Taliban has gained "strategic momentum," with their forces now controlling about half of Afghanistan's more than 400 district centres.

Blinken said Afghanistan would become a pariah state, if the Taliban took it by force. "It would not get the assistance that it's looking for, and that the Taliban says it wants if it has any responsibility for the country. It would not get the support from the international community that it says it wants. We're actively engaged in diplomacy because there is no military solution to this conflict that's been going on for more than 40 years in Afghanistan, and we're working to try to bring that to an end," he said.

US Central Command, which is in charge of Afghanistan, said recently that the withdrawal of US forces is more than 95 per cent complete.

Pak NSA, ISI chief likely to visit US next week for talks on Afghanistan: Report

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Washington while quoting diplomatic sources.

The trip of Yusuf and Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Director General Lt Gen Hameed was part of these diplomatic efforts, it said.

"Pakistan has a key role in a new US diplomatic offensive aimed at ensuring a peaceful transfer of power in Afghanistan," diplomatic sources told the newspaper on Friday.

Under a deal with the Taliban, the US and its NATO allies agreed to withdraw all troops in return for a commitment by the militants that they would prevent extremist groups from operating in areas they control.

Pakistan deploys regular troops along Afghan border: Report

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan has deployed regular troops at forward positions along the Afghan border due to the fluid security situation in the neighbouring war-torn country in the wake of the withdrawal of American and NATO troops, a media report said on Saturday.

Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said that Pakistan Army soldiers have replaced the Frontier Constabulary (FC), Levies Force and other militias from the frontline positions, the Dawn newspaper reported.

The US and NATO are on the verge of completing their final troops withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Ahmed said the FC Balochistan and other militias working under the interior ministry had been called back from border patrolling.

"Now regular army troops are manning the border after replacing the paramilitary forces," the minister said, adding the decision had been made in wake of the volatile situation across the border.

Ahmed said the situation not only demanded containment of the influx of refugees from Afghanistan but also the

entry of armed army personnel and migrants into Pakistan. "Paramilitary troops including the Frontier Constabulary, Levies, Rangers are deployed at the borders to deal with regular issues including illegal border crossing, smuggling etc," the minister was quoted as saying in the report.

However, the current volatile situation (in Afghanistan) demands that regular military troops be deployed along the border," he said.

Military spokesperson Major General Babar Iftikhar recently told a TV channel that troops were manning the border and the move would help prevent escalation of conflict along the Afghan soil or airspace to the Pakistani side.

Meanwhile, sources in the armed forces told the newspaper that the most serious challenge in the current scenario was not just the inflow of refugees or any infiltrators in the garb of refugees but the movement of Afghan army personnel or Taliban fighters.

"We have seen that more than 1,000 Afghan soldiers fled into Tajikistan early in July to escape clashes with the Taliban," an officer said.

"But Taliban's presence in

the northern areas of Afghanistan is not as strong as it is in the areas bordering Pakistan. Therefore, if Afghan army troops enter Pakistan while fleeing fighting, there are chances that Taliban would follow them and the conflict would spill over inside Pakistan, and it could spread to the mainland too," the officer added.

Pakistan and Afghanistan have already traded barbs last week after the Taliban took control of the Spin Boldak border crossing, and the Afghan Air Force wanted to attack Taliban positions from the Pakistani side, which was not allowed by Islamabad.

"Pakistan does not want to see any such situation when the Afghan air force might use our airspace without permission to attack Taliban and in retaliation the militants attack Pakistani positions creating a new issue," the officer said.

Meanwhile, responding to a question, the interior minister said that the fight inside Afghanistan was their internal personnel or Taliban fighters.

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"But Taliban's presence in

GLOBE TROTTING

BANDITS KILL 4 IRANIAN TROOPS NEAR PAK BORDER

Tehran: Armed bandits killed four members of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guard (IRGC) fighting in a southern province, the official IRNA news agency reported Saturday. The report said the clash between Guard members and the bandits happened Friday night in the Gouin district of Sistan and Baluchistan province. The site of the fighting is some 1,250 kilometers (775 miles) southwest of the capital Tehran. It did not elaborate.

Nawaz Sharif faces flak for meeting Afghan NSA Mohib in UK

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Several Pakistani Ministers on Saturday lashed out at former prime minister Nawaz Sharif for meeting Afghan National Security Adviser Hamdullah Mohib in London, saying the PML-N supremo was a "close friend" of every enemy of Pakistan.

Mohib recently made headlines in Pakistan for calling the country a "brother," evoking a

sharp response from ministers in Islamabad, including from Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi who asked him to "reflect and correct" his behaviour.

Afghanistan's National Security Council on its Twitter account shared a picture of Mohib and Afghan State Minister for Peace Sayed Sadat Naderi meeting Sharif in London, where he has been living since 2019 for medical treatment.

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Afghanistan's National Security Council on its Twitter account shared a picture of Mohib and Afghan State Minister for Peace Sayed Sadat Naderi meeting Sharif in London, where he has been living since 2019 for medical treatment.

14 KILLED IN WAREHOUSE FIRE IN CHINA

Beijing: Fourteen people died and 26 others were injured after a fire broke out at a warehouse in northeast China's Jilin province on Saturday, local authorities said. The accident happened at a logistic warehouse in Jingyue high-tech industrial development zone at Jilin province's capital Changchun, according to officials with the zone. Fourteen people were confirmed dead in the blaze, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Among the 26 injured, 12 were in severe condition, it said.

US AIR STRIKE IN SOMALIA IS 2ND THIS WEEK

Washington: For the second time this week, US forces Friday conducted an airstrike against the al-Shabab extremist group in Somalia. The earlier strike, on Tuesday, was the first in Somalia since President Joe Biden took office in January. In a brief statement, the Pentagon said the attack was conducted in support of Somali partner forces, and it was allowed under existing congressional authorization for the use of military force. A Pentagon spokesperson, Gindi King, said the airstrikes were coordinated with the Somali government and took place in the Galmudug area in central

Xi meets top military officials in Lhasa

PTI ■ BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping underlined the importance of long-term stability and prosperity in Tibet during a meeting with top military officials in Lhasa, the state media reported on Saturday, a day after he made a previously unannounced visit to the strategically important region, including to Nyingchi, a town close to the border with Arunachal Pradesh.

Xi, also General Secretary of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, met top officials of the Tibet Military Command of the People's Liberation Army, guarding China's border with India in Arunachal

Xi meets top military officials in Lhasa

Pradesh, and also called for "fully strengthening the work of training soldiers and war preparation," the Global Times reported.

Xi, 68, made his first visit to Tibet as President from Wednesday to Friday. But his important visit was kept under wraps by China's official media till the end of the tour on Friday due to the sensitivities



Chinese President Xi Jinping visits the Drepung Monastery located in the western suburbs of Lhasa, southwestern China's Tibet Autonomous Region on Thursday AP

of the trip. As part of his trip, he first went to Nyingchi, a strategically located town close to the border with Arunachal Pradesh. On Thursday, Xi went to Nyingchi Railway Station, learning about the overall design of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway and how the Lhasa-Nyingchi section has been operated since June 25.

It was the first time in recent years, a top Chinese leader visited the Tibetan border town. From there he went to the provincial capital Lhasa by the recently launched high-speed train.

Xi wound up his visit to the politically sensitive Himalayan region on Friday by meeting "representatives of troops stationed in Tibet."

Xi met with representatives of troops stationed in Tibet, calling for efforts to strengthen military training and preparedness in all aspects and make contributions to the lasting stability, prosperity and development of Tibet," the state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

However, the CPC-run tabloid Global Times said that Xi in his meeting with the PLA representatives "stressed that the local troops should fully strengthen the work of training soldiers and war preparation and contribute positive strength to promote the long-term stability and prosperity of Tibet."

Xi's first visit to Tibet took place amid the current India-China military tensions in eastern Ladakh.

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Millions sleep well at night due to technologies like Pegasus: NSO

Jerusalem: Amid the raging controversy over its surveillance software Pegasus, Israeli cybersecurity company NSO Group has defended itself by saying that millions of people around the world sleep well at night and walk in the streets safely due to such technologies available with intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

The company also stated that it does not operate the technology nor does it have access to the data collected by its clients.

The alleged use of the Pegasus software to spy on journalists, human rights defenders, politicians and others in a number of countries, including India, has triggered concerns over issues relating to privacy. Politicians, rights activists and journalists were among those targeted with phone spyware sold to various governments by the Israeli firm, according to an international media consortium.

"Millions of people around the world are sleeping well at night, and safely walking in the streets, thanks to Pegasus and similar technologies which help intelligence agencies," a spokesperson for NSO said. PTI

Biden stumps for McAuliffe in early test of political clout

AP ■ ARLINGTON

President Joe Biden led the kind of campaign rally that was impossible last year because of the pandemic, speaking before nearly 3,000 people in support of a fellow moderate Democrat whose race for Virginia governor could serve as a test of Biden's own strength and coalitions.

Biden motored across the Potomac River Friday night to back Terry McAuliffe, a former governor looking for a second term whose centrist leanings in many ways mirror those of the president. The race is seen as an early measure of voters' judgment on Democratic control of all branches of the federal government.

The president stood before an enthusiastic and largely unmasked crowd who gathered around a park pavilion and playground on a warm July

night. He emphasized that he shared the same vision as McAuliffe about the need for greater public investments in order to drive economic growth. But Biden was also focused on the political stakes.

"You're not gonna find anyone, I mean anyone, who knows how to get more done for Virginia than Terry," Biden said. "Off-year election, the country's looking. This is a big deal."

COUNCIL OF ARCHITECTURE A Statutory Authority of Government of India

NATA 2021 EXAMINATION NOTICE: NATA-2021

Subject- Announcement of Third Test of NATA-2021 The Council of Architecture is pleased to announce that the Third Test of National Aptitude Test in Architecture (NATA) 2021 shall be conducted on September 3, 2021.

UJVN Limited NOTICE INVITING TENDER Date: 24.07.2021 For and on behalf of UJVN Ltd. Executive Engineer (Civil), Pashukh Barrage Rishikesh, invites sealed & separate tenders from interested contractors for following works:

JUSTICE ENTERPRISES LIMITED Reg. Off: Plot No. 133, CAE, Pocket No. 11, Janapuri, New Delhi-110058

PUBLIC NOTICE Whereas, Chintel India Limited is in the process of undertaking development of a Group Housing Colony in Sector 106, Gurugram, over an area measuring 10,41,975 sq.m in the residential estate of village Bibaur in accordance with the provision of Licence No. 250 of 2007 dated 02-11-2007 granted by the Director General, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh.

Place: Gurugram For: Chintel India Limited Dated: 25.07.2021 Authorised Signatory

AGR dues no subject matter of any future litigation: SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) related dues payable by telecom majors, including Vodafone Idea and Bharti Airtel, cannot be a subject matter of any future litigation, the Supreme Court has said.

A bench headed by Justice L. Nageswara Rao stated this while dismissing the plea of telecom seeking rectification of alleged errors in the calculation of AGR.

The top court said the dispute relating to AGR has been pending in courts for a very long period of time and the dues payable by Telecom Service Providers cannot be the subject matter of any future litigation.

It said there is no room for any doubt from the period of the earlier judgement dated September 1, 2020 with respect to this court entertaining any application for altering the AGR dues of the TSPs.

The court said the issues concerning the ambit of proceedings under Section 18 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 in relation to spectrum, the manner in which payment has to be made and liabilities apportioned between the TSPs in case of spectrum sharing and spectrum trading, with which we are not concerned in these applications,

were also dealt with in its judgement dated September 1, 2020.

The telecom companies had pleaded before the apex court that arithmetical errors in the calculation be rectified and claimed there were cases of duplication of entries.

"Though these applications appear to be innocuous at first blush, the end result of the relief sought by the applicants in the guise of correction or rectification of the defects or arithmetical errors in the calculation of AGR dues, would be recalculation which would amount to the AGR dues, as prescribed by the order of this Court dated July 20, 2020, being altered."

"The dispute relating to AGR dues had remained pending in courts for a very long period of time and bearing this in mind, this Court was at pains to emphasise, at the cost of repetition, that the AGR dues payable by TSPs cannot be the subject matter of any future litigation," the bench also comprising justices S. A. Nazeer and M.R. Shah said.

The apex court said the order of the top court dated September 1, 2020 makes it clear that there is no scope for any recalculation/re-computation of AGR dues.

"Even at the time of passing of the order dated September 1, 2020, an attempt was made to

seek recalculation and reassessment, as recorded in the order, which was rejected by this court outright," the bench said.

The top court in September last year had given a time period of 10 years to telecom service providers struggling to pay Rs 93,520 crore of AGR-related dues to clear their outstanding amount to the government.

During the hearing on the applications on July 19, the bench had referred to an earlier order passed by the apex court in the matter and observed that it said no reassessment of AGR-related dues can be done.

One of the lawyers representing a telecom firm had contended that they were not blaming the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) for it as there are arithmetical errors and they want to place the entries before the department so that they can re-consider it.

In its September last year order, the apex court had said that telecom operators shall make the payment of 10 per cent of the total dues as demanded by the DoT by March 31, 2021 and the rest amount to be paid in yearly instalments commencing from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2031.

India in exciting phase of growth: Paytm CEO

PTI ■ MUMBAI

EXPECTED TO BECOME USD 5 TRN ECONOMY IN 5-10 YEARS

The country is in an exciting phase of growth and the economy is expected to add USD 2.5 trillion in the next 5-10 years, Paytm founder and CEO Vijay Shekhar Sharma said on Sunday.

"If this country's economy is USD 2.5 trillion today, in next 5-10 years, you will see another USD 2.5 trillion. It took 70 years for us to make it USD 2.5 trillion... Now only in 10 years all that history will be recreated and doubled."

"It's an amazing, inspiring moment for us to be in India and lucky to be in India," Sharma said while speaking at a 2-day virtual youth conclave organised by IIMC Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

He said one should never hesitate to do what they feel very strongly about even if it seems small.

"When somebody makes just that you're here. That's just the way you handle the



Vijay Shekhar Sharma, CEO of Paytm, speaking at a virtual youth conclave.

adversity. And once you are a success, all these adversities will become the folklores, so you should never feel bad about it," he added.

Meanwhile, Arin Capital Chairman Mohandas Pai in another session of the conclave said, new business models can come up as the wide distribution network is no longer the limiting factor for businesses.

"So your business models can come up, you can start a business and produce something in India and sell to the world cheaply," he added.

He said through technology the disadvantage and advantage of starting a business in any country no longer exist.

India will continue to attract high foreign investments: Goyal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday expressed confidence that India will continue to attract high foreign direct investment (FDIs) in the current financial year.

He said India has received highest ever FDI in the Covid-impacted 2020, in contrast with a shrinkage in investment inflows globally.

In 2020-21, FDI into the country grew by 19 per cent to USD 59.63 billion, Total FDI, including equity, re-invested earnings and capital, rose 10 per cent to USD 81.72 billion during 2020-21 as against USD 74.39 billion in 2019-20.

"This year, we are very confident that we will continue this streak of seven consecutive years of historic highs in foreign investments," Goyal said at the CH-Horasis India Meeting weekend.

Similarly, he said, India's exports too are recording healthy growth and would reach USD 400 billion by the end of the current financial year.

During July 1-21, export crossed USD 22 billion and it is "bound to cross USD 32-33 billion by end of the month (July), which means our run rate is on track to achieve USD 400 billion of exports target for the first time ever."

Further, he said that cur-



Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry, speaking at a meeting.

rently India is in talks with 16 countries including the UK, the EU, Australia, Canada, and the UAE for trade agreements.

With some countries, India is working for early, high-level agreements which will allow the country to quickly identify areas of mutual interest and progress negotiations faster towards a comprehensive economic partnership agreement, or FTAs, the minister said.

"We have focused our efforts on a few very promising agreements where I can clearly see huge comparative advantages for India to get market access and the ability to trade both in goods and services in a much bigger way. The UK, EU, Australia, Canada, UAE are countries with whom we can very quickly expand our discussions and engagements," he added.

India has inked FTAs with several countries, including Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and ASEAN members.

Under such agreements, two trading partners significantly reduce or eliminate import/customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them.

Talking about vaccination, he said the government had permitted the private sector to procure 25 per cent of Covid-19 vaccines but they are not buying.

"CII should take a lead and get all of you to ensure that you take that 25 per cent of Covid-19 pandemic second wave, they are not buying."

Open air travel for inoculated passengers: IATA

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

International air travel should be opened up for at least fully vaccinated air passengers, global airlines' association IATA told IANS. As per the association, a comprehensive system should be set in place that allows hassle free travel for those inoculated. Moreover, the system should also ensure testing and verification of the passengers who have not been inoculated but without increasing the already set restrictions.

"Vaccination and testing have a role to play in the recovery of international trav-

el. It is not an option to wait for vaccines to be widely available before reopening borders. The global vaccine roll-out is likely to take time," said Conrad Clifford, IATA's Deputy Director General and Regional Vice-President for Asia Pacific.

"That's why testing is the alternative for those who do not have access to vaccines or are unable to be vaccinated for various reasons."

According to Clifford, it is not sustainable to maintain a zero case load approach, especially with scientists believing that Covid-19 will end up becoming endemic.

Honest taxpayers deserve to be recognised for paying due share of taxes: Sitharaman

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said honest taxpayers deserve to be recognised for dutifully paying their due share of taxes and appreciated the Income Tax Department for successful implementation of various reforms.

In her message to the I-T Department on the 161st anniversary of Income Tax Day, she complimented the department for continuing to work towards simplifying its procedures and processes, and making its functioning hassle-free, fair and transparent.

"The minister observed that the honest taxpayers deserve to be recognised for the contribution they are making to the progress of the nation by dutifully paying their due share of taxes... She also lauded tax-

payers for discharging their compliance obligations despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic," an official statement said.

Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary observed that most of the processes and compliance requirements have been shifted to online platforms and the need for taxpayers to physically visit tax offices has been eliminated or minimized.

He highlighted the fact that the interaction with taxpayers is now characterized by a spirit of trust and respect, relying more on voluntary compliance.

Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj also complimented the department for having done well in adapting itself to the emergent changes in the economy and having been able to achieve a healthy growth in tax

collections. He also appreciated the initiatives undertaken by the department to reorient its approach towards revenue collection, making its functioning transparent and taxpayer-centric.

Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Chairman J B Mohapatra lauded the tax officers for their collective efforts and effectively fulfilling their twin role as the revenue earning arm of the nation and provider of taxpayer services.

Referring to the larger and far-reaching policy measures like 'Honouring the Honest', 'Faceless Regime and adoption of the Taxpayers Charter', he noted that these initiatives have made the departmental functioning more transparent, objective and taxpayer-friendly.

7-day relief: No revision in fuel prices in a week

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Oil marketing companies (OMC) continued to pause fuel price revision for seven consecutive days, the longest period in weeks, as the global development on oil production and rising US inventories softened crude and product rates.

However, they stepped short of reducing the retail price of petrol and diesel as more time will be required to study oil price movement before any downward revision.

Already, crude has firmed a bit for last few days and this could prevent price cut by the OMCs.

With no change in prices on Saturday, in the national capital, petrol continues to be sold for Rs 101.84 per litre, while diesel remains at the unchanged price of Rs 89.87 a litre.

The pump price of fuel has been static since Sunday. It last increased on July 17 with petrol being revised upwards by 30 paise per litre, while diesel prices remained unchanged. One of the main reasons for pause in fuel price rise is over 10 per cent fall in global oil prices with benchmark crude sliding to \$69 a barrel from a high of over \$77 barrel just a few weeks ago.

It had again risen to over \$74 a barrel on strong demand projections.

SBI opens branch in President's Estate

New Delhi: The country's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI) on Saturday opened a branch at President's Estate.

The branch was inaugurated by President Ram Nath Kovind along with Finance Secretary, State Bank of India, Pankaj Chaudhary, in the presence of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, SBI said in a statement.

The branch will provide all types of banking services including safe deposit lockers to the residents of President's Estate. It is headed by the President K D Tripathi, SBI Chairman Dinesh Khara and several senior officials of the bank were also present at the inauguration ceremony, it said.

This branch at President's Estate is a jewel in the crown for SBI and will offer a convenient and seamless banking experience to all the customers, said Khara. PTI

Indian pharma industry to touch USD 130 bn by 2030: Reddy

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Reddy, Chairman of Board of Governors of NIPER Hyderabad, was virtually addressing the 9th Convocation of the institute.

The government's encouragement (Atma Nirbhar Bharat) policy, a lot of reforms in the industry and thrust being given to innovation, among others, augur well for the industry, he said.

The Indian pharmaceutical industry worked continuously during the testing times of Covid-19 pandemic second wave to ensure the availability of life saving medicines.

Reddy, Chairman of Board of Governors of NIPER Hyderabad, was virtually addressing the 9th Convocation of the institute. Chairman of Dr Reddy's Laboratories, K Satish Reddy said on Saturday, "If you see, currently it's (pharmaceutical industry) about 42 billion dollars, half between the domestic sales, half between the exports. We expect that it will grow almost by three times in the coming decade, reaching almost 120 to 130 billion dollars by 2030. Truly, we believe that we are poised for a tremendous growth in the coming decade," he predicted.

The Indian pharmaceutical industry is expected to grow almost by three times to about 130 billion US dollars by 2030, Chairman of Dr Reddy's Laboratories, K Satish Reddy said on Saturday, "If you see, currently it's (pharmaceutical industry) about 42 billion dollars, half between the domestic sales, half between the exports. We expect that it will grow almost by three times in the coming decade, reaching almost 120 to 130 billion dollars by 2030. Truly, we believe that we are poised for a tremendous growth in the coming decade," he predicted.

Furthermore, the week ahead will witness the release of Q1FY22 corporate results from ICICI Bank, JTC, Indusind Bank, Axis Bank, etc. Tata Motors, Kotak Bank, Dr Reddy's, Maruti Suzuki.

"US Fed interest rate and progress in spread of Coronavirus and its variants will be watched keenly," said Deepak Jyani, Head of Retail Research at HDFC Securities.

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BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - 4th Floor Jeevan Tara Building Parliament Street, New Delhi - 110001. CA NO 286/2020 DATE: 01.07.2021. APPLICANT: SANEELY ARORA & ORS. RESPONDENT: [Name redacted]

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE FOR MISCELLANEOUS WORKS. Sri. No. (1) E-Tender No. DRN. E.N.G.-SSP-T-51-21-22. DATE: 19/07/2021. Work: Upgradation of Platform Surface of Shahdol and Anuppur stations. Provisions of toilet with water supply in CSISM's Panel room at Vijayakarma, Lohma and Mudaria & Creosote Works. [Details of work and tender process]

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON. General public is here by informed that this person namely Tota Ram S/o Kale Ram R/o H.No. B-391, Gali No. 8, S.B.S. Colony, Karawal Nagar, Delhi Age: About 95 years, Height: 5'5", Face: Round, Build: Thin, Complexion: Shallow, wearing blue colour shirt, white colour lower and slipper in feet, has been missing since 09.07.2021 from his house. In this regard DO No. 78-A dated 10.07.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Karawal Nagar, Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about this missing person may kindly inform to the following: E-mail: cic@cbl.gov.in SHO - P.S. Karawal Nagar, Delhi. Website: http://cbl.nic.in Tel. No.: 011-9205532616. 243668539. 8750670728

BRIEFS. Reliance Jio clocks strong subscriber adds in Q1 New Delhi: Jio's subscriber additions, though down 14 per cent QoQ, were still healthy at 26.7 million due to continued traction on new JioPhone offer, foreign brokerage, Jefferies said in a report. This along with lower churn, resulted in 14.3 million net additions in Q1. Assuredly, the additions on JioPhone, Reliance Jio said in a report. A mobile subscriber on net, which surprised positively given it was impacted by Covid. "We expect Jio's subscriber additions to remain robust by recent capacity additions, JioPhone offers and launch of JioPhone Next", the report said. Jio reiterated that its device and capacity strategy is in place to gain the next 200m subscribers. "We marginally tweak estimates to factor the results and see Jio gain 530m subscribers by Mar-24. Over FY21-24, we expect RJio to deliver 15% CAGR in revenues and 20% CAGR in profits. We maintain our valuation for RJio at US\$30bn," the report said.

WESTERN RAILWAY E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE NO. S22R2021 Date: 21/07/2021. S.N. Short Description of item Quantity T.O.D. 771 Wood Based Resin 1000 Nos. 09.08.2021 772 Gear Case Complete 4 Nos. 09.08.2021 773 Washer for Dia 41 mm Pin 10000 Nos. 09.08.2021 774 Gangway Bridge Mounting Assy. 640 Nos. 09.08.2021 775 Set of Connection Strap Assy for WAP4. 302 Nos. 09.08.2021 776 Roller Bearing 314 Nos. 10.08.2021 777 Filer Assy. 18 Nos. 11.08.2021 778 Plug Assy. 1315 Set. 11.08.2021 779 Track Fast Battery Charger 150 Nos. 11.08.2021 780 Tar Plastic Compound 6734 Kg. 13.08.2021 781 VRLA Valve Regulated (Sealed) Lead Acid Battery 2/300AH 3628 Nos. 13.08.2021 782 Set of 35 mm NABCO Brake Pads 2000 Nos. 13.08.2021 783 LMLA Low Maintenance Lead Acid Secondary cells 2V, 300AH 3028 Nos. 13.08.2021 784 Set of Switches 6 A-250 V 16 Set. 16.08.2021 785 RIM Paint Gentian Blue 38520 Lit. 16.08.2021 786 Single Stone Vacuum Oil Seal Beaker 150 Nos. 16.08.2021 787 VRLA Batteries of 45V/200AH 110 Set. 19.08.2021 788 AOH Kit for Tapschanger 98 Set. 19.08.2021 789 Gear Oil Obisgar CMO 5053 Ltr. 19.08.2021 790 LMLA Secondary Cells 2V/200AH 1647 Nos. 25.08.2021 791 Main LED Signal Lighting Unit Red, Yellow, Green 5323 Nos. 26.08.2021 792 Wire T Strand Steel, Galvanised for Signaling Purpose 4594 Kg. 30.08.2021

INDO COTSPIN LIMITED. REGD OFFICE: 76 X.M. MILE STONE, CT ROAD, NH-1, VILLAGE JATTIPUR, POST BOX NO. 3, POST OFFICE SAWALKHA, PANIPAT -121012. CIN: L1111MH01002025 Website: www.indocotspin.com. Email: indocotspin@indocotspin.com. Statement of Financial Results for the Quarter Ended June 30, 2021. (Amounts in Lakhs)

ZEE MEDIA CORPORATION REPORTS ₹9.06 CR LOSS. New Delhi: Zee Media Corporation on Saturday reported a consolidated net loss of ₹9.06 crore for the quarter ended in June 2021 on account of exceptional items. The company had posted a net profit of ₹12.26 crore during the April-June quarter of the previous fiscal, Zee Media Corporation Ltd (ZMCL) said in a regulatory filing. Its revenue from operations was up 28.79 per cent to ₹175.18 crore during the quarter under review as against Rs 132.14 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. ZEE MEDIA CORPORATION REPORTS ₹9.06 CR LOSS. New Delhi: Zee Media Corporation on Saturday reported a consolidated net loss of ₹9.06 crore for the quarter ended in June 2021 on account of exceptional items. The company had posted a net profit of ₹12.26 crore during the April-June quarter of the previous fiscal, Zee Media Corporation Ltd (ZMCL) said in a regulatory filing. Its revenue from operations was up 28.79 per cent to ₹175.18 crore during the quarter under review as against Rs 132.14 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. ZEE MEDIA CORPORATION REPORTS ₹9.06 CR LOSS. New Delhi: Zee Media Corporation on Saturday reported a consolidated net loss of ₹9.06 crore for the quarter ended in June 2021 on account of exceptional items. The company had posted a net profit of ₹12.26 crore during the April-June quarter of the previous fiscal, Zee Media Corporation Ltd (ZMCL) said in a regulatory filing. Its revenue from operations was up 28.79 per cent to ₹175.18 crore during the quarter under review as against Rs 132.14 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal.

“Decided in Rio Olympics itself that I will prove myself in Tokyo”

MIRABAI LETS WEIGHT OF A NATION



Mirabai Chanu Saikhom competes in the women's 49kg weightlifting event at the 2020 Olympics on Saturday at the Sydney Games.

An Olympic medal finally around her neck, star Indian weightlifter Mirabai Chanu on Saturday said she can finally take a break at home without worrying about training after managing just five trips to her place in Manipur in the last five years.

“I have just been home for five days in the past five years. Now I will go with this medal,” said Chanu, whose family is based in Nongpok Kakching village about 20 kilometres from Imphal.

“I will now go home and eat food made by my mother,” she added.

Chanu revealed that after the Rio Games debacle she changed her training and technique completely so that she could redeem herself in Tokyo. Competing in her second Olympics, Chanu claimed the Silver medal in the 49kg category with a total of 202kg (87kg+115kg). It was India's second Olympic medal in the sport after Karnam Malleswari's bronze that came 21 years ago

me that I have a lot of potential,” she added.

Head coach Vijay Sharma revealed he was under a lot of pressure after the disappointing outing in Rio.

“There was a lot of pressure on me after the Rio failure, but we failed in a very important part. We were expected to win then also,” Sharma said.

Determined to prove herself in the Tokyo Games, Chanu and Sharma changed the Manipuri's training, employing a more stringent regimen.

After that we changed the training pattern and technique a lot. The result of which we saw in the 2017 world championship, then we took the Gold in the 2018 Commonwealth Games. We won a medal in the 2019 world following it with a Gold at the

growing and improving regularly.

“The lesson we learnt was that we need a lot of determination and discipline. I worked with that and Mira partnered me.”

“She hasn't done anything but eat, sleep and train in the last five years. It took us 2.5 years instead of 1.5 for the Olympic qualification because of coronavirus. Overall the result of the journey is that we are sitting here today with the medal.”

The Manipuri's sole focus for the past five years was on winning a medal at the Olympics and that required several sacrifices including staying away from her family.

“The efforts paid off. Chanu went on to win the world championship in 2017 following it with a Gold at the

“Could not have asked for a happier start to @Tokyo2020 India is elated by @mirabai_chanu's stupendous performance. Congratulations to her for winning the Silver medal in weightlifting. Her success motivates every Indian. #CheerIndia #Tokyo2020”

—PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI

“Many many Congratulations to @mirabai_chanu on winning India's first medal at #Tokyo2020. Such an inspiring performance that will be remembered for a long time to come and will inspire generations. Well done.”

—ABHINAV BINDRA

“Congratulations for a beautiful opening on medal tally @mirabai_chanu. This Second place medal medal is a morale boost for our Indian contingent. Thank you for a spectacular performance..... jai hind.”

—BAJRANG PUNIA

2018 Commonwealth Games. At the 2019 Asian championship she picked up a Bronze in clean and jerk where medals are awarded separately for snatch, clean and jerk, and total lift.

Ahead of the Tokyo Games, the Khel Ratna awardee had created a world record in clean and jerk at the 2020 Asian championship earlier this year. Chanu hoped her exploits in the international arena and the Olympics win can inspire more girls to take up the sport specially weightlifting.

“There will be change, there are few girls in weightlifting right now but I hope many will be inspired by me and will feel they can also achieve something in the sport.”

Mirabai's mother in tears as daughter sports 'good luck' earrings she gifted

New Delhi: A historic Silver medal and a radiant smile were not the only eye-catching things about Mirabai Chanu on Saturday in Tokyo, her gold earrings shaped like Olympic rings were as striking.

The hope was that the earrings would bring her “good luck”. It didn't happen in the Rio 2016 Games but Chanu made the little sacrifice count in Tokyo on Saturday morning with a Silver medal and Saikhom Ongthi Tombi Leima has struggled to stop her tears from flowing ever since.

“I saw the earrings on TV. I gave them to her in 2016 before the Rio Olympics. I have made it for her from the gold pieces and savings I have so that it brings luck and success,” Leima said from her home in Manipur where a considerable number of relatives, friends and well-wishers gathered to watch Chanu script history in Tokyo.

Chanu was in tears seeing it and also during the moment she won the medal. Her father (Saikhom Kriti Meitei) was also in tears. Tears of joy. All her hard work has led to the success.

The Chanu household at Nongpok Kakching village, around 25km from state capital Imphal, visitors had been trickling in since Friday despite the curfew caused in part by the Covid-19 pandemic.

“She had told us she will win Gold or at least a medal. So everybody was waiting for it to happen. Many of our relatives who lived far came last evening. They stayed overnight with us,” Chanu's mother said.



Family members and neighbours of Mirabai Chanu gather together to watch her lift.

“Many came this morning and the people of the locality also thronged. So, we have brought out the television to the verandah and around 50 people were there to watch Mirabai in Tokyo. Many sat at the front courtyard. So, it was a kind of festival.”

The Gold they had wished for didn't come but the Silver was enough to send a packed courtyard, glued to the TV, into frenzy as the tense little crowd broke into celebrations, unclenching their fists and clapping frantically.

Chanu was on video call with her family from the weightlifting arena in Tokyo before her event began and she had sought blessings from her parents.

“She (Chanu) rarely comes home (because of training) and so we have



made a Whatsapp group to communicate with each other,” said Chanu's cousin Aroshini.

“This morning, she had a video call with all of us and she bowed down and sought blessings from her parents.”

“She said ‘bless me to win a Gold medal for the country’. They gave their blessings. It was a touching moment.”

Amit Shah, NE CMs give standing ovation to Mirabai

Shillong: Union Minister Amit Shah and Chief Ministers of all eight North Eastern states on Saturday gave a standing ovation following which everyone in the meeting gave the standing ovation with pride, they said. Singh also announced a ₹1 crore

package besides other perks an Olympian enjoys besides reserving a special post for the 26 year old Manipur woman.

All eight CMs of the Northeast are attending a meeting presided over by Shah in Meghalaya's capital Shillong.

Manika, Mukherjee off to promising start

Tokyo: India's slim hopes for a table tennis medal in mixed doubles vanished in no time but Manika Batra and Sathiya Mukherjee made promising starts to their women's singles campaign on Saturday.

The start to India's table tennis campaign was disappointing with Sharath Kamal and Manika losing 0-4 to the third seeds Lin Yun-Ju and Cheng I-Ching of Chinese Taipei in the mixed doubles round of 16.

However, world number 62 Manika returned to beat 94th-ranked Tin-Tin Ho of Britain 4-0 in her singles opener while 98th-ranked Sathiya made a strong impression on

her Olympics debut with a come from behind 4-3 win against 78th-ranked Linda Bergstrom of Sweden.

Mukherjee play Portugal's Fu Yu in the second round while Manika takes on Ukraine's Margarita Pesotska.

Mukherjee showed remarkable grit to down her Swedish opponent after trailing 1-3 in the best of seven affair. She won 5-11, 9-11, 13-9, 11-3, 11-9, 11-5.

Earlier in the mixed doubles, Sharath and Manika had to make all chances count against a superior opponent from Chinese Taipei but they couldn't do so after leading 5-1 and 5-3 in the first two games. In the end, it was a comfortable 11-8, 11-6, 11-5, 11-4 win for Lin and Cheng.

Manpreet & Co start with win, women's lose

Tokyo: Harmanpreet Singh scored a brace and veteran goalkeeper P R Sreejesh stood like a wall in the closing minutes as the Indian men's hockey team overcame a late surge from New Zealand to eke out a close 3-2 win in its opening Olympic Games match on Saturday.

Aside from Harmanpreet (26th and 33rd minutes), Rupinder Pal Singh (10th) was the other goal-getter for the eight-time former champions, currently ranked fourth in the world, in the Pool A match at the Oi hockey stadium.

For the eighth-ranked New Zealand, Kane Russell scored from a penalty corner in the sixth minute before Stephen Jenness (43rd minute) reduced the margin of defeat later in the match.

India will next play mighty Australia on Sunday. The Kookaburras beat hosts Japan 5-3 in another Pool A tie. India's chief coach Graham Reid was happy to start the campaign on a winning note but said there are many areas to improve ahead of Sunday's tough match.



Harmanpreet Singh celebrates with his Indian teammates after he scores a goal against New Zealand during Pool A match.

“Winning three points in a competition like the Olympic Games is really important. I think we had a good second and third quarter but the first and fourth struggled a little bit,” he said.

“When we watch the video later today, we will be able to find out where we need to get better at and surely there are going to be things we learn from today

too”, he added.

INDIA WOMEN LOSE 1-5

The Indian women's hockey team fought valiantly in the first two quarters before losing the team to go down 1-5 against world No 1 Netherlands in their opening Pool match.

Felice Albers gave Netherlands the lead in the sixth minute before the advan-

tage was evened out by India skipper Kant Rampal in the 10th minute.

The Indians defended bravely in the first two quarters to go into the half time locked at 1-1 but the break seemed to have broken their momentum as the Dutch came out all guns blazing after the change of ends and pumped in three goals to nip any chance of an upset in the bud.

Margot van Geffen (33rd minute) restored Netherlands' lead soon after resumption before the three-time Olympic champions and reging silver medalist scored two goals in quick succession through Albers (43rd) and Frederique Matla (45th) to take control of the proceedings.

If that was not enough, there was more agony in store for the Indians as Caia Jacqueline van Maasaker slammed home from their sixth penalty corner in the 52nd minute.

India will play Germany in their next Pool A match on July 26.



Nagal creates history with singles win

Tokyo: Sumi Nagal on Saturday became only the third Indian tennis player to win a men's singles match at the Olympic Games and the first in 25 years, when he edged past Denis Istomin 6-4, 6-7(6), 6-4 in two hours and 34 minutes on court 10 at the Ariake Tennis Centre.

Zeehan Ali was the first Indian to win a singles match at the 1988 Seoul Games when he beat Victor Caballero from Paraguay.

After that, the legendary Leander Paes won the historic men's singles Bronze at the 1996 Atlanta Games, beating Brazil's

Fernando Meligeni.

“No Indian could win a singles match after Paes' heroic feat. “To lose second set from 5-3 and then comeback in the third set in a weather like this, is not easy. Playing for my country gave me the push,” said Nagal after the match.

Nagal now faces a herculean task as he takes on Australian Open runner-up Medvedev. “I am very excited for this match to play the world number two on a big court. That's why we play tennis for, to live for these moments. I am looking forward to it,” he said.

Chirag-Satwik stun World No 3

Praneeth suffers defeat; Sindhu in action today

Tokyo: The Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty shocked the world No 3 pair of Yang Lee and Chi-Lin Wang of Chinese Taipei in a thrilling group A match of the badminton competition where the country experienced disappointment in the singles' event on Saturday.

Chirag and Satwik, the current world No 10, notched up a stunning 21-16, 16-21, 25-25 win over the seeds Lee and Wang, who had claimed back-to-back titles at the Yonex Thailand Open, Toyota Thailand Open and BWF World Tour Finals in Thailand earlier this year.

However, 13th seeded B Sai Praneeth suffered a demoralising 17-21, 15-21 loss to world number 47, Misha Zilberman of Israel in a 41-minute men's singles group D match.



India's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty compete against Taiwan's Lee Yang and Wang Chi Lin during their men's doubles group stage match.

Satwik and Chirag, who have been working under Danish coach Mathias Boe for the last few months, dished out a tactical superior game and held their nerves in the final moments to emerge victorious during the one-hour and nine-minute contest, which turned out to be an edge-of-the-seat thriller.

The Indians had five match points but the Chinese Taipei pair, the 2018 World Championship Bronze medalists, saved all of them before grabbing one themselves but Chirag and Satwik were up to the task and had the last laugh.

Satwik and Chirag will next play Indonesian world No 16 Marcus Fernaldi Gideon and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo on Sunday.

Injured Vikas out



Vikas Krishan stands in his corner during his men's 69-kg boxing match.

India's Indian boxer Vikas Krishan (69kg) was out-punched 0-5 and left with a bloody eye by local favourite Sewonets' Quincy Mensah Okazawa as he bowed out of Olympics on Saturday after fighting with a shoulder injury in the opening round.

“During the last sparring session in Italy (before the team left for Tokyo), he injured his shoulder. He got treatment and we had hoped that he would be

fine, he started with problem,” Director Santiago Nieve said. “He was the favourite for a job at Okazawa's body, he hurt the shoulder again and could not use his left hand properly. He fought with one hand today,” the Swede added.

Vikas was the only Indian boxer in action on the day. On Sunday, six-time world champion M C Maryam (51kg) and Commonwealth Games Silver medalist Manish Kaushik will compete in their opening bouts.

Indian shooters fail to fire

Tokyo: Indian shooters endured multiple heartbreaks on the first day of their competition in the Tokyo Olympics on Saturday, with the biggest disappointment being Saurabh Chaudhary's failure to win a medal after topping the qualifications.

Chaudhary could not replicate the form he displayed in the qualifications to finish seventh in the women's 10m air pistol final. His roommate and friend Abhishek Verma could not make the eight-man finals, settling for the 17th place with 575 points in the event that was considered one of India's best bets for a podium finish.

In the women's 10m air rifle event, first-timer Elavenil Valarivan and Apurvi Chandel, too, failed to qualify for the finals, finishing 16th and 36th respectively, at the Kasana Range.

Following his sensational entry into the finals, a lot of hope were pinned on Chaudhary after a dismal show by the qualifications to finish seventh in the women's 10m air pistol final. His roommate and friend Abhishek Verma could not make the eight-man finals, settling for the 17th place with 575 points in the event that was considered one of India's best bets for a podium finish.

Chaudhary shooting 586 to finish ahead of a world-class field, thanks to a perfect 100 in the fourth series after back-to-back 98.

Verma was also in contention to make the cut after staging an excellent rally but two 8s in the final series dashed his hopes.

Earlier in the day, world number one Elavenil finished 16th in the qualifications after shooting 626.5 over six series of 10 shots each, while the more experienced Apurvi, who is also the finals world record holder in the event, settled for the 36th place after aggregating 621.9.

For marriage to be a success, every woman and every man should have her and his own bathroom. The end
—Catherine Zeta-Jones



Support system for rural India
If more private companies perceive rural development as a market investment, we will be able to better support our rural regions



Watch your thoughts
Every individual is born with a stockpile of thought seeds in mind, coming as it may as Karmic carryover from the past



Identifying a passive aggressive partner could be the first step towards curbing the hostility growing between you and your partner, writes NIDHI UPADHYAY

HOW FINE IS 'I AM FINE'?

We all use 'I am fine' as the most powerful means to avoid any potentially costly confrontations, be it with a spouse, with your colleague at work agrees with your constructive feedback in the meeting to avoid confrontation and later forgets to copy you in an important email? What if your usually punctual spouse doesn't show up on time for a dinner date simply because he or she disagreed with your choice of restaurant? And what if you have noticed a pattern in this behaviour but every time you try to bring it up with your spouse you are dismissed for reading too much between the lines?

While developing the characters for *That Night*, I accidentally stumbled upon an interesting article about passive aggression in a marriage and how sometimes what might appear like a difference of opinion on the surface could be a classical setup for passive aggressive relationship. Although the partner exhibiting such behaviour in a relationship might not be a full-fledged, card carrying passive aggressive personality, but he or she could be a member of the club, subtly abusing the partner emotionally and sometimes physically too.

According to WebMD: Passive aggressive behaviour is when you express negative feelings indirectly instead of openly talking about them. During World War II, when soldiers wouldn't follow officers' orders, experts described them as "passive-aggressive." Someone who uses passive aggression may feel angry, resentful, or frustrated, but they act neutral, pleasant, or even cheerful. They then find indirect ways to show how they really feel.

We all might show a streak of passive aggression at times, however, when this repetitive sulking, backhanded compliment, withdrawal, or manipulation becomes a way of life, it can result into grave consequences in a relationship, especially in a marriage. Identifying a passive aggressive partner could be the first step towards curbing the hostility growing between you and your partner.

While each passive-aggressive spouse might operate differently, but they all have one thing in common: they avoid confrontation, and often these individuals appear and behave outwardly supportive or content, which makes it all the more difficult to spot them. However, identifying a behavioural pattern can serve as a key differentiator between a momentary angry acceptance and a passive aggression in a relationship.

RECOGNISING PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Below are some red flags that can help you identify a harmless sulking from a hostile one.

- **Disguised Verbal Hostility:** I'm just saying a sentence that sounds so harmless can be your partner's coping mechanism developed over the years to express his or her angry feel-

ings without being affirmative about it.

- **Disguised Hostile Humour:** 'Can't You Take a Joke?' The backhanded compliment or sarcasm could be another powerful weapon often used by a passive aggressive partner, especially in the instances when they are confronted about their demeaning act. Playing a victim card 'that it was meant to be a joke' is their knee-jerk reaction to avoid any uncomfortable conversations.

- **Guilt-Baiting:** 'You were taking so long to finish that call with your mom that I started the match instead.' Aggressive passive spouses are an expert at wielding guilt as a weapon to show their disagreement or hostility. They inadvertently or skillfully manipulate and coerce you into an agreement by attacking your vulnerable spots.

- **Disguised Psychological Manipulation:** 'I think you need to go for a yoga class to manage your stress.' Passive aggressive spouse usually have a tendency to change your perception by spinning the whole blame on you for being the inconsiderate or the short tempered one.

- **Stonewalling:** Avoiding responsibility, duty, and obligations and withdrawing from a relationship is another trick up the sleeves of these individuals. It's their way of maintaining power and control by imposing many hurdles for you to jump through.

While the phrases such as 'I am just saying,' 'It was a joke' and the silent treatment are invariably part of every marriage, it should not be a breeding ground for hostility that leaves the receiving partner shattered and confused about her or his own worth in a relationship. Unfortunately, often these tricky psychological manoeuvres take absolutely no planning on your passive-aggressive partner's part. On the contrary, they are acting on pure instincts. Hence identifying the cause for such behaviour could work as a powerful tool to stop such manoeuvres in the track.

POSSIBLE CAUSES FOR PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

- **Upbringing:** Voicing your strong opinion was/is often categorised as disrespectful in most Indian households. However, a constant suppression of opinion during the formative years can impact adversely, pushing an individual to find ways to passively channel their anger or frustration.

- **Sense of powerlessness:** A manipulation in a marriage can often be a side-effect of tussle of power between the partners, especially when one partner feels out of control in a situation or area where his or her spouse is enjoying success. This sense of insecurity can fuel underhanded tactics to sabotage the partner's success and emotional wellbeing, sometimes without even realising it. This power hunger can also manifest into establishing their territories by subtle emotional and physical abuse.



WHILE EACH PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE SPOUSE MIGHT OPERATE DIFFERENTLY, BUT THEY ALL HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON: THEY AVOID CONFRONTATION, AND OFTEN THESE INDIVIDUALS APPEAR AND BEHAVE OUTWARDLY SUPPORTIVE OR CONTENT, WHICH MAKES IT ALL THE MORE DIFFICULT TO SPOT THEM. HOWEVER, IDENTIFYING A BEHAVIOURAL PATTERN CAN SERVE AS A KEY DIFFERENTIATOR BETWEEN A MOMENTARY ANGRY ACCEPTANCE AND A PASSIVE AGGRESSION IN A RELATIONSHIP

- **Inability to accept their own emotion:** Passive aggression is a personality disorder, and these individuals cannot approach situations, feelings, relationships or communication directly. They are often unaware of what they are doing, and when confronted, they refuse to acknowledge both the behaviour and the results.
- **Low self-esteem:** The passive-aggressive partner often feels that he or she is the one at the receiving end, inadvertently playing the victim card. These individuals often operate out of a deep sense of insecurity, and they persistently feed their negative emotions to justify their actions, sometimes to the extent of demeaning the partner in an attempt to elevate themselves.
- **Buried feelings of inadequacy and injustice:** Often words like 'it's-unfair' can be passive aggressive person's way of communicating that the spouse has some kind of unfair advantage over them in a relationship. It could be in career, relationships at work and family, or kids.

HOW TO COPE WITH PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

- Once you have identified a classical pattern of passive aggression in your spouse, the most critical step is to protect your and your partner's emotional wellbeing. The following few steps can act as a crucial steppingstone in bringing your relationship back to a healthy track.
- **Accepting the situation:** It's painful to accept that your spouse is operating within a passive-aggressive pattern, especially, because these individuals have a tendency to manipulate your emotions by displaying sacrifices made by them in a relationship. They usually go an extra length to prove that their love for their spouse is unmatched. But if you notice a concrete pattern in the sugar-coated humiliation or purposeful withdrawal to punish you, it's time to trust your instincts and accept the reality.
 - **Identify the trigger:** There is no excuse for aggression and abuse of any form in a marriage. However, knowing the reason for this aggression can help you predict the behaviour pattern of your spouse. Also, sometimes the issue can be as trivial as your spouse fearing to hurt your feelings and thus, he or she inadvertently finds an underhanded way to express his or her dislike. Understanding the triggers can minimize the potential damage to your relationships.
 - **Don't justify your spouse's behaviour:** The chances are that you have been manipulated enough in a relationship by now that you tend to find flaws in you than in the spouse who appears so nice and non-confrontational. So, train yourself to stop inwardly justifying or finding excuses for your spouse's unacceptable behaviour.
 - **Stay calm and keep your anger in control:** It's essential to keep a check on your emo-

tions, especially when the passive aggressive spouse is acting up. If you can recognise triggers of your own anger and get a control of your reactions, you are less likely to get psychologically manipulated or gaslighted by the partner.

- **Establishing a healthy channel of communication:** It is important to approach your spouse with vulnerability and empathy as passive aggressive individuals are hypersensitive and often operate from low self-esteem or sense of insecurity. You can help them by wording their angry feelings in a way that it doesn't appear judgmental yet factual. Share with your spouse how his or her behaviour hurts you but do it without placing the blame on them.

- **Set healthy boundaries and ground rules:** It hurts deeply to accept that your spouse might not have your best interest in mind always. However, it is important to set boundaries to protect yourself from any form of emotional or physical abuse. By drawing a clear list of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour might help you and your partner identify the patterns you've been experiencing. Also, setup consequences for the next time he or she does the same thing and don't back down if they demean you.

- **Seek help of a marriage therapist:** It never hurts to seek help of a good marriage therapist. With the right approach and professional support, you can overcome passive-aggressive patterns and manipulations in a relationship to build a happier, healthier marriage together. However, even after repetitive efforts at your end, if your partner still believes that you are at fault, in that case, you might be forced to take the tough decision of saving yourself from any form of emotional abuse. If despite all your love and patience your partner is persistently falling back to his or her old ways of demeaning you or manipulating you, or they refuse to seek help, it's time to walk out of a relationship that is ruining you (and your partner) inside out. Because marriage should not be about turning yourself inside out, it should also be about loving yourself and defining your own worth in a relationship, and it can only happen when the boundaries about what is acceptable and not are defined clearly for both the partners. And if something unacceptable still finds its way into your marriage, time and again, despite all your efforts, perhaps walking away from a relationship would be a better idea. Because these episodes of withdrawal, aggression, abuse and manipulation are a double-edged sword that wounds you and your partner, too. So, before you fall out of love with yourself and with your partner seek help.

The writer is an engineer-turned-headhunter. That Night, published by Penguin, is her debut novel



NEED TO BUILD A SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR RURAL INDIA

If more private companies perceive rural development during and beyond disasters as a market investment, instead of an evangelist or missionary ad-hoc project, we will be able to better support our rural regions

With the tragic second wave of Covid-19 in India done and dusted, malls and restaurants in cities are once again thronging with customers. However, in rural India the devastating effect of Covid-19 this time round has been so grave that the mood there might take far longer to pick up.

By May 2021, one in every two cases was in India's rural areas, while states like Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan had 75% of their cases in rural areas. Exposing the weakness of the public healthcare system, rural India only had 40% of the beds in the country even when it is home to 70% of India's population. In fact the number of hospital beds per 10000 population between 2010 and 2020 reduced from 9 to 5.

I spent much of last month leading the philanthropic effort of a consortium of partners to establish more Covid care facilities in rural parts of India. It has been challenging to raise funds for Covid relief in the second wave as charitable funds for health care in India have dried up while government regulations have clamped down on international funds coming in to the NGOs in the country.

Secondly, given the intensity of this wave, only ICU beds or at least beds equipped with oxygen concentrators were mostly needed in the second wave, pushing up the effort and cost of equipment procurement. Thirdly, many individuals and organisations including established not-for-profits were no longer contributing to the cause voluntarily but instead leveraged the desperate situation of the second wave to make a buck.

Nonetheless with the support of local NGO Bihar and its founder Anis Bari, the sustained efforts of Anant National University, besides my own firm Sustain Labs, we managed to establish 13 Covid care facilities in rural Bihar.



It is indeed easy and not incorrect to blame the government as state governments with higher expenditure on health had lower confirmed cases of Covid. However, at a time when the government has demonstrated substantial inertia in effectively managing the pandemic in the country, the civil society must (and has!) step up. With management expertise, wide distribution networks in the country, human resources at disposal, the private sector has an especially strong role to play in disaster management in rural India. Corporations hold enormous influence within their domains and communities around their factories and depots that are often located in remote or rural areas. In this context, government effectiveness in rural areas can thus be strengthened by leveraging existing private sector capacities, reach and core competencies.

There is a need to emphasize greater market driven ways for the private sector to support rural development in India, during and beyond disasters. A balanced approach to driving market driven rural development strategies ensure that the development is sustained as stakeholders see incentives to do so. CSR funds alone, on the other hand, are undependable as it runs dry exactly at the time of socio-economic crisis such as the current pandemic, which is ironically when it is most needed.

There are at least three ways that the private sector can play a central role in managing disasters better in rural India.

First, through the investments they make and the decisions they take, companies directly impact the

THERE IS A NEED TO EMPHASIZE GREATER MARKET DRIVEN WAYS FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO SUPPORT RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

world around us. Establishing markets in rural regions and offering affordable products and services to rural India is a market opportunity. For example, Visaka Industries Limited is a Hyderabad based diversified company that manufactures asbestos cement roofing sheets, building products and textile yarn, in ways that established it as a primarily green business. Further, 90% of Visaka's asbestos sheets, 30% of VBoard products, and 20% of its ATUM solar roofing are sold in rural and semi-urban parts of the country, thus enhancing the quality of life of rural communities.

Similarly, ICICI too has a substantial rural presence. 650 of ICICI's rural branches are in previously unbanked villages and which also promote entrepreneurship among women by developing

tailored financing and loan options catering to rural India. During disasters such as the ongoing pandemic, the reach and institutionalised presence of companies in these rural areas are of paramount importance for providing sustained livelihood and disaster relief to people.

Secondly, rural India still needs to be better connected to cities via roads, highways, and also telecommunications. Goods for relief work (and beyond) need to be transported by roads to villages and this becomes difficult to do if road infrastructure is inadequate. Until June this year we also saw that the vaccination distribution exclusively relied on a digital portal for booking vaccination slots for a significant population of the country, which became an impediment for India to achieve universal immunisation. Ultimately on June 2, 2021, the Supreme Court asked the government to explain how the use of the CoWin app for booking slots is going to overcome the digital divide in rural and urban India, following which offline channels of vaccine booking were introduced. This again is an opportunity for the private sector to step in and build physical and digital infrastructure that connects rural India better to the rest of the country. Indeed the government needs to also prioritise the development of infrastructure projects, make approvals more efficient, besides tightening quality control.

Third, we need more public private partnerships. Disasters by themselves are beyond anyone's control. However, the preparation and response to them can be managed so that the human and economic losses can be minimised or eliminated. This is why, whereas states have the overall responsibility to drive disaster recovery and mitigation efforts it must be understood as a shared task between the government and relevant stakeholders. Currently the Indian private sector provides disaster support in a less systematic and more ad-hoc manner. Far more strategic and planned partnerships between the government and the private sector for rural development and disaster mitigation and recovery remain to be seen.

If more private companies perceive rural development during and beyond disasters as a market investment, instead of an evangelist or missionary ad-hoc project alone, we will be able to better support our rural regions and not lose as many lives during disasters.

The writer is the CEO of Sustain Labs, a company that transforms companies towards being sustainable and profitable. She is the author of Indian Instincts: Essays on Freedom & Equality in India, and a Global Leadership Fellow at the World Economic Forum

Changing demographic profiles & women

The formation and the break-up of a society determine the consequences of a radical shift in external forces. For instance, the negligible say of women in the USA before the 1800s prompted women leaders to band together to promote a new, separate women's rights movement and change the direction of Abolitionist Movement of the 1830s.

Generations upon generations, the gender equality rhetoric has filled the gap of responsibilities and rights through gradual and profound movements around the globe. However, the 21st-century demographic picture is still blurry for women, which face constant denial of individual rights and powers.

The Covid-19 pandemic has been the greatest peacetime disruptor of years of progress in demographics of the society, especially in India, where there only 943 females per 1000 males. Moreover, in 2020, India ranked at 189th position out of 201 countries in terms of female to male ratio. In a society where 77% of parents prefer a male child over a female, this disproportion in the gender ratio has had profound implications in the lives of an average Indian woman during the pandemic.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DIVORCE & CHILD CUSTODY

With only 66% women literate as compared to 83% men in India, the social awareness among women is at the lowest, which makes them incapable of voicing their power against domestic violence. Indian women filed more domestic violence complaints than recorded in a similar period in the last 10 years. But even this unusual spurt is only the tip of the iceberg as 86% of women who experience domestic violence do not seek help in India. Social isolation amid the pandemic has also caused circumstances where victims and aggressors cannot separate, and there are fewer options

Closing the gender gap in digital inclusion is an urgent priority in the pandemic. This involves a special focus on women-owned enterprises under the stimulus programmers, write RAJESH MEHTA & UDDESHYA GOEL

for women to escape their conditions, especially in the rural regions.

Despite this fact, post first wave, India saw a nearly three-fold increase in cases pertaining to divorce and child custody being filed. From an average of 1,280 cases in a month, their numbers went up to 3,480 during the lockdown. This has placed them in a situation where they have to face social denial and the increased financial burden of their child individually.

THE SECOND SHIFT AND MENTAL WELL-BEING

A study by McKinsey found mothers are more than three times as likely, compared with fathers, to meet the majority of the demands for housework and caregiving during the pandemic. In addition, they are more than one and a half times as likely as fathers to spend three or more hours per day on these activities.

This "second shift" is where women complete their day of paid work and then spend another full shift doing work at home supporting children, families and at-home tasks. This dynamic has been exacerbated by the limits and lockdowns associated with the pandemic.

Naturally, this has brought detrimental effects on the mental fitness of working women, which constitutes 21% of the total workforce in India. According to a *LinkedIn* survey, the pandemic is taking a toll on the emotional well-being of India's working women as 47% report they are experiencing more stress. For men, this number stood at 38%, pointing towards a disproportionate impact on women.



JOB LOSSES AND POVERTY

Female job loss rates due to Covid-19 are about 1.8 times higher than male job loss rates globally, at 5.7% versus 3.1% respectively. Moreover, 4.5% of

women's employment is at risk in the pandemic globally, compared with 3.8% of men's employment. This is because women are over-represented in industries that are likely to experience the greatest

declines because of the pandemic. These include hospitality and foodservice, retail, education and manufacturing.

As a direct consequence, the pandemic will push 96 million

people into extreme poverty by 2021, 47 millions of whom are women and girls, widening the gender poverty gap.

WIDENING ENTREPRENEURIAL GAP

In India, women-owned a little over 20% of all micro, small and medium businesses compared to nearly 80% among men in FY21. The crisis has made family resources scarce for women, such as financial capital to invest in businesses or digital devices that families must now share as children's schooling has gone online. This has brought a disproportionate impact on female entrepreneurship, including women-owned microenterprises in developing countries like India

THE LOST FUTURE TALENTS

The cascading effect of pandemic-induced economic insecurity is not just the income losses but also the rippling effect of years of education denied to women and girls. Impacts on education and employment have long-lasting consequences that, if unaddressed, will reverse hard-won gains in gender equality.

According to a UNESCO estimate, a total of 11 million girls may leave school by the end of the Covid crisis; evidence from previous crises suggests that many will not return.

Lack of education and economic insecurity also increases the risk of gender-based violence. Without sufficient economic resources, women are unable to escape abusive partners and face a greater threat of sexual exploitation, trafficking and teen pregnancy. These consequences won't disappear when the pandemic subsides: women and girls are likely to experience long-term set-

backs in workforce participation and income. The fallout will be most severe for the most vulnerable women, those who are rarely in the headlines: migrant workers, refugees, marginalised racial and ethnic groups, single-parent households, youth and the poorest of the poor.

DIRECT INTERVENTIONS

The challenge is huge but the cause is even gargantuan. Direct interventions are needed to draw an inflection point in the current demographic status to bring a fundamental change down the line. This mandates addressing attitudinal biases. Any drive toward gender parity arguably starts with efforts to change entrenched, widespread attitudes about women's role in society. This is an extremely difficult and complex challenge that will require all stakeholders to play a sustained part over the long term.

Addressing unpaid child care cannot be overstated. There is an immediate requirement of reducing the gender imbalance in responsibility for care. This involves employer- or state-funded provision of childcare or tax policies that encourage both spouses to work and a profession-aided child care industry with public-financing support to enable women to work and create employment for others

Interventions are also required to address digital and financial inclusion. Closing the gender gap in digital inclusion is an urgent priority in the pandemic. This involves a special focus on women-owned enterprises under the stimulus programmers. Tax burdens should be eased and where possible, government should source food, personal protection equipment, and other essential supplies from women-led businesses.

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EdTech platforms: Same old wine in new bottle?

For a country as populated as ours, where a large section struggles to make a decent living, access to basic education still remains a privilege. However, there exists an inherent paradox where even a good percentage of the educated population find it difficult to have gainful and stable employment. So, given this paradox, how do we expect that educating the underprivileged lot will somehow help them in finding a better livelihood?

But before making an attempt to decipher the underlying code behind this paradox, we need to dig a little deeper beneath the surface to come up with an answer to this question. Who exactly are the stakeholders that tend to benefit most out of the current education system?

All the educational institutes usually serve the purpose of signalling certain qualities like intelligence, diligence, compliance, and conformity to potential employers. As a result, there is a widespread clamour among students to get themselves validated through a paper degree as it presumably increases the chances of landing a well-paying job.

Therefore, as long as we don't find any fault in subscribing to a free market doctrine, only skills and experiences that are directly convertible to income are considered useful. As a consequence, the need for the education system to make itself sufficiently market aligned has

always managed to remain the top priority, where institutes keep thriving by serving as a certification agency. As long as both the stakeholders (students and institutes) are happy with this arrangement, the 20th-century educational ecosystem will keep haunting us even in the 21st century.

Whereas the third stakeholder (parents) doesn't seem to bother much about the present education system, primarily because they themselves are a product of that system. Besides, in India, the sense of pride associated with raising an academically exceptional child is something difficult to express in words. It is the ultimate validation to prove their worth as successful parents. It helps parents in covering every other possible flaws in their parenting. Not only that, but it also gives them a false sense of assurance that their children will eventually become an overachiever in actual life.

The false promise!
Now given this ground reality, the more we change around this system, the more they seem to remain the same. And that seems to be true for the growth in EdTech platforms. All the changes introduced so far in the education ecosystem remind us of the earlier models of coaching centres that held a promise of a better tomorrow if you could afford their fees.

However, despite these apparent shortcomings, the



media is never tired of celebrating the success of EdTech initiatives that are nothing but a rehash of the same old wine in the shiner bottle. The content and delivery by most of these EdTech platforms are woefully dated, with a minimum collaboration, participation, and feedback from students.

Now given the widespread celebration in media, there is a temptation to accept education as a potent investment opportunity for people with deep pockets. Given the poor quality associated with most forms of public education, people, in general, have been conditioned to accept the association of good quality education at a cost. As a result, there is no dearth of institutes claiming to offer the same.

As an integral part of tar-

getting the gullible parents and students, there is a deliberate attempt from these EdTech entities with deep pockets to sell their product as something very essential for the success of students — an unsubstantiated claim sold as gospel truth.

Celebrity endorsement is another potent method to capture the attention of insecure parents. These insecure parents are made to feel guilty if they dare to deny their kids "the key to success" on financial grounds. There is a lot of unnecessary noise created in the media about the potency of the life-altering products and courses. A kid as young as 5 years is not spared from their tempting media campaigns.

Is there a way to weed out these outright commercial entities occupying the educational

space?
In the era of low-cost internet, the availability of good quality free content has never been in question. It's the concomitant contextual understanding and subsequent follow-up lectures that make the whole difference. You can't expect a student with limited working knowledge of English to comprehend a two-hour lecture by Harvard faculty on quantum physics.

So, what's the solution?
Given the kind of complexity inherent in the problem, the solution needs to incorporate the seemingly conflicting interest of different stakeholders into account. Therefore, it wouldn't make sense to come up with one size solution that fits everyone.

It's important to embrace the true potential of EdTech. It's

not just about reformatting books into pdf or teaching remotely, it's also about using tech to deliver brand-new learning architecture, opening up the world of education to new audiences, boosting student engagement, while cutting costs to improve access for all.

There is no denying that the pre-university generation is digital natives; they favour individual expression and personalisation to such an extent that they expect to resolve all of life's problems with the device in the palm of their hands. They don't mind being bombarded with information via social media.

Therefore, there is a need to go straight to the heart of social media, where Gen Z spends a lot of time. EdTech platforms need to find a way to

cut through the noise and reach students across the social divides who could be given the needed support.

In the name of online classes whatever is being done with books and whiteboard can merely be termed as a good start especially for visual learners, but can't be termed as a technological revolution in the education space by any stretch of the imagination. Because a forward-looking twenty-first-century education envisages more than exposing students to audio-visual content. Here every learner is expected to collaborate, communicate, be creative and think critically to solve problems!

We need to prepare students to work in teams, exchange ideas with peers who may be in different geographies. The students are expected to find solutions by thinking out of the box with the world of information at their fingertips. We need to outgrow the mentality of spoon-feeding, and allow children to learn for themselves and be there to support them as a facilitator.

Till we succeed in bringing these much-needed changes within the existing ecosystem, the promise of gaining a better livelihood after going through the pain of years of formal education will eventually turn out to be a hollow one.

(The writer is an educator, former IRS officer & author of upcoming book "The Current Perspective on INDIAN ECONOMY.")

Do we actually need them? The content and delivery by most of these EdTech platforms are woefully dated, with a minimum collaboration, participation, and feedback from students. EdTech platforms need to find a way to cut through the noise and reach students across the social divide



PIYUSH KAMAL

PERSPECTIVE

South Sudan — A decade of Independence

This month South Sudan is celebrating its first decade of Independence, but there is not much to rejoice. Since its separation from mainland Sudan, it has been experiencing continued violence, endemic corruption, poverty and underdevelopment. However, the 10th anniversary of country's historic achievement of Independence provides an opportunity to inject fresh initiatives to the ongoing peace process

South Sudan became the world's youngest nation on July 9, 2011. The birth of the Republic of South Sudan was the culmination of a six-year peace process that began with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005. With the signing of the CPA, the war between the South and the North Sudan came to an end and the peace deal, known as the Naivasha Agreement between Khartoum Central Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army Movement (SPLA/M), led to a historic referendum which took place in Southern Sudan between January 9 and 15 in 2011.

The main purpose of the referendum was to decide whether the region should continue to remain a part of Sudan or become independent. However, a simultaneous referendum that was supposed to be held in the Abyei region on whether to join South Sudan could not take place due to massive violence. The Referendum Commission published the results of the referendum on February 7, 2011, which showed more than 98.3 per cent people voted in favour of separation from the mainland Sudan.

South Sudan's partition from Sudan was predicted long ago. Interestingly, this part of Sudan was experiencing unrest for nearly six decades before its independence. Omar al-Bashir, then President of Sudan and a former army veteran, who ruled the country from 1989 to 2019, indeed talked about the right of South Sudan to secede from the mainland. Once a powerful strongman who ruled one of Africa's largest nations with an iron fist, Bashir commented that the referendum for South Sudan was helpful as he believed "unity could not be forced by power". However, then he was of the opinion that secession was not the answer for bringing an end to the myriad of problems of South Sudan. He had said, "The stability of the South is very important to us because any instability in the South will have an impact on the north...The

South suffers from many problems. It's been at war since 1959. The South does not have the ability to provide for its citizens or create a state or authority". The brutal man, who ruled his country for three decades and having the scar of carrying genocide in Darfur, almost turned his words prophetic over the newly independent South Sudan. As of this date, Juba is fervently struggling for peace, stability and unity.

This month the country is celebrating its first decade of Independence, but there is not much to rejoice. Since its separation from mainland Sudan, it has been experiencing continued violence, endemic corruption, poverty and underdevelopment. South Sudan is located in the northern and eastern hemisphere of the planet earth. It is bordered by six other African nations — Sudan to the north, Ethiopia to the east, Kenya to the south-east, Uganda to the south, the Democratic Republic of Congo to the south-west and Central African Republic to the west. The country has been undergoing a number of significant changes since 2011. At its birth, South Sudan had only 10 provincial States, but in 2015, it was divided into 15. In 2017, the country was further made into 32 provinces purely based on ethnic lines. However, after three years of running a troubled Government and signing of a peace treaty in February 2020, the South Sudanese Civil War came to an end. And with this, Juba decided to roll back the ethnic divisions of States created in 2017 and reverted to the earlier system of 10 States.

How the Civil War began in South Sudan? The two titans — Salva Kiir, the President, and Riek Machar, the former Vice President, were fighting to claim their rights over the fragile nation. This conflict started just after two years of the country's Independence from the mainland Sudan. The vast majority (over 80 per cent) of the people fleeing South Sudan in the past are women and children. And sadly, children make up to the 63 per cent of the total South Sudanese refugees during the

country's recent Civil War that lasted between December 15, 2013 and February 22, 2020, covering a period of nearly six years, two months and one week. Since the Civil War erupted, nearly 400,000 people have been killed and over 2.3 million became refugees and asylum seekers.

In November 2013, President Kiir, from the Dinka ethnic group, dismissed Machar who belonged to the Nuer group of South Sudan. Following the rumours of a possible coup, the President immediately replaced the members of the Army and the Government. He added fuel to the fire by dismissing all the main organs of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), citing that their time in office had expired. Further, massive violence sparked between the armed groups of Kiir and Machar, when the President accused the latter of plotting a coup against him in December 2013. Gradually, the violence took an ethnic turn by dividing and arming militias and villagers belonging to the Dinka and Nuer groups. There have also been allegations by both sides of crimes against humanity, including rape, extra-judicial killings, abductions, torture and the use of child soldiers in the war.

How has the UN responded to the crisis so far? As large swaths of South Sudan are facing violence against civilians, particularly children and women, the UN peacekeeping mission in the country known as United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is establishing a number of camps to protect the victims. Nicholas Haysom, the UN Secretary General's Special Representative for South Sudan briefed the UN Security Council about the current situation on June 21, 2021. In his briefing he said, "I would like to highlight the pervasive insecurity, in particular inter-communal violence, which continues to obstruct the realisation of a durable and sustainable peace in South Sudan. This year more than 80 per cent of the civilian casualties were attributed to inter-communal violence and community-based militias". Therefore, the UNMISS has a turbulent road ahead in South Sudan.



munal violence and community-based militias". Therefore, the UNMISS has a turbulent road ahead in South Sudan.

What is the latest peace deal? On September 12, 2018, President Kiir and Vice-President rebel leader Machar signed a renewed peace agreement to put an end to the five-year long ethnic war in South Sudan. The agreement known as the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict of the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) was nothing new and indeed built upon a previous peace deal signed by both the leaders. It's a renewed peace process as both these rebels have come across a number of negotiations in the past. But then all of them failed as both the parties kept violating the terms for strengthening their own militias. The R-ARCSS envisioned an eight-month "pre-transitional period" that focused largely on stabilising the security situation of the country. After eight months, the agreement stipulates the starting of another eight-month "transitional period" when the country would be led by a "Unity Government" with Kiir as President and Machar as

Vice President. Needless to say, that the proposed Unity Government structure resembles the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict of the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS) signed on August 17, 2015. Even under that agreement, Machar was supposed to be appointed as the Vice President of the country. But unfortunately, the formation of that Government was delayed till April 2016 as Machar refused to travel to the Capital city, fearing for his security and life. Eventually, fierce fighting between the two groups began in the summer of 2016 in Juba and Machar had to leave as widespread violence engulfed the entire country.

A UN Report highlighted that the slow implementation of the revitalised peace accord may push the country again into a chaos. Experts on Africa say that political, ethnic and military divisions are growing across South Sudan. The parties and actions that signed the peace deal are again fighting in many places. Also, the UN says that nearly 100,000 people are facing famine like situations in the war-torn nation.

Even barely a year after signing the peace deal in 2019, South Sudan's National Security Service recruited a force of 10,000 fighters in President Kiir's stronghold. These were all apparently violating the peace accord. The Kiir administration is taking very little interest in following the terms and conditions of the deal. Sadly, an often-overlooked conflict, the South Sudanese civil war has already taken the lives of more than 400,000 people so far. Violence, disease and dire scarcity mar this land-locked country in East Central Africa even after a decade of its Independence. Women and children are largely bearing the brunt of the violence.

However, the 10th anniversary of South Sudan's historic achievement of Independence provides an opportunity to inject fresh initiatives to the ongoing peace process. The idea is to bring back peace, stability and growth that all South Sudanese people deserve today. Notwithstanding the recent signs of tranquillity, the overall implementation of the revitalised agreement is abysmally slow. Nevertheless, the feeble and almost paralysed insti-

tutions of State governance throughout South Sudan have directly helped the perpetrators of violence to exploit the existing perennial ethnic and communal cleavages. Entrenched insecurity has prevented the regular cultivation and herd rearing practices of the traditional communities in the countryside leading to food shortage and famine.

Above all, the global Covid-19 pandemic and a continued economic downturn are deteriorating the current state of affairs in South Sudan. The weakened law and order and rising criminal networks are making huge roadblocks in bringing peace back. It is time for Kiir and Machar to rebuild the newest nation of the world once again. Let Juba jubilate!

(Dr Mahkan Saikia has taught political science and international relations for over a decade in institutions of national and international repute after specialisation in globalisation and governance from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He is the chief editor of the Journal of Global Studies, an international research journal.)



MAKHAN SAIKIA



TO BRING ANYTHING INTO YOUR LIFE, IMAGINE THAT IT'S ALREADY THERE
— RICHARD BACH



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19
This week your physical health and mental health needs to be looked after. You want to discover, and solve every problem using only your resources, ignoring other's advice. This way you may end up feeling isolated and excluded. Need be, take the advice of a health practitioner. On the work front, expect good news concerning finance. A female may prove beneficial in your career. Give yourself a break, and know that you can make a positive difference to make more prosperity in your life. Some of you may get a promotion and higher positions this week. A great week in personal relationships as well. This is the time when married couples will enjoy good bonding and share good understanding.

Lucky number 28
Lucky colour Orange
Lucky day Tuesday



LEO July 23-Aug 22
This week, you are in the best of health. Use this good energy to enhance your habits, improving your exercise routine or adding to your knowledge of nutrition. Trust yourself. You come back in life with double enthusiasm and creativity. On the work front, it is a vibrant and action-packed time. There will be outbursts of emotions and passions. You start the work to finish and with quality. Support of seniors will give a boost to your career. On the personal front, give with kindness and compassion, and know that what goes around always comes around. Some of you might spoil your relations with your loved ones, due to your sensitive nature. Career becomes important and romance and love will take backstage.

Lucky number 14
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Wednesday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21
This week you may be overworked and overstressed. Addictions and obsessions might bring harm. You are likely to lose self-control. Balance is the key to keeping good health. On the work front, a pleasant surprise will be come your way. A new project or assignment is on the cards. This could be a new job opportunity. You may come up with some new systems or processes that make your work-life simpler and less stressful. Ignore workplace gossip. Rely on your intuition and your inner knowledge, rather than your conscious mind or intellect. On the relationship front, this is a good week for singletons. Those in a committed relationship and have lost some of its shine need to consider some action and discussion to bring back its glory.

Lucky number 22
Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Friday



TAURUS April 20-May 20
This week your health remains good and you will bring balance to your life. Professional, personal, and emotional, all fronts go well with your wisdom. Amidst the busy schedule, you take time out for your well-being. Family members will be supportive of you. On the work front, you feel powerful energy and want to achieve the best in all your task. A male at work may behave talk to you in a manner that will bother but the truth is that you may be being too sensitive. He's just doing his job. An exciting opportunity is likely come to you to represent your institution on the academic front. On the relationship front, some moments in life are pure ecstasy and you wonder why. A new bonding is indicated on the horizon.

Lucky number 21
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Tuesday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22
This week you are likely to follow a new health regime. You have been pampered for long. Now things are out of your control. You need rest, a planned diet, and peace of mind. So work out accordingly. Remember health is wealth and there are no other commitments as important as looking after your wellbeing. At work, those waiting for interview results may have to wait longer for a decision. Try to be patient and refrain from pushing people to move before they are ready. Make sure you have done your share of work, and if you haven't, figure out how to explain or make amends. On the relationship front, there may be the end of a relationship. Try to give your beloved some breathing space.

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Caramel Brown
Lucky day Sunday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19
Heart patients should be careful this week. Anger & aggression should be avoided. Your health is good and you will be full of life. Be careful when exercising, there are indications of minor injuries or sprains. Career-wise you feel important as new job opportunities will be coming with a better perspective. You feel creative and gets busy planning your life. Use your intelligence and hard work which will pay you rich dividends. You may face a tough time in the relationship area. It can be that your beloved or blood relations maybe your mother or sister is undergoing through mental tension and needs your support. Those who are seeking love don't worry. Your time will eventually come but for now, it's good to stop with your search for some time.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Monday



GEMINI May 21-June 20
This week you may be more inclined to give up bad habits in the interest of your health. You are energetic, feel a lot of stamina and vitality. Avoid aggression. Give yourself time and space for meditation. Walking can also be very effective as well. A good massage is recommended. On the career front, you are either getting a good job offer or a promotion in the existing one. Your projects are the most successful than expected. You have a lot of reasons to feel pride. If you're waiting on results from an interview, you are likely to get a good response. In the matters of heart, ensure that you are counting your blessings. Focus on the things and people in your life that you have to be thankful for.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Monday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22
In the first part of the week, you may feel exhausted. Still you will have at least a short period when you feel exceptionally well and upbeat about your future. Give thought to how you may support and continue this good health. You can deepen your spiritual growth. Share the good feelings with your near & dear ones. On the career front, things are changing positively. It is advised to take counselling and seek advice on the career front. It will be beneficial at this point. Your efforts are likely to be valued. Just continue what you are doing. There are promotions and recognition on the card. On the relationship front, there is romance in the air. There is fruition in your affair and you find yourself in the pool of bliss. You feel happy and contented with life.

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Saturday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18
This week do not ignore your health. Take advice from the doctor. Get a second or even third opinion before you sign up for anything that is irrevocable health-wise. Be open to spiritual healing. If you are not happy with the current job, know that you hold the power to change your situation. Maybe you cannot change your work environment, but that should not keep you from looking for a different or better situation. On the relationship front, although your intentions are good your sharp attitude may put people off. Try and improve your communication skills. While you are busy with work, money, family taking your time and energy you are suddenly pitched into a whirlwind romance that leaves you empty and lost.

Lucky number 31
Lucky colour Red
Lucky day Wednesday



CANCER June 21-July 22
Any kind of ritual like reading a book will be helpful for your health. At this time a person is likely come into your life who will be a mentor & teacher. You will learn from them at several levels. You will be much more social. Career-wise, you may face tough competition or rivalry. You will get good news about finance. With your creativity, you can reach out to others particularly females, and get the help and advice that you need to make a positive difference financially. On the relationship front, don't get too possessive for your partner. You may face conflicts, both external and internal. Don't escalate conflicts unnecessarily. Think before you act. Things may not work out as you would hope with a love relationship.

Lucky number 30
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Thursday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21
This week your health will be good. You will find a healer who works with something besides traditional western medicine. Follow your instincts about what is best for your health. Taking advice from a physiotherapist. Meditation & yoga will work in your favour. Work-wise, this is the time when you get the results with the least effort. You are nearing the point where work success and recognition are well within your reach. Do your best to be organised and productive. Be the right thing even if nobody is watching. Your honesty and integrity will pay you well. In the matters of heart, there will be some quick happenings this week that will surprise you. Some of you are feeling ready for a commitment that doesn't seem to be forthcoming.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Turquoise
Lucky day Friday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20
This week you will feel strong, physically and mentally. You feel full of vigour and vitality. This week you may decide to finish the pending tasks and many other works which you were not able to do in the past weeks. There is a warning not to overdo things or push your body further. Rest is also a critical part of health. Career-wise, this is a very positive time for you in financial terms. Wise investments will keep your bank balance in a healthy state. Money inflow will be good. There will be an improvement in your career life. You need to be cautious in your relationships this week. Your obsession and passion might give you a job. Secret affairs or extramarital relations might put you in trouble. For those who are seeking love, this is not a favourable time.

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Friday

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ASTROTURF
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Watch your thoughts

One of friends based in the US, seeking clarification on interrelation between thought process and planetary placements in a horoscope wrote: "Everyone has positive as well as negative thoughts. I believe that good planets excite positive thoughts. Often, bad planets supersede the influence of good planets and breed negative thoughts. Is there any astrological remedy to contain undesirable thoughts? Does counselling help?" As thought trends have bearing on our quality of life, the question deserves attention.

You need to change your perception, I replied. Planets are not doers in their own right. They won't define your thought process. Planets are respectively marked with energy streams of a particular character passing through different regions in the cosmos, with the said planet in the centre. And, energy doesn't have its own drive. It will work accordingly as it is applied or responded to. It is something like electrical energy, which could equally activate a heating element as well as an air conditioner. Similarly, planetary emissions will influence a being, according as an individual mind is inherently framed. There is nothing like a good or

bad planet. All planets have to play their part in carrying on the life cycle, and are available in equal proportion to all. They lack the discriminatory ability necessary to differentiate one person from the other to offer varying influence. So, there is no scope for having astrological remedy to manage your thought process.

The world is a unified organism, where all existences are inseparably framed into an interdependent mechanism. There has to be correspondence among all field players, including human beings. What goes inside the mind, can't be read by others. But planetary motions can be calculated. Based on the principle of correspondence, a look into planetary alignment offers ground to have an insight into your thought trends. Knowing which, you can take corrective measures by self-educating yourself, and then redefine your thought process.

Here, a look into how thought process works, becomes imperative. Every individual is born with a stockpile of thought seeds in mind, coming as it may as Karmic carryover from the past. The imprints of the skill sets you develop, good or bad experiences one would have, habits and attitudes incubated dur-



ing life time and unfulfilled desires if any, get carried over to the next life in the form of thought seeds. These memory imprints set the premise on which your thought process moves — desire trends, likes & dislikes; prejudices & obsessions; and passions. Accordingly, one sets the goal of life and responds to the situations

Coming to the chemistry of mind, the karmic imprints involuntarily develop individual specific belief pattern. As and when congenial ground becomes available, the belief system comes into active play. Accordingly, you make choices in life. The belief system excites desire trends, which when gravitate after processing in mind, turn into thoughts, that translate into actions. And every action has consequences, good or bad, depending on the content and character of the thoughts driving the mind. Evidently, one does not wish to invite bad consequences.

To overcome this vulnerability, human beings are empowered with an exclusive privilege to guide one's actions by choice and discrimination. The discriminatory ability, however, doesn't play out involuntarily. You need to consciously invoke it for due diligence before taking any call. The paradox, however, is that

more often one's *ahamkara* (ego consciousness) identifies itself with the inherent mind-trend. It takes things on its face value, as if that would be its end game. Also, it gets drawn towards tempting influences of the seeming world and accordingly sets its dream destination. In the process, it fails to utilise its empowerment tool, and evidently to its detriment.

Your empowerment tool enjoins upon you with the capability to observe and evaluate your thought process. Applying this privilege, you could reflect, identify and acknowledge your thought trends, and make necessary corrections. But more often *ahamkara* doesn't let you identify your own face values. Here comes the role of a Guru, who shows your mirror image and then counsels you how to give a positive turn to the mind. Life may then turn into a beautiful experience.

So goes the saying: "Watch your thoughts, they become words; words translate into action; action turns into habit; habit develops your character; and character defines your destiny."

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