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OLYMPICS
14 SPORT

Mamata meets PM; chai pe charcha with Sonia today

Bengal CM on mission to unite Opp leaders

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on a high-profile visit to the national Capital met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his residence on Tuesday ahead of a series of meetings with top Opposition leaders to prepare the strategy for a unified challenge to the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

On Wednesday, Mamata will hold "chai pe charcha" with Congress president Sonia Gandhi.

This was the Bengal Chief Minister's first meeting with the Prime Minister after the bitter Bengal election campaign.

Mamata told reporters after the meeting that there should be a Supreme Court-monitored enquiry into the Pegasus scandal involving Opposition leaders, two Union Ministers and 40 journalists revealed as potential targets of surveillance using Israeli Pegasus spyware that is sold only to Governments.

Mamata's nephew Abhishek Banerjee is among the potential targets whose name has surfaced as part of a worldwide investigation by a media consortium that includes India's *The Wire*. Mamata announced a judicial enquiry led by former Supreme Court judges on Monday.

Mamata described her meeting with the PM as a "courtesy visit" and said she discussed the Covid situation, the supply of vaccines and medicine to the State and also a proposal to rename Bengal as Bangla.

"I should not speak what the PM said," she told reporters when pressed for details.

Apart from Sonia, Mamata is scheduled to meet top



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee during their meeting in New Delhi on Tuesday PTI

Opposition leaders like NCP chief Sharad Pawar, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav,

Om Prakash Chautala, Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal

and political strategist Prashant Kishor.

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6th day of Monsoon Session washed out, Modi slams Opp

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Placards of "Big Brother is Watching" and ear-splitting slogans were the only highlight of the sixth day of the Parliament session which ended without transacting any business on Tuesday even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave tongue-lashing to the

Congress for obstructing business in both Houses and asked BJP MPs to "expose" the Opposition party.

Both Houses of Parliament have barely transacted any business as they have been witnessing a repeat adjournment on account of Congress-led vociferous protest on a range of issues, including farm-

ers' agitation and Pegasus spyware controversy.

Both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha were adjourned multiple times on Tuesday as members of the Opposition continued their vociferous protests on the Pegasus snooping issue, seeking an independent judicial probe into the matter.

Apart from the reports by the Pegasus Project partners, the issues of the farmers' demand to repeal the three farm laws and petrol prices skyrocketing have also been raised by Opposition members.

However, it was the Pegasus issue that has dominated proceedings in both the Houses so far. As soon as the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha resumed their sessions, the Opposition members began raising slogans in support of their demands for a probe.

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Members protest in the Well of the Rajya Sabha during the Monsoon Session of Parliament on Tuesday RSTV/PTI

Assam-Mizoram border row has roots in 1875 Frontier Regulation

1,318 sqkm forest reserve on border is bone of contention

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Assam-Mizoram border row that claimed the lives of six Assam policemen on Monday has its genesis in an 1875 Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation declaring 1,318 sq km of the stretch as an inner line forest reserve over which Assam claims its jurisdiction.

Mizoram shares a 164 km border with Assam which is the core of the unresolved border issue between the two States.

Several rounds of talks between the two States with facilitation from the Centre since 1995 have not yielded any result. Both sides have accused each other of transgressing their territories.

At the centre of the conflict is the 164.6-km inter-State bor-

der that separates Assam and Mizoram, with the three Assam districts of Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj sharing a border with Kolasib, Mamit and Aizawl districts of Mizoram.

Mizoram, earlier referred to as Lushai Hill, shares borders with three States of Tripura, Assam and Manipur besides a 722-km border with the neighbouring countries of Bangladesh and Myanmar.

The India-Myanmar border in Mizoram is open, and an unhindered movement of people from both sides has reportedly led to a spurt in cross-border smuggling. The Free Movement Regime between India and Myanmar allows people living along the border to travel 16 km into each other's territory without visa.

Amid recurring claims and counterclaims, the region along the border between the two States has largely remained peaceful.

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Locals near damaged security force vehicles after clashes on Monday night on the Assam-Mizoram border at Lailapur in Cachar district on Tuesday PTI

Rakesh Asthana named Delhi CP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

General of the Border Security Force (BSF), will join as the Delhi Police Commissioner with immediate effect.



Earlier on June 30, Balaji Shrivastava, 1988 batch IPS officer, cadre, as the Commissioner of the Delhi Police.

The appointment of Asthana to the post came just days before his superannuation on July 31. He will have a tenure of one year.

According to a Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) order issued on July 27, Asthana currently serving as Director

was appointed as the acting Delhi Police Commissioner after then incumbent SN Shrivastava retired.

Asthana has served as the Special Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). During his stint in the CBI, he was engaged in an unsavoury spat with then CBI Director Alok Verma.

BJP boycotts Tharoor-led Parl panel meeting

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP members on Tuesday boycotted the meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology (IT) led by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, saying that the agenda of the meeting should not be made public.

The Committee is likely to question top Government officials, including from the Home Ministry, on allegations related to phone tapping of many using Pegasus spyware on Wednesday. There are 32 members in the committee.

Continued on Page 11

Hockey, boxing bring some cheer to India

PTI ■ TOKYO

There was resilience on display in hockey, a tactical mind sparked in the boxing ring but the free fall in shooting remained perplexing and worrying as India's Olympic campaign oscillated between some celebration and a lot of dejection on day 4 of the competitions here on Tuesday.

At the Asaka shooting range, the Indians largely misfired and with that the hopes of medals in the 10m air pistol and 10m air rifle mixed team events went up in smoke.

The performance so far has resurrected the ghosts of 2016 Rio Games when similar hype and expectations had ended in a deflating medal-less campaign.



India's Rupinder Pal Singh celebrates after scoring against Spain during a men's field hockey match at the 2020 Summer Olympics on Tuesday AP

But perhaps the shooters can take a leaf out of the men's hockey team's book and find a way out of their current misery. Hammered 1-7 by

Australia, the Manpreet Singh-led side claimed a 3-0 triumph over Spain to inch closer to a quarterfinal berth.

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Antibody weakens 2-3 months after both doses: Lancet study

Results based on immunisation with Pfizer and AstraZeneca jabs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indicating that a booster dose is going to be the next in-thing after two mandatory jabs against Covid-19, a study published in *The Lancet* journal has found that the total antibody levels start to weaken just six weeks after both doses of immunisation with Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines. The antibody levels may also be reduced by more than 50 per cent over 10 weeks or 2-3 months, said researchers from University College London (UCL) in the UK.

They said if the antibody levels carry on dropping at this rate, there are concerns that the protective effects of the vaccines may also begin to wear off, particularly against new variants. But how soon that might happen cannot be predicted yet, they added.

The UCL Virus Watch study also found that antibody levels are substantially higher following two doses of the Pfizer vaccine compared to two shots of the AstraZeneca jab, known as Covishield in India. Antibody levels were also much higher in vaccinated people than in those with prior SARS-CoV-2 infection, they said.

"The levels of antibody following both doses of either the AstraZeneca or Pfizer vaccines were initially very high, which is likely to be an important part of why they are so protective against severe Covid-19," said Madhumita Shrotri from UCL

Institute of Health Informatics in a statement.

"However, we found these levels dropped substantially over the course of two to three months," Madhumita Shrotri added. Based on data

from more than 600 people aged 18 and above, the findings of the study were consistent across all groups of people, regardless of age, chronic illnesses or sex, researchers said.

Continued on Page 11



A medic inoculates a dose of Covid-19 vaccine to a beneficiary in New Delhi on Tuesday PTI

Govt asks for data on O2 shortage deaths from States/UTs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Days after denying any death due to oxygen shortage during the second wave of Covid-19, the Government has written to States/Union Territories seeking such data, according to Government sources.

This data is likely to be presented in the ongoing Monsoon Session of Parliament, they added.

Covid immunisation of 12-18 yrs group from Aug: Health Ministry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government is expected to begin vaccinating children against Covid-19 by next month, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya told the BJP Parliamentary Party meeting on Tuesday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was also present at the meeting.

The Union Government had expressed confidence that it would soon be able to vaccinate children between 12 and 18

CAPSULE

IMF CUTS INDIA'S GDP GROWTH TO 9.5%

Washington: The International Monetary Fund cut its economic growth forecast for India to 9.5 per cent for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022 as the onset of a severe second Covid-19 wave cut into recovery momentum.

HEALTH OF KALYAN SINGH CRITICAL

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh's former Chief Minister Kalyan Singh is on life support as his condition is critical, according to a medical bulletin by the Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences here on Tuesday. The 89-year-old BJP veteran was admitted to the ICU on July 4 due to an infection and reduced consciousness.

IMD: 381 MM RAINFALL IN DELHI HIGHEST FOR JULY

New Delhi: Monsoon may have arrived late in Delhi, but it is inundating the Capital now. The city has recorded 381 mm rainfall so far this month, the highest for July since 2003 and the second-highest ever. It is also the maximum rainfall in 24 hours in the month of July in eight years. In 2013, Delhi had received 123.4mm rainfall on July 21.

TOKYO 2020 OLYMPICS: JULY 27 MEDAL TALLY					
RANK	COUNTRY	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
1	Japan	10	3	5	18
2	USA	9	7	8	24
3	China	9	5	7	21
4	ROC	7	7	4	18
5	Great Britain	4	5	3	12
6	Korea	3	2	5	10
7	Australia	3	1	5	9
8	Canada	2	3	3	8
9	France	2	2	3	7
10	Kosovo	2	0	0	2
39	India	0	1	0	1

Campaign launched to provide Golden Health Cards to beneficiaries

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Aiming to provide free medical aid to the underprivileged, a special campaign to provide Golden Health Cards has been started for beneficiaries who do not have Ayushman cards.

On the first day of the campaign, Golden Cards were provided to over 26,000 families of Uttar Pradesh and so far, such cards have been issued to over 6.5 crore beneficiaries in the state under Ayushman Yojana. Using this card, any beneficiary can get free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh in any empanelled hospital.

Stressing that Antyodaya card-holder families would get relief in paying their medical expenses, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said the campaign should be conducted with commitment and the benefit of the scheme should be provided to all eligible people.



Last week, during a cabinet meeting, it was decided that over 40 lakh Antyodaya cardholder families of Uttar Pradesh, who were deprived of Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana and Mukhya Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana would be linked to Mukhyamantri Jan Arogya Yojana.

“This will not only reduce

the financial burden of poor and underprivileged families but will also ensure their access to quality health care services. If the budget of Rs 5 lakh sanctioned for the Mukhyamantri Jan Arogya Yojana is insufficient, an additional budget will be allocated through a supplementary budget,” the chief minister said.

11 UP districts Covid-free

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh reported 36 new coronavirus positive cases on Tuesday while 73 patients recovered during the same period while 11 districts were declared Covid-free, said Additional Chief Secretary (Information) Navneet Sehgal here on Tuesday.

Aligarh, Budaun, Basti, Bahraich, Etah, Fatehpur, Hamirpur, Hathras, Kasganj, Mahoba and Shravasti districts have been declared Covid-free. Sehgal said not a case of infection was found in 54 districts, while patients were found in single digits in 21 districts. He said the positivity rate now stood at 0.01 per cent.

A proposal to this effect was cleared in a meeting of the

He said at present, the number of active cases in the state had come down to 798 out of which 508 were in home isolation.

The COVID-19 recovery rate in the state is 98.6 per cent. So far, more than 16.84 lakh people have recovered, he added.

In the last 24 hours, 2,25,009 Covid tests were conducted. More than 8.20 lakh people were administered vaccines on Monday. So far, more than 4,52,39,000 Covid vaccines have been administered in UP. In this, more than 1.32 crore vaccine doses have been given in the month of July alone. More than 3.79 crore people of the state have taken at least one dose of Covid vaccine.

state cabinet chaired by the chief minister earlier.

Modi to visit UP almost every month

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

To showcase the claim of how double engine governments in Delhi and Lucknow had changed the face of Uttar Pradesh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several Union ministers will now frequently visit the poll-bound UP every month to either inaugurate or lay the foundation stone of various development schemes, until the model code of conduct comes into force. Union Home Minister Amit Shah will visit the state capital to lay the foundation stone of Uttar Pradesh State Institute for Forensic Sciences which will come up in 50-acre land in Pipsarsand village of Sarojini Nagar tehsil in Lucknow on August 1. The institute will also have a seat of centre of excellence and pave the way for research in DNA testing in the state.

“Like the model followed in Bihar and West Bengal elections, the prime minister, his ministerial colleagues and senior BJP functionaries will be visiting UP regularly ahead of the imposition of the model code of conduct to inaugurate



or lay the foundation stone of development projects in the state,” a senior BJP leader told this reporter on Tuesday.

The prime minister will be in Siddharthnagar to inaugurate nine new medical colleges, his second trip to the state this month after visiting Varanasi on July 15 for unveiling projects. The dates will be announced later. It will be highlighted that these medical colleges have been built under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana and with the resources of the UP government.

Government sources confirmed that the prime minister is likely to lay the foundation stone of Asia's biggest airport at Jewar in Gautam Buddha Nagar between August 22 and 25 and the district authorities have been asked to start prepa-

ration for the programme.

Similarly, the state government is working round the clock for completion of Purvanchal Expressway which will be inaugurated in August. Already, 95 per cent work of the project has been completed and the rest will be finished by the first week of August, sources disclosed and added that the government has appointed nodal officers to complete these works on the war footing.

In October, the prime minister could again be in the state to inaugurate two All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Gorakhpur and Rae Bareilly. The Centre will stress that it was the ‘double-engine’ of BJP governments at Centre and in UP that made these AIIMS projects possible. The OPDs of AIIMS in Gorakhpur and Rae Bareilly are functional.

Besides, BJP president JP Nadda is also expected to launch the party's poll campaign in the second week of August and will be in Lucknow on August 7 and 8 to hold a series of meetings with state leaders.

Govt to launch next phase of Mission Shakti

Lucknow (PNS): Buoyed by the success of Mission Shakti, the Uttar Pradesh government is set to launch its next phase to ensure safety, dignity, health, education and self-reliance of women.

Chairing a high-level review meeting, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that there was a need to give a new direction to Mission Shakti along with added energy and spirit and the departments of Health, Education, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Home, Women and Child Development and others should coordinate and prepare a detailed action plan for the next phase.

He also instructed officials to take immediate action against crime involving women and girls.

“Despite the pandemic, many schemes implemented in the state for needy women and girls of rural and urban areas have become a shield for them. Now the government has decided to launch a new phase of Mission Shakti. Schemes like Women Self-Help Group, BC Sakhi have shown the path of self-reliance to women. While other schemes like Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana, and Mukhyamantri Samuhik Vivah Yojana have provided major support to the girl child and their parents. Schemes run by the Yogi Adityanath government are focusing on women's security, education, self-reliance, dignity, health for the all-round development of women,” a top government official said.

ATS arrests three for running human trafficking racket

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Sleuths of the Anti Terrorists Squad (ATS) claimed to have busted a gang involved in human trafficking racket involving Bangladeshis and Rohingyas in the country. They arrested three members of the gang on Tuesday and claimed that the group was involved in human trafficking, especially of women and children, to settle them in cities like Ghaziabad, Noida and Delhi through forged documents.

According to an official communiqué, the ATS sleuths were getting information for some time that an international gang was illegally bringing citizens of Bangladesh and Myanmar, especially women and children, to India to settle them in cities like Noida, Ghaziabad and Delhi.

During investigation, it was found that the leader of this international human trafficking gang was Muhammad Noor alias Noorul Islam, who was illegally luring Rohingyas and Bangladeshi women into marriage, and men and children to work in factories, the release stated. After bringing them to India, they were settled on the

basis of coded forms.

According to the information given by the police, these human traffickers exploited the victims, including women and children financially, physically and mentally. It also came to light that the human traffickers were earning a huge amount of money from this work.

The ATS investigation revealed that Noor Muhammad was going to Delhi by train (Brahmaputra Mail) along with some Rohingyas and Bangladeshi nationals when the probing team boarded five persons, including two girls and interrogated them in Ghaziabad. Besides Islam, the other two arrested were identified as Rahmatullah and Safiurehman alias Safiullah, all hailing from Myanmar.

Earlier in June also, four members of the gang that sent Rohingyas to India were arrested. Rohingyas are living illegally in the country. Around 15 Rohingyas have been arrested from Uttar Pradesh so far.

The gang involved in these illegal activities used to send them through the Myanmar-Bangladesh border. The gang was involved in illegal documents and human trafficking. A

person named Hafiz Shafiq was running this gang in Meerut.

“Gang members used to make fake United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees cards and take a lot of money and then help people enter India illegally after making their fake Indian IDs. These people were involved in criminal and anti-national activities,” said ADG (Law & Order) Prashant Kumar.

They have also sent some Rohingyas women abroad using fake documents. This is the first time that human trafficking angle has come to the knowledge as they have sent some women to Malaysia. Investigation is underway,” Prashant Kumar had earlier revealed.

The money was being circulated through hawala. Metals like gold have also been recovered from the arrested Rohingyas, he informed.

The ATS also arrested two members of the Rohingyas community for illegally living in India by forging documents just two days before the above arrest. The ATS team arrested Rafiq and Amin belonging to the Rohingyas community, who are residents of Myanmar.

JP Nadda to hold meeting with BJP MPs this month

Lucknow (PNS): With a view to assign responsibility for the forthcoming assembly elections, Bharatiya Janata Party national president JP Nadda will hold meetings with BJP MPs on July 28 and 29 in New Delhi.

“An important meeting has been called by BJP national president JP Nadda regarding preparations for upcoming assembly elections, party campaign and programmes of the organisation,” a senior leader of the party said here on Tuesday.

He said the meeting of Braj, West and Kanpur regions would be held on July 28 while the next day MPs from Awadh, Kashi and Gorakhpur regions will hold a meeting with the party national president.

BJP state president Swatantra Dev Singh, state general secretary (organisation) Sunil Bansal and in-charge Radha Mohan Singh will be present.

The source in the party said that the meeting had been convened to activate the MPs before the 2022 assembly elections and their role in the election campaign would be fixed and responsibility would be assigned to them.

Battle of one-upmanship among two Nishad parties worries SP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The battle of one-upmanship among two Nishad parties staking claim over the legacy of bandit queen and former MP Phoolan Devi has worried the Samajwadi Party. The Nishad Party of UP and Vikasheel Insaan Party (VIP) of Bihar, both allies of the Bharatiya Janata Party, are vying with each other to establish themselves as the sole representative of the Nishad community in UP and claiming themselves as the sole representative of Phoolan Devi.

“It was the Samajwadi Party that took cudgels on behalf of the community in 1994 and not only ensured the release of Phoolan Devi but got her elected to Lok Sabha twice. Now new claimants have emerged to stake claim on her legacy. Both Nishad community-based parties would be exposed during the 2022 UP Assembly elections as people know who their real benefactor is,” said a Samajwadi Party leader in Lucknow on Tuesday.

Nishad leader and Bihar minister Mukesh Sahani has said that his outfit, VIP, will contest 165 assembly seats in the 2022 UP elections. Eyering the votes of Nishad (Mallah) community that constitute seven per cent of UP's electorate, Sahani has decided to install Phoolan Devi's statues in 18 UP districts including Prayagraj, Firozabad, Ballia, Sant Kabir Nagar, Banda, Ayodhya, Sultanpur, Gorakhpur, Maharajganj, Auraiya, Lucknow, Unnao, Meerut, Mirzapur, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Muzaffarnagar, Varanasi and Jaunpur.

All these districts have the presence of a sizable Nishad community.

In 1994, the then Chief Minister of UP, Mulayam Singh Yadav had withdrawn pending cases against Phoolan Devi and facilitated her release from the jail. She was in jail for the 1981 massacre of Thakur community members in Behmai village of Kanpur Dehat. Subsequently, Phoolan was elected twice to Lok Sabha as a SP candidate from Bhadohi constituency in UP. However in 2001, Phoolan Devi was perforated with bullets by assailants outside her official residence in Delhi. The assassins later said that they wanted to avenge the deaths of people in Behmai village.

Sahani's political ambition has become a threat to the UP-based Nishad Party headed by Sanjay Nishad, whose son Praveen Nishad is a BJP MP from Khalilabad. Sanjay Nishad has been a Nishad politician in Uttar Pradesh for decades and has raised the issues of the community on numerous occasions. He is now eying a berth in Yogi Adityanath's possible cabinet expansion. The party is dominant in about 20 Lok Sabha constituencies and 60 Assembly segments in Uttar Pradesh.

If Mukesh Sahani manages to make inroads into the Nishad votes in UP, he will be another option for the BJP to replace Sanjay Nishad as the saffron party has been under pressure from him in recent months. Rattled over the development, the Samajwadi Party has been keeping a close watch on the situation.



सूचना

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BSP announces names of two candidates for Assembly polls

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Taking a lead over other political parties, the Bahujan Samaj Party, on Tuesday, announced the names of two of its candidates for the coming Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections.

Ramesh Singh Yadav will be the BSP candidate from Bithoor assembly constituency in Kanpur and Kalmesh Ambedkar from Bharthana (reserved) assembly seat Etawah in the 2022 election. The name of Kalmesh Ambedkar was announced by BSP's Etawah district president Shilu Dohra on Tuesday. Kalmesh Ambedkar is the wife of Bhimrao Ambedkar, chief sector in-charge of the BSP for Kanpur division.

In 2007, Kalmesh's husband Bhimrao Ambedkar was elected as BSP MLA from Lakhta reserved seat, which has now been included in the Bharthana reserved seat, but he could not taste victory in the subsequent assembly elections. The Bharthana reserved assembly constituency is present-

ly held by Bharatiya Janata Party, from where Savitri Katheria is the ruling party's MLA. Shilu Dohra claimed that the BJP would contest the 2022 assembly elections with full force. He said preparations were being made to field a candidate of Yadav or Shakya caste from Shivpal Singh Yadav's Jaswantnagar constituency.

Meanwhile, continuing its outreach programme ahead of the assembly polls, BSP has now decided to host a 'Brahmin Sammelan' at Vrindavan from August 1. This assumes significance as Lord Krishna is believed to have spent his childhood in this holy town. Before taking part in the event in which a lot of Brahmins are expected to participate, BSP general secretary Satish Chandra Mishra will visit the famous Banke Bihari temple. He claimed that both BJP and Samajwadi Party had failed to do anything for the development of Vrindavan and Mathura as compared to BSP.

On July 23, Mishra had

offered prayers at the Ram Jannabhooni temple in Ayodhya and commenced the party's first phase of campaign to woo Brahmin voters.

Brahmin sammelans were also held in Prayagraj and Ambekar Nagar. Stressing that the real power would come only when Brahmins and Dalits in UP came together, Mishra said, "The Brahmin community constitutes 13 per cent of the state population but are still marginalised because they are not united."

BSP supremo Mayawati on Tuesday also tweeted that the opposition was in fear after the success of Brahmin sammelan held by the party with the first phase starting from Ayodhya.

"The favourable response and success of Brahmin sammelan held by Satish Mishra on my directive pointed that people had confidence in my party and would support them in the coming assembly election," Mayawati asserted through her tweet on Tuesday.

SP-NCP to join hands for UP elections

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a move aimed at defeating the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, Sharad Pawar led Nationalist Congress Party and Samajwadi Party have decided to join hands and contest the coming assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh.

Well placed sources in Samajwadi Party said that Sharad Pawar and Akhilesh Yadav had a long consultation over the issue in Delhi after which the two leaders decided to forge an alliance but the seat sharing was yet to be worked out.

The sources said Pawar was also said to be in talks with

other "like-minded" parties in a bid to put up a united front against the BJP in Uttar Pradesh.

While addressing party workers in Lucknow last week, Akhilesh Yadav had said that the BJP was an "anti-people" party which was running the government with "hatred" and that the assembly polls

next year would be the "last opportunity" to save democracy.

"To achieve the target of securing 350 seats in UP, we will have to work day and night," Akhilesh Yadav had said and exhorted party workers to beware of BJP's tricks and propaganda.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ				
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No. 21/55 Dated 27.07.2021				
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2	50215292	Gate Communication System	225 nos.	02.09.2021
3	20213659	Set of shaft and assembled dummy pinion	30 set	16.08.2021
4	80201244D	Printing and Supply of Passenger Reservation Ticket Size-15.6cmX9.6cm for PRS of NCR Without advertisement.	31130	26.08.2021
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Yogi govt's push to rural economy

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a major push to the rural economy of Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath government announced an investment package of Rs 1,000 crore which is likely to create self-employment opportunities in the villages of the state.

The government will procure material worth more than Rs 1,000 crore at the local level through 58,189 gram panchayats and the Panchayati Raj department has already issued necessary instructions in this regard. These gram panchayats have been asked to conduct work from the village secretariat, which will be equipped with furniture, computers, internet powered by

solar energy and other facilities. The state government has approved a budget of Rs 1.75 lakh each for equipping and furnishing village secretariats with necessary facilities, including Rs 25,000 for chairs, Rs 6,000 for computer tables, Rs 17,000 for racks and cupboards, Rs 38,000 for solar panel set-up, Rs 3,000 for carpets, Rs 6,000 for fans, Rs 60,000 for computers and Rs 20,000 for CCTV cameras. The government will spend a total of Rs 1018.30 crore for the 58,189 gram panchayats. As per Panchayati Raj department officials, panchayat buildings were being constructed in 33,577 villages of the state while construction of 24,617 panchayat bhawans is

on the cards. Of these, 2,088 panchayat buildings are to be constructed under RGSA and 22,529 under the Finance Commission and MNREGA. All 24,617 under-construction panchayat buildings are to be completed in the next three months. An amount of about Rs 1.75 lakh each will be admissible for office furnishing and computer etc.

Meanwhile, the state government clarified that the purchase of furniture and equipment for village secretariats will be done by gram panchayats at the local level, ruling out pooling of any kind at the block or district levels. The rural body will also ensure compliance with financial rules during procurement.

ASHA workers soldier on in areas under Kaiserbagh CHC

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

Kaiserbagh and surrounding areas which come under the Red Cross Community Health Centre reported over 300 cases per day during the second wave peak earlier this year. The CHC is now gearing up to deal with the third wave.

CHC superintendent Dr Ritesh Dwivedi said that the areas which come them include Kaiserbagh, Aminabad, Ganeshganj, Chitwapur, Hussainganj, Sadar, Udaiganj, Lal Kuan and Khurshid Bagh apart from areas from KKC up to Charbagh. The hotspot areas include Aminabad, Khurshid Bagh, Purana Ganeshganj, Bhoosamandi, Kaiserbagh and adjoining areas, slum area of Sudamapuri, Ramdas Haata and Nayee Basti.

"In these areas, ASHA

workers carry out surveillance and if they find a case of fever, they report to us and we send the rapid response teams for screening," he said.

He pointed out that the biggest challenge is getting people tested. "If people have fever and cough, they are not ready to get tested. The other challenge is that there is a large market in Aminabad where it is difficult to ensure Covid-appropriate. We keep contacting the SHOs and ADMs asking them to help in maintaining Covid protocols. We also visit the areas for that purpose. Other such areas include Kaiserbagh vegetable market and Gola Bazaar in Sadar," he said.

There were multiple factors responsible for the spread of coronavirus infection during the second wave, which included mandis and market areas, migration of

people during the festive season and mutation of the virus, he pointed out. Dr Dwivedi said they are carrying out several activities to make sure that the third corona wave is kept at bay or delayed as much as possible.

"We have adequate preparations for making oxygen cylinders or concentrators available for each of the 15 beds at the CHC. We also have a control room which provides logistics to all the rapid response teams at district levels and one of the wards has been provided to this control room for storage," he said.

He added that they have over 1,000 medicine kits in spare for adult patients and through the nigrani samitis, the kits provided by the state government are being distributed among children.

"The medicines are being

distributed in three categories, including children up to one year, 1-5 years and 5-12 years. The ASHA workers have these medicine kits and they provide medicines to children depending upon their symptoms and age. Their families are also told to get them tested at the nearest facility. We have three PHCs which have rapid response teams for testing. These centres are in Ganeshganj, Sadar and Station Road," Dr Dwivedi said.

He added that their sector teams visit the hospitals from time to time along with the ADM to ensure that they have a Covid help desks and fever & flu clinics so patients can be screened before being allowed to enter the premises.

He pointed out that there has been not a single Covid case for the past one week.

"We have made arrangements for installation of an oxygen plant and preparations are afoot for the purpose in the basement. Once this ward is ready, we will have a central oxygen supply to all the wards," he said, adding that the CHC covers a population of 1.80 lakh.

Regarding vaccinations, he said when they started out, they were covering collectorate, commissioner office, Jawahar Bhawan and Swasthya Bhawan. "Now, the vaccinations are being carried out at the CHC, Urban PHC at Sadar and at Chitwapur PHC. Besides, 500 people are being jabbed on a daily basis under the Sadar Gurudwara while a week-long camp was held for Central Bar Association & Lucknow Bar Association and another at the Silver Plaza in Aminabad.

Kalyan Singh continues to be critical

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday paid a visit to Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGIMS) to inquire about the well-being of former UP CM Kalyan Singh whose condition continues to be critical.

A senior doctor at the SGPGI said Singh, who is also the former Governor of Rajasthan, is on life support system. "He has been on continuous dialysis. His clinical parameters are being closely monitored by expert consultants and senior faculty members of CCM, Cardiology, Nephrology, Neurology and Endocrinology," he said.

A number of senior BJP leaders have paid a visit to the ailing former chief Minister at the hospital.

Govt warns protesting ambulance drivers

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The state government will take stern action against the ambulance drivers for holding a strike in the midst of a pandemic, Additional Chief Secretary Awanish Awasthi said as the stir continued on Tuesday. Awasthi categorically stated that if health services were affected, action would be taken.

"It was not appropriate and no strikes can be held under ESMA. It is an essential service where patients are impacted directly. Ambulance drivers had also created problems when Covid was at its peak in the second wave," he said.

Awasthi said the Health department has issued instructions to districts that alternative arrangements should be made, wherever required. In the state capital, the drivers of 108 and 102 ambulances staged a dharna at Eco Garden even as the GVK EMRI service provider of the ambulances filed an FIR against 11 union leaders ESMA at Ashiyana police station.



A woman being taken to a hospital in an e-rickshaw due to the strike by ambulance drivers

TVS Reddy from GVK EMRI service provider said they are running the services and trying to ensure maximum percentage of ambulances on the road. "This kind of behaviour cannot be accepted as it causes inconvenience to people," he said. He added that they had no link to the dispute which arose with a new service provider for the ALS ambulances.

"However, leaders of the

ambulance drivers union are instigating the 108, 102 ambulance drivers to go on strike to press demand for a salary hike," he said. A senior official from the Health department claimed that health services were not impacted because they had made alternative arrangements for ambulances across the state. "We have asked the DMs to make arrangements for ambulances. We have no role to play

because the issue lies between the service provider and the drivers and is being looked into by the National Health Mission," he pointed out.

Spokesperson of ambulance drivers union Sharad Yadav said that in view of the requirement, 15 ambulances were being run in all the districts. Giving a backgrounder, he said that since July 23, they have been holding a peaceful protest for their demands but when the state government did not pay heed to their issues, they went full-throttle across the state, bringing all the ambulances to a halt from July 26 midnight.

"There are 20,000 ambulance drivers across the state. In 2017, a project of Advanced Life Support Ambulances had been started and the contract was given to GVK EMRI. Now the contract has been given to a new company which is recruiting new drivers. GVK has told the ALS drivers that the tender is not with them now and 1,200 drivers are jobless," he said.

Special vaccination drive for pregnant women from today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A special vaccination drive for pregnant women will kick off from Wednesday. CMO Dr Manoj Agarwal said the drive is being carried out under the directions of District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash.

Those pregnant women who can reach the vaccination centres can take the jabs while for those who are unable to do that due to advanced stages of pregnancy, the mobile vans will take them to the health centres, he said.

The nod to immunisation of pregnant women came after a lot of deliberations by experts. Coronavirus infection during pregnancy may impact the health of a woman and her child. According to experts, the advantages of vaccination are more than the risks involved. The matter was

taken up by the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI) and NEGVAC in a series of meetings conducted on the subject after which the vaccination was recommended.

As per the guidelines, Covid vaccine can be taken anytime during pregnancy and it should be taken at the earliest. Symptomatic pregnant women are at an increased risk of a severe disease and it might affect the child as well. Hence, the vaccine was recommended for pregnant women.

The CMO further said that for the third wave, all the resources are at their disposal and the control room is running fine. "We have an inventory of all the required equipment with us. We had a long meeting with private hospitals in this regard and oxygen plants are also being

opened at the hospitals. We have enough oxygen and trained manpower for paediatric care, PICUs and NICUs," he said. He added that there is no problem as far as drug supply is concerned and they are getting all the medicines from the medical corporation. About the problems regarding the availability of drugs like Remdesivir during the second wave, he said they are unlikely to face any problems now.

Meanwhile, Lok Bandhu Hospital has opened a crèche for its employees. Nodal Covid officer Dr Arun Tewari said it is an initiative to facilitate employees with little kids who can be taken care of.

"This is for the hospital employees who face problems in taking care of their children due to their busy schedule. We decided to open the crèche where children can be taken care of," he added.

समझदारी दिखाएँ! अपने बच्चे का सम्पूर्ण टीकाकरण करावाँ

टीकाकरण एवं विटामिन 'ए' सम्पूरण

28 जुलाई से 28 अगस्त, 2021 तक

ग्राम स्वास्थ्य स्वच्छता पोषण दिवस पर (वी.एच.एस.एन.डी.)

विटामिन 'ए' के फायदे अनेक

9 माह से 5 वर्ष के बच्चों को विटामिन ए की खुराक अवश्य पिलवाएँ

5 साल, 7 बार छूटे न टीका एक भी बार

वयस्क	टीकाकरण
जन्म पर	बीसीजी, हेपेटाइटिस बी-ए, एच.पी.वी. (जीरो डोज)
1½ माहने पर	पेन्टावैलेंट-1, ओपीवी0-1, रोटा-1, एच.पी.वी. (जीरो डोज)
2½ माहने पर	पेन्टावैलेंट-2, ओपीवी0-2, रोटा-2
3½ माहने पर	पेन्टावैलेंट-3, ओपीवी0-3, एच.आई.पी.वी.0-2, रोटा-3, एच.पी.वी.0-2
9-12 माहने पर	एम0आर0 एवं "जे0वू0" पल्ला टीका पीसीवी0-1 विटामिन 'ए'
16-24 माहने पर	एम0आर0 एवं "जे0वू0" टीका विटामिन 'ए' हर छ. माहने पर पांच साल तक
5-6 साल	डीपीवी0-2

सम्पूर्ण टीकाकरण आपके बच्चे को निम्न जानलेवा बीमारियों से बचाता है

टी.बी. | पोलियो | हेपेटाइटिस बी | रोटावायरस डायरिया | डिप्थीरिया | काली खाँसी | टिटनेस | हिब निमोनिया व मेनिन्जाइटिस | न्यूमोकोकल निमोनिया | ग्रीजल्ज | रूबेला | जेपेनीज इन्सेफेलाइटिस

टीका असरदार, लगवाए समझदार

18 वर्ष से ऊपर के सभी व्यक्ति कोविड-19 टीका अवश्य लगवाएँ

कोविन पोर्टल के माध्यम से बुकिंग हेतु क्लिक करें <http://selfregistration.cowin.gov.in>

WE-WIN

विश्व हेपेटाइटिस दिवस

28 जुलाई 2021

वायरल हेपेटाइटिस - जानकारी से बचाव संभव

वायरल हेपेटाइटिस - रोग फैलने के कारण

- उपयोग किये गये इंजेक्शन अथवा सिरिज का पुनः उपयोग करने से
- नशी की सुइयों को साझा करने से
- असुरक्षित यौन सम्बन्ध बनाने से
- टैटू एवं नाक, कान इत्यादि छेदने के लिये संक्रमित सुई के उपयोग से
- व्यक्तिगत उपयोग की वस्तुओं को साझा करने से
- संक्रमित रक्त एवं रक्त उत्पाद का संचार, डायलिसिस आदि से

क्रियाशील मॉडल ट्रीटमेंट सेंटर्स पर उपलब्ध सुविधाएँ

- वायरल हेपेटाइटिस की स्क्रीनिंग
- वायरल लोड की जाँच
- उपचार एवं फॉलोअप सुविधाएँ

मॉडल ट्रीटमेंट सेंटर्स का विवरण

जनपद का नाम	उपचार केन्द्र
इटावा	«» उत्तर प्रदेश मेडिकल साइंस यूनिवर्सिटी, इटावा
अयोध्या	«» गवर्नमेंट मेडिकल कॉलेज, अयोध्या
सहारनपुर	«» गवर्नमेंट मेडिकल कॉलेज, सहारनपुर
अलीगढ़	«» जे.एन मेडिकल कॉलेज, ए.एम.यू. अलीगढ़
बौदा	«» गवर्नमेंट मेडिकल कॉलेज, बौदा
बहराइच	«» गवर्नमेंट मेडिकल कॉलेज, बहराइच
लखनऊ	«» के.जी.एम.यू. लखनऊ
वाराणसी	«» आई.एम.एस. बी.एच.यू. वाराणसी
मेरठ	«» एल.एल.आर.एम मेडिकल कॉलेज, मेरठ
आगरा	«» एस.एन मेडिकल कॉलेज, आगरा
झाँसी	«» एम.एल.बी मेडिकल कॉलेज, झाँसी
गोरखपुर	«» बी.आर.डी मेडिकल कॉलेज, गोरखपुर

क्रियाशील ट्रीटमेंट सेंटर्स पर उपलब्ध सुविधाएँ

- वायरल हेपेटाइटिस की स्क्रीनिंग
- उपचार एवं फॉलोअप सुविधाएँ

निम्नलिखित जतपदों में जिला चिकित्सालय पर वायरल हेपेटाइटिस उपचार केंद्र भी संचालित हैं

1. मेरठ	2. झाँसी
3. आगरा	4. अलीगढ़
5. मुरादाबाद	6. सहारनपुर
7. मुजफ्फरनगर	8. कानपुर नगर
9. गौतमबुद्धनगर	10. बाराबंकी
11. बरेली	12. फिरोजाबाद
13. मथुरा	14. इटावा
15. बागपत	16. प्रयागराज
17. गाजियाबाद	18. बिजनौर
19. रामपुर	20. शामली

यदि आपको पीलिया, निरंतर ज्वर, भूख न लगना, गहरे रंग का मूत्र, यकृत में दर्द इत्यादि लक्षण हैं, तो तत्काल अपने निकटवर्ती मॉडल ट्रीटमेंट केंद्र अथवा जिला चिकित्सालय में स्थापित हेपेटाइटिस उपचार केंद्र पर निःशुल्क जाँच एवं उपचार हेतु संपर्क करें

अधिक जानकारी के लिए स्वास्थ्य विभाग के टोल फ्री नंबर 18001805145, 1800116666 पर संपर्क करें

राज्य वायरल हेपेटाइटिस नियंत्रण इकाई, स्वास्थ्य सेवा महानिदेशालय, उत्तर प्रदेश

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टीका असरदार, लगवाए समझदार

18 वर्ष से ऊपर के सभी व्यक्ति कोविड-19 टीका अवश्य लगवाएँ

कोविन पोर्टल के माध्यम से बुकिंग हेतु क्लिक करें <http://selfregistration.cowin.gov.in>

WE-WIN

Woman killed by son over reluctance to sell land

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A woman was killed in Nigoha on Monday night allegedly by her son after she refused to sell their ancestral land. Police registered a case of murder and launched a manhunt for the accused.

The victim was identified as Leelawati (50) of Kalshar Kheda village in the area while the accused as Sanjay.

As per reports, some locals spotted the woman lying dead outside her house and sensed foul play as a side of her saree was tied around her neck. They alerted the police and a team reached the scene.

Leelawati had two sons (Sanjay & Sangam) and a daughter (Rajrani) and her husband Kishan passed away four years back. Her elder son Sanjay and her daughter are married. Leelawati was staying separately from her sons due to differences with them.

Locals said Sanjay is a liquor addict and would pick up fights with Leelawati off and on over his insistence to sell their ancestral land. On Monday night, Sanjay reached

Leelawati's house in a drunken state and tried to forced her to sell the land.

"Sanjay is suspected to have killed Leelawati as some villagers had seen him fighting with her over the issue. He is absconding and we have launched a manhunt for him. We hope to nab him soon," Nigoha inspector Nand Kishor said. He said Sanjay's wife deserted him four months back as she was thrashed by Sanjay on a daily basis. "Villagers told us that Sanjay is an ill-tempered man and he used to thrash his wife. Due to his highhandedness, she shifted to her parents' house," the inspector said.

Villagers said Sanjay sold all the ornaments of his wife to purchase liquor and it was the reason behind the differences between the couple. "Sanjay used to torture his wife forcing her to bring money from her poor parents. He later started pestering his mother to sell the land," a villager said.

Meanwhile, two pilgrims going to Ayodhya were killed when a loader rammed into a stationary truck in Nigoha on Tuesday. Several others were

injured in the mishap.

The deceased were identified as Urmila Devi (53) and Julie (15), both of Kanta Karaundi village of Nigoha. The injured were identified as Usha Devi, Ram Dulari Adarsh, Rishu, Saroj Kumari, Bitana, Radha and Khushboo, also of Kanta Karaundi village.

As per reports, the devotees were travelling by a loader which rammed into the truck.

THEFT

Thieves decamped with ornaments of gold and silver worth several lakh from a shop located on Kanpur road in Banthra on Monday night. Anand Kumar Dixit of Alambagh said his shop, 'Anand Jewellers', is located close to the Hanuman temple in the area. He said he closed the shop around 7 pm on Monday. "Around 3 am on Tuesday, the landlord informed me that the shutter of the shop was broken. As I reached there, I found the articles lying strewn across the floor. The thieves made off with a huge quantity of ornaments," he said.

Forced to work during rains, two labourers electrocuted to death

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a tragic incident, two labourers were electrocuted to death at a construction site in Para on Monday evening after they were forced to continue working despite their refusal. Police registered a case of causing death due to negligence against the contractor on Tuesday on a complaint given by the kin of the victims.

The victims were identified as Kamlesh Maurya (30) of Naubasta locality in Kakori and Ram Babu Rathor (28) of Malihabad.

As per reports, Kamlesh and Ram Babu were hired by contractor Anuj Chaurasia for an under-construction house in Sun City locality in the area.

Kamlesh's kin Vimlesh said both Kamlesh and Ram Babu were working at the site on Monday when it started raining around 5:30 pm. "Kamlesh and Ram Babu refused to work as an uncovered electricity wire was lying at the site. However, Anuj and his kin Sonu forced the victims to complete the work. Left with

no option, they started to work unwillingly. Vimlesh said when the victims were working, the mixer machine came in contact with the uncovered wire and both Kamlesh & Ram Babu suffered electric shock. They were rushed to KGMU Trauma Centre where both were declared brought dead.

After the incident, the kin of the deceased staged a demonstration and held Anuj and Sonu responsible for the mishap which claimed the lives of the labourers. A case was registered against Anuj and Sonu. Gloom descended on the locality after the bodies reached the scene. Villagers said the families of the deceased were facing financial crisis since Covid outbreak as both were out of jobs.

"They left their houses to bring money for their families for purchasing food stuff. When it started raining, they became apprehensive and requested the contractor to let them go. However, they had to continue working on being forced by the contractor," a villager said.

Youth ends life as cops rough up his mother, ransack house

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 22-year-old youth ended his life by hanging himself at his house after his mother was roughed up and their house ransacked by police over a brawl at a Covid vaccination camp in Ranchhad village in Baghpat. Superintendent of Police of Baghpat, Abhishek Singh said that 10 police personnel from Binauli police station were removed and attached to the Police Lines.

As per reports, a local Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh leader's son, Akshay (22) accompanied his 62-year-old mother Madhu to a Health department facility at Ranchhad village to get her vaccinated against coronavirus on Monday. When he urged the officials to give her the jab on priority considering her old age, an altercation ensued with the cops. A cop on duty allegedly slapped Akshay and got into a scuffle. To "teach" him a lesson, the irked police personnel raided Akshay's house and broke chairs and a window of the car and also vandalised a tractor. When the women of the house protest-

ed, they were insulted. Akshay's mother Madhu, her sister-in-law Kamlesh and Dharamveer Singh of the village were taken into custody and dragged to the police station and a case was also registered against Akshay. Upset over the police high-handedness, Akshay ended his life by hanging himself at his home. After the news of his death spread, local villagers staged a demonstration, demanding that a case be registered against the erring policemen. It was only after senior police officials pacified them that they allowed police to take the body for post-mortem at around 7:30 am on Tuesday. On the complaint of Akshay's father, a case was registered against five policemen, including police station in-charge Chandrakant Pandey, SSI Udhav Singh Talan, constable Ashwani, head constable Salim and constable Murlu, under Indian Penal Code sections pertaining to abetment to suicide and other relevant sections.

Later, 10 policemen were attached to the Police Lines with immediate effect. An investigation into the incident is under-

way and policemen in large numbers have been deployed in the village to maintain law and order.

Meanwhile, police inaction forced a youth to commit suicide inside the office of senior superintendent of police of Meerut on Tuesday. Reports said that Devendra Singh of Sarai Kazi area under Medical police station had taken Rs 1 lakh from his neighbour 10 years back and had returned Rs 2 lakh yet he was being harassed by the neighbour who even threatened to auction his house to recover his money which as per him amounted to Rs 8 lakh.

Devendra contacted the local police and senior officers several times but failed to get any relief. Depressed with this, he went to the Meerut SSP's office on Tuesday morning and met senior officers, including SP (Crime) and SP (Traffic) but they failed to get his grievance redressed. Upset with the police inaction, he consumed sulphas tablets after which the police shifted him to a hospital where he was pronounced dead. A case was registered and investigations were on.

Rajnath begins 3-day visit to Dushanbe to attend SCO meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Situation in Afghanistan and its impact on the whole region and terrorism and ways to curb its funding will figure prominently during Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's three-day participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) conclave starting Wednesday in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

The annual conference of the Defence Ministers of the SCO countries will also see the Chinese and Pakistan Ministers taking part. While Rajnath had met his Chinese counterpart Wei Fenghe in the SCO conclave last year in a bilateral meeting in Moscow, it was not yet confirmed about such a meeting this year.

Rajnath and Fenghe had discussed ways to ease tension at the Line of Actual

Control (LAC) in nearly two-hour long parleys on the sidelines of the SCO conclave in September last. Incidentally, it was the first high level meeting between leaders of India and China after stand-offs erupted on the LAC in eastern Ladakh in May last year.

Giving details of Rajnath's schedule in Dushanbe, the Defence Ministry said here on Tuesday, the Minister will address the SCO gathering on Wednesday.

Defence cooperation issues among the SCO member states will be discussed and a communiqué is expected to be issued after the deliberations. During his visit, Rajnath is also expected to meet his Tajikistan counterpart Colonel General Sherali Mirzo to discuss bilateral issues and other issues of mutual interest.

Tajikistan is chairing the SCO this year and hosting series of Ministerial and official-level meetings. A few days back it hosted the foreign Ministers' meet.

Addressing the SCO dia-



logue on Afghanistan there on July 14, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had proposed a three-point way forward to restore peace in the strife torn country. He also stressed that the solution has to be Afghan led.

Jaishankar also cautioned that the international community is against the "seizure of power by violence and force" and will not "legitimise such actions". This was in an apparent reference to the Taliban surging in many districts in Afghanistan.

As regards Rajnath's address on Wednesday, sources said he is expected to delve into regional security challenges, including terrorism, and the ways to deal with them.

Naresh Goyal, Ajay Singh, Prashant Ruia, PSU chiefs in Pegasus list

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Pegasus snooping list seems unending. The latest list to come out figures many industrialists and their lobbyists. It includes the now defunct Jet Airways owner Naresh Goyal, Spice Jet promoter Ajay Singh, considered close to the top BJP leadership, Essar Group's Prashant Ruia, Aircel promoter Sivasankaran, and Rotomac Pens' Vikram Kothari and son Rahul Kothari, facing bank cases.

Mukesh Ambani and Anil Ambani Group's V. Balasubramanian and A.N. Sethuraman and Adani Group's lobbyists' names also figured in the list. As per the report published by The Wire portal, the top executives of PSUs like

GAIL, LIC, Narmada Valley Fertilizer Corporation also figured in the Pegasus target list.

"Apart from Goyal, the most prominent names on the list are numbers used by SpiceJet chairman and managing director Ajay Singh and the Essar Group's Prashant Ruia. The list also contains multiple businessmen or officials of companies who have had run-ins with the law over the last few years, mostly due to investigations of loan fraud. This includes Vikram Kothari of Rotomac Pens (and his son Rahul), and C. Sivasankaran, former Aircel promoter and maverick entrepreneur," said the Wire report.

Former GAIL Chairman BC Tripathi, who later joined Essar Group, two numbers,

"one for a former boss of Life Insurance Corporation of India and the other for a former executive director of the Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertiliser Corporation also appears on the list," said the report.

Though the report named both Reliance Group lobbyists Balasubramanian and Sethuraman, it did not name the lobbyists of Adani Group who were targeted. Davidian splinter group leaders were also caught on the Pegasus radar. "Naam Thamizhar Katchi's Seeman, May 17 movement's Thirumurugan Gandhi, Thanthai Periyar Dravidar Kazhagam's K. Ramakrishnan and Dravidar Kazhagam treasurer Kumaresan feature in the list of potential targets of an NSO Group client.



उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रॉसमिशन कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड निविदा सूचना

अल्यकातीय निविदा संख्या— ०१—२१ / वि०प्र०मं०हि०प०का० / २०२१—२२, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल द्वितीय, पनकी, कानपुर के कार्यालय के अन्तर्गत विभागीय कार्य हेतु एक अद्वीड्डीजल चलित हल्का वाहन इन्ड्रियर सहित (०८ माह के लिए) उपलब्ध कराने का कार्य। कार्य सम्पादन हेतु अनुभवी, दक्ष एवं व्यापारकर/सेवाकर में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निदांक—०६.०८.२०२१ अपराह्न १२.०० बजे तक दो अलग-अलग भागों में मुहरबन्द निविदायें आमन्त्रित की जाती हैं। निविदायें निदांक—०६.०८.२०२१ अपराह्न १५.०० बजे उपरोक्त कार्य हेतु अयोध्यासाहकरता अथवा नामित अधिकारी द्वारा सार्वजनिक रूप से उपस्थित निविदादाताओं/प्रतिनिधियों के समक्ष मण्डल कार्यालय में खोली जायेगी। लिकाफे पर फर्म का नाम, निविदा संख्या, भाग प्रथम एवं द्वितीय एवं खुलने की तिथि स्पष्ट अंकित होनी चाहिये। निविदा के प्रथम भाग में निविदा शुल्क व धरोहर धनराशि केवल RTGS के माध्यम से अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड—द्वितीय, कानपुर (IFSC Code-PUNB0103500 A/C No-1035002100001555) के पक्ष में जमा रसीद हो तथा निविदा के दूसरे भाग में दरे व शर्तें होंगी। निविदा शुल्क या धरोहर धनराशि के अभाव में निविदा का दूसरा भाग नहीं खोला जायेगा। अयोध्यासाहकरता को सम्पूर्ण निविदा या उसके किसी अंश को बिना कारण बताये स्वीकार/अस्वीकार करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित है। निर्धारित तिथि में अवकाश पड़ने पर सारी प्रक्रिया अगले कार्यदिवस में सम्पन्न होगी। कार्य का विवरण नोटिस बोर्ड पर देखा जा सकता है। निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य तथा जी०एस०टी० नियमानुसार देय होगा। निविदा प्रपत्र निविदा खोलने के एक दिन पूर्व तक प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं। निविदा संख्या—२१ की धरोहर धनराशि रु०—४०००/—, निविदा मूल्य रु०— २३६— (जी०एस०टी० सहित) राशि नियमानुसार देय होगी। अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल द्वितीय, पनकी, कानपुर पत्रांक ६०८ दिनांक २७.०७.२०२१ "राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचाये"

Assam-Mizoram border sealed; MHA calls meeting of officials

New Delhi: Union Home Ministry has called a meeting of the Chief Secretaries and DGPs of Assam and Mizoram on Wednesday in the wake of violence along their shared border, where five Assam Police personnel were killed.

Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla will chair the meeting to discuss the sudden escalation of violence along the Assam-Mizoram border. The meeting of the Chief Secretaries and DGPs is expected to work on a peace formula so that there is no repeat of the violence along the border of the two states, a home ministry official said.

The central government is in regular touch with the Assam and Mizoram governments and trying to calm down the situation, the officials said, adding CRPF has been deployed in the violence-hit area. Five Assam Police personnel, along with a civilian, were killed and more than 50 others, including a Superintendent of Police, were injured when Mizoram Police opened fire on a team of Assam officials on Monday. **PNS**




NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ
Notice No. 01/2021 Dated : 27.07.2021

Detailed Notification for Engagement of Apprentices for Apprenticeship Training under Apprentices Act-1961, has published on 27.07.2021 vide our Zonal Notification No. RRC/NCR/01/2021. Desirous candidates are advised to visit our official website www.rccprj.org for further details and filling up online application in this regard.

Chairman
Railway Recruitment Cell,
Allahabad

851/21 (P)

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY
KANKE, RANCHI-834006, JHARKHAND

WALK IN INTERVIEW
It is proposed to fill up the following posts at Central Institute of Psychiatry, Kanke, on a contract basis for a period of one year or till the post is filled up on regular basis whichever is earlier. Accordingly, applications are invited from the desirous candidates. Applications on plain paper either typed or handwritten in the prescribed format along with bio-data, passport size photograph, photocopy of the certificates of age proof, educational qualification, experience etc., may be submitted to the undersigned before **16.08.2021**. After submission of application, candidates have to turn up along with their original certificates at 9.30 A.M. on the date of interview. No interview letter will be issued separately. Experience in private sector may also be considered.

The interview shall be held at Central Institute of Psychiatry, Kanke, Ranchi-834006, Jharkhand, on **17.08.2021 at 11.00 a.m.**

Sl. No.	Name of post	Consolidated pay per month	No. of post
1.	Sr. Library and Information Assistant	Rs. 43500.00	1 (UR)
2.	Medical Record Officer	Rs. 43500.00	1 (UR)
3.	Library Clerk	Rs. 24300.00	1 (UR)
4.	Medical Record Clerk	Rs. 24300.00	1 (UR)

Details of qualification of the above posts are available on our website www.cipranchi.nic.in Sd/- Director

22,129 new Covid-19 cases in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Kerala on Tuesday logged 22,129 new Covid-19 cases across the State while the pandemic claimed 156 lives during the last 24 hours. This took the death toll in the State till date to 16,326. The average Test Positivity Rate on Tuesday was 12.35 per cent.

The Legislative Assembly witnessed charges and counter charges between the Opposition UDF and the ruling LDF over the death toll released by the Government. Leader of the Opposition V D Satheshan claimed that the Government has not included more than 7,000 persons who died of Covid-19 in its list while Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan retorted that the Government does not have anything to hide. "If you have any genuine grievances and evidences, furnish it to us and we will certainly examine the same," said the Chief Minister while replying to an adjournment motion moved by the Opposition.

Tuesday's announcement regarding the Covid-19 details came amidst the concern

expressed by the Union Government that Kerala's ten districts had the highest TPR in the country.

Malappuram topped the list of districts with highest number of new Covid-19 cases on Tuesday. While Malappuram registered 4,037 new patients, Thrissur came second with 2,623 patients. Kozhikode (2,397), Ernakulam (2,352) and Palakkad (2,115) were the other districts with more than 2,000 patients.

On Tuesday, 1.79 lakhs samples were tested, according to the release issued by the Department of Health. "The number of new Covid-19 cases are likely to go up further in days to come as we are waiting for the impact of the lifting of lock down in connection with the Id festival," said a Government Physician who has been on Covid-19 treatment duty for the last one year.

He said there were discrepancies in the details submitted by the Department of Health, Kerala Government. "A comparative study between the details released by Tamil Nadu and Kerala reveal that the former is more transparent.

Maha rain-flood toll reaches 209

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The rain-flood toll in Maharashtra climbed further to 209 on Tuesday, even as 43 roads in various rain-flood ravaged areas of Maharashtra remained submerged in water and the number of people evacuated went up to 4,34,185. Seventeen more bodies were recovered during the day, taking the total number of people killed in the rain-related mishaps to 209.

Raigad accounted for a maximum of 95 deaths, while there were 45 deaths in Satara district of western Maharashtra. The death tally in other places comprised: Ratnagiri-35, Thane-14, Kolhapur-7, Mumbai-4, Pune-3, Sindhudurg, Wardha and Akola-2 each. The authorities pegged the number of injuries at 50, while eight persons were still reported missing. Though there was let up in the rains, as many as 19 -- 16 teams belonging to the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and three belonging to the Indian Army -- continued with their rescue and operations in various parts of the coastal Konkan region and western Maharashtra. Till Tuesday evening, the rescue and relief teams shifted as many 4,34,185 people in the flooded areas of the state to safer places. As many as 1351 villages were affected by the rains and consequent floods. Satara bore the maximum brunt of the heavy rains, as many as 420 villages were affected. While 411 villages in Kolhapur district were affected, the authorities pegged the number of villages affected in Sangli district at 104.

The Tamil Nadu Government's daily bulletins incorporate the number of RT-PCR tests and antigen Tests while Kerala is silent about the categories of tests carried out. The RT-PCR tests are authentic while the antigen tests are not trustworthy. There were many instances when samples tested negative during antigen turning positive when RT-PCR was done," said the physician.



SHUBHAM HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FINANCE CO. LTD.
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POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES)
Whereas the undersigned being the authorized officer of the Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited (hereinafter called Shubham) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 issued demand notice calling upon borrowers to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described hereinbelow in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002.
The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited for an amount detailed below and interest thereon.
The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. Details are as below:

S. No.	Loan No/Borrower(s), Co-Borrower	Demand Notice Amount	Date of Demand Notice	Secured Asset	Date of Affixation
1.	QALB19070000050021414, Kiran Mali, Vijay Kumar Mali	Rs. 10,27,218/-	22-04-2021	H. No. 77/9A, Mohalla -Bakshi Kala, Daraganj Pargana & Tehsil - Sadar, Prayagraj, Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
2.	OKAN1703000005004889, Shubhank Prajapati, Uma Shashi Prajapati	Rs. 3,54,026/-	22-04-2021	Plot No. 3, Situated at Part of Arazi No. 282, Bingawan, Kanpur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
3.	OKAN1703000005015607, Rakesh Roshan, Priyanka Kumari	Rs. 21,88,197/-	22-04-2021	Flat No. FO-2, On Fourth Floor In The Residential Building, Named "Gopeshwar Nikunj Apartment", Premises No. 578, Situated at Block-W, Kanpur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
4.	OKAN1902000005017788, Sita Ram, Reena	Rs. 7,09,560/-	22-04-2021	Pvt Plot at Arazi No 962, Mauja Ahiwan, Kanpur Dehat, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
5.	OKAN1906000005021026, Sandeep Gupta, Mithlesh Kumari, Dinesh Kumar Gupta	Rs. 24,88,226/-	22-04-2021	House No. 103/338-B (Measuring area 62,774 Sq. Meter), Colonel Ganj, Kanpur Nagar, Kanpur Dehat, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
6.	LKW_1508_04279, Gyan Chandra Kaushal Neelam Kaushal	Rs. 10,10,356/-	22-04-2021	H No-A-7, At Plot No- 42 & 43, Part Land, Kh No-173, Bhaishora, Lucknow, 226001, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
7.	LKW_1509_045399, Anjanee Kumar, Sanju	Rs. 8,15,759/-	22-04-2021	House No A-13, At Plot No- 42 And 43 Part, Land Khandra No-173 Minjulia, Bhaishora Pargana Tehsil And Distric Lucknow- 226020, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
8.	OLKW1702000005004096, Satyam Rastogi, Kusum Lata Rastogi	Rs. 7,86,214/-	22-04-2021	Shop On Kharsa No 2859/2362, Min-q-397, Nanon Gayan Ghantaghar, Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
9.	OLKW1702000005004389, Gautam Chaudhary Ujma Chaudhry	Rs. 3,82,834/-	22-04-2021	House On Part Of Plot Kh No- 2406, At Amausi Ward Sarojini Nagar Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
10.	OLKW1904000005004580, Shadma Akhtar, Ayasha Parvin	Rs. 5,36,059/-	22-04-2021	House On Plot No-13, Ka Bhag, Kh No-850, 843/1 And 851, Ka Mini, New Sardar Nagar, Ward- Kanhaiya Madhopur Mani Mata Mandir Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
11.	OLKW1706000005006618, Shyam Kumar Singh Babita Singh	Rs. 9,79,124/-	22-04-2021	House No4, Plot No.4, PartMinjulia of Kharsa/Gata No. 659/38, addressing area 530 SCF, Situated at Gram/ Mohalla- Madyaon, Pargana- Mahora, Tehsil- Bakshi Ka Talab, District- Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
12.	OLKW1904000005012206, Gautam Chaudhary, Ujma Chaudhry	Rs. 4,46,193/-	22-04-2021	House On Part Of Plot Kh No-2406, At Amausi Ward Sarojini Nagar Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021
13.	OVNR1901000005016984, Sunil Kumar Mourya, Manorama Mourya	Rs. 10,91,973/-	22-04-2021	Arazi No. 125/1, House No. SA17/4 A. Mauza- Paharyia, Pargana- Shivpur, Ward- Samath, Tehsil & Distt- Varanasi	26/07/2021
14.	OVNR1903000005018967, Vinod Kumar Singh, Arati Singh	Rs. 16,87,490/-	22-04-2021	Flat No. 304,3rd Floor, RUDRA BLOSSOM, S.M. Plot No.93, & H.No. D 59/235-S-304, Mauza- Shivpurava, Pargana- Dehat Amatnat, Ward- Dashshwamedhi, Distt- Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh	26/07/2021

Place : Gurgaon
Date : 27-07-2021

Authorized Officer,
Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Ltd.

Shankarpuri new mahant of Annapurna temple

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As expected Shankarpuri has become the seventh mahant of Annapurna Mandir. He has long experience of working along with late Mahant Rameshwarpuri as his deputy. In a function organised at the temple's premises here on Tuesday, the representatives of Sri Panchayati Akhara, along with senior religious leaders of the city, offered 'chadar' to Shankarpuri to mark his succession to the post of mahant.

After becoming the mahant as per traditional rituals, Shankarpuri offered floral tributes to Rameshwarpuri and then said that he would work hard to fulfill the dreams of Rameshwarpuri and complete all the pending projects. He said that he would also work for the protection and popularisation of culture and continue the temple's all social service works. He said that both temple and trust would work for the society as per the guidance of the scholars. Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya also visited the temple to greet the new mahant and paid tributes to Rameshwarpuri.

Earlier, Sri Panchayati Akhara has decided to appoint Shankarpuri as mahant as he was associated with the temple since his student life as he got his traditional education from Rishikul Brahmacharya Ashram, run by Annapurna Ann Kshetra Trust. In the



Deputy Chief Minister KP Maurya greeting new mahant of Annapurna Mandir Shankarpuri in Varanasi on Tuesday

beginning, seers sat there and offered tributes to Rameshwarpuri. Then the name of the new mahant was announced by the secretary of Akhara Ravindrapuri, mahant of Akhara Haridwar Kailash Bharti, Mahant Dayalpuri of Onkleshwar and many other

senior saints. The function was also attended by Mahamandleshwar Santosh Das of Satua Baba Ashram, general secretary of Akhil Bhartiya Sant Samiti Swami Jitendranand Saraswati, Mahant Jaikishanpuri of Sant

Bihari Puri Math, Mahant Subhashpuri, president of Kashi Vidvat Parishad Prof Ram Yatna Shukla, general secretary Ram Narayan Dwivedi and chief priest of Kashi Vishwanath temple Shashi Bhushan Tripathi.

DM directs Jal Nigam EE to shift valves of tube-well

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

It is surprising that one government department is creating hurdle on the project of other department and taking a serious note of it, the District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma directed the executive engineer of Jal Nigam to shift valves of tube-well from the road to other place by making chamber so that the 400 m long four-lane Shivpur-Lahartara road could be constructed on time.

Reviewing the projects being carried out by the Public Works Department (PWD) and Bridge Corporation at his camp office, here on Monday last, the DM came to know that there is valve of tube-well of Jal Nigam on the road which is creating obstacle in constructing the 400 m long four-lane Shivpur-Lahartara road being constructed by the PWD and taking it seriously, he asked the executive engi-



DM KR Sharma reviewing progress of development works in Varanasi on Tuesday

neer of Jal Nigam to shift the same to other places by making a chamber. The DM directed the superintendent of central jail in Shivpur to shift the temple which was outside the jail, inside the jail premises so that the construction of road could be completed. Expressing annoyance over

the delay in completing the construction work being carried out in Chandpur industrial state by the PWD, the DM directed the concerned authority to complete the work by August 31.

The DM expressed annoyance over the slow pace of the works being carried out by the

Bridge Corporation and directed for sending a letter to the corporation for making no additional effort to complete the construction work of Imiliya Ghat and others within stipulated time. He took the engineers of the corporation to task for the slow pace of the work to construct RoB on Phulwaria four-lane. He fixed the deadline of September 15 to complete the construction works of Konia Bridge, bridge on Babatput-Kapsethi route and Imiliya Ghat and directed for completing the construction work of Varuna-Kalikadhar Bridge by August 31.

Emphasising on drafting out an action plan to acquire land for the service lane of Ashapur flyover, the DM directed the concerned authority to clear all the hurdles on the construction works by addressing all the matters relating to land acquisition within a week.

Kargil martyrs remembered in BLW

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Vijayotsav was celebrated at Surya Sarovar in Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) here on Monday evening, remembering the victory of the country in the Kargil war. On the occasion, hundreds of lamps and candles were lit by the officers, employees, ex-employees, players and children paying their tributes to the sacrifices and exemplary bravery of the Kargil martyrs. The Kargil war lasted for 60 days which saw the country's triumph hoisting tri-colours at Kargil peak.

Deputy General Manager (DGM) Vijay was the chief guest. It was also attended by Dr Sunil Kumar, Public Relations Officer (PRO) Rajesh Kumar, Staff Council's members Navin Sinha, Vinod Kumar Singh, Vijender Kumar, Pankaj Srivastava, Market Committee's members Ramesh Singh, Rajesh Singh, Santosh Singh of Human Rights Committee, football coach VK Kanodia, Mritunjya of St John's Brigade, Saroj of Employees' Club and many others. The function was conducted by MP Thakur, former welfare inspector.

Earlier, on the occasion of Kargil Vijay Diwas, a blood donation camp was organised under the aegis of Red Ribbon Club of National Service

Scheme (NSS), Banaras Hindu University (BHU) at NSS building. More than 36 units of blood were donated in the blood donation camp which was inaugurated by chief proctor of BHU Professor Anand Chaudhary. In the beginning, programme coordinator Dr Bala Lakhendra welcomed the guests. As a special guest Dr Sandeep Kumar of the Blood Bank, Institute of Medical Sciences (IMS), Dr Dinesh Singh, technical officer and many others were also present.

NON-AIDED COLLEGE TEACHERS PROTEST: Raising their voices against the state government for not disbursing stipend to the teachers of non-aided colleges for the last two years, the non-aided teachers associated to the Uttar Pradesh Madhyamik Shikshak Sangh (Non-aided group) on Tuesday staged a protest at Shastri Ghat, here and submitted a memorandum to the district administration regarding their demands including an ex-gratia of Rs 50 lakh to the next kin of the teaching and non-teaching staff who died of COVID-19 while discharging their duties.

The teaching and non-teaching staffs of non-aided colleges are currently facing starvation like situation and their life has become worse than that of labourers of MNREGA because they are not

getting stipend for the last two years, the state president of Sangh and MLC Lal Bihari Yadav said adding, even they are not in position that they could pay fee of their wards. The government is also not paying attention to their plights, he blamed and demanded the government to open the schools and colleges from August 1 and also ensure that they could get their stipend.

The government did not announce an ex-gratia for their families of non-aided teachers who died of COVID-19 while discharging their duties; he charged and demanded that the government should make announcement of an ex-gratia of Rs 50 lakh for the next kin of such teachers and also government job to their one child.

There are no rules and regulations for the non-aided teachers, he said and demanded the government to draft out rules & regulations for them. He also demanded the government to address the problems of teachers of madarsas related to their salary. The government is not paying an ex-gratia of Rs 50 lakh which was announced for the next of kin of the teachers of aided and government colleges who died of COVID-19, the speakers blamed and demanded the government to pay the same at the earliest.

The teaching and non-teaching staff of aided and government colleges are fighting for the restoration of the old pension system but the government is paying no heed towards it, they blamed and demanded the government to restore it in the larger interest of teachers and employees. There are many posts of backward class and Scheduled Castes which are lying vacant in the aided and government colleges, they blamed and demanded the government to make recruitment on these vacant seats at the earliest. They also made other demands and handed over the memorandum regarding it to the district administration.

The state president (in-charge) of Sangh Sitaran Yadav, state vice president Omprakash Ambedkar, state organising secretaries Jain Kushwaha, Omprakash Yadav & Parashuram Yadav, divisional president Dr Suryanath Yadav and district president Bhanu Shankar Tripathi mainly put their views.

TWO MORE TEST POSITIVE: Two were tested positive for the novel coronavirus infection out of 4,642 tests conducted during the last 24 hours taking the confirm cases to 8,234 as per the figures released by the Health department in the evening on Tuesday

VHP to set up Gau Raksha committees

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (Gau Raksha division) in an attempt to protect cows has planned to set up Gau Raksha committees at all villages and appoint gaurakshak (cow protectors).

Leaders said that cow slaughter would not be tolerated at any cost in the country. VHP has also decided to impart training to farmers so that Indian origin cows should be kept at every house in villages. Leaders of VHP (Gau Raksha division) Kashi prant held a meeting at Shankaracharya ashram, Alopibagh on Tuesday.

Senior VHP leader and national organisational secre-

tary (Gau Raksha division) Khemchandra Sharma said Gau Mata (cows) are the central devotion point (Kendra Bindu) for Hindu community. He also said the Indian culture can be protected only when we protect cows, Ganga and villages.

He also stressed on the need to protect the original breed of cows (Indian origin cows) at a time when Indian origin cows were finding no place in the society.

People were more interested in keeping jersey cows for their economic benefits but there was a strong need to take care of Indian origin cows or they would be an extinct species.

VHP leaders said that the

strength of Indian origin cows was declining by every passing day and if the similar condition continues, cows would be seen at museums only. Speakers stressed on the need to make farmers self reliant and develop industries in villages.

Lal Mani Tiwari, regional secretary (VHP Gau Raksha) said that it should be every individual's responsibility to protect cows and they should also come forward for it. He also said that the majority of Gaushala had fallen prey to corruption and many cows were losing their lives.

RETD TEACHER COM-MITS SUICIDE : A retired teacher committed suicide on Tuesday morning by taking a leap from his flat, situated on

the third floor under the Dhoomanganj police station.

Radheshyam Bharatiya, a retired teacher lived with family in a flat in Paras Green Apartment, TP Nagar under the Dhoomanganj police station.

On Tuesday morning he came to the balcony of the flat and took a leap from there. He fell on the ground and died instantly owing to head injury. The panic gripped residents of the Paras Green Apartment informed the police, who took the body to hospital and then to postmortem house.

The preliminary investigation revealed that the retired teacher was not enjoying good health, so he preferred to end his life.

BJP trying to eliminate Sanskrit: Mishra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The BJP, which claims to be friendly to Hinduism, is trying to eliminate Sanskrit from the country. More than half of Sanskrit schools have been closed due to promotion of model schools. This is weakening Sanskrit education, which is directly affecting Sanatan Dharma. These views were expressed by the National General Secretary of BSP, Satish Chandra Mishra in a seminar organised on Tuesday at the party office in Osa.

The National General Secretary of BSP said that people from Brahmin and Dalit society are being harassed all over the state.



Satish Chandra Mishra addressing the gathering

People of Brahmin society are being killed selectively. Despite the disclosure of the killing of

Brahmin in Chitrakoot, the police did not nab the accused. The temple of Lord Shri Ram in Ayodhya is being built on the orders of the Supreme Court, but the BJP is patting its back.

The BSP leader said that Khushi Dubey was married on June 29. She was put in jail. Even after a year has passed, the bail has not been given, it is injustice. Even after this the people of Brahmin society are silent. The BSP general secretary also told the people present that 'you are the descendants of Vishnu and Parashuram, you should think about the state. Think of 'Sarvjan Hitay, Sarvjan Sukhay'.

He said that 13 per cent are Brahmins and 23 per cent Scheduled Caste people in the state. If they become one, then in the year 2022, the government of BSP will definitely be formed. The BSP chief had placed the people of Brahmin society in dozens of posts along with the minister. The BSP general secretary also accused the central and state governments of ignoring the unemployed and farmers protesting in Delhi over the agriculture law. He said that like the SP government, hooliganism and terror continues in the BJP. After the formation of the BSP government, people of all sections will get justice, added Mishra.

Third wave is sure to come: Doctors

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The fear of the third wave of coronavirus is gradually weakening, but doctors do not agree with it. They believe that the third wave is sure to come, even if it does not come in the third week of August and comes in the month of September or October. This is the reason why the cases of increasing corona infection in Delhi, Maharashtra and South Indian states are increasing the heartbeat of doctors in Prayagraj too.

In the daily video confer-

encing to be held from the UP government, the preparedness of the hospitals is being reviewed. The biggest emphasis is on the availability of oxygen and its generation plant. Additional Chief Secretary Health Amit Mohan Prasad has asked the Health department of Prayagraj district to be alert. It has also been said that like the second wave, keep the medical team ready to deal with the sudden impact of the third wave.

Dr Kiran Malik, Chief Medical Superintendent of Tej Bahadur Sapru i.e. Beli

Hospital, said that before the second wave, two or three infected were being found every day in January, February 2021. Then suddenly the cases increased in March, as if the storm had arrived. Even at present, cases are getting less that the general public will have to be alert in Prayagraj due to the increasing cases of infection in the states like Delhi, Maharashtra, Kerala etc.

She said that people must wear a mask when they come out of the house, protect themselves strictly from com-

ing in contact with someone else, and eat something after cleaning their hands. If they don't do this, it can be very difficult.

Swarooprani Nehru Hospital has now become a hospital of 1066 beds. In this, 24 hours full oxygen has been arranged on all the beds. Oxygen plant is also being installed in Beli Hospital. Beli was made a L2 Covid Hospital at the time of corona infection. The Health department has also asked the United Medicine and Medical College to be alert and ready.

One-way traffic in Civil Lines mooted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

A joint delegation of Civil Lines Vyapar Mandal and Prayag Vyapar Mandal submitted a memorandum to Alok Kumar Pandey, Zonal Officer of Prayagraj Development Authority (PDA). The delegation suggested one-way traffic in the Civil Lines area to avoid vandalism due to road widening. It was said that the traders are under mental stress due to the demolition notice given for

road widening and they are feeling very traumatised.

The delegation of traders apprised him that in the past, similar demolition had been started, so after meeting the District Magistrate and the Vice Chairman of the Authority, it was suggested that if the electric poles and transformers are removed from the roads, then the roads will be widened. It was also suggested to make these routes one-way, as there is less traffic on

the roads. In such a situation, road widening and beautification can be done as per requirement without damaging the installations.

The zonal officer said that all the works are being done under the smart city project. At the same time, the delegation demanded to include the office-bearers of the Vyapar Mandal, public representatives of the area and elite citizens in the Smart City Advisory Committee, so that

the plan does not have to be amended again and again.

The delegation was led by Sushil Kharbanda, president, Civil Lines Vyapar Mandal and general secretary Shivshankar Singh. Prayag Vyapar Mandal president Vijay Arora, Ashish Arora, Inder, Harshit Agarwal, Shashank Agarwal, Ritesh Singh, Sheikh Dabur Vakil, Sardar Indrepreet Singh, Dr. Subhash Yadav etc. were present in the delegation.

Handful of Kanwaris spotted on banks of Ganga

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

A handful of Kanwaris were spotted on the banks of Ganga for taking holy water from Sangam - the confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati - here on Tuesday. Despite the fact that the state government has cancelled the Kanwar yatra this year in view of corona pandemic, a group of Kanwaris dressed in saffron attire and Kanwar on their shoulders, on Tuesday afternoon arrived from Pratapgarh district to take holy water from Sangam and started their journey back to Pratapgarh where they would be offering Jalabhishek at Lord Shiva at Baba Bhayharan Nath Dham in Pratapgarh. The group members included Manish Kumar, Triloki Nath, Ashish Tiwari and others and residents of Mahoba Tiraha said, 'We have come from Mahoba Tiraha area from Pratapgarh district to fetch holy water from Sangam as we would be performing Jalabhishek at famous Lord Shiva temple at Baba Bhayharan Nath Dham in Poore Torai, Katra Gulab Singh (Pratapgarh).'

Manish said, 'I along with a group of five devotees arrived to take holy water and we started our journey on bare foot from Pratapgarh to

Prayagraj on Tuesday morning and collected holy water from Sangam. He said that we have maintained social distance while walking to Prayagraj and used masks.'

On being asked about state government's decision to cancel Kanwar yatra, Manish said that it's a matter of faith and government might have taken right decision to protect its people from the deadly disease. He, however, said that people living in villages have not formed big groups of devotees and some of them would be arriving to fetch the holy water.

Another three members' group from Kunda also arrived at Sangam to take holy water. One of the group members Sharad said, 'After taking holy water from Sangam, we would be heading towards Varanasi to offer jalabhishek at Kashi Vishwanath temple on Monday. He added, 'We would cover the distance between Prayagraj and Varanasi during night hours and would perform jalabhishek.'

Meanwhile, authorities of Baba Bhayharan Nath Dham said that they have cancelled the Kanwar yatra this year. General secretary of Baba

Bhayharan Nath Dham, Samaj Shekher said, 'Apart from banning the Kanwar yatra this year, we have strictly followed social distancing and made wearing of masks compulsory on the temple campus.'

COURT RECORDS STATEMENT OF RN RAI: The MP/MLA of Prayagraj on Tuesday recorded the statement of Ram Narayan Rai, brother of the slain BJP MLA Krishnanand Rai. Mafia turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari, BSP MLA and mafia don of eastern Uttar Pradesh is facing murder charge in this case and it is related to the Gangster Act.

It may be mentioned here that after the murder of BJP MLA Krishnanand Rai, Gangster Act was slapped on Mukhtar Ansari and a case under the Gangster Act was registered by the Mohammadabad police station of Ghazipur district.

Ram Narayan Rai, brother of Krishnanand Rai, is an eye witness and the court had fixed July 27 for recording his statement in this high profile murder case. Krishnanand Rai was killed on November 29, 2005.

August 3, 2021 has been fixed for the next hearing of the case when the eye witness will be cross examined.

REQUEST NOT TO

DEMOLISH BRIDGE: Local residents of Deyghat and Damupur handed over a memorandum to the ADM City requesting him to ensure that the private bridge on Sasurkhaderi river is not demolished. They reached Kutchery with the Gram Pradhan to draw the attention of the district magistrate towards this issue. The memorandum says that land mafia has nothing to do with the above bridge which is built by collecting funds from the local residents. They said that the FIR registered against the land mafia for constructing this bridge to enhance the value of the plots, was totally fabricated and misleading. According to the memorandum, the villagers had to cover a distance of about 10 kilometres to reach the other village on the other side of the small river Sasurkhaderi. They made several requests with the officials and political leaders for constructing a bridge there, but their requests fell on the deaf ears of the system. Ultimately they collected funds for the bridge and constructed the same for their convenience.

Through this memorandum they have requested the authorities not to demolish the bridge in the name of action against land mafia.



New KDA VC Arvind Singh holds meeting with officials on Tuesday.

Pioneer

Early detection can cure Hepatitis C: Doctors

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Hepatitis C is a liver infection caused by the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). It is spread through contact with blood from an infected person. Most people become infected with the HCV by sharing needles or other equipment used to prepare and inject drugs.

This was stated by gastroenterologist Dr Praveen Jha from Regency Superspeciality Hospital here on Tuesday.

Addressing media persons, Dr Jha said Hepatitis C was a short-term illness for some people but for more than half of people who become infected with the HCV, it becomes a long-term, chronic infection. He said chronic Hepatitis C could lead to serious, even life-threatening health problems like cirrhosis and liver cancer.

According to the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people with chronic Hepatitis C can often have no symptoms and do not feel sick. When symptoms appear, they often are a sign of advanced liver disease.

Chronic Hepatitis C infection causes ongoing liver inflammation that leads to scarring (fibrosis). As fibrosis progresses, scars gradually replace healthy liver tissue. Advanced liver fibrosis leads to damage of the normal liver architecture and to growth of

new liver cells (regenerative nodules). This stage of liver damage is known as cirrhosis. Hepatitis C-related liver failure is usually a result of cirrhosis.

There is no vaccine for Hepatitis C. However, the best way to prevent Hepatitis C is by avoiding behaviors that can spread the disease, especially injecting drugs. Getting tested for Hepatitis C is important, because treatments can cure most people with Hepatitis C in 8 to 12 weeks.

While many people with Hepatitis C can be treated with direct-acting antiviral (DAA) medications, some, including those who have suffered liver damage from cirrhosis or developed liver cancer, may also need to have a liver transplant.

The CDC reports that out of 100 people infected with Hepatitis C, more than half will develop chronic liver disease - specifically, hepatitis and fibrosis -- and 5 to 25 will develop cirrhosis over a period of 10 to 20 years. An estimated 1 to 5 out of 100 people with chronic Hepatitis C die of cirrhosis or liver cancer resulting from the infection.

He said liver failure due to Hepatitis C is one of the most common reasons for liver transplantation in India. He said without treatment, most people who had Hepatitis C remained infected for life and infections that persist in this

way are called "chronic."

Liver transplantation has several benefits for persons suffering from liver failure due to Hepatitis C but it is also a sensitive process.

Meanwhile, leading gastroenterologists from Regency Care, Dr Ajmal Hasan and Dr Abhimanyu Kapoor, while addressing press persons on World Hepatitis Day said this year the theme was 'Hepatitis Cannot Wait' and thus there was an immediate need to create awareness among the masses towards this deadly disease.

Dr Hasan said although there were umpteen breakthroughs for the management of hepatitis yet more research was needed to save precious lives. He said medical scientists across the world strongly recommended a functional cure and added that the results from the trial of RNAi therapeutic drug VIR-2218 were quite encouraging examples that a cure was possible sooner or later.

He said each year July 28 July tried to raise awareness of viral hepatitis, an inflammation of the liver that caused severe liver disease and hepatocellular cancer. He said this engendered a global need to eliminate hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030. He said every 30 seconds a person was dying from a hepatitis related illness and it was witnessed in the current COVID-19 crisis. He said

the number of viral hepatitis cases across Uttar Pradesh amounted to approximately 25,000 which was a cause of concern.

Dr Abhimanyu Kapoor said hepatitis referred to an inflammatory condition of the liver commonly caused by a viral infection, but there were other possible causes of hepatitis.

He said the other causes included autoimmune hepatitis and hepatitis that occurred as a secondary result of medications, drugs, toxins, and alcohol. He said Hepatitis A was caused by a virus that infected liver cells and caused inflammation, which could affect the working of the liver and cause other signs and symptoms of Hepatitis A.

He advised in simplest terms that eating food handled by someone with the virus who does not thoroughly wash his or her hands or work in a child care centre. He said Hepatitis A could even cause a sudden loss of liver function, especially in older adults or people with chronic liver diseases.

New premises of BoB inaugurated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The regional head of the Bank of Baroda, Kannauj, Reeta Bajpai, while inaugurating the new premises of the bank at Sarai-Meera Road on Tuesday said that the BoB was one of the leading banks of the country and thus it was committed to provide the best services to its clientele.

She then informed about



the new products of the bank and said it was meant for the

clients and appealed to them to avail themselves of the facility

extended by the bank. She said the bank would continue to provide the best services to the bank in the near future.

Prominent among those who took part in the function were Shekhar Vaidya, Ajay Kumar, Branch Manager, SK Mishra and the remaining staff of the bank.

Regional Head of Bank of Baroda, Reeta Bajpai, inaugurating the new premises of the bank on Tuesday.

Pioneer

Success story of Kurele-Rathore figures in Forbes India Magazine

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Nikhil Kurele and Harshit Rathore, alumni of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, made the country proud as the prestigious Forbes India Magazine has published their success story in its latest issue.

During the COVID-19 crisis, they took up the challenge of technological innovation and created ventilators that are at par with any world-class product, but better suited to Indian needs and conditions, and are available at a fraction of the cost of imported variants.

Their aim has been to create 'Made-in India' products of superior quality that meet global standards and certifications, while keeping them affordable for hospitals of all sizes and



IIT-K graduates Nikhil Kurele (right) and Harshit Rathore (left) with the ventilator developed by them.

startup and formed a company, Noccarr Robotics, to manufacture robots to look after the cleaning and maintenance of solar panels. Both these alumni of IIT-Kanpur had figured in the list of Forbes Under-30 Asia 2020. The team's journey to successfully make the Noccarr V310 ventilator in a record time of 90 days has been documented in The Ventilator Project, written by Srikant Sastri and Amitabha Bandyopadhyay, who were the team leaders in the project and formed the IIT-Kanpur Ventilator Consortium to assist Noccarr Robotics. "The decision that we made last year was primarily driven by two factors. One, our existing business became highly restricted because of the lockdowns and we could not progress with it;

and two, we realised that there was a requirement for medical technologies in the country and we could contribute meaningfully to that as we had experience of building complex electro-mechanical products," says Kurele. Between April and June this year, they sold 2,500 units. With the ebbing of the second wave, the numbers have come down and although the company has the capacity to manufacture up to 100 units a day at its Pune plant, it normally makes about 40 units a day, he disclosed.

The fact that Noccarr's ventilators are being installed in some of the best hospitals in cities such as Mumbai, Pune and Delhi proves that they are being recognised for their capabilities and not simply their lower price.

Shivasharanappa takes charge as new municipal commissioner

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

New Municipal Commissioner Shivasharanappa GN took over charge of the Kanpur Nagar Nigam in an informal function on Tuesday. He said the priority of the government was to carry out development works and that too at a rapid pace and thus his focus would be on development.

He said his objective would be to keenly monitor all the development works and ensure that there was no compromise on quality. He also assured the people of Kanpur Nagar that issues related to their civic issues would also be taken up on priority and settled at the earliest.

Shivasharanappa GN is an IAS officer of the 2015 batch and was the CDO of Deoria.

The new municipal commissioner said he always preferred transparency in working, especially issues related to government projects, so that it catered honestly to the needs of the people. He said the meeting with the officials of the KNN was quite cordial and he found that the KNN had a very strong and hardworking team which would further the pending projects in the times to come.

He said Kanpur Nagar was a very big city and it would take some time for him to become familiar with the city and its problems and what could be the solutions.

He said as the monsoon had come, every effort would be made to ensure proper civic facilities. He said he was informed that water-logging was a perennial problem of Kanpur and thus every effort would be made to ensure that it did not happen this monsoon. He appealed to the officials and the KNN staff to extend full cooperation so that the development works could be carried out smoothly in the city.

He said the KNN had done a commendable job in sanitizing the city during the COVID-19 pandemic and said it would be continued and the objective would be to keep the city clean especially in view of the apprehended third wave.

Jewellers oppose hallmarking of silver jewellery

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Uttar Pradesh Sarafa Association has expressed concern over the government move to bring silver jewellery under hallmarking. It has appealed to the government that when the gold hallmarking work is yet unaccomplished then adding silver for hallmarking is unjustified. It has also appealed to the Central government to keep the hallmarking of silver jewellery in abeyance till the hallmarking work of gold is not finished. The sarafa association members said assurance had been given to them that the silver hallmarking would not be made mandatory immediately but it would certainly be made mandatory at the appropriate time. Addressing the meeting of the members on Tuesday, Uttar Pradesh Sarafa Association president Mahesh Chandra Jain said the issue was quite complex and should not be introduced in a haste. He, however, said that it was certainly not justified to add silver jewellery for hallmarking at this juncture and added that that association was in touch with the ministry and would certainly work out an amicable solution to this vexed issue. He said the current moves one after the other were not justified and the government should give enough time to those in the jewellery business. He said the association was not against the rule but it was certainly protesting against the manner in which it was being forced upon them.

It may be mentioned that the Bureau of Indian Standards has imposed a hallmarking system for silver jewellery sold in India, certifying the purity of the metal. Hallmarking certifies that the piece of jewellery conforms to a set of standards laid by the BIS the National Standards Organisation of India.

Minister's directive to officials

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

UP Minister of State for Tourism, Culture, Religious Affairs and Protocol (Independent charge) Neelkanth Tiwari while interacting with some mediamen at Vindhyachal on



Monday said on the lines of Mathura, Ayodhya and Kashi Vishwanath temple Vindhyachal was to be developed and Vindhya Corridor was just a beginning. At Ashtabhuja guest house while reviewing preparations regarding the proposed laying of foundation stone of Vindhya Corridor the minister directed the officials concerned to complete the allocated works timely and make a plan for overall development of the area after widening the roads. He said under the plan the entire Tarikon area was to be developed in order to attract tourists. The minister inspected the demolition sites, helipads at hillock as well as at Deori village besides the site at GIC too where a public meeting was to be held along with laying foundation laying ceremony and works to be dedicated to the public. The minister inspected the site of the stage too from where the public meeting was to be addressed and became aware about all preparations and gave necessary directions. During the visit the minister was accompanied by MLA (City) Ratnakar Mishra,

divisional commissioner Yogeshwar Ram Mishra, District Magistrate Praveen Kumar Laxkar, Superintendent of Police Ajay Kumar Singh, ADM (F&R) UP Singh, city magistrate Vinay Kumar Singh and other officials concerned.

THEFT CASE: Unidentified burglars targeted a house situated in an area under Chilh police station on Sunday night and took away jewellery and cash from there. According to a reports received here, Uma Shankar Dubey alias Dukharan, a resident of Mahanandpur, was sleeping on the roof along with his family members. On Monday morning he was taken aback on seeing his main gate closed from outside. On hearing his cries his neighbours gathered there and opened the door. The house owner was shocked when he saw the boxes missing from the rooms. On getting information the police team reached the spot and found some empty boxes lying in the field. As per the house owner, the thieves had decamped with jewellery worth around ₹7 lakh besides ₹14,000 in cash. On getting information about the matter Circle Officer (Sadar) Shailendra Tripathi visited the spot and directed the cops to work out the case without delay.

PROGRAMME HELD: Divisional Commissioner Yogeshwar Ram Mishra during the clothes distribution programme organised at an old age home located at Vindhyachal

appealed to inmates to lead a happy life and not feel alone because the entire society was with them. He directed the CMO to conduct health and eye

check-up of all inmates. He instructed the social welfare officer to visit shelter home regularly and solve the problems of inmates on priority. During the distribution of clothes Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr PD Gupta, Social Welfare Officer Gireesh Dubey were also present.



Rajbhasha committee meeting held

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

Under the chairmanship of Chief Rajbhasha Officer and Principal Chief Engineer (PCE), North Eastern Railway (NER) Satish Kumar Pandey, the second quarterly meeting of the Headquarters Rajbhasha Implementation Committee was held on Monday through virtual medium. In it Construction Organisation and Mechanical Workshop's deputy chief rajbhasha officer besides Rajbhasha liaison officers

of various departments and non-departmental units were present virtually. Addressing the meeting Principal Chief Rajbhasha Officer Satish Kumar Pandey said while working in NER he had experienced that here Rajbhasha is being widely used in official work. He said through e-office 100 per cent correspondence should be done in Hindi. Besides, the language of the letter to be sent through e-office should be simple and comprehensible. Moreover, all the meetings, till the next order, should be done through virtual medium only. Pandey said that regular publication of 'Rail Rashmi' should be ensured. All departments should send articles etc. for this magazine. With the concerted efforts of all the status of Rajbhasha in this railway will be further strengthened, he added. Deputy Chief Rajbhasha Officer Krishna Chandra Singh while welcoming everyone in the second quarterly meeting of the calendar year 2021 of the Headquarters Rajbhasha Implementation Committee said that as per the guidelines of the Government of India due to Coronavirus infection it was being done through virtual means. He further said he had taken over charge as deputy chief rajbhasha officer recently. Singh added that all the departments should discuss the actual status of the use of Rajbhasha among



themselves so that meaningful steps can be taken in the direction of achieving the set target. The minutes of the last meeting held on March 30 were confirmed. Rajbhasha Officer Arshad Mirza discussed the compliance status of the major decisions of the minutes of the last meeting as per the standard agenda of the Railway Board and the suggestions of the members of the committee were sought. On the occasion the vote of thanks was proposed by Rajbhasha Officer Mohd Arshad Mirza.

C A M P A I G N LAUNCHED: With the aim of creating awareness among railway passengers about protection from Covid-19 infection and its prevention a joint checking campaign was conducted by the Commercial Department and Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel at Gorakhpur railway station on Monday.

For protection from Coronavirus infection and its prevention, announcements are made by the railway administration regarding wearing of masks by passengers, adherence to physical distancing besides taking care of hand hygiene. In order to ensure adherence to guidelines regarding prevention of Covid infection, a checking campaign was conducted jointly by the Commercial Department and RPF personnel at Gorakhpur station here. During it as many as 50 persons on being found without face masks there were fined and counselled. Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh said. Moreover, a sum of ₹5,000 collected as fine was deposited in railway revenue. It may be pointed out here that it is mandatory to wear masks in trains as well as in station premises and there is a provision for imposition of fine for not wearing them. Besides, a drive is also being run against illegal vendors and those selling water illegally,

DM inaugurates Olympics awareness rally

CORRESPONDENT ■ JALAUIN

District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjan inaugurated Tokyo Olympics awareness rally on Tuesday. She said sports is an integral part of the society and we are proud that girls are bringing medals for the country. On the occasion She appealed to people for large-scale participation in the field of sports and praised the efforts by national shooter Deepak Pandey,



who belongs to Orai. She said efforts will be made to improve sports facilities in the district. The rally which will cover a distance of 3,625 km passed through Indira Stadium, Jaiswal Tower, Kalpi bus stand, Patel Square, District Hospital, Bhagat Singh square, Yadav garments, Lalman Sweets, Ghantaghar, Mahil Talab and Allahabad Bank in Orai city and was welcomed by people.

46 employees honoured

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The third phase of 65th Rail Week and Award Distribution Ceremony-2020 was organised under the chairmanship of Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Vijay Kumar Panjari in Premchand auditorium hall of divisional office on Monday with simplicity and following Coronavirus prevention guidelines. In this

sequence, the DRM honoured 46 employees of the division by providing medals, cash prizes and certificates for their remarkable and outstanding service. Among the award recipients were 24 employees of Mechanical (Carriage & Wagon) department and 22 of Mechanical Power (O&F) department whose excellent and dedicated service has significantly improved the functioning of the Railways as well as the image of the division. Congratulating them Panjari said that for the last two years the movement of passenger trains may have decreased due to Covid-19 but that of goods trains has increased threefold during this period. The mechanical employees by following the Covid protocol during the Corona period performed their responsibilities very well due to which very few employees of Varanasi division got infected as compared to other institutions. He appealed to employees that they should also get their families vaccinated so that



everyone remained safe. A water recycling plant has been installed for water conservation at Banaras and Chhapra coaching depots of Varanasi division. Along with it automatic coach washing plants have also been installed at Banaras and Chhapra stations for the cleanliness of coaches. Under the Swachh Bharat Mission bio-toilets have been installed in almost all trains by Indian Railways. In Varanasi division by making provision for single-use plastic free stations/offices major offices and stations have been made plastic free. On the occasion Additional Divisional Railway Manager (ADRM-Infra) Praveen Kumar, ADRM (Operations) SPS Yadav, Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W) SP Srivastava, Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer (O&F) Alok Kesharwani, Senior Divisional Personnel Officer (SDPO) Sameer Paul, Divisional Personnel Officer (DPO) Vivek Mishra and a limited number of divisional employees were present. Senior Divisional Personnel Officer Sameer Paul conducted the programme and proposed the vote of thanks as well. For the compliance of Covid-19 guidelines and safety of employees the 65th Railway Week and the award ceremony at the divisional level is being organised in five phases, Public Relations Officer (PRO) Ashok Kumar said.

2nd wave still not over, 22 dists see rise in cases: Ministry



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Overall Covid-19 cases may have been showing a declining trend, but there are 22 districts— 7 from Kerala, 5 from Manipur, 3 in Meghalaya among others in the country where an increasing trend in cases has been reported in the last 4 weeks. It is a cause of concern, the Union Health Ministry said as it warned the public that the second Covid wave is still not over.

“There has been a consistent decline in the weekly average in the COVID cases...But if we compare the rate of decline in cases, from earlier to now, its decrease remains the area of concern. We’re in talks with states in this regard,” Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary, Union Health Ministry ,said at a press conference here.

He said, “There are still 62

districts in the country where over 100 cases are reported every day. These cases are found in a localised and limited set of areas of these districts.”

The rate of decline of cases has however slowed down which is a matter of concern, cautioned the official.

Echoing similar views, Niti Aayog member Dr V K Paul pointed out that vaccination is not a full guarantee and one should not take Covid for granted. “No vaccine provides 100% guarantee against reinfection. All however reduce the risk of hospitalisation drastically,” he said.

In this connection he cited resurgence of Covid cases worldwide, pointing out that “it is a matter of concern and the pandemic is not over yet.”

“If we look from a global perspective, the pandemic is far from over. There’s a noticeable increase in the number of

SC seeks Centre, Delhi Govt’s view on inoculation, rehabilitation of beggars

New Delhi: Making it clear it will not take an “elitist view” that no beggars be allowed on the streets, the Supreme Court Tuesday asked the Centre and Delhi Government to respond to a plea seeking vaccination and rehabilitation of beggars and vagabonds in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The apex court said begging is a “socio-political problem” and people are compelled to beg on the streets to eke out some elementary livelihood in the absence of education and employment.

A bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and M R Shah told the counsel appearing for the petitioner that it would not consider one part of the prayer which sought direction



to the authorities to restrain beggars, vagabonds and homeless persons from begging at public places or traffic junctions.

The bench said it would issue notices to the Centre and the Delhi Government seeking their responses on the prayer made in the petition

for rehabilitation, vaccination and providing food and shelters to beggars and vagabonds amid the pandemic.

“As the Supreme Court, we would not want to take an elitist view that no beggars should be there on the streets,” the bench said. PTI

cases across the world, which remains the area of concern. We’ve to work on containing the spread of the virus with strictness,” the official said.

At 29,689, India has reported less than 30,000 new Covid-

19 cases after 132 days, according to the government.

The number of active cases in the country also fell below 4,00,000 after 124 days, it said. Fresh cases pushed India’s overall Covid-19 tally to 3,14,40,951,

while the death toll climbed to 4,21,382 with 415 daily fatalities, the health ministry said.

The active cases have declined to 3,98,100 and now comprise 1.27 per cent of the total infections.

Reports about India missing 50 cr end-July jab target ill-informed: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Tuesday termed as “ill-informed and misrepresenting” media reports that claimed that India will miss the end-July target of administering 50 crore Covid vaccine doses and asserted that over 51.60 crore vaccine doses will be supplied from January to July 31.

“These reports are ill-informed and have clearly misrepresented the facts,” the Union Health Ministry said in a statement here.

The figures of 516 million vaccine doses might have been picked up from various sources which informed about the likely availability of the vaccine doses from January to July-end, it added.

“The facts are that a total of more than 516 million vaccine doses will indeed be supplied from January 2021 to 31st July, 2021,” the ministry said.

It added that the vaccine doses are supplied to the states in accordance with the

Govt cites study, says Covishield gives 93% protection against virus

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Tuesday cited a study by the Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC) during the second Covid-19 wave to say that Covishield gives 93 per cent protection against Covid-19 and a 98 per cent mortality reduction.

Addressing a press conference, NITI Aayog Member (Health) Dr V K Paul presented findings of the study which was conducted on 15

lakh doctors and frontline workers.

“Protection to the extent of 93 per cent was seen (in people who were administered the Covishield vaccine) and this was during the second wave which was driven by the Delta variant... also 98 per cent mortality reduction was seen,” he said.

Reiterating the usefulness of vaccines in battling Covid-19, Paul said inoculation reduces infection but it is not a total guarantee.

advance allocation plan and they are informed about it in advance. The vaccines are supplied to the states in various schedules throughout the month.

“Therefore, availability of 516 million doses till end of a particular month does not mean that every dose supplied

till that month is going to be consumed/administered.

“There would be supplies in the pipeline, which should be available for the next few days till the next supplies of vaccine doses materialize in a particular state/district/sub-district to keep vaccination going on,” the statement said.

Pegasus row continues to halt RS proceedings

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Pegasus issue continued to rock the Rajya Sabha for the sixth consecutive day on Tuesday. Sloganeering and displaying of banners by the agitated Opposition and some of them trooping into the well of the house were the order of the day. It witnessed repeated adjournments due to disruption.

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu tried to restore order when the proceedings commenced at 11.00 am. However, the Opposition was in no mood to relent and shouted slogans. Naidu said it was “a sorry state of affairs” before

adjourning the house till 12.00 pm.

Similar scenes were seen when the house reassembled and despite Deputy Chairman Harivansh’s appeal, the din continued.

He cautioned that some of the members in the well were not wearing masks and not following the Covid protocol.

Deputy leader of the house Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi also objected to the members not wearing masks and said they are posing a health risk to the Rajya Sabha secretariat officials.

He also objected to alleged derogatory slogans raised against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Govt seeks time till Jan 9 for framing CAA rules

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has sought an extension for the fifth time till January 9 for framing the rules of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which was passed by Parliament in 2019. The Ministry also said that due to outbreak of Covid-19 and flood situation, finalisation of National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam is delayed and the process of issuing rejection slips has been postponed.

Replying to the question from Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi, the MoS Home Affairs

Nityanand Rai informed Lok Sabha on Tuesday that “the Committees on Subordinate Legislation, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha have been requested to grant further extension of time upto 09.01.2022 to frame the rules under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019.”

This is the fifth extension sought by the government for framing of these rules. According to the Manual on Parliamentary Work, the rules for any legislation should have been framed within six months of Presidential assent or seek extension.

The MHA, to a query

from Abdul Khaleque (Congress) on the NRC, said nine Gazette notifications, the last being on July 31, 2019, had been published by the Office of the Registrar General and the Census Commissioner. “Several communications and instructions have been sent to the State Coordinator of National Register of Citizens (NRC), Assam, for complying [with] the orders of Hon’ble Supreme Court with regard to disposal of claims and objections, publication of lists of inclusions and exclusions in NRC, etc.,” said the Ministry.

the opportunity to work on aspects relating to heritage conservation and restoration in Dholavira. Our team also worked to create tourism-friendly infrastructure there,” he further said.

Gujarat so far has three world heritage sites — Champaner near Pavagadh, Rani ki Vav in Patan and the historic city of Ahmedabad.

This session of the World Heritage Committee is being chaired from Fuzhou in China and is being held online. It started on July 16 and will end on July 31.

The 44th session combines current work, and issues left outstanding since last year, when the annual meeting was postponed due to

COVID-19.

“It gives immense pride to share with my fellow Indians that #Dholavira is now the 40th treasure in India to be given @UNESCO’s World Heritage Inscription. Another feather in India’s cap as we now enter the Super-40 club for World Heritage Site inscriptions,” Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy said in a tweet.

“Today is a proud day for India, especially for the people of Gujarat,” he said. “Since 2014, India has added 10 new World Heritage sites – one fourth of our total sites. This shows PM @narendramodi’s steadfast commitment in promoting Indian culture, heritage and the Indian way of life,” Reddy tweeted.

Don’t make delay in identifying Covid-orphaned kids: SC to States, UTs

New Delhi: Observing that identification of children who have become orphans or lost a parent either due to Covid-19 or otherwise does not brook any further delay, the Supreme Court Tuesday directed the State Governments and Union Territories (UTs) to file status reports giving particulars about the number of children who have become orphans after March 2020.

The top court said there is a need to ensure the schemes meant for orphans reach the real beneficiaries and not just remain on paper.

A Bench comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao and Aniruddha Bose directed the the District Magistrates to issue necessary instructions to the district child protection officers to take assistance of the police, civil society, gram panchayats, anganwadi and ASHA workers for identification of orphans.

The apex court said this is in addition to mechanisms



available in Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and rules.

“The identification of children who have lost both parents or one parent after March 2020 does not brook any further delay,” the bench said.

The Bench also clarified that its order covers all children who became orphans during this period due to Covid or otherwise.

“What we are thinking is to take care of all children who have been orphaned whether Covid or not Covid. We cannot restrict the orders passed to only orphans who lost both parents to COVID-19,” Justice Rao said.

The Bench said District

Magistrates are directed to continue uploading the information on Bal Swaraj portal of National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

Child welfare committees are directed to complete the inquiry within the time limit specified under Act and provide assistance and rehabilitation to orphans, the bench added.

“All State Governments, UTs are directed to file status reports giving particulars giving the number of children who have become orphan after March 2020. The number of children produced before the child welfare committee and their particular who have been provided with benefits of the schemes by the state governments,” the bench said.

It also directed the states to provide details regarding payment of ₹2,000 monetary assistance given to needy orphans under the Integrated Child Development Services scheme. PTI

7 Opposition parties seek Kovind’s intervention on farm laws, Pegasus

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Seven Opposition parties have written to President Ram Nath Kovind seeking his intervention to direct the Government to discuss farmers’ issues and Pegasus phone-tapping in Parliament.

The decision to knock the doors of Rashtrapati Bhavan took place after a meeting of the Opposition leaders held in the Parliament premises after the adjournment of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

Though the Congress was also present in the meeting, the signatories of the letter are BSP, RJP, SAD, National Conference, CPI, CPI(M) and NCP. Later, the Opposition leaders joined senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge for a joint Press conference outside the Parliament.

Congress sources said that the grand old party did not become a signatory to the letter due to the presence of SAD however the both political parties will continue to fight for the right of farmers in the Parliament till justice met.

NCP leader Supriya Sule said the seven parties have written to the President seeking his intervention to instruct the government to discuss the farmers’ issues and Pegasus snooping in the Parliament.



SAD leader Harsimrat Badal, who was a Minister in Modi government until she resigned to protest the controversial farm laws, said it is very unfortunate that farmers have died while protesting against the three farm laws but the Centre is not even ready to discuss their issues.

Addressing the Press conference, Kharge said, government is not interested in a meaningful discussion and debate.

“This Government does not believe in its accountability to the people of India through the Parliament. This Government has functioned in a manner, which has lowered the prestige of Indian Parliament and Indian democracy. What the opposition has demanded is fair, correct, within the ambit of rules and established Parliament practice and conventions. When collectively, the opposition gives a notice that matter has to be discussed,

Parliament is not convened only for the legislative agenda of the Government,” Kharge said.

“We have no option, but to continue to agitate and we have come here all of us together, because what we say inside the house, does not reach the people, it is never telecast. Opposition is being blacked out inside the house, so through the media, we want to tell our people, we shall continue this fight. The government obdurate as it is, we will force them, as in a democratic set up it is done to come and debate, if the government has nothing to hide, let them start the debate today itself, the opposition is ready,” said Anand Sharma, Deputy Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha.

DMK’ Tiruchi Shiva, SP leader Ram Gopal Yadav, CPI leader Binoy Vishwam, TMC leader Sukhendu Shekhar Roy, RJD’s Manoj Jha and AAP leader Sanjay Singh attended the meet.

India-Russia military drill to start on Aug 1

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Underlining the time-tested long-standing defence between the two countries, India and Russia will take part in the 12th edition of the Indo-Russia Joint Military Exercise (INDRA) at Volgograd city. The 13-day exercise will start on August 1, 2021.

The exercise will entail

conduct of counter terror operations under the United Nations mandate by a joint force against international terrorists groups.

Giving details of the upcoming event, officials said here on Tuesday, 250 personnel from both the nations will form part of the exercise. The Indian Army contingent comprising of a Mechanised

Infantry Battalion underwent rigorous training at different locations in India to refine their drills for participation in the joint exercise.

Exercise INDRA-21 will further strengthen mutual confidence and interoperability between the Indian and Russian Armies and enable sharing of best practices between the contingents of both the countries.

The exercise will be yet another milestone in strengthening security cooperation and will serve to reinforce the long-standing bond of friendship between India and Russia.

Dholavira joins UNESCO World Heritage list

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The UNESCO on Tuesday said Dholavira, a Harappan-era metropolis, in Gujarat, has been inscribed on its World Heritage List, prompting Prime Minister Narendra Modi to tweet that he was “absolutely delighted by this news”.

“Dholavira: A Harappan City, in India, just inscribed on the @UNESCO #WorldHeritage List. Congratulations!” UNESCO tweeted. The ongoing 44th session of the World Heritage Committee of the

UNESCO has already given India a new world heritage site in the form of the Rudreswara/ Ramappa Temple in Telangana, which



dates back to the 13th century.

“Absolutely delighted by this news. Dholavira was an important urban centre and is one of our most important

linkages with our past. It is a must visit, especially for those interested in history, culture and archaeology,” Modi tweeted.

“As CM of Gujarat, I had



Upheaval

India should wait and watch and resist global pressure to move into Afghanistan

It will mean a massive turnaround in India's Afghanistan policy to send its soldiers into the war-torn neighbouring country. No current indication warrants such an approach even though friendly external powers want India to play an active, hard role in Afghanistan. The situation is similar to the one where the Quad members (the United States, Australia, India and Japan) would like India being their active spearhead in containing China. In the western theatre, China has planned joint action with Pakistan to fend off the threat of terrorism in Afghanistan even though the Afghan media has created a perception that Pakistan is aiding the Taliban. Still, China's articulation may convince the West to prefer pulling India into the neighbourhood war. India, thus, already has its hands full trying to ensure that it is not forced into taking sides. India has clarified it is not "aware" of any "invitation" to be part of the American initiative through Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Pakistan or the Russia-US-China grouping on Afghanistan. The relationship between Kabul and New Delhi is shaped by the strategic partnership between the two countries signed in October 2011. It is the basis for their strategic efforts "against international terrorism". India's role is limited to training and equipping Afghan national security forces and executing capacity-building programmes. To go beyond this point will mean freshly assessing its Afghanistan policy that so far translated into India keeping itself out of the conflict but contributing to capacity building with an external power — the Iran-Russia front initially and, later, the United States — maintain-



ing stability. This policy allowed India to keep away from the Taliban.

In the present scenario, however, the Taliban are forcing themselves to be at the centre-stage in Afghanistan, making it impossible to arrive at a resolution without involving them. The situation persuades all parties to decide what kind of contact to have with the Taliban. The other complication is, which of the factions of the Taliban to contact? There is the faction that depends on Pakistan's support while another faction attempts to carve its political space with help from sections in the Middle East. Thirdly, what exactly would a country like India talk to the Taliban about when Pakistan-based terror outfits that are intent on destabilising India are said to be assisting the Taliban in Afghanistan? India will get a fair idea of where the United States, which is in the last stages of withdrawal from Afghanistan, stands on the question of stability in the region when its leadership meets visiting Secretary of State Anthony Blinken. India missed a first-hand briefing on the ground situation in Afghanistan because of the cancellation of the visit of the Afghan Army chief. The situation is not such that India can come to an informed decision about its future action. The external powers are still in the process of firming up their own positions and roles. Till then, India's job is to wait and watch and resist international pressure to move in.

PICTALK



A pet monkey enjoys tea from a plastic cup collected from a roadside garbage box, in Kolkata

PTI

Zapping the virus

In what may be a breakthrough against Corona's spread, a laser device will kill the virus in 50 msec

Even as the Novel Coronavirus fast mutates into new, deadlier variants since being discovered nearly one-and-a-half years ago, virologists and scientists are scurrying to keep pace and finding more potent ways to eliminate it. According to latest reports, a new laser device has been created in Italy that is apparently capable of obliterating the pernicious virus present within a structure's boundary walls. Work on the machine project, developed by the scientists of the United Nations in collaboration with the scientists of an Italian tech company, the International Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, and Altec K-Laser, a local company that makes laser equipment, respectively, was started last year when Italy was reeling under the COVID-19 pandemic. How does the instrument work? It's quite simple, really. In the device, the air is passed through a laser beam that kills viruses and bacteria. And it is already getting noticed and winning accolades, too. "This device has completely changed the way I think about laser technology. It kills viruses in 50 milliseconds," claims Serena Zakinya, the head of the Cardiovascular Biology Group at the International Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology.

As a significant precautionary measure, keeping the areas within the boundary walls free from infection has proved to be a major challenge during the pandemic. A virus-free environment within the boundary walls has become a necessity to prevent the spread of the virus. However, there are Doubting Thomases, too. Some scientists say that the laser-based technology will not be safe to kill the virus. A study published in the *Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology* in November linked laser-based devices to the risk of cancer. But the equipment's manufacturers have assured that there is no truth in these reports. They believe that the laser emanating from it never comes in contact with the human skin, so there is no risk of developing cancer. Claiming that it is a recycled product, the Altec founder has said that "our device uses nature against nature". But the one drawback is that though viruses and bacteria can be eliminated in the air, the laser won't be effective if they fall to the floor or any surface. The company, having already bagged a patent for this device which can also be installed in the air-conditioning unit, now plans to take it to the international market.

When politicians pass the buck to military



ASHOK K MEHTA

After decades-long wait, Modi 2.0 appointed Gen Rawat as the CDS in 2019 but the Defence Planning Committee fell short of groundwork

Before the monsoon session of Parliament, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh invited two former Defence Ministers for a briefing. He did not dirty his hands but asked the CDS and COAS to brief them. In the UK, it would not happen. Politicians pass the buck to the military. Expectedly, the Army and Air Force have clashed over the transformational reforms underway. CDS Gen Rawat described the IAF as an extension of artillery and a combat support service. Air Chiefs have been kept out of the loop during the 1965 and 1971 wars, reflecting mistrust of IAF which is about air power required for "shaping the battlefield". But boots on the ground are essential.

Rewind: Gulf War I (1991) lasted 44 days; 38 days of aerial bombardment and four-day land offensive. In Bosnia (1995), air power alone won the war in 17 days. Kosovo (1999), air war was 78 days with no ground offensive. The Afghanistan campaign (2001) lasted 65 days with 11 days of ground operations. The Iraq war (2003) lasted 21 days of air and land battle. In Sri Lanka, the IAF performed its modest role effectively. The IAF's sterling performance though was the Balakot bombing — politically and strategically a turning point, marking the threshold of counter-terrorism response. The omission in employing IAF in 1962 was part of the political and military fiasco. Still, IAF insecurities arising from jointness, including rotation of three-star slots by merit, have to be addressed to achieve unification to obviate IAF Chief having to ask the Army Chief to requisition in writing that air support was required during Kargil.

The CDS traces its history to Admiral Mountbatten when he sounded Prime Minister Nehru about its utility. After the 1971 war, Prime Minister Gandhi had informed Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw he would become CDS but nothing came of it. The CDS was resurrected by a 2001 GoM containing 100 recommendations, most of which were implemented except CDS. When an attempt was made to appoint CDS, Air Chief Marshal OP Mehra accompanied by a posse of former Air Chiefs met the President and blocked the enterprise. In 2002, a



CDS actually appeared on the horizon: His office was prepared in South Block, Guard of Honour rehearsed by Delhi Area and NDTV announced Adm Sushil Kumar's elevation. But between the cup and the lip was a slip. The Naresh Chandra Task Force in 2013 revived the CDS in its less truculent avatar: Permanent Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee. But Defence Minister AK Antony sat on the proposal. It was not until Christmas Day 2019 that Modi 2.0 Government issued a gazette notification appointing Rawat as "primus-inter-paraes-CDS" — tasking him to implement jointness by January 2023. A Department of Military Affairs was also created under MoD. Appointing a CDS has been an article of faith for the BJP.

Two questions arise from the reform process. First, did GoI do the necessary thinking and research — and who did it — before issuing the gazette notification? Why were the known historical IAF insecurities not addressed by the political authority? Unfortunately, the newly minted Defence Planning Committee under NSA AK Doval merely issued a charter of work to Rawat without the DPC doing any ground-work. Clearly such an epic transformational exercise should have begun by launching an SDRS (Strategic Defence and

THE LACK OF CONSENSUS (WHICH ALL MILITARIES HAVE HAD TO OVERCOME) EMERGED CLUMSILY LAST MONTH DURING A SEMINAR IN WHICH BOTH RAWAT AND AIR CHIEF MARSHAL BHADRAURIA SPOKE. IT WAS ONE OF THE UGLIEST PUBLIC SPATS BETWEEN A SERVICE CHIEF AND THE CDS

Security Review), preferably an Integrated Review, on the lines the UK did in March this year followed by enunciating a National Security Strategy. The DPC conveniently left the thinking to CDS, ignoring the inevitable repercussions.

I recall UK Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine explaining to me on the back of an envelope at RCDS London in 1984 how he had rewired the CDS system for unification and whose implementation he ordered in the face of revolt from Service Chiefs. The reforms were ordered top-down without passing the buck.

Modi had announced the appointment of CDS from Red Fort in 2019. The Government simply issued a fiat to CDS on jointness despite knowing opposition to it. This lack of consensus (which all militaries have had to overcome) emerged clumsily last month during a seminar organised by Global Counter-Terrorism Council in which both Rawat and Air Chief Marshal Bhadrauria spoke. It was one of the ugliest public spats between a service chief and CDS, which has triggered an ill-informed debate. The remedial measure of an Experts Committee headed by CDS with Vice Chiefs of single services for more consultation and discussion is a bad idea: the medicine worse than the mala-

dy. The Defence Minister ought to have intervened and done a Heseltine.

The IAF's concerns including integrated use of air power have to be addressed, given that IAF has only 30 fighter squadrons. Appointments of CDS and Combatant Commanders of other joint/integrated/unified commands and organisations be made by merit and not in Robin's turn. The concepts of air-land and tri-service battles have to be revised and updated. Joint Professional Military Education should become mandatory for promotion to flag rank. An equivalent of US Goldwater-Nichols Act 1986 will ensure jointness to diminish inter-service rivalry. India was a pioneer in integration through Joint Services Wing/ National Defence Academy/ Defence Services Staff College/ National Defence College. But long ago, the political class responsible for defence of India stopped thinking, leaving it to the military to self-reform. The politician is required to do and say more than "giving a befitting reply".

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SEERS SHOULD SHUN POLITICS

Sir — It looks that from Punjab to Karnataka, it is the season of change and a show of assertion by the central leadership of political parties to set their house in order, their sights trained on the upcoming elections. The 78-year-old, four-time Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa who had won his current term by engineering defections and toppling the Congress-JDS Government in 2019, has quit.

To date, Yediyurappa and the BJP have remained synonymous in Karnataka and now he, despite being the only mass leader the BJP had in the State and in the entire south, has now resigned. His exit leaves the BJP without an experienced leader to helm the Government. While the RSS wants to move away from caste equations by picking national organising secretary BL Santhosh, a Brahmin, many in the State BJP are against ignoring the Lingayat community that has been the BJP's mainstay all these years.

The hard fact is that the party cannot do without the support of the Lingayat community, particularly its influential mutt heads. But what is most unfortunate is that the effect of what the seers in Karnataka have said openly has the effect of dividing people on the basis of caste lines and community. If these seers are keen on a life in politics, they should drop the pretence of renunciation and contest elections.

JS Acharya | Hyderabad

INTERSTATE BOUNDARY ISSUE ERUPTS

Sir — The interstate boundary issue in north-eastern States is a perennial problem and six personnel of the Assam Police died at the border with Mizoram while defending the constitutional boundary of the State. The incident came less than two days after Home Minister Amit Shah met with the northeast CMs to resolve the interstate boundary disputes.

Border conflicts have occurred intermittently since Mizoram was carved out of Assam as a Union Territory in 1972 and got Statehood in 1987. Six Assam police personnel were killed in an exchange of fire with their Mizoram counterparts after the

SC view on beggars heartening



As an imminent third wave of COVID-19 looms large, the Supreme Court refused to take an "elitist" view to ban begging and issued notices to the Centre and the Delhi Government on a petition seeking vaccination and rehabilitation of beggars in the wake of the pandemic in India. According to the apex court, no one would like to beg if not for poverty. It observed that people are generally compelled to beg to eke out elementary livelihood due to the lack of education and employment. As it was a socio-economic problem, beggars could not be stopped from begging, it added.

The Supreme Court has made the right

observation regarding beggary in India. On the other hand, many factors are involved in beggary. But it is a fact that beggars are driven by poverty. However, it must be understood that the state of very poor people in the country is equal to that of beggars. As there is no proper enumeration of beggars, it is difficult to deal with the problem. Wandering beggars in the time of the COVID pandemic pose risk to the public. They must not be deprived of their right to COVID testing and vaccination. They must be rehabilitated and vocational training must be provided to them. Also, education must be provided to their children.

In spite of the advancements made by India in different sectors, beggary continues to be a social problem. As the country is striving to achieve world standards in every field, socio-economic measures are needed to solve the beggary problem. A comprehensive programme must be developed for this. Philanthropic approach to beggary must be replaced with therapeutic and rehabilitative work.

Venu GS | Kollam

protracted border row between the two northeastern States took a violent turn. The clashes at the border town of Vairengte also left at least 60 persons from Assam injured. The incident comes less than two days after Union Home Minister Amit Shah held a meeting with the Chief Ministers of the northeast in Meghalaya's capital Shillong for resolving the interstate boundary disputes. However, Assam also harbours border disputes with Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Nagaland.

Krishnan Subramaniam | Ghaziabad

PUNISH THE CORRUPT POLITICIANS

Sir — During the election campaign season earlier, the leaders of the DMK accused the then AIADMK Government and its Ministers, including then Chief Minister E Palaniswami, of rampant corruption. They even submitted a memorandum to the Governor seeking action against those "corrupt" leaders. They also

assured the electorate that if elected to power, they would initiate serious action against all the Ministers and officials found to be involved in corruption and other malpractices leading to them amassing wealth disproportionate to their known sources of income.

As assured, the DMK Government has commenced action and the recent raids conducted by the DVAC at the residence and more than 20 business places connected to former Transport Minister MR Vijayabhaskar are part of the exercise which, we believe, is going to be a continuing process henceforth. The Government that has started in the right earnest to fix the corrupt should not succumb to any pressure from any quarters, go ahead with the raids and investigations and see that the corrupt get exemplary punishment.

Shalini Gerald | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Your (Sidhu's) win is my win and our win is the party's win. We need to work together in the interest of the State and its people.



Punjab Chief Minister — Amarinder Singh



Our role in Iraq will be... continue to train, to assist and to deal with ISIS but we're not going to be, by the end of the year, in a combat mission.

US President — Joe Biden

I think it's super delicious. It's tasty and when you compare it to everything else, Indian food competes really well.



MasterChef Australia winner — Justin Narayan



I feel like my attitude wasn't that great because I don't really know how to cope with that (Olympics) pressure.

Four-time Grand Slam winner — Naomi Osaka

Social evils begin in the mind... The fear of social stigma should deter people from demanding or giving dowry.



Kerala Governor — Arif Mohammed Khan

FIRST COLUMN

THE GLOBAL MINIMUM TAX

Companies will have to pay a minimum tax regardless of the jurisdiction they operate from



KINNARRY THAKKAR

It was a historic event when 130 nations representing over 90 per cent of global GDP agreed to a global minimum tax (GMT) of possibly 15 per cent on corporations for a two-pillar solution to address the tax challenges arising from the globalisation and digitalisation of the economy. These countries are part of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) which has been working towards preventing tax base erosion and profit shifting by companies that setup their businesses in low-tax jurisdictions to avoid payment of higher taxes. Nothing can prevent companies from engaging in such arrangements but the tax authorities became part of a global race to the bottom to compete which jurisdiction could lower their corporate tax rate most to check revenue leakage. The outcome was a double whammy: Companies still avoided taxes by locating in the jurisdictions that won this race and consequently, the tax authorities kept losing on their revenue collections. The digital companies felt the negative impact



strongly as their headquarters would be in a low-tax jurisdiction and consumers all over the world; they would thus pay tax only in the low-tax jurisdiction thus hurting the tax revenues of all other jurisdictions. To overcome this problem, several countries levied a digital services tax and collected a percentage of revenue from corporations on certain transactions. In India, an equalisation levy of six per cent for 'any specified service' provided by a non-resident in some cases and of two per cent on a non-resident e-commerce operator subject to certain criteria is presently applicable. Such measures are adopted in retaliation of the tech giants exploiting the tax treaties or doing 'treaty shopping' that puts a hole in the coffers of the State.

As a result, there is a strong consensus to make the companies pay a minimum amount of tax irrespective of the location in which their businesses are headquartered. This will deter the companies from designing a complex web of corporate layers for shifting their tax base to low-tax jurisdictions and avoid tax in the country of consumption. The solution to the problem of Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) was enunciated by OECD that provided for a framework in a pillar-wise approach as mentioned below. Pillar one proposes the reallocation of taxing rights in the jurisdictions where customers and/or users are located. Pillar two presents a global anti-base erosion mechanism to stop the shifting of profits to low tax or no-tax jurisdiction facilitated by new technologies and ensure a minimum level of tax being paid by multinational enterprises. The proposed rules aim to annihilate the idea of shifting profits by leaving no added advantage for the corporations in doing so. This will also encourage positive competition among companies by creating a level playing field that is otherwise distorted by the ability of only a few big international corporations to setup businesses in tax havens. The G-20 and the EU have supported this framework, but countries like Barbados, Estonia, Ireland, Hungary, among others, which are tax havens or low tax jurisdictions, have not signed up to the deal for various reasons. The proposed rules shall override the present digital services tax. Also, laws such as the global intangible low-taxed income (GILTI) of the US to discourage profit shifting shall have to be aligned with the proposed inclusive framework. The proposed regulation is a giant step towards an efficient global system of taxation. Concerns of all stakeholders must be considered and addressed to formulate and implement an effective policy framework. The G-20 meeting this October will decide on the agreement and its implementation plan. The rules may take effect in 2023.

(The writer is Professor and Head, Department of Commerce, University of Mumbai, Mumbai. The views expressed are personal.)

Afghan conundrum and the road ahead

The responses can range from total to moderate military support or maybe a combination of various strategies but India won't certainly be indifferent



NISHTHA KAUSHIKI

The Taliban taking over Kabul or establishing a parallel regime in Afghanistan will involve the issue of legitimacy via its recognition. Strongly related to this, the message from Russia to India is clear, "it's up to India to analyse the situation and go ahead according to the current realities". The new strategic alignment of Pakistan-China-Russia is already in a process that will have a destabilising effect on the countries of South and Central Asia. With these developments, India might then have to rethink beyond its traditional strategies.

In this context, the entire debate would shift upon India's decision for the Afghan forces and the strategic developments that might follow. India might decide to help the Afghan Air Force with the Strategic Partnership Agreement (2011) being the main guiding principle. The responses can range from total military support to a moderate one or maybe a combination of various strategies, but certainly, the Indian government will not be indifferent because security is at stake.

Irrespective of the decision that would be taken, certain challenges are coming up for the government. An increase in cross-border terrorism with new forms of hybrid warfare, a sharp increase in drugs and human trafficking, especially affecting Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Maharashtra, and an increase in the propaganda warfare by the adversary working in tandem with the existing and the emerging Violent Non-State Actors (VNSA). The fate of Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan is also in jeopardy. All these challenges are inter-linked. An India-centric approach is required to deal with them.

First, at the diplomatic level, even though Russia might look to stand with Pakistan, strategic overlaps with Russia can be used for the furtherance of India's interests. As we understand that geopolitics is neither black nor white, how well the current strategic agreements are used to extract leverages would depend upon the government apart from the developments that will follow. India should exercise its strategic leverage with Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries to tighten its noose around Pakistan in the future. The role of OIC in the coming few days would be of immense importance to India. The policy of exposing and isolating Pakistan should continue at a regional and international level. There can be no better platform than FATF and UNGA.

There is also an opportunity for India to reinvigorate its strategic relations with Iran and find new commonalities to cooperate. Iran's initial euphoria of the US exit may soon end as it might find the Taliban committing atrocities on the Shia minority in Afghanistan. Many hardliner clerics in Tehran have still not forgotten the 1998 killings of Iranian diplomats.

The upcoming refugee problem in the wake of the establishment of an Islamic emirate is going to open up new challenges for



INDIA SHOULD STRENGTHEN ITS DEFENCE SYSTEM THAT IS CAPABLE OF RETALIATING TO THE EMERGING HYBRID WARFARE TECHNIQUES THAT ARE REDRAWING THE BATTLE LINES. TURKEY AND CHINA ARE THE MAIN SUPPLIERS OF DRONES TO PAKISTAN. COLLABORATIVE THREATS EITHER IN A PROXY WAR OR A MILITARY CONFLICT CANNOT BE RULED OUT

(The writer is an Assistant Professor at Central University of Punjab, Bathinda. The views expressed are personal)



Iran. The Taliban have already taken control of Islam Qala, a military post on its border with Afghanistan. Here, an opportunity for India is open. It is through an independent Iran policy that India can deepen its strategic stronghold. Another geopolitical twist, a positive one, can be a possibility if pursued. Given the geographical proximity of India to both Afghanistan and Iran, the dynamics of the situation are well understood. The US has to accept the region's geopolitical realities. History is full of examples of states having multiple allies who probably don't see eye to eye each other.

The role of the UN has to be called upon as sincere joint efforts are required. India should first approach the UNSC and in case of conflicting interests, the task of maintaining normalcy and peace should be discussed in the UNGA. Having an understanding that there would be a lack of unanimity in the UNSC to protect Afghanistan and its people, India cannot let the region be sucked into chaos and anarchy. For this, sooner or later, India has to take the lead for an "emergency special session" of the UNGA. This session can be called by India and its allies under Resolution 377A (V) that provides for a 'Uniting for Peace'. India must remind the international community of its primary duty to maintain peace and security and should request recommendations to act collectively to restore the peace of the region under a unified command. The UN has provisions in case the UNSC fails to "discharge its responsibilities".

All the international legal issues

such as re-arming and unlawful diplomatic recognition to the Taliban, suppression of the human rights of women, children, and religious minorities, and diversion of fundamentalists should be discussed in the UNGA to expose countries like Pakistan. This will also set the tone for India's leadership and the expansion of the UNSC. Additionally, to secure the lives and dignity of Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan, the government may think of evacuating them at the earliest before a full-fledged war breaks out.

Second, at a tactical level, hybrid warfare against India will deepen and broaden. New weapons and tactics utilised by the proxy militia will call for measures that favour coercive policies. For instance, the use of drones and rockets by terror groups to avoid casualties in physical attacks has already been initiated. To counter such an emerging threat, India can expand the horizons of its 'offensive defence'. It may incorporate the policy of 'deterrence by denial' through disallowing the terrorists to assemble and execute attacks against India. Of course, it has its own risk of substantial escalation when states are using VNSA. The evolving strategic communication and the military-civil interface through the media to let the world know about India's political will, intentions and interests will surely play an important role.

India should strengthen its defence system that is capable of retaliating to the emerging hybrid warfare techniques that are redrawing the battle lines. Turkey and China are the main suppliers of drones to Pakistan. Collaborative

threats either in a proxy war or a military conflict cannot be ruled out. Here, a two-way approach may be adopted. Apart from strategic purchases of anti-drone platforms from the allies such as the US, Israel, France, and Germany, long-term collaboration may be pushed forward to counter the asymmetric warfare. AI is another thrust area. For instance, the US alone has around 140 projects based on AI, the knowledge of which is available in the public domain. This can be of immense help to the Indian forces. Simultaneously, indigenous R&D in defence manufacturing especially in AI technologies should be boosted for surveillance and tactical capabilities.

There are various new areas of AI that India has not yet explored. These include bio-inspired surveillance systems, AI face recognition cameras in sensitive areas, tools using AI algorithms to counter cyber-attacks, and overlook security issues such as indoctrination, sale of narcotics, and small arms through the darknet. All these measures will help the forces and will ensure efficiency in the changing times. However, the focus on AI and other technologies should not distract the government from developing new warfare platforms such as anti-submarine warfare capabilities and short-range tactical weapons to defeat the conventional threats for there are possibilities for simultaneous provocations on the border. Given the current scenario and the shifting sands, India has to strive for itself and there is no one better than India to think about the national interests.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

DURING FESTIVALS AND GAIETY, DO REMEMBER THAT CORONA IS NOT YET GONE FROM AMIDST US. YOU DON'T HAVE TO FORGET CORONA-RELATED PROTOCOLS.
— PRIME MINISTER
NARENDRA MODI



HAD YOU UNDERSTOOD THE COUNTRY'S 'MANN KI BAAT', SUCH WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN THE STATE OF VACCINATIONS. #WHEREAREVACCINES
— CONGRESS LEADER
RAHUL GANDHI



Yediyurappa out, but still crucial for BJP in Karnataka

If the BJP high command handles him well, BSY, being a mass leader, could still mobilise the Lingayat vote for the party

July 26 happened to be the second anniversary of Chief Minister Yediyurappa's rule in Karnataka. However, it turned out to be an occasion for an emotional farewell speech after he announced his resignation. Though BSY, as he is known in the State, resisted pressures, the high command had decided that it was time for a younger leader to take over.

Yediyurappa is now 78 and well over the party's prescribed age limit of 75 years to hold public office. He will not lead the party in the next assembly polls in 2023, as he would be over 80 by then. Karnataka is the southern gateway for the BJP. It has become the third pillar along with Congress and JD



KALYANI SHANKAR

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(Secular) and Yediyurappa had a big role in that.

Unfortunately, though he came to power four times, he has not completed a single term. BSY quit reluctantly as the high command had worked out his exit plans with minimum damage to the party.

Incidentally, the RSS, too, wanted a younger leader to take over. Karnataka has produced many important RSS leaders - from RSS chief, the late K. S. Sudarshan, HV Seshadri to present-day leaders like Dattareya Hosbole, B.L. Santosh, and C.R. Mukund.

Yediyurappa has been an asset as well as a liability to the party. BSY was a shrewd manipulator who knew how to snatch power from the



opponents, be it the Janata Dal coalition or Congress. He was adept at using age-old tricks of defection and lure of money. Even in the 2017 polls, the BJP did not get a simple majority. To keep BJP out, the Congress and the JD(S) formed a government with the JD(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy as Chief Minister. Yediyurappa pulled down this government in 2019 and became the chief

minister for the fourth time.

Why is Yediyurappa important for the BJP? First of all, there is no Lingayat leader to match him in the state, either in Congress or the JD(S). The BJP also did not develop the second rung of leadership.

Secondly, crucial caste politics favour him. Lingayats are the State's single-most significant community, (17 percent). Of the 500 mutts in the state, most are headed by Lingayats, followed by Vokkaliga mutts. The community can tilt the balance in as many as 90-100 of the State's 224 assembly constituencies. The seers, who received support financially and otherwise from the chief minister, openly supported BSY.

The Lingayats traditionally supported the Congress but moved away in the seventies only to return briefly. But they withdrew their support after Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi abruptly sacked popular Lingayat chief minister Veerendra Patil. In the 1994 assembly elections, the community voted against Congress. This was the time when BSY emerged as the face of the Lingayats. Barring 2013, the BJP always had more than 30 Lingayat MLAs in the House - 32 in 2004, 39 in 2008, and 38 in 2018.

Yediyurappa has risen from the RSS ranks and been a seven-term MLA between 1983 and 2013. He joined the RSS when he was barely 15 and cut his political teeth in the Jana Sangh. A mass leader

who installed the first BJP government in South India in 2008, BSY continues to have his own place in the State, despite the corruption charges, nepotism, and voices of dissent.

His meteoric rise in Karnataka was checked in the wake of a land scam that cost him the chief minister's job. He walked out of the BJP in 2012 to float his outfit, the Karnataka Janta Paksha (KJP), which dealt a severe blow to the BJP in the 2013 assembly elections.

The return of Yediyurappa consolidated the Lingayat vote base again in the 2014 general elections. While dealing with him, the BJP leadership had to keep this in mind. For the fourth time, he took over as the chief minister

in July 2019 after engineering defections of 18 MLAs from Congress and the Janata Dal (S). By then he had already crossed 76 years and like before, was facing corruption and nepotism charges from his party detractors.

With the chief minister drumming up support from the mighty Lingayat mutts, the BJP cannot ignore BSY because holding Karnataka is critical for the party before the 2023 Assembly polls or the 2024 General elections.

BSY's innings may be over but if the BJP high command handles him well, being a mass leader, he could still mobilize the Lingayat votes. His successor has a tough job ahead, taking everyone along in a state where factionalism always prevailed.

IMF cuts India’s GDP growth forecast to 9.5 pc for FY22

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Tuesday cut its economic growth forecast for India to 9.5 per cent for the fiscal year 2021-22 as the onset of a severe second Covid-19 wave cut into recovery momentum.

This forecast for 2021-22 is lower than the 12.5 per cent growth in GDP that IMF had projected in April before the second wave took a grip.

For 2022-23, IMF expects economic growth of 8.5 per cent, larger than the 6.9 per cent it had projected in April.

“Growth prospects in India have been downgraded following the severe second COVID wave during March-May and expected slow recovery in confidence from that setback,” IMF said in its latest World Economic Outlook (WEO).

India’s economy is gradu-



ally recovering from a deep contraction in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021 (7.3 per cent) and a subsequent severe second wave of COVID-19.

IMF joins a host of global and domestic agencies which have cut India’s growth estimates for the current fiscal. Last month, S&P Global Ratings projected a 9.5 per cent GDP growth in the current fiscal and 7.8 per cent in 2022-23.

While World Bank sees GDP growth at 8.3 per cent

from April 2021 to March 2022, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) last week downgraded India’s economic growth forecast to 10 per cent from 11 per cent estimated in April.

Another US-based rating agency Moody’s has projected India clocking 9.3 per cent growth in the current fiscal ending March 2022. For 2021 calendar year, Moody’s has cut the growth estimate sharply to 9.6 per cent.

FDI in food processing sector falls 57 pc to USD 393 mn in FY21

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in food processing sector declined 57 per cent to USD 393.4 million (around ₹2,926 crore) in 2020-21 as compared to the previous year, the government said on Tuesday. In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Food Processing Industries Prahlad Singh Patel said the FDI policy and data are the under purview of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.

“As per extant policy, 100 per cent FDI for FPI sector is permitted under the automatic route implying that no prior approval of the Government or RBI is required. As per the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), the Indian recipient company has to report the inflow of FDI to Reserve Bank of India,” he

said. The FDI received by food processing industries (FPI) sector during 2020-21 stood at USD 393.4 million as against USD 904.7 million in the previous year.

During 2018-19, FDI in FPI sector stood at USD 628.24 million. Patel said the ministry has been implementing Central Sector Umbrella Scheme - Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY) since 2016-17 for overall growth and development of the food processing sector, including processing of agroproducts and thus increasing the income of farmers.

The component schemes of PMKSY are -- Mega Food Park, Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure, Creation /Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities, Infrastructure for Agro-Processing Clusters.

Higher Q1 tax mop-up shows economy on recovery path: Govt

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Increased tax collection in the first quarter this fiscal shows that the economy is on the recovery path, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said on Tuesday.

Net direct tax collection in the April-June quarter of the current fiscal is over ₹2.46 lakh crore, as against more than ₹1.17 lakh crore during the same period of the previous fiscal.

“Reasons for increase in the collections include revival of economic activities and positive sentiments among taxpayers during this current financial year, leading to increased income estimates and higher advance tax payments in the first quarter of the FY 2021-22 as compared to the corresponding period of FY 2020-21,” he said in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha. Net Indirect Tax (GST



and non-GST) revenue collection in the first quarter of FY 2021-22 is ₹3.11 lakh crore, he said.

“The increased tax collection (Direct & Indirect) as reported in the first quarter of the current financial year as compared to the same period previous financial year shows that the economy is on the recovery path. Higher tax collection would enable Government in increasing public expenditure, which would have a positive impact on GDP,” Chaudhary added.

Govt says 78 foreign companies registered in India last fiscal year

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 78 foreign companies were registered in the country under the companies law in the last financial year, according to official data.

In 2019-20, a total of 124 foreign companies were registered in India. The count was at 118 in 2018-19.

The data was provided by Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Rao Inderjit Singh in a written reply to Rajya Sabha on Tuesday.

“Foreign Company is defined under Section 2 (42) of the Companies Act, 2013 (the Act) as any company or body corporate incorporated outside India which (a) has a place of business in India by itself or through an agent, physically or thorough electronic mode and (b) conducts any business activity in India in any other manner,” the minister said.

Sensex tumbles for 2nd day as Asian sell-off deepens

Mumbai: Domestic markets surrendered early gains to close in the red for the second straight session on Tuesday as sentiment remained risk-averse amid lacklustre corporate earnings and a deepening sell-off in Asian markets post

China’s regulatory crackdown on tech companies. The 30-share BSE Sensex skidded 273.51 points or 0.52 per cent to finish at 52,578.76, while the broader NSE Nifty fell 78 points or 0.49 per cent to 15,746.45. Dr Reddy’s was the

top loser among the Sensex constituents, plunging 10.44 per cent, after the company reported a 36 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at ₹380.4 crore for the quarter ended June 30, 2021, on account of higher expenses.

Govt focussed on strengthening digital infrastructure: DoT official

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Digitisation and growth-oriented initiatives have enabled India to take progressive strides, and the government is focused on policies in

areas like licencing framework, spectrum management and broadband to strengthen digital infrastructure, a senior DoT official said on Tuesday.

Telecom and IT industries have achieved a level of matu-

urity and built capabilities for business, technology, innovations and an appetite for startups, T K Paul, Member (Technology), Department of Telecom (DoT), said. Speaking at a virtual event organised by

Broadband India Forum (BIF), Paul said, “(The) government is looking at a series of policy initiatives to propel India to this path of growth of digital infrastructure and the digital economy as a whole.”

NIFTY 50						BSE 500						RUPEE vs Dollar																		
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	Script	Open	High	Low	LTP	BIOCON	396.20	396.20	378.20	379.60	NTPC	119.70	119.70	118.15	118.75	MAXHEALTH	267.50	284.00	267.50	275.00	EIHOTEL	114.90	114.90	112.00	112.35
NIFTY50	15860.50	15881.55	15701.00	15746.45	-7800	TATAMOTORS	292.90	297.60	288.70	291.30	ROUTE	2120.00	2212.00	2116.65	2149.15	ISEC	714.10	746.65	714.10	731.65	GICRE	178.00	178.45	174.50	174.70	PHOENIXLTD	874.75	875.00	826.15	830.50
HINDALCO	404.00	419.70	403.55	417.35	17.30	DRREDDY	5421.00	5445.00	4781.00	4844.35	MPHASIS	2599.00	2618.40	2562.75	2596.00	TRENT	892.20	925.30	885.55	910.25	NALCINDIA	57.40	57.80	56.30	56.60	SUMICHEM	437.60	437.65	423.65	425.20
SHILPIE	1098.00	1113.75	1063.00	1111.00	34.35	JINDALSTEL	405.20	423.25	405.20	419.95	ACC	2384.00	2395.00	2357.65	2370.90	AUBANK	1187.25	1201.20	1179.60	1195.50	DALBHARAT	2224.65	2299.00	2224.65	2253.60	PTC	99.30	99.85	97.60	97.95
TATASTEEL	1315.00	1334.50	1308.05	1333.50	35.55	TATASTEEL	1312.10	1335.00	1308.25	1330.50	JSL	156.65	160.95	149.95	155.35	ORIENTELE	356.70	368.00	355.65	361.95	STLTech	301.40	301.40	297.95	298.60	DBL	576.40	576.40	560.00	560.10
BAJAJFINSV	13531.15	13844.95	13503.15	13795.60	270.55	SBIN	424.50	433.15	424.05	429.45	GUJALKALI	480.90	493.65	470.95	474.60	PIDILITIND	2319.70	2325.00	2290.00	2303.90	MIDHANI	197.55	200.35	189.45	189.95	HAWKINCOOK	5850.05	5924.00	5802.15	5815.00
SBIN	424.15	433.25	424.00	429.20	5.90	HAPSTMINDS	1364.95	1475.00	1361.40	1427.25	SUNTV	546.75	560.00	531.80	538.60	PGHL	5479.95	5540.40	5404.90	5430.00	ICICIGI	1468.30	1479.35	1458.10	1472.70	KANSAINER	623.10	626.15	611.85	616.10
BAJFINANCE	6180.00	6327.00	6175.00	6231.10	68.65	IBULHSGFIN	285.80	289.80	275.35	277.25	SPARC	251.80	256.55	239.40	241.70	DELTAICORP	181.45	181.45	174.50	175.80	KRBL	279.15	280.25	273.00	275.20	GESHIP	370.15	379.75	367.90	369.10
HDCLIFE	666.00	674.80	662.90	669.75	6.65	RELIANCE	2079.00	2083.50	2041.20	2054.30	ALLCARGO	189.90	195.60	186.30	191.85	RCF	83.10	84.65	80.60	80.95	KEI	716.15	730.00	711.20	713.05	3MINDIA	24980.00	25000.00	24378.00	24879.05
JSWSTEEL	709.85	717.90	703.30	709.55	5.00	DLF	339.50	344.50	328.65	336.95	SEQUENT	307.50	311.25	292.00	308.95	JMFINANCIL	107.80	111.80	105.00	108.10	EPL	241.90	241.75	233.05	238.10	ZYDUSWELL	2233.90	2238.00	2185.00	2199.80
NESTLEIND	18012.00	18449.00	17972.50	18200.00	98.65	FINOEXCEL	177.70	178.50	173.80	174.75	FORTIS	248.00	256.90	246.60	254.80	TVSTMOT	311.00	3121.45	2966.90	3003.75	SCS	112.10	112.95	110.85	111.55	SHOPERSTOP	249.45	251.95	243.75	244.80
IT	16101.15	16190.00	15842.55	16056.00	8.00	CHOLAFIN	493.70	496.00	481.30	484.10	WSOLAR	274.80	293.90	274.80	290.60	TORNTPHARM	510.00	5121.45	2966.90	3003.75	VBL	758.00	762.70	738.95	743.30	NESCO	614.80	614.80	586.15	590.00
HDPCBANK	1436.10	1449.90	1436.10	1441.50	6.95	SAIL	131.00	132.00	128.25	129.75	JSIHISAR	272.10	283.00	266.45	276.15	CGCL	524.90	525.75	516.80	525.00	RHIM	343.50	344.15	333.45	335.00	UJIVANSFB	29.20	29.80	29.00	29.05
EICHERMOT	2566.10	2598.00	2542.65	2575.00	11.80	TATAOFFCEE	220.00	241.60	218.00	235.40	CHAMBLFERT	371.80	321.85	302.15	305.20	VOLTA	103.90	104.90	101.845	101.95	KEC	426.00	434.15	417.50	421.50	SUNDRMFAST	76.79	76.90	73.90	74.90
TECHM	1120.20	1127.70	1104.05	1123.25	3.05	PEL	2264.85	2409.50	2264.65	2305.90	ESCORTS	1155.00	1160.35	1135.15	1142.50	IIFL	313.00	313.00	287.40	305.25	GALAXYSURF	3075.00	3112.75	3052.00	3081.25	BAJAJHOLDNG	3892.35	3914.95	3870.50	3910.00
TITAN	1733.00	1742.40	1713.35	1726.95	4.10	HINDALCO	401.15	419.60	401.15	417.45	BEL	185.40	185.40	181.85	183.35	INTELLECT	845.00	858.90	816.45	830.25	INDHOTEL	147.00	149.25	146.35	148.30	EMAMILTD	565.00	565.00	553.45	554.85
ONGC	115.35	115.90	114.00	114.70	0.15	BAJFINANCE	6174.00	6324.00	6174.00	6231.20	L&TfH	88.65	89.00	87.20	88.10	BAJAJ-AUTO	348.30	3859.70	381.65	381.65	AVANTI	637.35	643.25	633.20	634.90	KNRCON	271.70	277.85	271.10	275.00
ICICIBANK	680.15	685.60	673.30	677.50	0.75	AXISBANK	752.50	756.10	729.50	731.75	WELSPUNIND	127.50	135.00	125.75	134.35	AFLE	439.40	439.00	425.50	428.90	GSPL	346.20	348.25	338.80	343.00	GPPL	107.40	107.65	104.20	105.80
MARUTI	7241.30	7320.00	7160.85	7243.30	7.50	CAPPL	963.00	1034.00	887.00	907.40	LUXIND	4500.00	4500.00	4057.10	4117.00	GAIL	141.30	141.95	138.60	139.05	BASF	285.00	2917.95	2808.00	2815.75	BALMALWRIE	136.70	137.60	133.50	136.15
WIPRO	588.90	594.65	581.15	590.35	-0.10	IDEA	8.33	8.50	8.31	8.41	PERISISTENT	324.80	324.00	3135.00	3161.20	MAHINDCIE	270.05	272.95	252.00	267.90	JAICORPLTD	159.60	160.85	153.00	154.80	POWERINDIA	1947.00	1947.00	1901.25	1919.65
HCLTECH	1000.00	1002.20	993.85	993.65	-0.65	BAJAJFINSV	13525.35	13843.10	13502.20	13816.05	METROPOLIS	2900.05	2984.70	2900.05	2926.55	GREAVESCOT	169.00	169.00	161.80	163.40	INDHOTEL	147.00	149.25	146.35	148.30	BAJAJHOLDNG	3892.35	3914.95	3870.50	3910.00
INFY	1605.00	1609.30	1597.90	1600.10	-3.80	CADILAH	612.75	622.00	591.00	598.90	WOCKPHARMA	553.00	558.95	522.00	528.00	VTI	1824.70	2007.05	1824.70	1880.15	ASHOKA	30.45	30.50	29.85	30.20	JKCEMENT	3110.00	3178.40	2990.05	3005.00
TCS	3200.00	3210.00	3161.15	3187.95	-9.60	INDUSINDBK	989.00	994.00	963.35	975.65	PVR	1342.00	1376.20	1330.90	1358.90	MRF	81288.55	81384.05	79986.65	80121.00	VAHRANGE	39.60	39.80	37.30	37.60	MAHSCOOTER	4205.35	4247.00	4082.20	4102.85
HINDUNILVR	2347.00	2359.45	2332.00	2341.00	-7.70	SANOHI	7996.25	8064.85	7842.00	7959.90	TATAELXSI	4240.00	4240.00	4151.70	4174.15	IDBI	38.60	38.65	37.70	38.00	NETWORK18	49.25	50.35	49.25	50.30	RECLTD	151.00	151.00	145.00	145.30
BAJAJ-AUTO	3859.00	3859.00	3812.00	3821.00	-15.35	TATAPOWER	122.65	123.75	120.25	121.10	BURGERKING	176.90	179.35	172.55	174.80	BALRAMCHIN	346.00	358.25	342.80	349.95	INFIBEAM	46.55	46.60	44.80	45.05	RATNAMANI	2060.25	2097.00	2046.05	2068.95
ULTRACEMCO	762.50	767.00	759.00	758.00	-31.70	ASIANPAINT	3084.00	3084.00	3021.20	3027.45	KPRMILL	1896.50	2086.25	1879.35	2002.25	ADANIPOWER	97.80	98.00	94.50	93.35	EXIDEIND	179.00	179.30	176.15	177.75	DCBBANK	103.85	104.05	101.55	103.75
POWERGRID	233.00	234.85	230.65	231.50	-1.20	BHEL	62.70	63.95	61.25	61.50	APLAPOLLO	1608.50	1819.30	1603.75	1735.70	EQUITASBNK	65.60	68.70	64.45	65.80	SIEMENS	1984.10	1989.10	1939.65	1942.95	ASTERDM	162.00	162.35	156.70	159.15
SHREECEM	28000.00	28473.00	27751.30	27824.00	-144.30	ADANIENT	1415.00	1423.80	1378.80	1402.20	KPITTECH	780.00	787.60	764.30	769.75	GNFC	375.00	384.00	372.95	376.10	SCHNEIDER	126.90	130.10	126.60	127.40	INDOCO	440.00	451.00	436.10	438.60
NTPC	119.70	119.60	118.20	118.70	-0.65	INFY	1605.00	1608.90	1598.10	1602.60	EICHERMOT	2570.00	2597.05	2542.55	2570.55	HALC	286.25	290.45	281.95	283.95	UTIAMC	934.80	934.80	919.20	922.40	CSBBANK	361.90	361.90	347.00	350.50
HEROMOTOCO	2821.80	2862.65	2790.50	2794.00	-16.25	HCLTECH	1002.00	1002.00	983.90	992.80	TRIDENT	17.25	17.95	17.15	19.95	BRITANNIA	349.00	3503.90	3437.00	3454.50	VENKYS	3200.00	3245.00	3090.15	3109.90	ADVENZYMES	410.85	412.35	402.00	403.20
BPCL	456.00	460.40	452.25	453.00	-3.00	GUIGAS	71.075	72.40	68.60	694.70	NMDC	175.05	177.55	173.75	174.45	NAM-INDIA	403.00	403.00	387.00	390.00	LEMONTREE	40.70	41.05	39.70	40.00	GODREIND	555.85	555.85	541.40	542.00
BHARTIARTL	545.80	545.80	536.15	540.15	-3.90	ASHOKLEY	121.80	123.20	120.85	122.45	TATACONSUM	780.00	787.60	764.30	769.75	MOTALALOFS	1086.00	1086.00	1026.45	1036.65	RECLTD	151.00	151.00	145.00	145.30	MINDACORP	134.35	139.30	134.35	135.15
TATAMOTORS	293.00	297.65	288.60	291.00	-2.15	APLITD	860.00	868.55	800.00	871.50	AARTIDRUGS	728.00	734.00	707.75	719.00	SHILPAM	662.00	662.65	610.00	623.60	INFIBEAM	46.55	46.60	44.80	45.05	RATNAMANI	2060.25	2097.00	2046.05	2068.95
UPL	820.00	825.65	806.15	813.95	-6.00	SBICARD	1017.35	1027.80	1004.35	1015.50	IOICP	696.70	708.55	676.60	683.05	HINDZINC	326.15	329.65	319.00	320.50	EXIDEIND	179.00	179.30	176.15	177.75	DCBBANK	103.85	104.05	101.55	103.75
IOC	104.75	103.35	103.25	103.75	-0.90	IBREALST	160.95	164.40	148.30	156.20	TATACHEM	780.00	787.60	764.30	769.75	ALOKTEXT	24.85	25.60	24.75	24.95	SIEMENS	1984.10	1989.10	1939.65	1942.95	ASTERDM	162.00	162.35	156.70	159.15
BRITANNIA	3496.00	3504.85	3435.15	3451.75	-30.25	SHILPIE	1095.05	1113.00	1062.85	1105.95	PNCINFRA	320.00	332.00	318.00	322.95	CENTURYTEX	711.65	711.65	680.35	682.95	SCHNEIDER	126.90	130.10	126.60	127.40	INDOCO	440.00	451.00	436.10	438.60
M&M	756.00	760.00	742.65	747.20	-7.10	MANAPPURAM	195.05	211.45	195.05	209.50	TATAMETALI	1285.00	1322.45	1285.00	1295.35	HCLC	72.00	73.75	69.60	70.75	UTIAMC	934.								

Biden: US combat mission in Iraq to end this year

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden said on Monday that the U.S. combat mission in Iraq will conclude by the end of the year, an announcement that reflects the reality on the ground more than a major shift in U.S. policy.

Even before Biden took office, the main U.S. focus has been assisting Iraqi forces, not fighting on their behalf. And Biden did not say if he planned to reduce the number of troops in Iraq, now about 2,500.

The announcement comes on the heels of Biden's decision to withdraw fully from Afghanistan nearly 20 years after the U.S. launched that war in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Together, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have heavily taxed the U.S. military and kept it from devoting more attention to a rising China, which the Biden administration calls the biggest long-term security challenge.

For years, U.S. troops have played support roles in Iraq and

in neighboring Syria, which was the origin of the Islamic State group that swept across the border in 2014 and captured large swaths of Iraqi territory, prompting the U.S. to send troops back to Iraq that year.

Speaking to reporters during an Oval Office session with Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi, Biden said his administration remained committed to a partnership with Iraq — a relationship that has been increasingly complicated by Iranian-backed Iraqi militia groups.

The militias want all U.S. troops out of Iraq immediately and have periodically attacked bases that house American troops.

Dan Caldwell, a senior adviser to Concerned Veterans for America, said U.S. troops will remain at risk.

"Regardless of whether their deployment is called a combat mission, U.S. troops will remain under regular attack as long as they remain in Iraq," Caldwell said in a statement. "An American military

presence in Iraq is not necessary for our safety and only risks the loss of more American life."

Biden said the U.S. military will continue to assist Iraq in its fight against the Islamic State group, or ISIS. A joint U.S.-Iraq statement said the security relationship will be focused on training, advising and intelligence-sharing.

"Our shared fight against ISIS is critical for the stability of the region and our counterterrorism operation will continue, even as we shift to this new phase we're going to be talking about," Biden said.

The shift from a U.S. combat role to one focused on training and advising the Iraqi security forces was announced in April, when a joint U.S.-Iraqi statement said this transition allowed for the removal from Iraq of any remaining U.S. combat forces on a timetable to be determined later.

It did not specify what combat functions the U.S. was engaged in then, nor did Biden get into such specifics on Monday.

US Prez's first visit to intel agency to contrast with Trump's

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden is making his first visit to an agency of the US intelligence community, looking to emphasize his confidence in national security leaders after his predecessor's incendiary battles against what he often derided as the "deep state".

Biden is scheduled Tuesday afternoon to visit the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, which oversees the 17 US intelligence organizations. The White House said in a statement that Biden intends to express "admiration for their work and underscore the importance for our national security of intelligence collection and analysis free from political interference".

President Donald Trump visited the Central Intelligence Agency on his first full day in office, praising the agencies but also airing personal grievances. Standing in front of CIA's memorial wall with stars marking each of the officers who

have died while serving, Trump settled scores with the media and repeated false claims about the size of his inauguration crowd.

The relationship between the intelligence community and the president "went downhill from that very day," said Glenn Gerstell, who then served as general counsel of the National Security Agency and stepped down last year.

Trump would go through four permanent or acting directors of national intelligence in four years and engaged in near-constant fights with the intelligence community.

In particular, he was angry about its assessment that Russia had interfered on his behalf in the 2016 presidential campaign and its role in revealing that Trump pressured Ukraine to investigate Biden, an action that ultimately led to Trump's first impeachment. Trump eventually fired the inspector general at the national intelligence office - the internal watchdog who brought that pressure to light.

Trump inaugural chair: I'm '100% innocent' in lobbying case

New York: The chair of former President Donald Trump's 2017 inaugural committee pleaded not guilty on Monday and said he was "100 per cent innocent" of charges that he secretly lobbied the U.S. On behalf of the United Arab Emirates.

Tom Barrack, 74, wearing a black mask to protect against the coronavirus, appeared in Brooklyn Federal Court for the first time, days after he was freed on \$250 million bail following his arrest in California. His lawyer entered his plea for him.

"As you'd expect, the system is working. I think what you'll find is that ... over time, you'll all see that I'm 100 per cent innocent," Barrack said as he left the courthouse.

Prosecutors say Barrack used his multidecade friendship with Trump to influence the Republican's policy, starting when Trump was a candidate in 2016 and continuing after he was sworn in as president.

AP

At first Jan 6 hearing, police to detail violence, injuries

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Democrats are launching their investigation into the January 6 Capitol insurrection Tuesday with a focus on the law enforcement officers who were attacked and beaten as the rioters broke into the building — an effort to put a human face on the violence of the day.

The police officers who are scheduled to testify endured some of the worst of the brutality. They were punched, trampled, crushed and sprayed with chemical irritants. They were called racial slurs and threatened with their own weapons as the mob of then-President Donald Trump's supporters overwhelmed them, broke through windows and doors and interrupted the certification of Democrat Joe Biden's presidential win.

"We're going to tell this story from the beginning," said Maryland Rep. Jamie Raskin, a Democrat who sits on the new House panel that is investigating the attack. "The moral center of gravity is these officers who put their lives on the line for us."

Testifying will be Capitol Police officers Harry Dunn and Aquilino Gonell and Metropolitan Police officers Michael Fanone and Daniel Hodges. In previous interviews, Dunn has said that attackers yelled racial slurs and fought him in what resembled hand to hand combat as he held them back. Gonell, an Iraq veteran, detailed surgery on his foot and injuries from which he struggled to recover. Fanone has described being dragged down the Capitol steps by rioters who shocked him with a stun gun and beat him. Hodges was beaten and crushed between two doors, and his bloody face and anguished screams were caught on video.

The panel's first hearing comes as partisan tensions have only worsened since the insurrection, with many Republicans playing down, or outright denying, the violence that occurred and denouncing the Democratic-led investigation as politically motivated.

Winds feed California's largest fire as blazes scorch West

Indian Falls (US): It could be days before officials will be able to assess the damage done to a small town by California's largest wildfire, one of dozens of blazes scorching lands across the US West.

Over the weekend, the massive Dixie Fire roared through the remote Northern California community of Indian Falls. The blaze had already levelled at least 16 houses and

other structures, but a new damage estimate wasn't immediately available because flames were still raging in the mountain area on Monday.

"Fire behaviour has been so unpredictable, it hasn't been safe for inspectors to go in to work," said Mitch Matlow, a fire spokesman. "Until things settle down, we won't know the extent of what's burned."

AP

With virus surge, US to keep travel restrictions for now

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The United States served notice on Monday that it will keep existing Covid-19 travel restrictions on international travel in place for now due to concerns about the surging infection rate because of the delta variant.

It was the latest sign that the White House is having to recalibrate its thinking around the coronavirus pandemic as the more infectious variant surges across the U.S. And a

substantial chunk of the population resists vaccination.

It was also a reversal from the sentiment President Joe Biden voiced earlier this month when he said his administration was "in the process" of considering how soon the U.S. Could lift the ban on European travel bound for the U.S. After the issue was raised by German Chancellor Angela Merkel during her visit to the White House.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said the restrictions would continue for now.

"Driven by the delta variant, cases are rising here at home, particularly among those who are unvaccinated, and appears likely to continue in the weeks ahead," she said.

The rising cases also are causing the administration to take a closer look at policies on wearing masks. On Monday, the Department of Veterans Affairs became the first major federal agency to require its health care workers to get COVID-19 vaccines.

US pays \$4 bn to Afghan forces; Who is watching?

Islamabad: The US and NATO have promised to pay \$ 4 billion a year until 2024 to finance Afghanistan's military and security forces, which are struggling to contain an advancing Taliban. Already, the US has spent nearly \$ 89 billion over the past 20 years to build, equip and train Afghan forces.

Yet America's own Government watchdog says oversight of the money has been poor, hundreds of millions of dollars have been mispent and corruption is rife in the security apparatus.

Monitoring where the future funding goes will become virtually impossible after August 31, when the last coalition troops leave. Here is a look at some of the issues:

US SPENDING SINCE 2001 Nearly USD 83 billion has been spent to build, equip, train and sustain Afghanistan's National Defence and Security Forces, which include the military, national police and the elite special forces.

That figure covers a wide range of items. For example, the US spent nearly USD 10 billion for vehicles and aircraft. It spent USD 3.75 billion on fuel for the Afghan military between 2010-2020.

AP

4 Afghan journalists held by intelligence agency, claims Af Press Group

AP ■ KABUL

Four Afghan journalists were arrested by the country's intelligence service after they returned to the city of Kandahar following a reporting trip to a border area recently taken by the Taliban, an Afghan press freedom group said Tuesday.

The four had travelled to Spin Boldak to interview Taliban commanders after the insurgents captured a border crossing there with Pakistan. A spokesman for the Interior Ministry says the four are accused of spreading propaganda for the Taliban.

The Afghan media watchdog known as Nai said they returned home to Kandahar on Monday and were arrested by the National Directorate for Security. Nai says that the journalists' whereabouts on Tuesday was not known.

Three of the reporters — Bismullah Wantandost, Qudrat Sultani and Moheb Obaidi — work for the local radio station Mellat Zhagh. The fourth is Sanaullah Siam, a cameraman for the Xinhua News Agency, the group said.

Taliban spokesman Mohammad Naem, with the insurgents' political office in Qatar, condemned the arrest by

the "Afghan administration," saying the four were only doing their job, trying to "follow the events and try to reveal the facts." Nai said the arrest was illegal and demanded the journalists' immediate release.

Later Tuesday, Afghan interior ministry spokesman Mirwais Stanikzai said the four have been accused of spreading enemy propaganda. He insisted the Kabul government is committed to freedom of expression but cautioned it must abide by the constitution and the laws of the country.

"Any kind of propaganda for the benefit of terrorists and the enemy as well as against the national interest of Afghanistan, will be counted as a crime," Stanikzai added.

Reporters work under extremely difficult circumstances in Afghanistan, and often face violence, threats and intimidation, preventing them from carrying out their work properly.

The war-torn nation has over 2,000 officially registered media outlets. Violence against journalists was up 26% in 2020, compared to 2019, according to the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee, which recorded 132 threats and acts of violence against journalists and media workers last year.

FROM PAGE 1

BSY'S MAN ...

Over last six decades eight of the 20 Chief Ministers of Karnataka hailed from the Lingayat community.

The decision to appoint a relatively "newcomer" to the party, who is not a hard-core Hindutva leader, is seen as a very pragmatic step that placed faith on a leader who could shift and shuffle well in the turbulent and divided BJP State unit with at least 17 former Congress-JDS MLAs keeping the Government afloat. Besides Covid-19, Bommai will need all skills to keep all factions happy when he forms his Cabinet shortly. Bommai started his political career with the Janata Dal and worked with senior leaders, including HD Devegowda and Ramakrishna Hegde.

He left the Janata Dal (United) and joined the BJP in 2008 and thus, interestingly carries a "secular past".

BJP BOYCOTTS THAROOR...

It has the maximum members from the ruling BJP.

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey said the agenda of the meeting should be given to the members in advance, but was not given and the meeting was held at a time when both the Houses are in Session. The agenda of the meeting was to review of the functioning of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) in the context of the draft Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

"As per rules, confidentiality should be maintained. Agenda became public before the meeting. The agenda should be fixed with the consent of committee members. We've boycotted the meet," said BJP MP Zafar Islam. The face-off of the BJP MPs and the Committee chairman is not new as the two sides have had several run-ins in the past over Facebook and Twitter issue and 4G connection in Jammu & Kashmir.

Meanwhile, the 32-member Parliamentary Standing Committee on IT is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, for which the listed agenda is "Citizens' data security and privacy," according to a notification issued by Lok Sabha Secretariat.

MAMATA MEETS PM; CHAI...

She will also meet leaders of the BSP and the RJD. After her meetings, the West Bengal CM is also planning to host a dinner for the leaders, sources added without divulging much detail of the timing and venue. Mamata met senior Congress leaders Kamal Nath, Anand Sharma, and Abhishek Singhvi and on Tuesday.

This is the first of her series of meetings with senior political leaders after her Assembly poll victory in Bengal.

Nath said he had come to congratulate Mamata for her victory in the recent Assembly elections. "The strategy for 2024 will be discussed with Sonia. Mamata will meet Sonia," said

Nath.

"We have not discussed any strategy. That will be discussed by the leader of our party. We just discussed the current situation and the issue of rising prices," Nath told media when asked about the meeting. Nath said Mamata's victory in the Assembly polls has sent a message across the country.

Mamata also met another senior Congress leader Anand Sharma during which Sharma is reported to have told her that there cannot be a non-BJP front without the Congress as it is a national political party with a pan-India presence. Mamata's visit is part of her efforts to cobble up a national front against the BJP. Before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Mamata is preparing to play an important role at the national level. The TMC said their party supremo is also to visit Parliament to meet other political leaders.

ASSAM-MIZORAM...

However, clashes in 1994, 2006, 2018, 2020 and the latest one on Monday at Lailapur, Cachar, between the two sides have flared up tensions in the area. In 1994, tensions escalated in Vairengte, 130 km from Aizawl, Capital of Mizoram, when a skirmish broke out between the police personnel of the two States, but the crisis was averted with the intervention of the Union Home Ministry. The North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971, provided for the creation of States of Manipur and Tripura and the formation of Meghalaya. The Act also provided the formation of the Union Territories of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh - by the reorganisation of the then existing State of Assam.

Mizoram was originally a part of undivided Assam. It was first created as a Union Territory in January 1972 when it was separated from Assam, and later acquired statehood in 1987. The Mizo community is the dominant tribal community inhabiting Mizoram and covered under the Schedules Tribes. Post-Independence, the border issue between Assam and Mizoram has existed for the last 50 years when the UT of Mizoram was formed in 1972.

The Mizoram Peace Accord signed in June 1986, between the Centre and the Mizo National Front (MNF), ended the two decades long Mizo insurgency, leading to the grant of statehood to Mizoram. However, the boundary issues that remained suppressed earlier escalated into border disputes after the creation of a separate State of Mizoram.

While Assam recognises the map and boundary drawn by the Survey of India in 1933, both sides have attributed border skirmishes to perceptual differences over an imaginary line.

COVID IMMUNISATION OF 12-18 YRS...

This will be a big step in breaking the chain of transmission and also reopening schools across the country amid warnings of a possible third wave of Covid, according to medical fraternity. Earlier this month, Dr NK Arora,

who heads the National Expert Group on Vaccines, had said that vaccination for children will start by September with the Zyklus vaccine for 12 to 18-year-olds. Bharat Biotech's Covaxin and Zyklus Cadila's candidate are testing vaccines for children. The results of the Covaxin trials are expected by September, AIIMS chief Randeep Guleria has said.

6TH DAY OF...

Addressing a meeting of the BJP's Parliamentary party, Modi accused the Congress of not only detailing Parliament proceedings but also not allowing other Opposition parties to resolve the impasse in Parliament.

The Congress had not allowed the Prime Minister to introduce his new council of Ministers on July 19 in the Lok Sabha when Parliament session had commenced.

In this reference the Prime Minister also pointed out the Congress' boycott of last week's all-party meeting to review the Covid-19 situation, and said the party had also prevented others from attending.

"Expose this behaviour of the Congress and some Opposition parties in front of the media and the public", Modi told MPs in the meeting.

In the last Parliamentary party meet he had said the Congress is in the "coma" and not being able to digest BJP's political progress. He had than sought BJP MPs to "expose lies of the Congress". Modi also spoke in the meeting about the "Azadi Amrit Mahotsav" launched by the Union Government to mark the 75 years of India's Independence and sought their active participation and not reducing it to a "sarkari event".

Reflecting Modi's ideas, JP Nadda asked party MPs to ensure that Central Government schemes reach the public affected by the Covid-19 and spread vaccine awareness among people.

The BJP has been trying to limit the political damage done by the April-May second-killer-wave of the Covid-19 and asking all its leaders to play a proactive role on vaccination and infrastructure building ahead of the anticipated third-wave of the pandemic in the country in August-September.

Meanwhile, seven Opposition parties have written to President Ram Nath Kovind seeking his intervention to direct the Government to discuss farmers' issues and Pegasus phone-tapping in Parliament.

ANTIBODY WEAKENS 2-3...

The authors highlighted that although the clinical implications of waning antibody levels are not yet clear, some decline was expected and current research shows that vaccines remain effective against severe disease.

For Pfizer, antibody levels declined from a median of 7,506 units per millilitre (U/mL) at 2141 days, to 3320 U/mL on 70 or more days.

For the AstraZeneca vaccine, antibody levels were reduced from a medi-

an of 1201 U/mL at 020 days to 190 U/mL at 70 or more days, over a five-fold reduction.

"When we are thinking about who should be prioritised for booster doses, our data suggests that those vaccinated earliest, particularly with the AstraZeneca vaccine, are likely to now have the lowest antibody levels," said Professor Rob Aldridge from UCL Institute of Health Informatics.

The researchers said that the findings also supported recommendations that adults who are clinically vulnerable, those aged 70 years or over, and all residents of care homes for older adults should be prioritised for booster doses.

HOCKEY, BOXING ...

It was a tremendous fightback after a loss that could have easily scarred them for the entire Games.

Instead, India produced a spirited performance against world No.9 Spain and scored through Simranjeet Singh (14th minute) and Rupinder Pal Singh (15th and 51st) to record a comfortable win in their third Pool A match at the Oi Hockey Stadium.

Any talk of fight by an Indian in these Games would be incomplete without the table tennis veteran A Sharath Kamal. The 39-year-old took a game off the reigning Olympic and World champion Ma Long of China.

It wasn't enough to fetch him a victory as he bowed out in the men's singles third round but it did show the tremendous athlete that Sharath has been for several years.

In the boxing ring, Assamese debutant Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) displayed what a calm mind can achieve. Borgohain, the lone Indian boxer in action on the day, prevailed 3-2 over German veteran Nadine Apetz in a closely-fought last-16 stage bout. Borgohain's rival was 12 years her senior but both the boxers were making their Games debut.

The Indian became the first from her nine-strong team to make the quarterfinal stage. The 23-year-old showed great poise in a tense contest to triumph by the thinnest of margins. She claimed all the three rounds on split points. Indian sailors Vishnu Saravanan and Nethra Kumanan finished way behind the leaders as they ended at 22nd and 33rd spot in the respective events after six races.

The Indian tennis team's campaign ended as Sania Mirza and Sumit Nagal could not make the cut for the mixed doubles event due to their low combined ranking of 153.

In badminton, it was tough luck for the debutant pairing of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy in the men's doubles. They emerged victorious against the England pair of Ben Lane and Sean Vandy in their final Group A match but still missed out on qualifying for the quarterfinals.

Ranked 10th in the world, the Indians beat world number 18 team 21-17 21-19 in a 44-minute match at the Musashino Forest Plaza.

16 injured, five missing in explosion at German chemical hub

Berlin: An explosion at an industrial park for chemical companies shook the German city of Leverkusen on Tuesday, sending a large black cloud rising into the air. At least 16 people were injured and five remain missing.

Germany's Federal Office for Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance classified the explosion as "an extreme threat" and asked residents to stay inside, turn off ventilation systems and keep windows and doors closed, German news agency DPA reported.

Later on Tuesday, however, the Cologne fire department tweeted that measurements of the air's pollution "do not show any kind of abnormality." They said the smoke had gone down but that they would continue to measure the air for toxins.

The city of Leverkusen said in a statement that the explosion at the Chempark site, about 20 kilometers (13 miles) north of Cologne on the Rhine river, occurred in storage tanks for solvents. It said four people were severely injured and 12 less seriously. Five people are missing.

Currenta, the company operating the chemical park, said the explosion happened at 9:40 a.m. at the storage tanks of their waste management center and then developed into a fire.

"Sirens were operated to warn residents and warning alerts were sent," Currenta said in the statement. Police in nearby Cologne said a large number of officers, firefighters, helicopters and ambulances from across the region had been deployed to the scene. AP

Guilty verdict in first trial under Hong Kong security law

HONG KONG: The first person to be tried under Hong Kong's sweeping national security law was found guilty of secessionism and terrorism on Tuesday in a ruling closely watched for indications of how the law will be applied as China tightens its grip on the city long known for its freedoms.

Tong Ying-kit was charged with inciting secession and terrorism for driving his motorcycle into a group of police officers last year while carrying a flag bearing the banned protest slogan "Liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our times." Rights groups condemned his conviction, and many are bracing for further such trials since more than 100 people have been arrested under the legislation — part of Beijing's increasing crackdown on dissent in Hong Kong following months of anti-government protests in 2019.

Tong, a 24-year-old restaurant worker, pleaded not guilty to the charges, arguing the slogan itself does not call for secession. He now faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment, but his lawyers are expected to argue for a lighter punishment at his sentencing hearing Thursday.

The new national security legislation not only resulted in the charges against Tong, but it also spelled out how the trial would be conducted. The

proceedings, which ended July 20, were held in the Hong Kong High Court with no jury, under rules allowing the exception from Hong Kong's common law system if state secrets need to be protected, foreign forces are involved or if the personal safety of jurors needs to be protected. Trials are presided over by judges handpicked by Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam.

Reading the verdict, Justice Esther Toh said Tong "committed terrorist activities causing or intended to cause grave harm to the society" in pursuit of a political agenda.

His behavior was an act of violence aimed at coercing the central and Hong Kong governments and intimidating the public and carrying the flag constituted an act of incitement to secession, she said.

Tong did not speak during the reading of the verdict. He waved to his parents and others in the gallery as he was escorted from the chamber.

Tong's defense lawyer has said it's impossible to prove that Tong was inciting secession merely by having used the slogan.

The defense also said there is no evidence that Tong committed the act deliberately, that he tried to avoid crashing into officers and that his actions couldn't be considered terrorism since there was no serious violence or harm to society. AP



Up your skills

The importance of making a conscious learning effort to possess the right attitude, upskilling to tap industry demand and re-skilling further to stay relevant in the job is immense, says DIYA JAIN

The strain of COVID-19 has impacted our lifestyle in many ways — learning, working, and traveling have all been hindered. As the promise of a swift recovery wanes, most institutions across India are adopting an online mode of teaching. Most workplaces continue to employ physical models of working, whereas some organisations have allowed their employees to work remotely. It would be an understatement to say that the pandemic has changed how academia and businesses operate!

Amidst all this doom and gloom, let's focus on the bright side. Technology is constantly evolving and automation is catching up in most of the industries across the globe. On one hand, the vaccination drive is gaining momentum, on the other, the infection positivity rate is going down drastically.

India still has one of the youngest populations in the world, putting it in a unique sweet spot wherein the working-age population is more than non-working age. Leveraging the demographic dividend and adoption of digital technologies has put us in a prime position to embark on a journey of rapid growth.

As more and more students join the workforce, the one question that threatens to derail us from our journey is "Are India's graduates employable?" "Do they have the relevant skills required by the industry?"

Traditionally, educational institutions have laid greater emphasis on the academic and theoretical development of students, leaving a long-

lasting effect in terms of a lack of development of employable skills including core technical skills, communication skills, and other workplace skills.

Graduate-level curriculum in India, in particular, does not emphasize on behavioural and soft skills. A graduate who has finished his/her course and may have secured an excellent academic rank might still lack oratory skills, knack for presentation, motivation, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills.

This has also been highlighted in the India Skills 2021 report published by Wheebox in association with CII. As per the report, only 45.9 per cent of graduates in India are found unemployable.

Having the right mix of hard and soft skills is important for a successful career. Today, employers value attributes such as integrity, reliability, teamwork, and a positive attitude as much as core technical skills in candidates. In most organisations, the responsibilities and KPIs defined for job roles, require an employee to work with different stakeholders across functions. While many of these skills are learned on the job, there are certain skills everyone should learn before starting their careers.

Investing in continuous learning and upskilling is essential for one to be productive, innovative, and marketable in today's recessionary job market.

The importance of making a conscious learning effort to possess the right attitude, upskilling to tap indus-

HAVING THE RIGHT MIX OF HARD AND SOFT SKILLS IS IMPORTANT FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAREER. TODAY, EMPLOYERS VALUE ATTRIBUTES LIKE INTEGRITY, RELIABILITY, TEAMWORK AND A POSITIVE ATTITUDE AS MUCH AS CORE TECHNICAL SKILLS IN CANDIDATES

try demand, and re-skilling further to stay relevant in the job is immense, given further the demand-supply mismatch. In India, the number of students applying for a job out-weighs the number of open positions by a factor of 10x.

Upskilling to differentiate yourself from your peers is as necessary for sustenance as securing basic education qualifications and degrees, if not more.

One may then wonder, how to evaluate one's own skills and know what is required by the recruiters. Are there some easy ways to do it?

One way to find one's level of employability skills is by taking the job fitment and aptitude tests available on the internet. Most of these good assessments give you a detailed report of your skill index and areas of improvement, if one selects the answers honestly. These self-assessments help the test taker in making an informed decision about the right career path she/he wants to pursue. A well-structured job-fitment test acts as a career guidance and provides insights to the test takers about their strengths and unique skill sets.

Another way is to study the job descriptions available on job portals. A well-defined job description lists the knowledge, skills, and attributes required to perform the job. Find the job description of the role one wants to take up, make a list of topics, skills, and attributes required and then analyse where one stands. This will help the students to focus on the skills and attributes they need to work on.

So, what do the students need to do to upskill and re-skill in order to stay ahead in the race?

First, try to find the area of interest and find out the niche in which one wants to make a career. Second, join several online industry-oriented certificate courses to learn the latest technologies and industry best practices. Thirdly, apply for internships in companies that are in the industry where you finally want to land up. Fourth, make a good LinkedIn profile, connect with industry practitioners, follow the best minds in the industry, watch out for what they are talking about, participate in online discussions, and write articles and post them. Fifth, subscribe to podcasts, vodcasts, newsletters, to stay updated about the industry and professions, and finally, find a good mentor who can guide you throughout your career.

Once you start working, make sure you don't lose out on learning. As you spend more time in the role, you start realising what skills, knowledge and attributes are required to grow in that path.

At that junction, make a list of additional skills you need to build yourself, and work on them consciously. Join training programs available in your company, and focus on gaining skills for particular job functions or roles. These programmes within the companies have well-defined learning outcomes to be achieved in a specified time period, and are designed to give the trainees a head start in their job profiles.

The writer is founder, Safejob

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Aim for success, not perfection. Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life. Remember that fear always lurks behind perfectionism.

— Dr David M Burns

DIPLOMA, UG & PG COURSES

Sanskriti University, Mathura invites online applications for admission to diploma, under graduate, and post graduate programmes in Engineering, Management & Commerce, Education, Special Education, Humanities & Social Sciences, Pharmacy, Agriculture, Fashion Designing, Law and Legal Studies, Yoga and Naturopathy, Tourism & Hotel Management, Medical & Allied Sciences, Basic & Applied Sciences, Ayurveda, Unani, and Nursing courses.

Eligibility: Applications are open to applicants who have passed or will appear for the qualifying examinations under the higher secondary (Class XII) from any recognised Board of Education such as AISSCE/IB/ICSE/CBSE, or equivalents. For Admission to diploma programmes, Students are required to have passed the Class X examination from any state or central board like CBSE/ICSE.



passed Class XII from a recognised central/ state board or from a recognised university and for MSc in HM Applicants must completed graduation from a recognised university.

How to Apply: Admission forms can be purchased from admission office of LBIHIM, Pitampura, Delhi or can apply online by visit www.lbihm.com.

Last date to apply: July 30, 2021.

CERTIFICATE COURSE

Delhi College of fire and safety Engineering invites applications for admissions to its one year certificate course in Fire Technology & Industrial Safety Management, one year six months course in health safety environment and six month certificate course in fire fighting.

The study of this programme is incorporated to train candidates to gain knowledge about the preventive measures to be applied during times of emergency.

Eligibility: This full time diploma course has been thoughtfully designed for those who have recently passed Class X or Class XII from any recognised board and want to work in fire & Safety management industry can enroll for these courses.

How to apply: To apply please visit www.dcfse.com or the application forms brochure may be obtained from admission office of Delhi College of fire and safety Engineering, Mundka, New delhi-110041.

Last date to apply: July 30, 2021.

BSC & MSC COURSES

Lakshya Bhartee Institute of International Hotel management, Delhi invites applications for admission to its three years BSc programme in Hotel management and two years MSc programme in Hotel management.

Eligibility: For BSc in HM applicants must have

Trip to a foreign land

Studying abroad can be an expensive affair. SUMEET JAIN lists ways how students can manage to live this dream

Studying in a great university abroad is no longer just a fad, or something reserved for those with deep pockets. Thanks to the growing appeal of a global career and lifestyle, the increased spending power of the middle class and the boom in student financing options.

The pandemic doesn't seem to have slowed India from becoming the second largest country to send international students to various countries abroad. According to a release by Common App in January 2020, the number of international student applicants were up by 10 per cent (of which Indian applicants were up by 28 per cent) as compared to 2019-2020 levels.

So how are all these students funding their study abroad dream? Between tuition fees, accommodation, living and travel expenses, the whole thing can be twice as expensive as planning an Indian wedding!

Self-financing: According to open-doorsdata.org, more than 85 per cent of the total international students choose to bootstrap their education abroad. Some students choose to dip into family savings and assets to fund their education, at least partially and cover the rest through scholarships and part-time work. But this leaves the whole family at risk without a Plan B.

Secured/collateral-based education loan: Many banks, both public and private, and NBFCs offer education loans against a collateral of a certain value like a house/land etc. This is a systematic and structured approach and has many advantages such as tax saving benefits. The loan repayment usually kicks in six months after the degree is completed, irrespective of whether you have a job or not, and must be completed within seven years of finishing the degree. So, this is a factor that students must consider before signing up for one.

The difference between banks and NBFCs is that banks usually cover about 85-90 per cent of expenses such as tuition fees, lodging, travel, lab fees etc, whereas NBFCs offer 100 per cent Cost of Attendance (CoA) coverage. Similarly, banks may also have an upper limit on the sanctioned loan amount for large amounts such as over ₹20-₹30 lakh, depending on the course and university you select. NBFCs have no such cap on loan amount. However, banks may also offer concessions on interest rates for women, which NBFCs don't.

Unsecured/collateral-free education loan: Another option is to opt for unsecured education loans offered by many financial institutions that require no collateral. This is given based on your financial status, for example, your credit score. However, since this is riskier to the lender, it may be more tedious and expensive as you may be charged a higher

er interest rate for the same loan amount. Students may also not get any favourable repayment terms for the same reason. Many banks and NBFCs require you to pay interest while you study.

International financial institutions: A trending option among students is educational loans from international financial institutions. They may provide loan amounts in foreign currency with or without a cosigner/collateral. They calculate interest rates based on the loan applicant's future repayment potential rather than historic data, and hence can also provide lower interest rates than banks or NBFCs.

SIP: This option depends on how early you start and is more suitable for working professionals rather than students who wish to pursue their postgraduate studies.

A systematic investment plan or a SIP is a great way to both invest and save for salaried professionals. The frequency of investment is based on the discretion of the candidate to allow them a flexible approach. SIPs have gained a lot of traction over the years in the field of financing the educational endeavours of post-graduate students.

The key to remember is that every student is different. So, it is important to weigh the pros and cons of each option before proceeding further.

The writer is Co-founder, Yocket

Social sector is dynamic

When one hears of someone volunteering in the social sector, the immediate reaction is to always congratulate the individual on choosing to give back to society, on being a change-maker. However, when the same individual announces a full-time job in the social sector, this news is met with hesitation, trepidation and sometimes even rebuke and criticism. What causes this sudden change in perception, and is this shift validated?

Many volunteer in the social sector, however working professionally in the same sphere is not considered viable due to myths surrounding the work, says DR GEETANJALI CHOPRA & PARUL KAMRA



Unfortunately, there are several myths associated with the social sector that set it in a bad light not just for donors, partner organisations but also for those looking to make a career in social work. Some of these myths are that there is no growth in this sector; it is a waste of time, there are no returns, the money is negligible and the work is dreary. However, if one does take out the time to talk to someone who has worked in this sector for a while, they are sure to get a clearer picture of what the sector actually comprises of, and what actually lies in store for those who want to enter the world of social work.

One of the prevalent assumptions is that there is no advancement in the social sector, that it is an area worth

investing only a small amount of time in order to boost resumes. However, there is immense potential to develop and evolve in the social sector. It offers space to grow not just professionally but personally as well, for you get the best of both worlds- desk jobs as well as field work. Further, this sector itself is always growing, taking into account the varied requirements of beneficiaries across demographics. Since the sector itself is never stagnant, growth always

accompanies it.

Several people also assume that there are no exciting opportunities available to social workers. However, the sector is extremely dynamic purely based on the fact that the work is directly related to people in need. Since humans themselves can't possibly be put into black and white categories, the work too has to adapt itself to situations and the issues it brings up. Each day brings with itself new challenges, and new opportunities

ties to bring about change. No two days are the same while working in the social sector, making it a vibrant and lively professional sector.

What seems to be the most pressing and overarching myth related to working in the social sector is that there is no adequate recompense or rewards, that there is no money for a social worker. While it is true that most NGOs cannot offer salary brackets that are possible at a corporate job, this does not mean that the salaries are meagre. Further, International NGOs have extremely attractive pay packages, and these come with several perks as well. Depending on qualifications, the returns can be extremely rewarding. Of course, what makes the work even more fulfilling are the blessings one receives from the beneficiaries, something that no amount of money can ever give.

The social sector is as enterprising, as exciting, and as rewarding as any other professional sphere. The myths surrounding this sector are exactly that- baseless. The world is your oyster when it comes to social work. No matter how you engage with it, it always gives back manifold.

The writers are from Wishes and Blessings NGO

VIT-AP inks MoU with Entuple Technologies

The signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Entuple Technologies and the School of Electronics and Engineering, VIT-AP University was held virtually on the July 22, 2021.

Dr S V Kota Reddy, Vice-Chancellor, VIT-AP University after signing the MoU with Entuple Technologies, said their aim is to impart skill and capabilities to the students in VLSI and RF Communication technologies and enable them



to build their career in this emerging field. This will also provide an opportunity to the students, scholars, and faculty members to carry out research and to develop several

advanced applications using VLSI and RF Technologies.

Further, Entuple Technologies will provide internships and job opportunities to selected students.

Department of Physical Education and Sports Science at SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), Kattankulathur organised the 'Volleyball Achievers Award 2021' and honoured eight of its students for getting placed in Government and private jobs. Of this, four girls have been selected to Indian Railways under the sports quota.

The chief guest for the event was SRMIST's Deputy Registrar and Director (Institute of Hotel Management) Dr Antony Ashok Kumar.

The special guests for the event were SRMIST's Director

SRMIST students shine



Students who got placed pose with their awards along with the dignitaries of SRMIST

(Career Centre) N Venkata Sastry, Associate Director Campus Life & Ladies Hostel

Dr E Poovammal and Managing Director Sri Vinayaga Timbers, Tambaram T

Purushothaman.

A documentary on the Women's Volleyball Journey 2020-21 was released on the occasion.

Volleyball women's team coach Om Prakash elaborated on how the students are trained, how their diets are monitored, their workout sessions, and so on.

T Purushothaman who has been a patron of the sports wished the team many more laurels in the upcoming tournaments.



Due to the present pandemic, there are lucrative options in the pharmaceutical industry, says PROFESSOR RANA SINGH

The present pandemic has brought the entire world to its knees and the whole world has observed the adverse catastrophe of this global pandemic. As the healthcare sector across the globe is growing, it has opened great career opportunities to thousands of students of pharmaceutical science because the rate of growth of the pharmaceutical sector is interlinked and is directly proportional to the growth of the healthcare sector.

According to IBEF, Indian pharmaceutical sector supplies over 50 per cent of global demand for various vaccines and states that we are the largest provider of generic drugs globally.

In the present scenario the demand for medicines is increasing day by day, so the employment in the pharma sector is also rising. According to sources of government statistics, over 300 institutions impart diplomas or degrees to nearly 20,000 students in India every year. Indian pharmaceutical industry is one of the largest pharma industries in the world and this widens the scope of pharma studies in India and abroad.

As per the report of Indian Economic Survey 2021, in the next decade the domestic market is expected to grow three times. The pharmaceutical industry is valued at \$41.7 billion. Our domestic pharmaceutical market is estimated at \$ 41 billion and likely to reach \$ 65 billion by 2024.

In India, Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) is the regulatory body which has been designing the rducation Regulations pertaining to pharmacy which outlines the conditions to be followed by pharmacy colleges. The PCI grants approval to universities and colleges to run various programmes. It has well-defined standards, norms and guidelines.

As compared to other countries, the prices of medicines in India are amongst the lowest in the world. Although having some of the medicine's lowest prices in the world, leading firms of India also have the capacity to not only serve the Indian market for essential drugs but also supply their drugs to the world.

Price fluctuation and policy environment: Price fluctuation and policy environment are

With the help of AI, companies can gather information regarding targeting audiences and create unique marketing strategies for them. This way they can understand the needs and convert leads into revenues

the challenges created by unexpected and frequent domestic pricing policy changes in India. One of the biggest challenges is analysing the shifting customer behaviour and fluctuating prices, due to this vague environment of innovations and investments has created in Industry. According to The Indian Pharmaceuticals Alliances (IPA), to produce affordable patients' drugs, the Government and stakeholders work together.

Paucity of proficiency in the innovation space: Due to limited government Supported research ecosystem the pharmaceutical companies have been slow to grow in the innovation space. To overcome this hurdle Government needs to invest in research and development initiatives and talent in order to expand India's innovation.

A talent pool with advanced skills is limited in India as compared to other countries. There is also a huge gap between the college curriculum and industry's requirements. Clinical trials should also be supported and subjectivity in certain regulatory

decision-making removed.

Generic market exporting: Just like any other industry, the pharmaceutical industry is also a sales-driven industry. With the help of AI technology, companies can gather information regarding targeting audiences and create unique marketing strategies for them. This way they can understand the needs of the market and can convert most leads into revenues. AI can help in protecting the success or failure rate of the marketing strategy.

Effect of external market: More than 50 per cent of pharma ingredients are dependent on other countries like China. Slight changes in policies can bring a big difference in the production of medicines and equipment. Due to growth in the pharma industry in India, both directly and indirectly, Government needs to make India a life sciences innovation hub to promote innovation by creating a research ecosystem and expanding and upskill the talent pool to handle complex technologies with advanced resources.

The writer is Vice-Chancellor, Sanskriti University

Tips to crack CAT

Many engineers take the Common Admission Test each year. But they make mistakes. SUMIT SINGH GANDHI shares must-follow dos in order to ace this exam

The Common Admission Test (CAT) is a national-level examination conducted by The Indian Institute of Management (IIM). It is a mandatory exam for seeking admission into IIM or other prestigious B-schools. More than half of the candidates appearing for CAT have an engineering background. This makes the competition quite serious. Here are some must-follow tips for engineers.

Work hard for the VARC section: The VARC section is a big hurdle for the Engineering students as they do not focus much on the English language as a subject during their graduation. But, if studied well this section will not trouble you much.

Master the DILR section: The only way to score well in this section is to practice as much as possible. This section can be solved using various tricks which you will know when and how to apply only when you have solved enough problems. This section is quite easy once you know the techniques.

Improve your calculations: Calculations are an extremely important factor in solving both the Quantitative Ability section. Improve your accuracy and try achieving the right answers in the first attempt to save maximum time. Practice solving mentally instead of using a virtual calculator. You will see a difference in your calculations if you practice religiously.

Get a complete idea about the sections: You need to have the maximum idea about all the sections. Make sure you know everything like the number of questions in each section, marks allocated to the sections, topics covered in the sections, the marking scheme, etc. Knowing all of this will make the process ahead easier and less complex.

Avoid rote learning: Mugging up will land you in trouble. One should focus on concepts and understand them thoroughly. It is not at all advisable to choose to mug-up technique. Understanding the whole concept helps one to remember things for a longer period and on the other side mugging up never stays for a longer period.

Practice makes perfect: No matter how good or bad you are at the topics, one thing that can make you score



Sumit Singh Gandhi, CEO, CATKing Educare

well in CAT is practicing. You need to keep practicing the questions regularly. Buy enough practice material and make sure you solve most of it. Make sure you know most of the concepts. Practicing every day will be of extreme help. Solve all the previous years' question papers and the available sample papers. Solve mock tests to be even closer to being perfect.

Do not start preparing at the last minute: Start studying well in advance. Starting from the beginning will not pile up all the work. You can study at your own pace and understand concepts properly. This will result in having a lot of time for preparation. If you start preparing at the last moment then you will have a chance of not covering the entire syllabus. You will have to finish the entire syllabus in a few days which may result in creating confusion.

Do not prepare without a plan: You need to have a plan. You need to make a timetable of how you will be studying and how much syllabus you will complete within a day. Also, make sure you decide how much you will practice each day after finishing up with the portion. Make strategies on how you will appear for the paper. Make daily targets and work hard to complete them.

If you are at a stage in your career where you are feeling stagnated? Or if you feel that you are going on a journey but your ultimate destination is unknown to you? Or if you have to drag your soul to the work every day with a lot of effort? Then you could be going through a mid-career dilemma, the first thing you should do is stop worrying about it and acknowledge it, a lot of working professionals go through it and there is nothing wrong with you.

Perhaps there are certain questions in your mind related to various aspects of your life and you need to simply answer them to march ahead with confidence. Let's look at the top 5 reasons why working professionals go through mid-career dilemmas?

■ Am I in the right job? Am I missing something? One of the most common puzzles that working professionals have in their mind is I in the right job? Am I am missing something? Though there is no perfect answer to this question not answering this question at all often leads to a mid-career dilemma.

■ The fear of missing out or FOMO refers to the feeling or perception that others are having more fun, living better lives, or experiencing better things than you are. It affects self-image; self-esteem and leads to feelings of restlessness, false comparison, and anxiety. What we see of others in social media may also one of the reasons why

MIND IT

people often feel fear of missing out and it could be one of the reasons that lead to mid-career crisis.

■ Downplaying own skills, knowledge and competence: In order to achieve the best result in the shortest span of time a lot of working professionals start copying and focusing on what skills, knowledge and competence they do not have and start acquiring those without realising that in the process they are downplaying their own skills, knowledge and competence and by the

time they realize that they have not used their own capabilities the opportunities which in front of them vanish and they are not able to course correct at the right time. This could be one of the main reasons that lead to a mid-career crisis.

■ Self-confidence has taken a hit: Self-confidence is one of the most vulnerable elements of any individuals, life and it can often get a blow due to various reasons such as making mistakes, not able to cope with the new manager, peer pressure, work

environment or due to a change in the job expectation. Lack or drop in self-confidence for a long period of time creates doubts both various aspects and it could be one of the key factors that lead towards the midcareer dilemma.

■ Fear of humiliation among more successful colleagues: Each and every working professional wants to be successful in life and they strive for success each day of their life; similarly, each organization has a very defined framework to judge the individuals based on the performance and behavioral competencies required.

A few are able to score well on those parameters and move ahead in the career

while other stays at the same point and due to lack of reasoning and explanation are given to the individuals who have not been able to score well around those parameters a lot of doubts get created in their mind and this often leads to a feeling of humiliation and ultimately becomes one of the key contributors that causes a mid-career dilemma.

Mid-career dilemma is a very common point that can come to a professional's life at any stage after working for three-five years in a professional environment but it is important to understand the key reason that is leading towards the mid-career dilemma.

The writer is Abhishek Joshi, Executive Coach, Learning and Development Expert



is September 28, 2021.

The Griffith University is offering RTP International Fee Offset Scholarships for international students. Scholarships fully cover the HDR me tuition fees.

Eligibility: Applicant must: Not be a domestic student, as defined as being a student who is an Australian citizen or an Australian permanent resident or holder of an Australian Permanent Humanitarian visa or a New Zealand citizen and be commencing or enrolled in HDR programme. Not be awarded to a candidate who is in receipt of an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth Government designed to offset HDR programme tuition fees.

Admission requirement: Must have previous degree.

Language requirement: Applicants whose first language is not English are usually required to provide evidence of proficiency in English at the higher level required by the University.

How to apply: New applicants must follow the process for submitting an online application. Visit: <https://www.griffith.edu.au/research-study/apply>

Application deadline: The last date to apply for this

Applications are invited for the need-based aid offered by the Case Western Reserve University for international students for the academic year 2021-2022.

Eligibility: Applicants can apply to study any bachelor or master degree programme offered at Case. Applicants must meet all the following/given criteria: Be international-first-year or transfer students enrolled in a programme at Case.

Supporting documents: The students are required to present the following documents to the university: High school results Admission essay

Admission requirements: The applicants must have completed high school graduation to be accepted in any programme at Case. **Language requirement:** The applicants are required to attain minimum scores in English language proficiency tests.

How to apply: The students are required to submit their application via the Common Application or Coalition Application. The applicants are required to have set up a CSS profile and apply for the opportunity through the same.

Application deadline: The last date to apply for this scholarship is November 30, 2021.

WEB DEVELOPMENT AT SHINE CONSULTANTS

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹8,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/4a5260
Deadline: August 5, 2021

HR AT KATMUNY TECHNOLOGIES

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹10,000-₹12,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/a2cfd5
Deadline: August 5, 2021

CONTENT WRITING AT VEGA SCHOOLS

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹20,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/76af51
Deadline: August 5, 2021

UI/UX DESIGN AT CETAS IT

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹15,000-₹20,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/811aca
Deadline: August 5, 2021

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (SALES) AT STUFIT APPROACH

Location: Lucknow, Gurgaon, Pune, Mumbai, Noida, Delhi
Stipend: ₹2,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/dcac98
Deadline: August 5, 2021

FRESHER JOBS

ASSOCIATE RECRUITER AT TALHIVE

Location: Remote
Stipend: ₹3-₹5 lakh per annum
Link: internshala.com/i/d5dd34
Deadline: August 21, 2021

Skill(s): MS-Office, Word & Excel, Recruitment, Client Relationship, English (Spoken & Written)

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE AT CAFE TATVA VENTURES

Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹3-₹5.5 lakh per annum
Link: internshala.com/i/811aca
Deadline: August 21, 2021
Skill(s): Salesforce, Client Interaction, MS-Excel, Client Relationship

IN BRIEF

ONLINE MBA DEGREE PROGRAMME

The Jaro Education has announced the collaboration with Dr DY Patil Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University) Centre of Online Learning (DPU COL) to offer a next-generation online MBA degree programme. The UGC approved degree is designed to help participants to develop future-focused competencies, which employers across the globe look for in potential candidates.

The course is designed to equip participants with leadership skills, global awareness and critical and analytical thinking. The two-

year programme is curated for working professionals and will follow a credit system as recommended by UGC.

The pedagogy consists of assignments, formative and summative assessment tests, compulsory domain, generic core courses, specialisation and generic elective courses, project work, and much more. Following are specialisations:

- Marketing Management
- Human Resource Management (HRM)
- Finance Management
- IT Management (ITM)
- Project Management
- Operations Management
- Hospital Administration and Health Care Management
- International Business Management

FREE MASTERCLASSES FOR TEACHERS

To support skill development of the educators of the country especially during such dire times, Aditya Birla

Education Academy (ABEA) has been offering free Masterclasses and Educator Meetup sessions for teachers for the last

15 months. This initiative started in April 2020 when teachers were grappling with strategies and tools to teach online.

NEW BTECH COURSE ON OFFER

The Indian Institute of Technology Jodhpur, is offering unique BTech programmes with multi-disciplinary breadth aligned with the emerging technology trends. With design thinking and social connect embedded into the curriculum, these programs target to produce 'global

engineers' who will be technology leaders and innovators with empathy and sensitivity for sustainable development. Entrepreneurship education has also been introduced offering an enriching experience in innovation, prototyping, business model formulation and market analysis.

THIRD SLOT OF NRA CET BASED SCHOLARSHIP TEST

The upGrad Jeet has announced the third slot of NRA CET based scholarship test for aspirants who are planning to appear for the yearly competitive exams and secure jobs in the Government sector. The first two slots have been conducted this year. The decision to introduce another slot was inspired by the massive response to

the first two slots. JeetCET: NRA CET based scholarship test, is an attempt to estimate the expected test pattern and syllabus to give aspirants a direction to prepare better. Divided into two rounds, learners from the Preliminary round will then appear for Round 2, called the Mains, after which only 3000 learners will be able to make their way to

receiving a six-month subscription of the course for free, while others will receive a 1-month subscription to the NRA CET course. upGrad Jeet has also announced a range of rewards and scholarships amounting to ₹151 crore to acknowledge the hard work of learners, based on the overall potential they demonstrate during the test.

ANALYSIS FOUND A CARBON RISK PREMIUM

A new mathematical analysis conducted by researchers from Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG) and IIM Bangalore has established a relationship between the carbon footprint of companies and the potential risks of investing in these firms.

An extensive data analysis of over 200 of the largest listed companies in the American market was carried out by the

researchers from these top Institutions.

The researchers found that most of these companies (71.6%) had shown a decrease in their carbon emissions in the 2016-2019 period. It was found that carbon footprint had a positive correlation with the size of the companies and the revenues. However, the correlation with expenses was found to be slightly less than that with revenue.

VMC LAUNCHES TWO UNIQUE TESTS

It is imperative to say that choosing the right stream and career has always been a tough task and around 85 per cent of students find it extremely difficult to take the right decision. In an effort to inflate its endeavor of learning and encouraging students to achieve their dreams, Vidyamandir Classes (VMC) in association with Mindler has come up with two new and innovative tests named VMC Disha and VMC Vision.

VMC Disha (Stream Selector) and Vision (Career Discovery) are important initiatives taken by VMC in pursuant to strengthening the school outreach programmes.

These stream and career deciding tests are especially customised for students ranging from classes VIII to XII. While VMC Vision is specially designed for science students of class Class XI and Class XII to make them realise the ideal match for

their careers, VMC Disha is customised for students of class VIII, IX and X in order to make the process of stream selection scientific and accurate for them.

VMC Disha and VMC Vision developed by the industry experts who have been in the field of education since decades, the exemplary tests are based on a Model accredited by the National Career Development Association and the Career Development Alliance, USA.

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

●**Hockey:** India beat Spain 3-0 in Men's Pool A Match.
●**Badminton:** Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty beat Ben Lane and Sean Vandy (Great Britain) 21-17, 21-19 in Men's Doubles Group A Match.
●**Boxing:** Lovlina Borgohain beat Nadine Apetz of Germany 3-2 in Women's 69kg Round of 16 Bout.
●**Table Tennis:** A Sharath Kamal lost to Ma Long (China) 7-11, 11-8, 11-13, 4-11, 4-11 in Men's Singles Round 3 Match.
●**Shooting:** Saurabh Chaudhary/Manu Bhaker and Yeshahswini Deswal/Abhishek Verma fail to qualify for medal round in 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team event.
Elavenil Valarivan/Divyansh Singh Panwar and Anjum Moudgil/Deepak Kumar fail to qualify for medal round in 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team event.
●**Sailing:** Nethra Kumanan 32nd and 38th in Race 5 and 6 in Women's Laser Radial.
Vishnu Saravanan 23rd and 22nd in Race 5 and 6 in Men's Laser.
KC Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar 18th in Race 1 in Men's Skiff 49er.

IN FOCUS TODAY

●**Hockey:** India vs Great Britain (Women's)
●**Badminton:** P V Sindhu vs NY Cheung (Hong Kong) and B Sai Praneeth vs M Caljouw (Netherlands).
●**Boxing:** Pooja Rani vs Ichrak Chaib (Algeria).
●**Rowing:** Arjun Lal Jat and Arvind Singh in Men's Lightweight Double Sculls Semifinal 2.
●**Archery:** Tarundeep Rai vs Oleksii Hunbin (Ukraine).
Pravin Jadhav vs Galsan Bazarzhapov (Russian Olympic Committee).
Deepika Kumari vs Karma (Bhutan).



India's Mandeep Singh (11) celebrates after Rupinder Pal Singh, right, scored against Spain during men's field hockey match on Tuesday

AP

Back to winning ways

Tokyo: Dragflicker Rupinder Pal Singh scored a brace as the Indian men's hockey overcame a demoralising defeat in the previous match to cruise past Spain 3-0 and inch closer to a quarterfinal berth at the Tokyo Olympics on Tuesday.

Drubbed 1-7 by Australia in their last match, India produced a spirited performance against world No 9 Spain and scored through Simranjeet Singh (14th minute) and Rupinder Pal Singh (15th and 51st) to record a comfortable win in their third Pool A match at the Oi Hockey Stadium.

India, ranked fourth in the world, had earlier defeated

New Zealand 3-2 in their opening fixture. Spain, on the other hand, are yet to register a win in the competition.

Spain drew 1-1 against Argentina before losing 3-4 to New Zealand.

The Indians will next play reigning Olympic champions Argentina on Thursday.

For any team it is always tough to recover from a morale-shattering loss within a day, but India looked more organised and sorted against Spain on Tuesday.

Despite the win, India's chief coach Graham Reid said the team needs to work upon a lot of grey areas, like conceding penalty corners, ahead of their remaining matches.

INDIA'S SCHEDULE ON JULY 28 (ALL TIMES IST)		
TIME	EVENTS	ATHLETES
06:30 AM	Hockey: Women's Pool A Match	India vs Great Britain
07:30 AM	Badminton: Women's Singles Group Match	PV Sindhu
07:31 AM	Archery: Men's individual 1/32 Eliminations	Tarundeep Rai
08:00 AM	Rowing: Men's Doubles Sculls Semifinals	Arjun Lal Jat & Arvind Singh
08:35 AM	Sailing: 49er Men's Race 2,3 & 4	KC Ganapathy & Varun Thakkar
12:30 PM	Archery: Men's individual 1/32 Eliminations	Pravin Jadhav
02:14 PM	Archery: Women's individual 1/32 Eliminations	Deepika Kumari
02:30 PM	Badminton: Men's Singles Group Match	B Sai Praneeth
02:33 PM	Boxing: Women's 75kg Round of 16	Pooja Rani
LIVE ON SONY TEN & SIX NETWORK		

"Better result today, but a lot of things to work on from an improvement perspective. The fact that we gave too many corners, that's always a concern when that happens. But the team did really well in

terms of defending," he said. "The first quarter was played very well, we could move the ball really well and it was exactly what we planned to do. We struggled a bit in the second and third quarters."



Indias Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty play against Britains Ben Lane and Sean Vandy during their mens doubles group play stage match

PTI

Chirag-Satwik exit despite win

Tokyo: Indian shuttlers Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy emerged victorious against the England pair of Ben Lane and Sean Vandy in their final Group A match but still missed out on qualifying for the quarterfinals at the Tokyo Olympics on Tuesday.

Ranked 10th in the world, the Indians beat world number 18 team 21-17, 21-19 in a 44-minute Group A men's doubles match at the Musashino Forest Plaza.

However, they couldn't make it to the knockout stage as they finished third in the Group A behind top-ranked Indonesian team of Marcus Gideon Fernaldi and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo and world number three Yang Lee and Chi-Lin Wang of Chinese Taipei.

"We knew the moment Lee Yang/Wang Chi-Lin won, we don't stand a chance. They won in two games and we won in three. It is quite sad. Unfortunately, even after winning two matches in the group, we don't go through. But that is badminton and have to live with it," said Chirag.

All three teams finished on same points with two wins each and when the number of games won was considered to identify the qualifiers, the Indians lost.

Chirag and Satwik's straight game loss to the Indonesians on Monday cost them dear.

Moments before the Indian pair stepped on the court, Lee and Wang had completed a three-game win over Sukamuljo and Gideon in the preceding group match, rendering the result of India's contest against Britain inconsequential.

Sharath goes down fighting

Tokyo: Sharath Kamal matched the legendary Ma Long stroke for stroke in the first three games before making a third round exit from the table tennis competition on Tuesday, ending India's medal-less yet impressive run at the Tokyo Olympics.

Following the unprecedented gains made from the 2018 Asian Games, where India won a table tennis medal for the first time ever, the performance of Sharath and Manika Batra in the round of 32 added significantly to the sport's growing popularity.

They both achieved a first by

reaching the third round at the Summer Games.

A less tougher draw in mixed doubles, in which Sharath and Manika were seen as medal contenders, as well as in the men's singles could have seen the Indians scaling new heights.

The way 39-year-old Sharath played against Long has convinced him to think about competing in his fifth Olympics in Paris.

He fought tooth and nail in the first three games against the reigning Olympic and world champion Long before going down 7-

11, 11-8, 11-13, 4-11, 4-11 in 46 minutes.

To have a player like Long under pressure in itself is a significant achievement for the seasoned Indian.

"It was the best three games and probably the best match and best tournament I ever played," Sharath said.

The Chinese great too acknowledged that Sharath made it tough for him.

"It was a tough match. Of course at the Olympics every match, no matter the opponent, no matter the country, it's always tough," said Long.

"I did prepare for difficulties. The third game was crucial. After gutting it out the last two games were better," he added.

With Sharath's defeat, India's challenge ended in table tennis as Manika, Sutirtha Mukherjee and G Sathiyam had already exited the singles competition.

Lovlina makes QFs

Tokyo: Indian boxer Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) advanced to the quarterfinals in her debut Olympic appearance on Tuesday, defeating German veteran Nadine Apetz in a closely-fought last-16 stage bout.

Borgohain, the lone Indian boxer in action on the day, prevailed 3-2 over her rival who is 12 years her senior. Both the boxers were making their Games debut and the Indian became the first from her nine-strong team to make the quarterfinal stage.

The 23-year-old showed great poise in a tense contest to triumph by the thinnest of margins. She claimed all the three rounds on split points.

The 35-year-old Apetz was the first German woman to qualify for a boxing event at the Olympics. She is a two-time world championship Bronze-medallist and a former European champion.



Germany's Nadine Apetz, left, looks for an opening against Lovlina Borgohain during their 69kg boxing match

AP

Borgohain is a two-time World and Asian championships Bronze-medallist and will next face Chinese Taipei's Nien-Chin Chen on July 30, who is seeded fourth.

A win in the upcoming contest would assure Borgohain of at least a Bronze medal at the mega-event.

On Wednesday, Asian champion Pooja Rani (75kg) will square off against Algerian youngster Ichrak Chaib.

Osaka eliminated

AFF ■ TOKYO

Japan's Naomi Osaka suffered a 6-1, 6-4 defeat to Marketa Vondrousova in the third round of the Tokyo Games on Tuesday, crushing her dreams of winning Olympic Gold at home.

Osaka, who lit the Olympic cauldron during the opening ceremony, struggled in an error-strewn display under the centre court roof at Ariake Tennis Park and was knocked out in 68 minutes.

Vondrousova, ranked 42nd, will go on to face Spain's Paula Badosa or Nadia Podoroska of Argentina.

Meanwhile, Stefanos Tsitsipas advanced to the third round of the Olympics men's tennis tournament on Tuesday as he avenged last month's Wimbledon loss to Frances Tiafoe.

The Greek third seed downed American Tiafoe 6-3, 6-4 under the centre court roof at Ariake Tennis Park, where all play on outside courts was delayed an hour by morning drizzle.

Tsitsipas, who is also entered in mixed doubles with Maria Sakkar, will play France's Ugo Humbert or Miomir Kecmanovic of Serbia for a spot in the quarterfinals.

Also Novak Djokovic added another medal event to his program by entering the mixed doubles draw with Serbian partner Nina Stojanovic.

INDIAN CAMPAIGN OVER

The Indian tennis team's campaign at the Tokyo Olympics officially ended on Tuesday as Sania Mirza and Sumit Nagal could not make the cut for the mixed doubles event due to their low combined ranking of 153.

The entries were to be finalised on Tuesday morning and the cut was expected to be between 50-60. The Indians did not even have faint hopes of getting into the easiest of tennis events at the Games.

Only 16 teams play the mixed doubles event and thus winning just two matches can get a team in the medal round.

Nagal was blown away by Daniil Medvedev in the men's singles competition, while the women's doubles pair of Sania Mirza and Ankita Raina lost its opener from a winning position.



Sailors Vishnu, Nethra at 22nd & 33rd spot

Enoshima: Indian sailors Vishnu Saravanan and Nethra Kumanan finished way behind the leaders as they ended at 22nd and 33rd spot in the respective events after six races in the Tokyo Olympics here on Tuesday.

Saravanan finished 23rd and 22nd in the fifth and sixth race in the men's laser event while Kumanan was 32nd and

38th in the two races of the women's laser radial event held at Enoshima Yacht Harbour on Tuesday.

Four more races and medal race remain in the competition and the India duo were far behind in the rankings.

Each event consists of a series of races. Points in each race are awarded according to position: the winner gets one

point, the second-placed finisher scores two and so on.

The final race is called the medal race, for which points are doubled. Following the medal race, the individual or crew with the fewest total points is declared the winner.

The medal races of both the women's laser radial and men's laser will be held on August 1 after 10 races each.

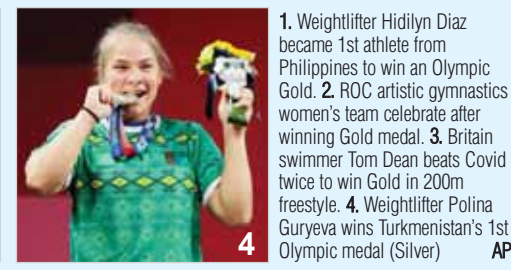


Indians KC Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar compete during the 49er men's race of the sailing event at the Enoshima harbour on Tuesday



Carissa Moore of US celebrates winning Gold medal in the women's surfing competition

AP



1. Weightlifter Hidilyn Diaz became 1st athlete from Philippines to win an Olympic Gold. 2. ROC artistic gymnastics women's team celebrate after winning Gold medal. 3. Britain swimmer Tom Dean beats Covid twice to win Gold in 200m freestyle. 4. Weightlifter Polina Guryeva wins Turkmenistan's 1st Olympic medal (Silver)

AP

Shooters poor form continues



Manu Bhaker & Saurabh Chaudhary during 10m Air Pistol mixed team event

PTI

Tokyo: Indian shooters endured yet another forgettable outing at the Tokyo Olympics on Tuesday as they crashed out in the qualifying stages of the mixed team events in both pistol and rifle.

Considered the team's best bet for a podium finish, the duo of Saurabh Chaudhary and Manu Bhaker caved in under pressure and failed to qualify for the final of the 10m air pistol mixed team event.

They finished seventh in Qualification 2 after topping the first phase with 582. Both the 19-year-old shooters lost the plot completely when the top eight teams battled it out in the second phase.

The other Indian team in the event, Abhishek Verma and Yashaswini Singh Deswal, failed to clear Qualification 1 and finished in 17th place, having totalled 564 across six series (three each for one member).

The team of Chaudhary and Bhaker totalled 380 across

two series each in the second phase of the qualification.

Indian debacle in Tokyo shocks shooting fraternity, NRAI boss talks of 'overhaul'

Tokyo: The Indian shooting federation on Tuesday promised an 'overhaul' of the coaching staff after the 15-strong contingent's Olympic campaign moved from one disaster to another.

As the country's shooters continued to belie expectations with their horror show here, reliving the Rio 2016 debacle, the head of the sport's national governing body promised a major revamp in coaching and support staff.

"Definitely the performances have not been on expected lines and I have spoken of an overhaul of coaching and support staff," NRAI Raninder Singh said.

Questions are being raised about why the shooters were not able to replicate their excellent showing at the ISSF World Cups at the Olympics.

"I feel something is lacking in getting our shooters prepared for these big occasions, because clearly the talent is there and we have seen it here as well," the NRAI boss said.

However, Raninder said that not all is still lost for the Indian shooting team as it is left with a few more starts.

"Having said that we still have starts left and let's continue to back the team and I am sure we'll get results. Postmortems can wait till after the Games," Raninder said.

Ind-SL 2nd T20I postponed to Wed as Krunal tests Covid +ve

PTI ■ COLOMBO/NEW DELHI

The second T20I between India and Sri Lanka in Colombo on Tuesday was postponed by a day after Indian all-rounder Krunal Pandya tested positive for Covid-19, forcing him out of the series with seven days of isolation.

However, all his eight close contacts, who were isolated, have tested 'negative' in the RT-PCR tests and will be available for the postponed game which is being held on Wednesday.

As per Sri Lanka's health safety protocols, Krunal will not be able to travel back to India with other members of the contingent on July 30 as he will now have to undergo mandatory isolation and obtain a negative RT-PCR report.

The third and final T20 is scheduled to be held on Thursday.

"Krunal is symptomatic with cough and throat pain.

He is obviously out of the series and will not be able to return with rest of the squad," a BCCI source tracking the developments in Colombo said.

"However the good news is that all his eight close contacts who were identified by the BCCI medical officer (Dr Abhijit Salvi) have tested negative."

For now, the three-match series is on as even if there are a couple of more cases, the Indian team has enough players with negative RT-PCR reports to field a team.

Krunal, who tested positive on Tuesday morning, has already been quarantined.

India are travelling with a 20-member squad plus four stand by net bowlers.

Now, there will be back-to-back matches on Wednesday and Thursday provided there aren't any more players testing positive to affect the balance of the sides which will lead to cancellation.



Pant bats in nets

Durham: Ahead of the gruelling five Test match series against England, the Indian Test team led by skipper Virat Kohli, had a centre wicket training at the Durham Cricket Club here on Tuesday.

Aggressive wicket-keeper Rishabh Pant, who had joined the Test team after recovering from Covid-19, also batted in the nets.

"TeamIndia back at it and having a centre wicket training at Durham Cricket Club ahead of the five-match Test series against England," the BCCI said in a tweet.