

OPINION 6

PEGASUS-GATE FLIES
RIGHT INTO GOVT'S FACE

WORLD 8

SYRIA ACCUSES ISRAEL OF CARRYING
OUT STRIKE, 2ND THIS WEEK

SPORT 12

INDIA AIM TO
WHITWASH SL

RANCHI, FRIDAY JULY 23 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



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FEELING
FORTUNATE:
TAHIR BHASIN
10 VIVACITY

Pegasus row: High drama in RS

TMC MP tears IT
Min's papers; Govt
to move motion for
his suspension

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Thursday witnessed all-round chaos as TMC MP Shantanu Sen tore off a copy of a statement being read by Information and Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on the Pegasus snooping controversy. Sources in the Government said it will seek action against some Opposition MPs, including Sen, and move a motion for his suspension.

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) members tore papers when Vaishnaw was called to

read the statement by the Chair in the afternoon session. As bedlam prevailed, the Minister could not complete his statement and instead laid a copy of it on the table of the House. Deputy Chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh tried to restore order and asked members to desist from unparliamentary behaviour, before adjourning the proceedings of the House for the rest of the day.

The pandemonium comes days before TMC supremo and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is scheduled to visit national Capital to engage with Opposition leaders.

Union Minister Meenakshi Lekhi condemned the conduct of Opposition members in the Rajya Sabha and said it was a "new low" in India's

Parliamentary democracy.

Shantanu Sen snatched papers from Vaishnaw after TMC, Congress and other Opposition party members who had earlier forced two adjournments of the proceedings in the Rajya Sabha rushed into the well of the House as the Minister was called to make a statement on the snooping row. On his part, Sen alleged that Union Minister Hardeep

Puri abused him in Parliament and was on the verge of physically assaulting him before he was rescued by his Opposition colleagues. Puri has so far not commented on the issue.

Government sources said the Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha Piyush Goyal and his deputy Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi reached out to the Opposition members and assured them that the Minister

will reply to their queries after he makes his statement, but in vain.

The situation remained tense in the House as the two sides engaged in a heated exchange.

Deputy Chairman Harivansh asked the members to desist from unparliamentary behaviour, before adjourning the proceedings of the House for the day.

Ex-CBI Director Verma, Asthana, Dalai Lama, Anil Ambani snooped

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Pegasus snoogate is getting bigger by the day. The latest revelation shows that at the peak of war within the CBI in 2018, phone numbers of then Director Alok Verma, his family and then Special Director Rakesh Asthana, Additional Director AK Sharma, industrialist Anil Ambani and his communication department chief Tony Jesudasan and his wife and Dassault Rafale's representative in India Venkata Rao Posina were also

on the Pegasus surveillance list.

Earlier on Thursday *The Wire* portal reported that Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, and staff members of other Buddhist clerics were selected as targets of potential surveillance by a client of the Israeli spyware firm NSO Group over two years, a leaked database of phone numbers reveals.

The staff of the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Urgyen Trinley Dorji, the third highest ranking monk in Tibetan

Buddhism, who had been living outside India since early 2017 was also in the targeted list. The report said Tibetan officials were targeted from late 2017.

On the CBI tapping, *The Wire* has reported, "Someone with the keys to India's hush-hush spyware deployment system received authorisation to add Verma's numbers to an extensive list of persons of interest that included at least 10 individuals whose phones bear the tell-tale footprints of Pegasus."

BBMKU CONVOCATION

Guv, CM call on youth to
pursue higher education

Governor Ramesh Bais and Chief Minister Hemant Soren attend the 1st convocation ceremony of Binod Bihari Mahto Koylanchal University Dhanbad, through virtual medium on Thursday. Pioneer photo

PNS ■ DHANBAD/RANCHI

Governor Ramesh Bais and Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Thursday called upon youth of the State to pursue higher education to build a strong State and Country. During the first convocation of Binod Bihari Mahto Koylanchal University, Dhanbad the Governor and CM attended the programme virtually and encouraged the students to pursue their dreams in higher education.

"I am happy to see the first convocation of Binod Bihari Mahto Koylanchal University, Dhanbad, but this happiness would have been more if there were no unfavorable circumstances of Covid-19 and I could be involved among my dear students, could meet them. The smile on the face of the students on the day of the convocation, the moment of their enthusiasm and their enthusiasm further enhances the dignity of the convocation. Universities are centres of knowledge, our educational institutions shape the future. We can accelerate the pace of development only through different dimensions of knowledge and information technology," said the Governor on the occasion.

The Governor said that as the Chancellor of the universities of the State, it would be his endeavour that maximum youth of the State should take higher education. "Caste, religion, gender should not be an obstacle in the acquisition of knowledge. It is a matter of happiness that now girls are not only interested in pursuing higher education, but they are also achieving excellence with their talent. It is also important from the point of view of women empowerment. New educational institutions should also be established as per the need for the expansion of higher education. Only education can bring awareness among the people and social evils can be completely eradicated from society. It should be the endeavour of our educational institutions that the students should be of good moral and of character. In this sense, the convocation is not the end of education, but the beginning. Today's global environment has provided many golden opportunities to the youth but the challenges are no less. Our students have to solve these challenges and climb to the pinnacle of success in life," he added.

Addressing the students at the convocation ceremony, Chief Minister Hemant Soren said

that the coalfields of Jharkhand State would be known not only for coal and iron but also for quality education and would set new heights. "I wish a bright future to all the students who got their degrees in the convocation ceremony today. Educational institutions are being set up in honour of the brave martyrs of Jharkhand. Similarly, Binod Bihari Mahto Koylanchal University has been dedicated to the students in the memory and honour of Late Binod Bihari Mahto ji dedicated to the uplift of Jharkhand. In the coming days, universities, colleges and educational institutions being established in all the divisions will provide better opportunities to the children of Jharkhand. The students of the State are achieving high position in the field of education; the credit for this goes to the teachers, management of the school and the college," he said.

The CM said that there are schemes to provide good education to the students of Jharkhand. But this period of Covid-19 has affected it to a great extent. As soon as the pace of infection slows down, plans will be given speed by making life normal. Also, the State government will soon discuss with the Vice Chancellors of all the universities for an action plan for better education.

The CM said that the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Pardeshi Scholarship Scheme has been started with the aim of providing higher education to the Scheduled Tribe students of the State, in which the government will bear the full cost of the students' education. Presently the scheme has been started in limited scope. According to the trends of the students, the scope of this scheme will be increased in the coming time. Hostels are being built for the students to stay. Hundreds of dilapidated hostels are being revived. The work of furnishing about 500 such hostels has started. This work will be completed as soon as the transition phase subsides. Accepting the challenge of transition, the government is committed to establish a better education system.

Dhanbad MP PN Singh, Dhanbad MLA Raj Sinha, MLA Purnima Singh, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Rajiv Arun Ekka, Vice Chancellor Dr. Anjani Kumar Srivastava, Registrar Col. Dr. M.K. Singh, HODs of various faculties, members of the Council and others were present on the occasion.

भारतखण्ड सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF JHARKHAND

TOKYO 2020

भारतखण्ड की बेटीयों को हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं

सलीमा टेटे
हॉकी

दीपिका कुमारी
तीरंदाजी

निककी प्रधान
हॉकी

टोक्यो ओलम्पिक के लिए

सूचना एवं जन-संपर्क विभाग, झारखण्ड सरकार

Emerging Jharkhand
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P.R. 250054 (IPRD) 21-22

Covid cases remain in single digit, vaccination resumes

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

The daily positive case count in the city remained in single digit in the last 24 hours. Four positive cases were reported in the last 24 hours of which three cases were from Mango and one from Musabani. The new positives in Jamshedpur took the Coronavirus tally to 51,749.

Of the 41 patients still undergoing treatment for the coronavirus in the district, most are in home isolation, while some are being treated at care centres and hospitals. As many as 7 people recovered from the virus on Wednesday, taking the overall recoveries to 50,654 which accounts for a recovery rate of 97.89%.

Meanwhile, to ensure the successful implementation of the Covid -19 vaccination



drive, SDM Dhalbhum, Sandeep Kumar Meena inspected various vaccine centers in the urban area on Thursday.

He took stock of the vaccination drive being carried out in Carmel Bal Vihar School Sonari, Andhra Association English School

Kadma, Kerala Public School Kadma, Community Center Namdabasti, Community Center Baridih and Gyan Deep High School Birsanagar

Zone 6. Nodal cum District Supply Officer of Vaccination Cell, Rajiv Ranjan and probationary deputy collector Prashant Hembram were also present on the occasion.

During the inspection, SDM Dhalbhum, in order to maintain law and order in the vaccine centers, arranged separate queues for the elderly, differently-abled and lactating and pregnant women.

On the occasion, while interacting with the beneficiaries, he encouraged them and made them aware about the side effects that come after taking the vaccine and informed them that after 24 hours there might be fever, headache, dehydration and pain at the injection site. There is no need to panic, but in case of fever, take ORS solution in

mercury cetamol and dehydration as needed. He told the beneficiaries that for the prevention of corona infection, the vaccine is being given under the complete supervision of doctors.

The senior in-charge of Vaccination Cell, said that the beneficiaries are being vaccinated by ensuring compliance of all safety standards and Covid -19 protocol at the vaccination site. Vaccination of beneficiaries is being done on a first come first serve basis at the Walk in Center. This will not only keep us safe but our relatives and the whole society will be safe from this pandemic. He appealed to the residents of the district to take the vaccine of Covid -19 at their scheduled time, so that Covid -19 can be controlled in the district.

32 new quarters handed over to BSF by CPWD, allotted to jawans

PNS ■ HAZARIBAG

Thirty two newly constructed type 2 quarters were handed over to BSF training center and school Meru by CPWD on Friday morning. The newly constructed quarters were inaugurated by the commanded cum IG Ravi Gandhi along with CPWD Assistant Engineer and other officers of the organisation. The quarter has been allotted to the jawans on the same day.

On this occasion the IG Ravi Gandhi said that the maximum numbers of jawans and subordinate staff are usually posted on the border. On the border it is not possible to live with their family. The posting in the center is a time when the jawans' subordinate staff and officers can pass their time with their families.

He further said that there are so many staff who are coming here on medical grounds or for the purpose of educating their children. This is the duty of the training center to provide them the quarters, but due to lack of quarters they are unable to provide quarters to all staffs on the campus.

The IG further said that they have written a letter to the BSF headquarters to provide funds for the construction of the quarters in the campus. The BSF headquarter has provided the funds.

He said that we have completed the construction of 44 quarters. The work on 72 quarters is going on. We have also renovated 186 quarters in the campus. We will allot the all remaining completed quarters to the jawans.

17% people in 18 to 44 age group are first dose vaccinated in Palamu

DALTONGANJ: Seventeen per cent of people in the age group of 18 to 44 have been vaccinated for the first dose so far in Palamu district. Sources said that the poor percentage of the first dose vaccination of this group is due to frequent curtain downs on the vaccination here for want of the doses.

Last fortnight there were more than three shutdowns of the vaccination.

Dr Anup Kr Epidemiologist said this 17 per cent first dose vaccination of this age group 18 to 44 can immediately shoot up if our vaccination does not go dry.

He said people of this age group know that vaccines come from the centre and hence such a

situation is inevitable. They don't mind going back home without getting vaccinated, said Anup Kr.

If one talks about the target of this age group then it is the biggest 9,25,276 and against it only 1,54,114 people of this age group 18 to 44 have been vaccinated first dose which accounts for only 17 percent, said the epidemiologist.

Anup Kumar said the first dose vaccinated people of this group are very conscious and mindful of their second doses as a result the percentage of the second dose among this group counts for more than 70 per cent.

Epidemiologist said we try hard not to say no vaccination to people above 60 years of age. He

said we manage vaccination for such oldies all for their convenience and comfort.

Asked if people living across the railway lines from Chiyanki railway station to Mohammadganj railway station and again from Chiyanki railway station to Untari road railway station have been covered with vaccination to which Anup Kumar said we are making a headway into it.

He said we have set up vaccination session site at or near the old railway ticket counter to facilitate the railway personnel living in a large number of quarters there, batches of coolies, loaders or unloaders of railway wagons, parked truck drivers and their apprentices etc to get the job without any inconvenience to their daily routine.

PANKAJ KUMAR ■ DHANBAD

A case of honour killing has come to fore in coal Capital, in which a father has hacked to death his pregnant daughter as she had married a man from other caste, against her father's will.

The incident took place on Wednesday late evening where Ramprasad Saw, resident of Jharia, hacked to death his 19 years old daughter Khushboo at Nawatand locality under Govindpur locality about 30 km away from Jharia residence.

Saw called Kbushboo by asking her to come with parents to see a piece of land at Nawatand locality which the family was willing to purchase. Though his wife Sunita was accompanying them, Ramprasad

in a quick action hacked Khushboo and escaped. Sunita chased her but failed to catch him.

Later she contacted police with the help of her brother. The police team led by DSP headquarters Amar Pandey reached the incident spot at night and recovered the body.

Khushboo had married Karan Bouri seven months ago and was living with her husband at Barwadda. She was pregnant, said Sunita.

In her statement to police Sunita said that she was not aware of ill intentions. She had picked Khushboo thinking that her father had accepted the intercaste marriage. Police have registered a case against Ramprasad who still is absconding.

उपायुक्त का कार्यालय, चतरा (समाज कल्याण शाखा)

::आम सूचना::

एतद द्वारा सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि चतरा जिला को सामाजिक न्याय एवं अधिकारिता मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार द्वारा Senior Citizen Home के संचालन हेतु चिन्हित किया गया है। Senior Citizen Home के संचालन हेतु योग्य एवं इच्छुक गैर-सरकारी संस्थाओं/सोसाईटी द्वारा ई-अनुदान पोर्टल (<https://grants-msje.gov.in/>) पर दिनांक-31.07.2021 तक Online प्रस्ताव भेजी जानी है।

अतः Senior Citizen Home के संचालन हेतु योग्य एवं इच्छुक गैर-सरकारी संस्था/सोसाईटी उपरोक्त ई-अनुदान पोर्टल में अपना प्रस्ताव दिनांक-31.07.2021 तक उपलब्ध कराना सुनिश्चित करें।

PR 250032 Social Welfare, Women and Child Development(21-22)#D

उपायुक्त, चतरा

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय भवन निर्माण विभाग, भवन प्रमण्डल, धनबाद

शुद्धि पत्र

दैनिक समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशित निविदा संख्या 02/2021-22 (पी0आर0 सं0 249611 (Building) 2021-22) में निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि एवं समय दिनांक 30.07.2021 के जगह 31.07.2021 पढ़ा जाय एवं अग्रधन की राशि परिमाण विपत्र के 02% (02 प्रतिशत) अनुमान्य रहेगा, अन्य शर्तें यथावत रहेगी।

कार्यपालक अभियंता भवन प्रमण्डल, धनबाद

PR 250017 Building (21-22)_D

Chief economist speaks on implications of Covid-19 on banks

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

Financial Market Centre (FMC) of XLRI hosted a webinar on Structural Changes in the Banking Sector in the light of macroeconomic developments. The webinar was delivered by Dr. Manoranjan Sharma, chief economist, Infomercis Rating, India.

Dr. Sharma discussed the implications of Covid-19 on the Indian banking sector. He said 'the banking sector is not a silo but is a microcosm, a miniature model of the broader macro-economy. Of late, the Indian economy has been hit by the triple whammy of demonetization, GST and Covid-19. The hardest hit sectors require intensive human contact, viz., MSMEs, aviation, tourism, logistic and hospitality sectors, services, and construction; IT-intensive activities generally fared far better. India's economy is crippled primarily because its four engines of growth — domestic consumption, government expenditure, private investment and exports — are limping. Creating jobs is critical to recovery together with boosting demand'.

Financial sector regulators and Government initiat-



ed policy measures to ensure normal financial intermediate functions and mitigate widespread distress. Policy measures kept financial markets from freezing and eased liquidity stress facing financial institutions and households. Consequently, borrowing costs ebbed and illiquidity premia shrunk. But risk aversion and lackluster demand impeded fuller flow of finance from both banks and non-banks into the economy. While banks have surplus liquidity, several important sectors are credit starved because of heightened risk aversion triggered by demand and supply side shocks, diminished consumer confidence, NPAs and consequently pronounced risk aversion.

Online welding tech developed for Alloyed NCC Rails

PNS ■ RANCHI

The rail certifying agency of Indian Railways, RITES this week approved the newly developed online welding process for the alloyed Rails for production of 260 meters rails at Bhilai Steel Plant. The development of this unique welding & post weld processing technology was done jointly by BSP and RDCIS, Ranchi and was subjected to a series of stringent processing controls across many phases before being approved by the certifying agency, RITES.

Incidentally, these alloy rails commonly mentioned as NCC (Nickel - Chromium - Copper) Rails for the three alloys added, was the joint development efforts of RDCIS - SAIL, RDSO and IIT Kanpur under the aegis of Government's Technology Mission on Rail Safety (TMRS). Over the years of field trials at the coastal and corrosion prone railway network, this rail grade has shown remarkable performance over the years.

Congratulating and commending the remarkable achievement of the team effort



of RDCIS & BSP, Bhilai N Banerjee, ED (RDCIS), SAIL said that the challenge of undesirable hardness and microstructure in the Heat Affected Zone, was overcome with ingenuity and research, both at the laboratory scale and the plant scale. He thanked DK Jain, CGM (Rolling Technology), S Kumar, DGM and the entire team for this achievement.

Director, Bhilai Steel Plant, A Dasgupta had earlier expressed his satisfaction and congratulated the team of BSP and RDCIS engineers, saying that it was another proud moment for Bhilai Rails in the presence of A Kumar, ED (Works) and many senior officers of BSP. He was confident that this development would lead to many more new rail grades in the coming times.

Vedanta spends ₹331 cr on CSR in FY 2021

Bokaro: Vedanta Group has spent ₹331 crore on social impact initiatives in FY 2021. Vedanta's CSR expenditure is 28 per cent or ₹93 crore more than the stipulated requirement.

Over the years, Vedanta has built one of the most recognised and impactful CSR programmes in India. During FY 2020, the company had spent Rs 296 crore on its CSR initiatives.

The company's CSR expenditure, which is among the highest by India Inc, has been spread across the company's core impact areas of education, health, sustainable livelihoods, women empowerment, sports and culture, environment and community development.



Each of the Group business units played its part by executing the respective CSR agenda, in line with the Group guidelines.

Vedanta is committed to conduct its business in a socially responsible, ethical and environment friendly manner and continuously works towards improving the quality of life of the communities in and around its operational areas.

Vedanta Chairman Anil Agarwal said, "We at Vedanta have a well-established history and commitment to reinvest in the social good of our neighbourhood communities. We believe that our efforts, in collaboration with the central and state governments, are positively impacting lives and contributing towards integrated and inclusive development."

"We have been in the forefront of supporting the Government in the fight against Covid 19. Establishing the field hospitals has been one of the most important and relevant support provided to district hospitals across states," he said.

PNS

Fire breaks out at two high-security buildings in Capital

PNS ■ RANCHI

Fire broke out at two high-security Government buildings in Ranchi – Birsa Munda Airport and Police Headquarters – on Thursday, triggering panic among staff members and burning furniture and files to ashes. However, no casualties were reported, officials said.

Firefighting teams swung into action and doused the fire within minutes at both the buildings, eyewitnesses said, claiming that short circuit may have led to the fire incidents in both the buildings. However, the cause for the fire incidents were not stated in any official statement by the time this report was filed.



Police personnel stand guard outside the Birsa Munda International Airport after a fire took place due to a short circuit, in Ranchi on Thursday

At about 11.15 am, airport staff saw smoke emanating from the room of the Chief Airport Security Officer (CASO) situated in the old airport complex, which is used as the airport office now by Central Industrial Security Forces (CISF) and airport officials. Firefighters rushed to the spot to douse the fire, while airport staff members moved fuel tankers away at a safe distance from the incident site, sources said.

“We managed to douse the fire in 10 to 15 minutes. No casualties were reported, neither were flights disrupted due to the incident,” said the Director of Birsa Munda Airport, Vinod Sharma.

“Some sofa sets and other furniture were gutted in the fire,” he added.

A staff member of the airport said that at least five jet fuel tankers were at a distance of less than 100 meters from the site of the incident when the fire broke out and moving them away at a safer distance was the first priority of the airport staff.

“We kept our calm and simply followed the rule book for fire fighting to avert a disaster,” he said.

A couple of hours later, fire broke out at the Tracking, Network & System (TNS) section on the second floor of the Police Headquarters at Dhurwa and the staff members had to use emergency fire extin-

guishers available in the campus to prevent the fire from spreading.

Eyewitnesses said that no major loss of property was caused in the incident, but some old files burnt to ashes before the staff members could douse the fire. Although fire tenders reached the police headquarters within 30 minutes, staff members had already got control over the fire by then, sources said.

A similar fire incident was reported at the police headquarters two years ago, which also caused damage to some old files. However, no fire incidents were reported in the airport premises in the past couple of years.

PHONE HACKING

JPCC holds protest before Raj Bhawan

PNS ■ RANCHI

Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee (JPCC) on Thursday held protest in front of the Raj Bhavan in the State Capital as part of the Congress’ nationwide protest programme, demanding a Supreme Court-monitored judicial inquiry and the resignation of Home Minister, Amit Shah against phone hacking case of Opposition Leaders, Senior Congress Leader Rahul Gandhi, Senior Military Officers, Journalists and some other dignitaries by the Government of India through Israeli spyware Pegasus.

Under the leadership of JPCC Chief, Dr Rameshwar Oraon, a small number of protesters held a protest in front of Raj Bhavan, postponing the march and procession in light of the instructions received under the Corona Guidelines. On this occasion, Senior Congress leader Roshan Lal Bhatia, Former Union Minister, Subodh Kant Sahai, Agriculture Minister,



JPCC President Rameshwar Oraon along with party workers stage a protest against the phone hacking case, in Ranchi on Thursday

Badal Patralekh, National General Secretary of Mahila Congress, Neeta D’Souza, Health Minister, Banna Gupta and others were present.

Speaking on the occasion Oraon said that surveillance and phone hacking by the Central Government through the Israeli spyware Pegasus is completely unconstitutional and illegal, it is also an encroachment of the Central Government on the powers conferred under Article 21. He said that the Supreme Court

should take Suo Moto cognizance of this matter and order a judicial inquiry.

“There is talk of investigation of such immoral acts in other countries as well. This espionage work is possible only at the behest of the Prime Minister. The BJP-led Central Government, finding itself weak, is engaged in spying on the opponents. It was through this that work was done to topple the Government in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh whereas the Israeli

Government clearly says that it can be used only and only to curb terrorist and criminal incidents to the Government,” he added.

On this occasion Sahay said that the BJP and the Central Government are currently spying on 50 thousand people, but in the coming time its number may increase to 50 crores. Such work is not possible without the consent of the PMO and the Union Home Ministry, he added.

Health Minister Banna Gupta said that the Central Government has made a big attack on democratic values and for this mistake the Central Government should apologize without delay and action should be taken against the culprits.

Agriculture Minister Badal said that now people are not safe from bedroom to bathroom through the Israeli spyware Pegasus. The echo of the nationwide movement for the violation of democratic values will definitely reach the ears of the Central Government, he added.

ANTI-ENCROACHMENT DRIVE

DC, RMC Commissioner inspect survey near water bodies



Ranchi DC Chhavi Ranjan along with Municipal Commissioner Mukesh Kumar inspect water body areas near Harmu Mukti Dham, during the ongoing anti encroachment drive in Ranchi on Thursday

PNS ■ RANCHI

Ranchi Municipal Commissioner, Mukesh Kumar and Ranchi Deputy Commissioner (DC), Chhavi Ranjan on Thursday inspected the survey work being done to remove encroachments from Harmu River near Harmu Muktidham. During the inspection of the survey work, Kumar informed that the work of removing encroachment from the major water sources of Ranchi district has started.

Survey work is being done by the joint team of District Administration and Municipal Corporation to remove encroachments from different areas of the major river, dams and water bodies.

During the inspection, the Municipal Commissioner and the DC gave necessary directions to the team engaged in the survey work.

Kumar said that continuous follow-up of the work being done by the District Administration and the Municipal Corporation team for the removal of encroachments is being taken. He said that this team will prepare a joint report and a report will be taken from them every day. He informed that whatever water bodies they have in Ranchi, they will visit jointly with the Deputy Commissioner.

On this occasion Ranjan informed that survey work is being done on all the major rivers, dams and water bodies in urban areas of Ranchi district. He said that some encroachers have also been identified and they are also being removed under the Public Line

Encroachment Act and simultaneously, if there is any construction within 15 meters of the water bodies under the municipal bylaws, then action will be taken considering it as illegal construction.

Ranjan also said that a committee has also been formed for the survey work, in which Additional Collector, SDM Ranchi, all concerned COs, Town Planner and Amin have been appointed. He said that the survey work is being done every day by the team and wherever there is illegal construction on the Government land, it will be removed as per rules.

Meanwhile, the pending cases related to giving benefits of various schemes to the extremists who have surrendered under the surrender policy were reviewed by the DC. Ranchi Deputy Development Commissioner (DDC), Vishal Sagar, Additional Collector Naxal, Ramvriksha Mahato and concerned police officers were present in the meeting.

During the meeting, Ranjan took detailed information about pending cases from Additional Collector, Naxal. Under the surrender policy, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the payment of funds to Naxalites, providing land, arrangements for education of children, giving commercial land and others. Taking information from the Additional Collector Naxal about all the matters in turn, he gave necessary directions. Additional Collector, Naxalites were informed about the benefits given to the surrendered Naxalites and further action in pending cases.

Selected aspirants of HS teacher run from pillar to post for appointment

PNS ■ RANCHI

Thousands of job aspirants, who had successfully completed recruitment examinations of Government high teachers from unscheduled districts of Jharkhand, are knocking doors of politicians and bureaucrats to pressurise the Jharkhand Government to start their appointment process.

A delegation of successful aspirants met water resources minister Mithilesh Thakur on Thursday requesting the minister to raise their issue before the government and HRD department.

On Wednesday over 100 successful candidates met Congress’ Mahagama MLA Dipika Pandey Singh. They also submitted a memorandum and details of their case to her. The MLA assured to take-up their matter before the government.

“Their case is genuine which needs immediate attention and resolution for which we have to fix responsibility because this is the question of their life and career,” she said.

Their problem started in September last year when a full bench of the Jharkhand High Court comprising had scrapped the provision of 100 reservation in the appointment of high school teachers in 13 out of 24 districts of Jharkhand notified as scheduled districts.

In 2016, the State government issued an advertisement for the appointment of 17,572 teachers across 24 districts out of which 8423 posts were meant for scheduled districts.

The court observed that 100 per cent reservation for local residents of 13 scheduled districts in the appointment is the violation of fundamental

rights enshrined in the constitution.

Among 24 districts of Jharkhand Ranchi, Khunti, Gumla, Simdega, Lohardaga, West Singhbhum, East Singhbhum, Seraikela Kharsawan, Latehar, Dumka, Pakur, Jamtara and Sahebganj were declared as scheduled districts.

By the time the judgment came Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission had completed recruitment of around 9000 posts in both non-scheduled and scheduled districts.

After the judgment the state government stopped the appointment process of selected candidates for both scheduled and non-scheduled districts.

The selected candidates of scheduled districts who were already appointed moved to the Supreme Court and the apex court put a stay on the high court’s order. Notably, neither the Jharkhand High Court had passed any order on selection in unscheduled districts, nor the Supreme Court. In the opinion of the advocate general the state government started the appointment process for unscheduled districts.

“All of a sudden in February this year, the government stopped the appointment process of the selected candidates of unscheduled districts. High court judgment is all about scheduled districts and Supreme Court order is also quite speaking that there is no restriction on the appointment process in unscheduled districts. Most of us have crossed the age limits of the government job. The government and the bureaucracy has left us disappointed,” said Niraj Kumar, a resident of Godda district.



Selected High School teachers gather at Mahagama MLA Dipika Pandey Singh’s residence in Ranchi.

Mucormycosis tally rises to 101 in State

PNS ■ RANCHI

One more case of Covid-induced Mucormycosis surfaced in the State Capital Thursday, taking the black fungus tally in Ranchi to 38 and that in Jharkhand to 101, latest data released by the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) highlighted. However, the deadly fungal infection did not cause fresh casualties on the day.

As per Government data, the State has so far reported 101 confirmed and 59 suspected cases of black fungus. While 98 patients have recovered from the infection, at least 30 could not survive, IDSP data reveals.

Jharkhand on Thursday vaccinated around 65,000 residents against Covid-19. As per data released by the National Health Mission (NHM), the first dose of vaccine was administered to at least 43,452 residents, while



the second jab was administered to 21,346 beneficiaries. Around 40,000 of the total beneficiaries vaccinated on the day were younger than 45 years.

As per NHM data released on Thursday evening, the state had 1,44,280 vaccine doses in stock. So far, Jharkhand has received 84,82,450 vaccine doses from the Centre and utilized 84,72,387 of them. Besides Covishield and Covaxin doses supplied from the Centre, some private hospitals have also procured Sputnik V vaccine and administered them to locals.

INBRIEF

IWCS INSTALLS HOARDING ON CANCER AWARENESS

Inner Wheel Club of Swarnrekha Ranchi District 325, under the cancer awareness campaign of its District Chairman Poonam Thakur, inaugurated a giant awareness hoarding by former District President Sarita Prasad, President Neeta Narayan and Mala Srivastava at Kutcheri Chowk on Wednesday. In the hoarding measures have been shown under cancer awareness and preventive measures under Covid-19. Club Treasurer Sandhya Prakash, Club Editor Neeta Shekhar, Club member Sangeeta Sinha were also involved in this. Dr. Pranav Narayan, who is the son of president Neeta Narayan and Dr. Ambuj Srivastava, who is the son of secretary Mala Sinha presented two trolleys to the cancer department of RIMS. This was inaugurated by former district president Sarita Prasad, president Neeta Narayan, secretary Mala Srivastava, along with club’s CCC Deepa Chauhan, treasurer Sandhya Prakash, club editor Neeta Shekhar and club members Ye Supriya, Sangeeta Sinha were involved. After that Innerwheel Club Swarnrekha Ranchi District 325, donated 15 umbrellas to poor elderly people on behalf of the club on Durga Mandir of Ratu Road.



OPERATION OF RAXAUL-NARKATIYAGANJ SPL RESUMED

For the convenience of the passengers, the 05209/05210 Raxaul-Narkatiyaganj-Raxaul DEMU Passenger Special train is being restored by East Central Railway. Train No. 05209 Raxaul - Narkatiyaganj DEMU Passenger Special will start operating from 23.07.2021 while 05210 Narkatiyaganj - Raxaul DEMU Passenger Special will start operating from 24.07.2021 and will continue till further notice. The passengers traveling in this special train are required to comply with the COVID-19 standards issued by the Government of India. Also, with effect from 23.07.2021, the timing of train number 05590 Darbhanga-Samastipur DEMU Special to run between Darbhanga and Samastipur has been revised. As per the revised timings, this DEMU Special will leave from Darbhanga at 09.15 hrs and will reach Samastipur at 10.40 hrs, stopping at all major/minor stations.

SAHAY TWEETS AGAINST IT RAIDS ON MEDIA HOUSE

“When panic sets in, the Modi Government bares its teeth. It sheds rapidly the facade of democratic norms and resorts to meanest acts of browbeating and tormenting the fourth pillar of democracy. Raising legitimate concerns becomes a crime as the oppressive instruments of brute state power are let loose, akin to the rule of Hitler, to somehow silence the media and hide the ‘naked truth’. Will ‘democracy’ survive and function in the country like this? Is it wrong if a media house is discharging its rightful duty? If the government truly believes in transparency, it should support the Media house. But the government itself has come in the dock by getting the IT raids conducted in all the offices of Dainik Bhaskar across the country. Their moral bankruptcy and desperation have led to this kind of use of state power. If any individual or organization is involved in this, it is a betrayal of Indian democratic values that must be condemned. There should be an investigation into why all of this happened between 2017 and 2019, when Parliamentary elections were due for 2019. We must condemn the onslaught on Dainik Bhaskar in strongest terms.” Former Union Minister and Senior Congress leader Subodh Kant Sahay, tweeted on Thursday.

POSTAL DEPT UIDAI LAUNCH SERVICE

J Venkatramu, MD and CEO of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) and Dr. Saurabh Garg, CEO, of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on Thursday jointly launched a service of updating mobile number in Aadhaar issued by UIDAI.

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Tax raids at offices of Dainik Bhaskar Group

Move to scare media: Opp; Govt denies charge

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Income Tax Department on Thursday conducted searches across several States against prominent media group Dainik Bhaskar and an Uttar Pradesh-based television news channel Bharat Samachar for alleged tax evasion, eliciting condemnation from Opposition parties that termed the development a measure to stifle and scare the media. The Government, however, said there was no interference and the agencies were doing their work.

The IT Department searched at least 30 locations across Bhopal, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Noida and other places at the premises of the Dainik Bhaskar media conglomerate which has significant presence in 12 States. The searches began early morning at around 5.30 am and continued till going to the press.

The group publishes 65 editions of newspapers and 211 sub-editions in Hindi, Gujarati and Marathi, as per information posted on the website of its parent company DB Corp Ltd. It also operates 30 radio stations in seven States besides having online presence with six web portals and four mobile phone apps.

“The group is also involved in textiles and mining businesses and the IT department is also looking into related transactions,” an official said.

Both the IT Department and its regulator, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), remained tightlipped on the searches against the promoters and staffers of the two entities that faced the searches.

As the searches continued,



of the issue was raised in the Rajya Sabha that faced adjournments twice. The development came in for wide condemnation from various Opposition leaders, including Chief Ministers of West Bengal, Rajasthan and Delhi, Mamata Banerjee, Ashok Gehlot and Arvind Kejriwal respectively, among others.

In response to criticisms from various quarters, Union Minister Anurag Thakur said, “Agencies are doing their own work and there is no interference in them.”

Articulating the Government’s stand, Thakur further said, “One should take complete information and sometimes many issues come up that are far from truth.”

In the run up to the IT Department action, both Dainik Bhaskar and Bharat Samachar have been critical of the handling of Covid-19 crisis through numerous stories highlighting the shortcomings of the authorities and the consequent distress of people during the deadly second wave of the pandemic.

In Lucknow, the premises

of Bharat Samachar and its promoters and staffers were searched. Bharat Samachar TV said on its official Twitter handle that searches are being conducted at the “house of its Editor-in-chief Brajesh Mishra, state head Virendra Singh, houses of some employees and the channel office”.

Interestingly, premises linked to BJP MLA of Harraiya Assembly constituency Uttar Pradesh, Ajay Singh and his associates were also searched during the day. However, it could not be ascertained if the searches were linked to those of the media groups.

On its website, the Dainik Bhaskar posted a message in Hindi saying the government was scared of its true journalism. From bodies in the Ganga to Corona deaths, the Group that brought the real numbers in front of the country is being raided by the government.

The group said the raids were carried out at the homes of many staffers.

The mobile phones of those in office were seized and they were not being allowed to go out, it further said.

“Officials involved in the raids said this was part of the process and they will be released after panchmana proceedings are done,” the Group said, adding that the digital team working on the night shift was released only at 12.30 pm.

The Group alleged that the IT Department’s search teams had no women members when they raided its Bhopal and Ahmedabad digital wing offices where women staffers were present. Senior income tax officers in the team have not clarified the reason for these searches till now, it said.

Govt brings Bill to prevent 2L OFB employees’ strike



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of the threat for an indefinite strike by over two lakh Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) employees, the Government on Thursday introduced a Bill in the Lok Sabha seeking to prohibit any agitation and strike by anyone engaged in the essential defence services.

This Bill comes weeks after the corporatisation of the OFB, against which employees of more than 40 Ordnance factories all over the country have threatened to go on indefinite strike from July 26.

The Essential Defence Services Bill, 2021, introduced by Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt, seeks to replace an ordinance issued in June.

The Statement of Objects said the ordinance issued on June 30 defines the expressions “essential defence services” and “strike”. It also empowers the central government to prohibit strike in essential defence services and provides for disciplinary action, including dismissal, against employees participating in strike. It also provides for penalties for “illegal strikes, instigation thereof and pro-

viding for financial aid to such illegal strikes.”

Indian Ordnance Factories is the oldest and largest industrial set up which functions under the Department of Defence Production of the Ministry of Defence.

The Ordnance factories form an integrated base for indigenous production of defence hardware and equipment, with the primary objective of self-reliance in equipping the armed forces with the state-of-the-art battlefield equipment.

In order to improve autonomy, accountability and efficiency in Ordnance supplies, the government decided to convert the OFB into one or more one hundred per cent government-owned corporate entity or entities to be registered under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

The recognised federations of the employees gave a notice for an indefinite strike. The conciliation proceedings initiated by the government at the level of Chief Labour Commissioner failed in the meeting held on June 15. On June 16, the government decided to convert the Ordnance Factory Board into seven Defence Public Sector Undertakings.

Centre asks Kerala Govt to provide land for airport expansion



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has requested the Kerala Government to provide 152.25 acres of land “free of cost and free from all encumbrances” for increasing the length of the Kozhikode airport runway from 150 metres to 280 metres, constructing embankments and building a runway-end safety area.

In a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha on whether the Centre has taken any steps to ensure safety at the Kozhikode airport after the August 2020 plane crash there, Minister of State for Civil Aviation V K Singh told Parliament on Thursday said a committee was formed to “suggest additional safety measures at some airports including Calicut (Kozhikode)”.

An Air India Express flight from Dubai with 190 people on board, including a six-member crew, overshot the tabletop runway during landing at the Kozhikode airport in heavy rains on August 7 last year. It fell into a valley 35 feet below and broke into pieces, killing 21 people, including both pilots.

Singh said the committee has suggested various measures, including exploring the

feasibility of providing a 280-metre runway strip instead of 150 metres at present. It has also suggested construction of a runway-end safety area at both ends of the runway to reduce the payload restrictions on the aircraft.

The minister said the committee has recommended filling, levelling and construction of embankments at the airport. “The government has requested the state government of Kerala to provide 152.25 acres of land free of cost and free from all encumbrances for executing the works as per recommendations made by the committee,” he said.

Five days after the plane crash last year, the Aircraft Accident Investigation Board (AAIB) had formed a five-member panel to inquire into the circumstances of the accident. The panel is yet to submit its report.

Captain S S Chahar, a former DGCA-designated examiner for pilots of the B737NG aircraft, is the investigator-in-charge in the panel. He is assisted by operations expert Ved Prakash, senior aircraft maintenance engineer-B737 Mukul Bhardwaj, aviation medicine expert Y S Dahiya and AAIB Deputy Director Jasbir Singh Larhga.

Venugopal moves privilege motion against Min for misleading nation on Covid deaths

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress Rajya Sabha MP KC Venugopal on Thursday moved a privilege motion against Minister of State for Health Bharti Pravin Pawar for “misleading” Parliament by saying “no deaths were reported by any State or UT because of Oxygen shortage”.

Pawar had in a written reply a couple of days ago said, “Detailed guidelines for reporting of deaths have been issued by the Union Health Ministry to all states and UTs. Accordingly, all states and UTs report cases and deaths to the Union Health Ministry on a regular basis.

However, no deaths due to lack of oxygen have been specif-

ically reported by states and UTs.”

But there was an unprecedented surge in demand for medical oxygen during the second wave and it peaked at nearly 9,000 MT compared to 3,095 MT in the first wave following which the Centre had to step in to facilitate equitable distribution among the states, she said.

Twitter flouted IT rules on May 26: Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on Thursday informed Parliament that Twitter was non-compliant with the IT rules on May 26 when the new regulations came into effect but the microblogging platform has subsequently appointed a chief compliance officer and a resident grievance officer as a contingent arrangement. In another reply, the ministry said that close to 140 phishing incidents were observed by CERT-In during the first half of 2021.

In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said that Twitter has also informed the IT Ministry about its physical contact address in India, and has published a compliance report for June 2021.

Chandrasekhar also said the statement made by Twitter earlier in May expressing concerns over potential threat to freedom of expression and staff safety.

Maha MLAs move SC against suspension

New Delhi: Twelve BJP MLAs from Maharashtra on Thursday moved the Supreme Court challenging their one-year suspension from the State Legislative Assembly for alleged misbehaviour with the presiding officer.

On July 5, these 12 MLAs were suspended from the Assembly for one year after the state government had accused them of “misbehaving” with presiding officer Bhaskar Jadhav in the Speaker’s chamber.

Advocate Abhikalp Pratap Singh said he has filed the petition in the apex court on behalf of these MLAs and they have challenged the resolution passed by the Assembly to suspend these lawmakers for one year.

The 12 suspended members are- Sanjay Kute, Ashish Shelar, Abhimanyu Pawar, Girish Mahajan, Atul Bhatkalkar, Parag Alavani, Harish Pimpale, Yogesh Sagar, Jay Kumar Rawat, Narayan Kuche, Ram Satpute and Bunty Bhangdia.

Abduction of Af envoy’s daughter: Pak stooping to new low, says India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Terming the abduction of the daughter of the Afghanistan to Islamabad as a “very shocking” incident, India on Thursday said Pakistan’s denial of the victim’s account is stooping to a new low.” This strong statement came after Pakistan’s Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed described the incident as a “conspiracy linked to India’s security agencies.

Selsela Alikhil, the 26-year-old daughter of Afghanistan Ambassador Najibullah Alikhil, was abducted and held for several hours by unidentified men in Islamabad last Friday. She reportedly suffered injuries due to alleged torture.

“This is a very shocking incident,” Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said here at a media briefing, while pointing

out that it is a matter involving Afghanistan and Pakistan.

“However, since the Pakistani interior minister has dragged India into it, I would only like to say that even by their standards, Pakistan’s denial of the victim’s account is stooping to a new low,” he said.

“As regards the security of the Indian High Commission and our personnel in Pakistan, I would not like to get into specific security-related measures,” he added.

Pakistan’s Interior Minister said the woman was not abducted according to investigations and urged her to come forward and join the probe.

Two days after the incident, the Afghanistan government recalled its ambassador and senior diplomats from Islamabad over concerns relating to their safety and security.

‘Delta variant still dominant lineage behind spread of Covid-19’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian SARS-CoV2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) said on Thursday that the genome sequencing of samples from across the country have showed that Delta variant continues to be the dominant lineage causing Covid-19 and there are strong evidence to suggest that vaccination offers high level of protection. “There is currently no evidence of any new Delta

sub-lineage that is of greater concern than Delta, it said.

“Delta continues to be the dominant lineage for new cases across all parts of India in recent samples and remains the most rapidly rising lineage globally that is responsible for multiple outbreaks, including across Southeast Asia, which shows the fastest growth in new cases globally,” the INSACOG said.

Regions with high vaccination and strong public

health measures, such as Singapore, continue to do well, it noted.

The Delta variant was behind the deadly second wave of the coronavirus in India that killed thousands and infected lakhs during March to May.

The INSACOG said a study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has confirmed that most of the clinical cases in vaccine breakthrough were infected with the Delta vari-

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3	10327	Type-3	TD-1404	Prem Shanker Singh	N/A
4	9316	Type-3	TD-1813	Dulrauti Devi	Akshay Kumar
5	9787	Type-3	TD-2111	Teena Singh	N/A
6	10618	Type-1	TA3-202	Arun Kumar singh	N/A
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RO NO. 3856

Spyware aimed at cementing Hindu regime, says CPM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CPI(M) alleged on Thursday that the Pegasus spyware scandal is not just a case of violation of privacy and illegal, but is a part of the “larger architecture” to consolidate the “authoritarian Hindu regime”, “intimidate” and even “blackmail” the functionaries of constitutional bodies. In the latest editorial of its mouthpiece, Peoples Democracy, the Left party said the bigger picture of the issue must not be obscured.

“The Pegasus usage is part of the larger authoritarian architecture that has been built up over the past seven years. The message is that any means can be adopted to establish and consolidate the authoritarian Hindutva regime...Like the UAPA, the hacking of computers of the accused in the Bhima-Koregaon case to plant malware as evidence, the use of the Enforcement Directorate and other central agencies to intimidate and incarcerate, the Pegasus is a cyber weapon against potential opponents and threats,” it said.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) also said the purpose and pattern in the use of the spyware is evident and that it is designed to “protect those in power and to destabilise the opposition and monitor the investigative voices in the media”. It said the targeting of the 11 phone numbers linked to the woman who complained of sexual harassment by the then Chief Justice of India was “ominous”.

“It is meant to protect someone in a vital position and probably use the information collected as leverage to bring the judiciary to heel. There is constant talk of the undermining of constitutional bodies under the (Narendra) Modi regime. The targeting of Ashok Lavasa, the dissenting Election Commissioner on certain decisions of the Commission favouring Modi, shows how spyware is used to intimidate and, if required, even blackmail functionaries of the constitutional bodies,” it said.

Come for talks, Tomar urges farmers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As farmers’ unions started their ‘Kisan Parliament’ at Jantar Mantar to pay tribute to those who died during the ongoing agitation, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Thursday yet again urged them to leave the path of agitation and come for talks. Tomar said farmers across the country have favoured the three farm laws.

Tomar said, “I want to tell through you (media) that farmers should leave the path of protest and come for dialogue. We are ready for talks if they come with issues in the bills point wise. If they come with their proposal, we are ready to discuss,” he said.

Asserting that the government is sensitive towards farmers, the minister said in the last seven years under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, major steps have been taken in the agriculture sector, the benefits of which are reaching cultivators across the country.

“Country has witnessed that these farm laws are beneficial and are in favour of farmers. We have had discussions about these laws. If they express their issues with the laws point-wise, we can discuss it,” Tomar added.

Tomar, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday, had reiterated that the government will remain open to discussions with protesting farmers’ unions to resolve issues over the three agriculture laws passed by Parliament in September last year.

After getting special permission from Delhi Lt Governor Anil Bajjal, a group of 200 farmers reached Jantar Mantar — adjacent to the Parliament Complex — in central Delhi to protest against the Centre’s three contentious farm laws amid the ongoing Monsoon session of Parliament. They have got permission to protest till August 9 amid heavy security.

‘My pre-poll meet with PK was recorded’

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A day after attacking the Centre for running Spygiri and surveillance raj in India calling upon all opposition parties to unite against the Narendra Modi Government, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday claimed that Pegasus spyware was used to record one of her pre-poll meetings with poll strategist Prashant Kishor and her nephew and MP Abhishek Banerjee.

“PK has given his phone for auditing and it has been revealed that one of my pre-poll closed-door meetings was recorded by using the Pegasus spyware ... in that meeting PK, Abhishek and my State president Subroto Bakshi was present ... this means that by snooping on one person they

are snooping on many others in that person’s touch,” Banerjee said.

Branding the Pegasus controversy as a “bigger scandal than Watergate” she said “this Hitler-style totalitarian regime cannot be allowed to function for eternity ... this is worse than Watergate, this is a Super Emergency,” and asked “how long can you muzzle people like this ... the more you will stop them the more they will protest.”

The Chief Minister who was likely to meet the Prime Minister when she would visit the Capital on July 28 said, “the entire civil society, the intelligentsia, students, workers ... everyone should come up in protest against this dirty snooping in people’s private lives ... they will not spare anyone ... they will keep a watch when



you are speaking to you wife or with your close associates or any one.”

Now the situation had come to such a spot that “either you put your handset inside the deep freezer or simply consign it to the funeral pyre ... because instead of serving your purpose it is being used to harm you ... Now we have been told that contrary to our earlier belief even WhatsApp is not safe.”

Saying that the Centre was trying to brush the issue under the carpet she wondered “why the Prime Minister is not coming out with a statement on the

issue ... why there is no statement on who purchased the Pegasus from the Israeli concern NSO because no one else

than the Government can purchase it.” This was a Government of “jumla and jolumbaji,” she said.

Didi slams I-T raid on Bhaskar

Kolkata: Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday condemned the Income Tax raids on the premises of a national Hindi daily saying the people of the country and the “entire media world should unite to protest against this act of dictatorship.”

“They are trying to control the judiciary, they are gagging the media, let alone the opposition parties they are not even sparing their own party leaders, government officials and are even spying on a section of the RSS men,” she said adding the newspaper house that had been

raided had “fearlessly raised its voice against the UP Government’s pandemic policy ... it had questioned the way the bodies were being disposed of in Ganges ... it had also raised its voice against Pegasus and now they are trying to muzzle its voice by conducting a raid ... but we will not allow this and we are all behind this media house.”

She said the Centre had reduced all the government agencies to servility adding how the CBI, ED and now I-T was being used to suppress the opposition voices.

UP Cong chief, many workers arrested

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Congress chief Ajay Kumar Lallu and several other party leaders were taken into custody after a face-off between Congress workers and the police while they were on their way to Raj Bhawan to submit a memorandum on the snooping on party leader Rahul Gandhi (Pegasus spyware row) on Thursday.

Earlier, Congress Legislature Party leader Aradhana Mishra, MLC Deepak Singh were put under house arrest.

Despite being under house arrest since Wednesday evening, Lallu managed to sneak out and joined Congress workers as they took out a march from Parivartan Chowk to demand a judicial probe into the Pegasus spyware issue by marching towards Raj Bhawan.

Priyanka hits out at Yogi



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Congress general secretary P Priyanka Gandhi Vadra slammed Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday, saying that people had the right to their views and abusing power to intimidate them was a “heinous crime” and reminded him that the property on which he was sitting could be taken away by the people.

She was responding to a Chief Minister’s tweet through which he appealed to the youth of the State not to be misled by anyone stressing that no one could do wrong today and whoever wanted to get his property confiscated, he could indulge in doing wrong.

In a series of tweets in Hindi posted on Thursday, Priyanka said, “It is a constitutional right to raise your voice, to demonstrate and to agitate for your demands in this country.”

Plea in SC seeks Uniform Code for Religious, Charitable Endowments

New Delhi: A PIL was filed in the Supreme Court on Thursday seeking Uniform Code for Religious and Charitable Endowments and referred to the control of authorities on Hindu temples across the country, unlike certain other groups which are allowed to manage their own institutions.

The plea filed by advocate and BJP leader Ashwini Upadhyay contended that Hindus, Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs should have similar rights to establish, manage and maintain their religious places like Muslims, Parsis and Christians, and the State cannot abridge this right.

“It is submitted that the right to manage institutions conferred under Articles 26 is a natural right for all communities. But Hindus, Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs have been denied this privilege,” said the plea filed through advocate Ashwani Kumar Dubey.

The PIL stated that there are approximately four lakh temples out of nine Lakh temples across the country which are under Government control. **PTI**

Girl thrashed over insistence on wearing jeans, dies in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a bizarre case, a class ninth girl student was beaten to death by her kin after she insisted on wearing jeans against her family members’ wishes in Deoria on Tuesday.

The family members were also accused of trying to dispose of the body by throwing it from Patanwa bridge on Deoria-Kasya in Rampur Karkhana area but the body got stuck in the railings.

On being informed by some locals that the body of a teenage girl was hanging from the bridge railing, the police rushed to the spot and sent it for post-mortem. The victim was later identified as Neha Paswan (17) of Seorahi Kharg in Deoria.

When the cops contacted the family members, the girl’s mother claimed that she suffered head injuries when she was beaten up and it led to her death. The autopsy report also confirmed severe injury and fracture in the head.



The girl’s mother filed a complaint against 10 people, including the girl’s grandparents and her uncles. A case was registered under sections pertaining to causing disappearance of evidence of offence, murder and other provisions. The grandparents were arrested and were being interrogated.

The victim’s younger brother, Vivek, told reporters that on Monday evening, his uncle Arvind started beating Neha after she insisted on wearing jeans. She was seriously injured after which the perpetrators and his brothers took her to the district hospital but she died on the way after which they threw her body from Patnawa Bridge but it stuck in a hook of the railing.

HC refuses to quash CBI FIR against Deshmukh

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major setback to Maharashtra’s former Home Minister Anil Deshmukh refuses to quash the First Information Report (FIR) filed against him by the CBI under the Prevention of Corruption Act, after holding that Deshmukh’s petition deserved to be “dismissed”.

Hearing a petition filed by Deshmukh, a HC of Justices SS Shinde and NJ Jamadar held that for reasons cited in the judgement, the plea by the State’s former Minister deserved to be dismissed, and asked the Registrar General to return the investigation papers to the CBI.

After hearing both sides, the HC bench had reserved the ruling in the case for ruling on July 12. It had directed the CBI to submit its report on the investigation conducted so far.

On his part senior Advocate Amit Desai representing Deshmukh, prayed for a stay on the effect of the order passed by the court as it involved important questions of law which required

to be studied for taking appropriate steps.

However, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for CBI, opposed petitioner’s request, stating that no question of law was involved.

The HC bench rejected Desai’s request for stay on the effect of the order, byu saying that no substantial question of law was involved.

Seeking the quashing of FIR filed by the CBI, Deshmukh – who has been charged with corruption and criminal conspiracy, told the court that the investigating agency had failed to obtain requisite sanction prior to registering the FIR, as he was a public servant at the time of registering offence.

Desai told the court that before filing the FIR against Deshmukh, the CBI should have applied for permission from the Maharashtra government as required under the Section 6 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, after completing the Preliminary Enquiry ordered by the high

court.

Obtaining consent from the Maharashtra Government was essential considering that the allegations made against him by Mumbai’s former police commissioner Param Bir Singh could easily have been a “false” allegation, Desai said.

Among other things, Desai told the court that the high court had relied two documents – a complaint made by Dr Jaishree Patil and a letter written by the by Param Bir Singh – did not contain first hand information which was necessary to initiate investigations, but contained mere “suspicions, whispers and allegations”.

Contending that Deshmukh was trying to revisit the HC ruling ordering PE into the allegations against Deshmukh, Additional Solicitor General Aman Lekhi appearing for CBI opposed the petition, by saying that the Court’s order had been upheld by the Supreme Court.

Lekhi argued that the allegations that the CBI was investigation was not based not

hearsay because Deshmukh had asked now suspended and incarcerated Mumbai police officer Sachin Vaze to exhort money from hotels and bars.

The court that requirement of sanction under Section 17A was deemed unnecessary the moment the Court ordered the enquiry based on a thorough consideration of the material before it. The section 17A could not be used as a shield to protect a wrongdoer, he told the court.

In his petition filed by him challenging the FIR, Deshmukh had also told the high court that the CBI had based its FIR on the “vague allegations” and that there was no case of allegations of “illegal gratification” under section 7 of PCA or criminal conspiracy under section 120-B of the IPC.

In his petition filed on May 5 he had also told the court that the CBI had not taken the Maharashtra government’s consent to register the FIR against him which he said was necessary since he was a minister when the alleged offence took place.

12,818 new corona cases in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Veteran physicians threw up their hands in despair as the Covid-19 pandemic continued its big strides unabated across Kerala on Thursday. The pandemic claimed 122 lives during the 24 hours ended on Thursday taking the death toll across the State till date to 15,739.

The day also saw 12,818 new persons getting diagnosed with Covid-19 with an average Test Positivity Rate of 12.38 per cent. But the release issued by the office of the Health Minister said there were 271 regions in the State where the TPR was above 15 per cent necessitating triple lock down in the specific areas.

On Thursday, health officials subjected 1,03543 persons for testing which thre up the figure of 12, 818. On Wednesday the State had diagnosed 17,481 new patients when 1.45 lakh persons were tested for the pandemic. The TPR which was 11.9 per cent on

Wednesday shot up further by Thursday.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan told the people not to get upset with the hike in TPR and asked them to maintain safety norms specified by the doctors. But physicians in Kerala who are working in the Government service said the people themselves are to be blamed for the state of affairs.

“But for the vaccines provided by the Union Government, Kerala would have become a graveyard by this time. I am extremely sorry to say that the people in the State are indifferent to the pleas made by the Chief Minister in his media interactions. Most of the people who turn up in hospitals do not wear face masks or observe the standard regulations. If we gently remind them to wear face masks, they shout at us and even try to physically attack us,” said a senior physician in a Government Hospital in Ernakulam district.

Maha deaths dip to 120

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Covid-19 daily deaths dropped to 120 and infections dipped to 7,302 in Maharashtra on Thursday, even as 7756 patients were discharged after full recovery from various hospitals in the State.

A day after the state logged 165 deaths and 8,159 infections, the deaths came down by 45 and infections dipped by 857. With 120 deaths reported on Thursday, the total number of deaths increased from 1,30,753 to 1,31,038, while the infections – with 7,302 new cases – climbed from 62,37,755 to 62,45,057

As 7,756 were discharged from the hospitals across the state after full recovery, the total number of people discharged from the hospitals since the second week of March last year increased from 60,08,750 to 60,16,506 The recovery rate in the State rose from 96.33 per cent to 96.34 per cent.

The total “active cases” in the state increased marginally from 94,745 to 94,168. The fatality rate in the State stood static at 2.09 per cent

Mumbai recorded 10 deaths and 389 infections. As a result, the Covid-19 toll in the metropolis increased from 15,800 to 15,810, while the infected cases in Mumbai went up from 7,32,582 to 7,23,971.

Pune with 15,869 active cases emerged as the first in the state in terms of maximum number of “active cases” in the state, while Thane with 11,710 stood second, followed by Sangli (10,737), Mumbai (10,710) Kolhapur (10,701) and Satara (7210).

Of the 4,62,64,059 samples sent to various laboratories across the state so far, 62,45,057 have tested positive (13.5 per cent) for Covid-19 until Thursday.

Eight UP dists now Covid-free

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Covid-19 is on the ebb in Uttar Pradesh as eight districts have been declared coronavirus- free while 53 new positive cases were confirmed during the last 24 hours on Thursday and 56 patients recovered during this period.

Additional Chief Secretary (Information) Navneet Sehgal said here on Thursday that there was not a single case of coronavirus infection in eight districts of the state, namely Aligarh, Balrampur, Basti, Etah, Mahoba, Lalitpur, Hathras and Shravasti.

The positivity rate is 0.02 per cent and the recovery rate in the state is 98.6 per cent. At present, there are 1,028 active Covid cases in the state. Not a single new case of infection was found in 44 districts, while Covid-19 patients were found in single digits in 31 districts, Sehgal said. So far more than 6.33 crore Covid samples have been tested. In the last 24 hours, 2.34 lakh Covid samples were tested.

Till July 21, more than 4.20 crore vaccine doses have been administered in the state.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday directed that ‘Ghar Ghar Par Dastak Abhiyan’ should be effectively carried out for the identification and treatment of active patients of TB, dengue, filariasis, malaria and encephalitis.

“During the campaign, people should be made aware about the importance of cleanliness, sanitisation, and nutritious food. Children up to 2 years of age should be vaccinated against Japanese encephalitis in regular immunisation sessions. After this campaign, from July 26, a special campaign should be carried out to make golden cards under the Ayushman Bharat scheme,” the chief minister said.

Woman, three children found murdered in Agra

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a gruesome crime in the City of Taj, a woman and her three children were brutally murdered in Kucha Sadhuram area in Kotwali police station area and the incident came to light on Thursday morning.

After being informed by neighbours, top police officers rushed to the spot and later quizzed the woman’s husband who lived separately.

As per reports, Rekha Rathore (36) of Kucha Sadhuram separated from her husband, Sunil Rathore, two years back after which the estranged husband started living in Maithan. Rekha lived with her three children Tuktuk (12), Paras (10) and Mahi (8).

On Thursday morning, around 9 am, the neighbours saw the door of Rekha’s house ajar.

When they went inside to enquire, they found to their horror the bodies of Rekha and her children lying in pools of blood on the room floor. They immediately raised an alarm and called the local police.

After preliminary investigation, the police maintained that Rekha and the three children were murdered by slitting their throats

with a sharp-edged weapon. The police said that the cabinets in the room were open and her belongings were scattered on the floor. The victim and her children were last seen on Wednesday afternoon.

The role of a tantric was also being enquired behind the gruesome murders as sliced lemons and a plate of worship was found in the room. The police are scanning CCTV cameras installed in the area.

Later, the canine squad was pressed into service to pick up a scent but nothing positive came out. A forensic team also visited the site for collecting any possible evidence.

Police are also trying to figure out the identity of visitors to the woman’s house. Her husband was also detained for questioning.

Meanwhile, the mastermind in the kidnapping of an Agra surgeon, was killed in an encounter in the city on Thursday.

Surgeon Dr Umakant Gupta was honey trapped by a woman and later kidnapped by notorious criminal Badan Singh and taken to Dholpur in Rajasthan on July 13. A demand for a ransom of ₹ 5 crore was also made to the victim’s family for his release.

Bike rally held to pay homage to Kargil martyrs

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Lt-Gen YK Joshi, GOC-in-C Northern Command Headquarters, Thursday embarked on a very special journey commemorating 22 nd Kargil Vijay Diwas and 75 years of Independence.

During Kargil War Lt-Gen Joshi was the Commanding Officer of Param Vir Chakra awardees Captain Vikram Batra and Rifleman Sanjay Kumar of 13 JAK Rifles. A Kargil war veteran, Lt-Gen Joshi has been regularly attending the annual event but this year he decided to hit the road and cover the journey along with fellow riders to immortalize the supreme sacrifice made by the soldiers.

The bike rally was flagged off from Dhruva War Memorial by Param Veer Chakra awardee Subedar Sanjay Kumar.

The Army Commander Northern Command will be joined by the three Corps Commanders of 14, 15 and 16 Corps Lt-Gen PGK Menon, Lt-Gen DP Pandey, and Lt-Gen MV Suchindra Kumar respectively. In addition, two Major Generals, Four



Brigadiers, Sixty two officers, Six ladies, One JCO and fifteen Other Ranks will also be forming part of the ride along with six ladies and four wards.

According to a Defence spokesman, “the main segment of the ride comprises 25 Jawa Classic Legend riders launched from Udhampur. Alongside this main ride, there will be subsidiary rides launched from Naushera, Srinagar and Karakoram Pass making it to a total of 75 bikes marking 75 years of India’s Independence. The segment covering the icy heights of Karakoram will traverse through Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) Darbuk Leh and Kargil to converge with the main segment at Kargil War Memorial,

Drass on 23 Jul 2021 where the entire ride is culminating to further participate in the Kargil Vijay Diwas 2021”.

At the time of Flag Off of Ride, the Northern Command Army commander said, “The Indian Armed Forces will defeat any nefarious design of the adversary with resolve, courage and bravery unparalleled in history. In the last two years we have made steady progress and the violence parameters have ebbed considerably indicating a paradigm shift in the common Kashmiri mindset which today is driven to seek peace and prosperity for the future generations. Let me assure each one that Indian Army shall walk with you in step towards a prosperous and

better future. Be it Ladakh or J&K our commitment to the local population is complete and comprehensive where we shall share their burden with equanimity and cheer”.

He also added, “Operation Vijay is testimony to the fact that there has never been and there will never be a compromise on the territorial integrity of the nation and any such far-fetched idea will remain a pipe dream.

“Despite and in spite of challenges the soldier will always stand steadfast in his vigil to protect the nation and will go beyond the duty to make the supreme sacrifice without batting an eyelid. Operation Vijay may have ended 22 yrs back but the battle here in Jammu & Kashmir still rages on. There is no gratification in violence and the life of a terrorist from the day he picks up a weapon to the day he is neutralized is not more than two months. I would exhort the parents to ensure that their children are not misguided and lured as cannon fodder by the Deep State and Nexus who sit in comfort and decadence to see your children act at their behest.”



Visitors during heavy rain at Taj Mahal in Agra on Thursday



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Rallying forces

Didi plans to meet the Opposition leaders and stitch together a united front against the BJP

Chief Minister's five-day visit to New Delhi when Parliament is in session would normally raise no eyebrows unless it is Mamata Banerjee of West Bengal. She plans to arrive in the nation's Capital to blow the conch for preparing the Opposition to unitedly face the BJP in 2024. At a rally in April, Mamata remarked, "I will win Bengal with one leg and Delhi with two legs." She will certainly have the nation's attention on her maiden visit to Delhi after her return to power in West Bengal. The task she has set for herself, to rally the Opposition forces in the country against the BJP, is not an easy one. Her last attempt boomeranged in her face. It may be recalled that on January 19, 2019, Mamata organised a gigantic rally in Kolkata that was attended by 25 national and State Opposition leaders and where they laid the foundation of a fledgling 'Mahagathbandhan'. However, it was short-lived and Narendra Modi returned to power with an emphatic victory in the general elections. Her own victory may have given her a new resolve now. In a virtual address on Thursday witnessed by a phalanx of the Opposition leaders, Mamata asked for a united front to be born at once. "Khela hobe in 2024", is to be her slogan. She would call the shots from Delhi, not Kolkata. Chandrababu Naidu and the late Jayalalitha before her did leave their State capitals to play roles in national affairs but never led from the front as Mamata proposes to do.



The Opposition appears eager to overcome internal differences, now more than ever in the recent past. The Pegasus affair has left them shocked, knowing that someone could be privy to everything they do. The clumsy progress of the anti-COVID vaccination policy frustrates the State leaders no end. The Centre's assertion about the lack of oxygen causing no death during the pandemic puts them in an awkward position as the States are unable to furnish any evidence to the contrary. Rising prices and inflation are fuelling anti-incumbency. The only silver lining is Mamata's return to power, triumphant enough for the Opposition leaders to rally around her. Unlike in 2019, they have time on their hands — three years — and two challenges to see if they are ready for 2024: The Uttar Pradesh elections and the presidential elections in 2022. A united Opposition can trouble the BJP in UP and give it a fillip for the presidential poll. The BJP needs a good showing in UP not only to settle the issue of its dominance and avoid its allies having any second thoughts but also garner enough votes to get a candidate of its choice elected as the next President. Unless, of course, Mamata has different ideas, like choosing a seasoned leader as the united Opposition candidate, a leader whose national stature will supersede his regional credentials and earn him support from all quarters, including fence-sitter regional satraps.

PICTALK



People use a boat to carry fodder for their livestock after the rise in water level, near Moradabad

PTI

A stitch in time

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan would do well to axe tainted Minister Saseendran from his Cabinet

When the CPI(M) appointed Pinarayi Vijayan, then hardly 53, as the secretary of the Kerala unit of the party in 1998, Marxist strongman VS Achuthanandan was asked why a relatively young man had been elevated to the top post. "This is a long-term investment being made by the party, taking into account the future," was the reply given by VS in his characteristic style. The long-term investment has not let down the party seniors as he navigated the CPI(M) through the turbulent politics of the State, known for its strong undercurrents. The re-election of the LDF Government for another five-year term in the April 6 Assembly election says a lot about the capabilities and qualities of Vijayan, who broke the more than four-decade-old jinx that the ruling party in the State never returns to power. The 2021 Assembly election was a Pinarayi Vijayan show and the electorate in the State offered Kerala on a platter to their leader. While all his predecessors, including late K Karunakaran, AK Antony and Oommen Chandy, had



to tread carefully in the political field of the State laden with "mines and booby traps" because of the alliance culture, Vijayan is free from all such bondages.

The CPI(M) and its poor cousin, the CPI, have enough numbers to rule the State and they are not at the mercy of any fringe parties. This means that the Chief Minister has enough power to clip the wings of any member in the ruling front who dares to violate the coalition dharma. However, Vijayan's second tenure commenced on a not-so-auspicious note because of the spurt in attacks on women, dowry deaths and corruption allegations. This week began on a stormy note as Forest Minister AK Saseendran allegedly misused his official powers to mediate in a sexual abuse case. Saseendran is no stranger to such controversies because his name had figured in the audio clip released by a news channel during Vijayan's previous regime. The Minister, a member of the NCP, was heard asking a female friend for sexual favours and the CPI(M) dumped him altogether. Though he was reinstated after the case was hushed up, the incident remains a blot on the LDF Government. Taking into account the ever-increasing number of sexual abuse cases, the Chief Minister should set up a benchmark and, for that to materialise, Saseendran should be ousted from the Council of Ministers.

Pegasus-gate flies right into Govt's face

India is among the countries which bought and used the spyware programme, not against terrorists but against its own civil society



GYANESHWAR DAYAL

Pegasus, the mythical white-winged warhorse, has finally descended in India. Not now exactly, but a couple of years back, in fact well before the 2019 elections. Pegasus was the white horse on whose back the BJP ensured its historic comeback. Like the mythical Pegasus, it destroyed the Opposition and ensured a comfortable historic win for the warriors who owned it. In fact, they had bought it with the exchequer's money!

For the uninitiated, Pegasus in our times is a spyware programme that can hack any phone and take covert control of the targeted device. Developed by the NSO Group of Israel, it can have covert access to its camera, microphone, contact list, stored data, and so on. It is available for any Government to tackle national security and terrorism. The manufacturers claim that they do not sell software to individuals, businesses or organisations. They sell it only to the Governments so that it is not misused.

"Project Pegasus" is the hard work of French organisation *Forbidden Stories* and Amnesty international. They have investigated the sale, misuse and targets of Pegasus. They have fathomed the phone numbers of the people under Pegasus watch. They have shared their work with several media organisations, *The Guardian*, *Washington Post*, *The Wire* back home and many others are the collaborators in the project. What has emerged is nothing short of mayhem.

They have unearthed what many Governments across the world were up to, and how they were using it against people who the Government thought was a potential threat. India was one of those countries which bought and used it; not against terrorists but against its civil society. Politicians, journalists, lawyers, activists and even its own Ministers were the targets.

As unconfirmed reports suggest, it was used against the intern of the Chief Justice, election commissioner, Opposition leader and even the Government Ministers. They are no terrorists or threat to national security. The software that is in principle for combating terrorism and strengthening the internal secu-



urity of the country was in fact strengthening the Government in power. It was helping it fix people who stand against it, and unleash a reign of terror in the name of fighting terrorism. As Home Minister Amit Shah rightly said people should understand the chronology. Indeed, they should and put things that happened in the last four-five years in perspective.

To connect the dots, let's have a few names that appear in the long list of targets in India. A lot happened during and after the general elections in 2019. To begin with, the then Chief Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa was a prominent player in the general election. He was on a panel hearing complaints against Prime Minister Narendra Modi for violating the code of conduct.

Lavasa dissented on a panel's ruling on the complaints against Modi and Shah. His wife Novel Lavasa was served an income tax notice two months later. The intern, who had filed an affidavit against former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi for having made sexual advances, was also the Pegasus target. Her phone number, along with



THE SOFTWARE THAT IS IN PRINCIPLE FOR COMBATING TERRORISM AND STRENGTHENING THE INTERNAL SECURITY OF THE COUNTRY WAS IN FACT STRENGTHENING THE GOVERNMENT IN POWER. IT WAS HELPING IT FIX PEOPLE WHO STAND AGAINST IT

10 other family members, was in the target list accessed by the Pegasus Project.

This was the time when many crucial and sensitive decisions were passed by Justice Gogoi, including Ram temple and Rafale. He gave a clean chit to the Modi Government in the Rafale deal. He passed the Ayodhya judgment just as it would please the Union Government. He also did not take a stand on the habeas corpus petition by Sitaram Yechuri to produce Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami. This was after an indefinite lockdown was imposed in Kashmir following the Modi Government's decision to scrap Article 370. A Bench headed by Justice Gogoi did not bother to consider that the detentions were illegal. Pegasus also cut into the armour of Rahul Gandhi, the Opposition leader and the main challenger to Modi in 2019. Prashant Kishor, once a strategist for the BJP, was also among the targets.

Finally, poetic justice was done to IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw. He defended the Government in the House, saying such snooping was impossible. His phone itself was under surveillance! The

software was used to spy on the accused in the Bhima Koregaon case, too. This was already hinted at by the western media that the Bhima Koregaon accused were being framed. Names of Hany Babu Musaliyarveetil Tharayil, his wife Jenny Rowena, Vernon Gonsalves, Anand Teltumbde, Sudha Bharadwaj, Gautam Navlakha, retired professor Shoma Sen and lawyer Arun Ferreira have been revealed by Project Pegasus. Among the accused was 84-year-old tribal rights activist Father Stan Swamy, who died on July 5 awaiting bail on medical grounds.

The Pegasus flies straight into the face of the Government, though it has denied any involvement in spying. If it was not involved, then it must prove so with a third-party investigation as demanded by Kapil Sibal. The onus is on the Government to prove that it is clean. It would not only restore people's faith in democracy, it would also boost the country's image which this Government claims to take so seriously.

(The writer is a columnist and documentary filmmaker. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE TRICOLOUR AT THE OLYMPICS

Sir — The Tokyo Olympics is starting with a lot of rules and protocols, but the shadow of Coronavirus looms heavy over it. The enthusiasm among the players is tremendous, they have to live up to the expectations of their respective countries and return only after winning a medal. A few years ago, the meaning of sports in our country was only cricket. Over time, this perception is slowly changing. Getting medals in the Olympics has now become a matter of prestige for the country, so everybody from the Centre to the State Governments is spending a lot of money and rewarding the athletes for winning medals. This is the identity of the changing India.

The Olympics is an event in which every player dreams of participating, but this time there will be no spectators to boost the morale of players due to Corona. For the first time, the Olympics are being held without spectators. It is true that there will be pressure on our players to live up to the expectations of the entire country, but the nation sincerely hopes and prays that our talented players will hoist the Tricolour high.

Devanand Ray | New Delhi

WHEN NATURE HITS BACK

Sir — It is always said that for the sake of development and prosperity in the material world, the destruction of nature will hit us back hard. Even the Father of the Nation said, "Nature gives enough to satisfy our need, not our greed." The seed which countries like China and the US have sown is now manifesting itself in the form of devastating floods and other natural calamities.

In the race to become more developed and powerful, we are writing the script of our own doom. The serious issue of climate change has always been in the headlines, but the promised words never converted into action. Whether the fires in California or the floods in China, the untimely natural events have shown their power and anger. Even, India is not untouched by these unprecedented problems of climate

Forging unity in the Opposition ranks



The "enthusiastic participation" of Opposition parties at the special function organised by the Trinamool Congress as part of the Martyrs' Day was a significant political development. Mamata Banerjee made an impassioned plea to all Opposition parties to make their short-term political calculations subservient to the country's long-term interest and form a united front against the BJP.

In her inimitable way, Mamata compared the Opposition's role in "saving the nation" to that of doctors who do their best "to cure the patient", adding that time is of the essence in both the contexts. To make her view more pronounced, she described the BJP as "a high-load virus

G David Milton | Tamil Nadu

change. Should we call it the result of our deeds or just pass the buck to each other?

From developing to developed countries, history is replete with instances that when natural calamities occur, neither technology nor human mind is capable of taming these. It would be better if we worked on the path of humanity, peace and global prosperity by planting trees and taking eco-friendly decisions.

Aman Jaiswal | New Delhi

PATCH UP MUMBAI'S POTHOLE PROBLEM

Sir — Mumbai and its suburbs are experiencing monsoon rains for over six days and the intermittent heavy to very heavy rainfall is causing concern to vehicle users as they come across at least 100 potholes on every main road. It causes traffic snarls as well, leading to a number of accidents almost daily. The two-wheeler users suffer the most as they lose their balance and

thereby fall down and injure themselves. The citizens disbelieve the BMC's pothole reporting system because it claims that Mumbai has a total of only 264 potholes.

The civic body's crate-tracking platform says 150 potholes have already been repaired. Obviously the figures are under-reported for a cover-up and immediate action needs to be taken before more accidents take place on the slippery and potholed roads. In the past, some Samaritans took up the challenge to fill up the potholes in whatever way possible. This time round, even traffic constables have lent a helping hand for repairing the roads. The BMC has been apathetic in filling up the potholes in Mulund and nearby areas. Better counsel should prevail and the BMC should take up rain preparedness in a very serious way.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUNDBITE

The I-T raid on *Dainik Bhaskar* highlights the dangerous, dismissive and draconian nature of the BJP Government.



Congress leader — Abhishek Singhvi



Children under the age of 12 could be eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine soon.

US President — Joe Biden

Jeetendra has been my co-actor in several films. Believe me, I have never seen any actor, even Amitabh Bachchan, being as punctual as him.



Actor — Reena Roy



The batsman playing in front of me, he should have the confidence that I can support him. I work hard on batting. My father is my coach.

Indian pacer — Deepak Chahar

These kinds of stories (Pegasus) are floated to undermine Indian institutions and stop Data Protection, that is set to become law.



Senior BJP leader — Meenakshi Lekhi

FIRST COLUMN QUAD: BUILD FUTURE ALLIANCES

The Quad got off to a good start with Biden sponsoring the optimism for such an alliance



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

US secretary of State Anthony Blinken may shortly visit India. The move assumes significance in the face of the fast-changing world order, especially in the Indo-Pacific region, with a focus on Quad and similar platforms among like-minded nations. The Chinese Communist Party celebrated its centenary on July 1, the occasion buoying the Dragon to actively look for new partnerships to counter the Quad alliance. Reports indicate China proposing a new Quad with Russia, Pakistan, and Iran. China enjoys deep ties with potential Quad partners. China and Russia have been strategic allies for a long time. Despite some suspicions and apprehensions, they have a healthy trade relationship and cooperate on fronts like technology, defence, and economy. China has always been a supporter of Iran which in turn has maintained a "One China outlook". The bond is sealed, deepened by their shared resentment towards the US. China has recently promised \$400 million to Iran while assur-



ing to buy more oil and natural resources from the partner.

An all-weather ally of China in the entire equation is Pakistan. The latter fits in the geo-strategic chessboard, where its presence right next to India serves China's unspoken wish to keep India busy in the neighborhood and have no significant say in world affairs. The US walking out of Afghanistan may see a more active Chinese presence in the neighborhood even as the clamor rises for a balancing force to bring Taliban and Kabul closer and keeping central Asia safe. That brings us to the original Quad, consisting of the US, India, Australia, and Japan. The multi-lateral alliance for economic and defence collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region also tries to contain growing Chinese dominance in the region. The Quad got off to a good start with President Joe Biden sponsoring the US optimism for such an alliance, set in motion by his predecessor. The first, virtual conference was held in March and there is a possibility of a physical meeting in Washington towards September. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to travel to the US around that time for his first in-person meeting with Biden. China along with Russia has been actively pushing the vaccine diplomacy to reach out to its neighbors thereby increasing its influence and negotiating power. The world is staring at a fresh bunch of variants hitting its population which could potentially threaten partial closures across geographies besides restricting the free movement of people. The Quad leaders had agreed in March to work together on vaccine manufacturing as well as setting up a working group and a fund for research on future pandemics. The four nations have significant grounds to cover on the vaccination front. Except for the US, none of the others have managed to vaccinate a large chunk of their populations and that continues to be a zone of concern. If the QUAD partnership has to make any headway, then the US will have to persuade its pharma giants to come in and quickly ramp up the production of the vaccines. This will also help many smaller countries in India's neighborhood as the Quad commitment is also to have a healthy and safe neighborhood besides trying to act as a bulwark against China. The other area of quick cooperation among Quad nations which the US secretary of State is likely to take up relates to technology cooperation and working together on emerging technologies in face of new threats in the cyberspace. The threat to technology architecture with the potential to bring nations and economies to a halt is a shared concern and these countries need to quickly put together an actionable roadmap for the future.

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

Rising forex reserves: A boon or bane?

More than the quantity of foreign exchange reserves, we have to pay attention to the sources of increase in our foreign exchange reserves



ASHWANI MAHAJAN

Our policymakers, pink (economic) newspapers, and pro-foreign investment economists are all obsessed by India's rising foreign exchange reserves. In this regard, the government seems to be patting its back saying that the investment climate in the country has improved. The newspapers appear to consider surging foreign exchange reserves as a barometer of the economy's well-being due to rising foreign investments.

It is worth noting that although our foreign exchange reserves have been increasing continuously for the last three decades, the growth has become faster than ever in the last 18 months. Significantly, the foreign exchange reserves have reached \$ 611 billion by July 3, 2021, increasing from \$ 431 billion on January 3, 2020 (most significantly during the period of the global pandemic). Compared with 1991, when India faced a situation of acute shortage of foreign exchange, such that our reserves were not enough to pay for imports of even seven days, today the situation is such that our foreign exchange reserves are enough to pay for 18 months of imports.

The growing foreign exchange reserves do give a sense of satisfaction and relief. It is also true that if foreign exchange reserves are not sufficient, there is a danger of default in repayment of interest and principal of foreign loans. We realized this worst-case scenario in 1991 when we were forced to mortgage our gold with the Bank of England as a guarantee against imminent default.

Citing the same history, some economists consider the rising foreign exchange reserves to be auspicious. They argue that foreign exchange reserves act as insurance for the country so that there is never a situation of a sovereign default. They also compare India's foreign exchange reserves with that of China's. Significantly, China's foreign exchange reserves are six to seven times more than India's reserves. We have to understand that China's foreign exchange reserves increased mostly thanks to a balance of payments (BOP) surplus of China with most of their trading partners. To some extent, they also grew due to foreign direct investment. Whereas in India's case, the increases in India's foreign exchange reserves are mainly due to foreign direct investment (FDI) and foreign portfolio/institutional investment (FPI). Generally, our balance of payments remains in huge deficit.

So, more than the quantity of foreign exchange reserves, we have to pay attention to what are the sources of increase in foreign exchange reserves. It also has to be kept in mind the far-reaching consequences of foreign exchange received from these sources. Economists agree that the best option as a source of foreign exchange is the balance of payments surplus. If our exports of goods and services are more than our imports, the foreign



HISTORY IS WITNESS THAT WHENEVER THERE HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTS TO TAX THESE FOREIGN INVESTORS, THEY HAVE PARRIED THE EFFORTS BY 'BLACKMAILING' THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COUNTRY. SINCE THERE IS ALWAYS THE FEAR THAT THESE FOREIGN INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS MAY LEAVE WITH THEIR 'HOT MONEY' ANYTIME, IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO RESTRICT ANY EVENTUALITY OF THAT KIND BY REGULATING THEM

(The writer is Professor, PGDAV College, University of Delhi. The views expressed are personal.)



exchange thus earned is the best option. This has actually happened in China. But if this foreign currency is obtained by borrowing, then it is the worst option.

Even if the foreign exchange is obtained through investment in the stock markets, then also it has many side effects. The first side effect is that it causes volatility not only in the stock markets but also in the exchange rate. Its result can be ominous for the country. Another side effect is that the country has to pay a heavy price for this inflow of foreign exchange as these investors take back the huge profits to their countries of origin even as the value of their assets keeps increasing.

Significantly, while foreign institutional investors have invested a total of \$281 billion in India till date, the total valuation of their assets has reached \$607 billion as of March 31, 2021. Apart from this, they have also earned dividends of \$64.28 billion. They can sell their \$607 billion worth of shares and bonds and go back at any moment and all our foreign exchange reserves can run out in a jiffy. That is why portfolio investment is also called 'hot money'.

However, foreign investment, foreign loans taken by private companies, and remittances by Indians to the home country are all important for increasing foreign exchange reserves. But not all

these sources have a similar effect on the reserves. Remittances by Indians normally do not have any repayment obligations and generally, all these amounts remain in India forever. However, foreign investors, whether they are foreign direct investors or portfolio investors, repatriate huge amounts of money. These investors take away huge amounts of foreign exchange in the form of dividend royalty, technical fees, interest, salary, etc. In addition to that, the share of imports in the products produced by these foreign companies is also very high due to which a huge quantity of foreign exchange outflow happens. Significantly, between April 1, 2000 and March 31, 2021, the total foreign direct investment has been \$763.6 billion.

In the last ten years (2010-11 to 2019-20), these foreign investors have withdrawn \$390 billion, in the form of dividends, royalties, technical fees, interest, and salaries and this amount has been increasing year after year.

On the other hand, when it comes to portfolio investments, they are even more dangerously more profitable. It has to be understood that there is no stability in portfolio investment. It is not possible to estimate how much foreign exchange the portfolio investors will bring in and when they will withdraw. Their volatility affects

the exchange rate, causing huge losses. Not only this, these investors cause huge volatility in the stock markets as well. Today, when India's foreign exchange reserves are booming, it is time to consider what price the country is paying for this growing foreign exchange reserves. For, foreign investors are repatriating huge profits from India while the country's returns from these foreign exchange reserves are very negligible. Avenues will have to be found for gainful use of foreign exchange reserves beyond a limit.

History is witness that whenever there have been attempts to tax these foreign investors, they have parried the efforts by 'blackmailing' the government and the country. Since there is always the fear that these foreign institutional investors may leave with their 'hot money' anytime, it is absolutely necessary to restrict any eventuality of that kind, by regulating them. In this regard, a provision of a 'lock-in period' can be imposed on them. If they still want to take their money back, then a provision can also be made to levy tax on them. This tax was suggested by an economist named James Tobin; hence it is also called 'Tobin Tax'. Today, as our forex reserves are in a comfortable position, it is high time to use these measures to discipline these foreign institutional investors.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

HEALTH IS A STATE SUBJECT, THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR COLLECTING DATA...NO DEATHS DUE TO LACK OF OXYGEN WERE SPECIFICALLY REPORTED.

— MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH
BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR



IF NO DEATHS OCCURRED DUE TO OXYGEN SHORTAGE, WHY DID THE HOSPITALS MOVE THE HIGH COURT ONE AFTER THE OTHER? THE CENTRE IS LYING.

— DELHI HEALTH MINISTER
SATYENDAR JAIN

The growing burden of neurological disorders in India

The COVID-19 survivors in particular have mental disorders on account of social isolation, anxiety, fear and emotional distress



RAJINDER K DHAMIYA

India has a huge burden of neurological diseases along with mental health disorders and substance abuse. Neurological diseases alone constitute nearly 10 percent of total diseases in India along with an additional 10.6 percent prevalence of psychiatric disorders, according to the National Mental Health Survey, 2016. With more than 20 crore people affected by these diseases and in a need to medical help, it is a serious challenge to India's public health system.

These diseases are on the rise, ironically, because of the increased longevity of the population with many people now living beyond the seventies and eighties. Strokes, headache disorders, epilepsy, dementia, and Parkinson's dis-

ease are the leading contributors to neurological disorders.

A recent Lancet global study said the disability resulting from neurological diseases has doubled from four per cent in 1990 to 8.2 per cent in 2019 and the proportional contribution of mental disorders to the total disease burden in India has also almost doubled since 1990. Indian ethnic factors are notable as most of us are prone to lifestyle related risk factors like diabetes, hypertension, lack of physical exercise, obesity, smoking, and air pollution. Many neurological conditions have a progressive course with limited therapeutic options available and require long-term treatment as well as care. More than a third of all



suicides globally are committed in India. The suicidal rates rank first among all mortality causes in young women in most states. This causes enormous financial losses as well as societal slurs. The WHO estimated in 2011 that the economic loss due to mental health disorders alone will be in the realm of \$1.03 trillion between 2012 to 2030. We also have the peculiar social issue of stigma associated with

mental health disorders in our country.

The government has taken steps to make things better for the patients. The Mental Health Care Act, 2017 empowers patients to make choices regarding treatment or nominate someone to take decisions about the course of treatment. It also criminalises the attempt to die by suicide, thereby reducing further stress on the victim. The Act provides the right to treatment for patients with mental health disorders.

Despite an exponential rise in neurological diseases, the neurology and psychiatric workforce has not grown proportionally. India has inadequate specialist manpower with fewer than 2500 neurologists, 1800 neurosurgeons,

200 palliative care physicians, and around 9000 psychiatrists, as per the Indian Psychiatric Society register.

The majority of the specialists are in urban hospitals and private setups. Very few of these services are available in rural areas. Most of these patients require long-term rehabilitation but neurorehabilitation is still in its infancy in India and practically non-existent in many parts of the country. Neuro-palliative care is still unheard of and leaves many patients with a poor quality of life. Hardly one or two per cent of the patients have access to palliative care or pain management. Hence, there is a dire need to strengthen the neurology and psychiatric workforce and the availability of affordable and

accessible management of neurological disorders. Also, stigma and lack of awareness are key issues that need to be addressed not only by state but also by civil society.

World Brain Day is observed on July 22 with the objective of raising awareness about brain diseases and neurological disorders. The theme for this year is Multiple Sclerosis which affects young women resulting in profound physical impairment as well as mental health disabilities. World Brain Day 2021 is also important in view of the fact that people in general, and COVID-19 survivors in particular, are suffering mental disorders on account of social isolation, anxiety, fear, and emotional distress. It has become widespread after the

second wave of the pandemic.

The number of patients reporting mood swings, depression, stress, anxiety, severe post-traumatic stress disorders, or depressive symptoms is increasing and needs counseling and support. We need to plan for the long-term care of these millions of COVID survivors suffering from neurological issues. The time has come to recognize the parallel epidemic of neurological and mental health disorders and plan strategies for an effective public health response to reduce this burden of brain diseases and augment infrastructure and the workforce in addition to creating public awareness and mitigating social stigma attached to these patients.

(The writer is Head of Neurology Department, Lady Hardinge Medical College and SSK Hospital, New Delhi. The views expressed are personal.)

COVID-19

China rejects WHO’s plan to probe Wuhan lab leak

Beijing: China on Thursday categorically rejected the WHO’s plan for the second phase of coronavirus origin-tracing in Wuhan, especially to probe the lab leak theory, as it dismissed reports that some of the employees of the facility were infected with the deadly virus before it spread to the city and the world.

China will not follow the World Health Organisation’s suggested plan on the second phase of COVID-19 origin-tracing, Zeng Yixin, the vice minister of the National Health Commission (NHC), told a media briefing here.

The work plan on the second-phase origins study proposed by the WHO contains language that does not respect science, he said.

China’s broadside against the WHO and its Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who previously won Beijing’s praise and support for praising President Xi

Jinping’s handling of the coronavirus, came after he asked China to be transparent and provide raw data.

“Asking actually China to be transparent, open and cooperate, especially on the information, raw data that we asked for at the early days of the pandemic. We owe it to the millions who suffered and the millions who died to know what happened,” he had said.

State-run Global Times reported that the WHO on Friday last proposed a second phase study into the origins of the coronavirus in China, which includes all the laboratories and markets in Wuhan.

Zeng said the plan has listed the hypothesis that China had violated lab regulations and leaked the virus as one of the major research objectives, and he was “very shocked” after reading the proposal, state-run China Daily reported.

Instead, the next-phase origin tracing should focus on var-

ious regions and countries, he said, reiterating Beijing’s oft-repeated claim that the coronavirus broke out in several places in the world and China was the first to report about it in December, 2019 when it emerged in the central Chinese city of Wuhan.

Zeng said he was shocked by the WHO’s work plan as it has been compromised by political manipulation and disrespect of scientific facts.

He said China had allowed the WHO experts to visit all places they wanted to go and meet all people they wanted to see early this year, adding that the results of the WHO-China joint study are able to stand the test of time.

“We hope the WHO can carefully consider the advice by Chinese scientists, take investigating the origin of the COVID-19 virus as a scientific question free from political interference,” the vice minister said. **PTI**

Zulu leader makes plea to stop anti-India sentiment in SA

Johannesburg: Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the traditional prime minister of the Zulu nation, has made an impassioned plea for an end to anti-Indian sentiment that has seen rising tensions between Indian-origin South Africans and their Black compatriots.

The tensions have been particularly high in the sprawling Indian township of Phoenix, north of Durban, and residents of three surrounding Black areas following the deaths of 22 people in Phoenix during the riots and looting last week by vigilante groups trying to protect their businesses and homes from looters.

The unrest started with protests after the jailing of former president Jacob Zuma on July 7, but rapidly degenerated into mass mob looting and arson allegedly fuelled by poverty and unemployment.

Zuma was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment by the country’s apex court for contempt of court after he repeatedly refused to testify at the

Commission of Inquiry into State Capture, where several witnesses have implicated him in corruption.

President Cyril Ramaphosa has called the incidents “a failed insurrection” in an organised way. Buthelezi said in an interview on TV channel Newzroom Afrika (sic) that Indians and Blacks had lived side-by-side for generations, as he decried the killings in Phoenix.

“This (the killings) is most unfortunate. The people who did this are very stupid, because they should have known beforehand what was likely to follow after that, that there would be feelings of wanting to retaliate,” Buthelezi said.

“I’ve always lived cheek-by-jowl with the Indian people. Some of the Indians are committed to social cohesion, because there is no future if we don’t promote and consolidate social cohesion,” said the 92-year-old politician who started the mainly-Zulu Inkatha Freedom Party in 1975. **PTI**

Syria accuses Israel of carrying out strike, 2nd this week

Damascus: Syria accused Israel of carrying out an airstrike in a central province early on Thursday, the second such attack in as many days. The aerial attack caused material damage, it said.

The country” state news agency quoted an unidentified Syrian military official as saying the air defense systems shot down most of the missiles in the attack in the region of Quseir in Homs province. The report did not say what was targeted.

There was no immediate comment from Israel.

Neighbouring Lebanon’s president, Michel Aoun, urged his foreign minister to protest with the United Nations the use

of Lebanese airspace to carry out attacks on Syria. Lebanese media meanwhile reported that a rocket fell inside Lebanon — in Lahfed, a village in the north — on Thursday, causing a large crater in the ground.

Israel has launched hundreds of strikes against Iran-linked military targets in war-ravaged Syria over the years but rarely acknowledges or discusses such operations. Late Monday, Syria reported an Israeli airstrike near northern Aleppo province, but did not elaborate.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a war monitor that has activists on the ground in Syria, said Monday’s strikes targeted

weapons depots belonging to Iranian-backed militiamen operating in Aleppo’s Safira region.

The group also confirmed Thursday’s strikes, saying they destroyed ammunition and weapons depots belonging to the Lebanese militant Hezbollah group in Homs. The Iran-backed group has been operating in Syria for years, siding with President Bashar Assad’s forces in the devastating civil war and helping the government reclaim most of the country.

Separately, the Israeli military said it detained two people after they were seen crossing from south Lebanon into Israeli territory. **AP**

Merkel: No way back on German plan to end N power use

Berlin: Chancellor Angela Merkel on Thursday defended her decision to end Germany’s use of nuclear power next year, but acknowledged that it will make it harder to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the short term.

The decision, taken in the wake of the Fukushima nuclear disaster 10 years ago, is regarded as one of the pivotal moments during Merkel’s 16 years in office. Critics have said the move places a burden on Germany as it seeks to cut carbon emissions to zero by 2045.

“There are other countries that choose differently so it will be easier for them, in some ways, to achieve climate neutrality,” Merkel told reporters in Germany. “I still believe that in the long term nuclear energy

isn’t a sustainable form of energy production.”

The phase-out of nuclear power by the end of 2022 has made Germany more reliant on coal over the coming years compared to France or Britain. But the German Government has also committed to ending the burning of coal by 2038, a goal Merkel said could only be achieved by significantly expanding the use of renewable energy.

She rejected the idea that a future Government might reverse the nuclear decision, saying that “for Germany, the die is cast” and called instead for greater efforts to expand production of hydrogen, a carbon-free fuel that experts say will be needed by the country’s industry. **AP**

Hong Kong police arrests 5 trade union members for sedition

Hong Kong: Hong Kong police on Thursday arrested five trade union members over children’s books they described as seditious, and a court denied bail for four editors and journalists held on charges of endangering national security, as part of a widening crackdown on dissent in the city.

The five who were arrested are members of the General Association of Hong Kong Speech Therapists, according to local media reports.

The association published three children’s books that Li Kwai-wah, a senior superintendent of the national security department, said have seditious intent.

The books feature stories that revolve around a village of sheep that has to deal with wolves from a different village. The sheep take action like going on strike or escaping by boat, according to the synopses published on the association’s

website.

Li said that the stories referenced the 12 Hong Kong activists who were arrested at sea while trying to flee the city, after most of them were charged in connection with massive anti-government protests in 2019.

There was also a story about wolves who are “cruel and try to occupy the area” where the sheep live, and try to kill them, Li said.

“Of course, when we prosecute the case, we are not the one to prove that these materials have actually caused the inciting to others,” said Li.

“And the children, maybe because of the information inside ... can turn their mind and develop a moral standard against the society.” The 2019 rallies calling for more civil rights and universal suffrage shook Hong Kong for months, often descending into violence between police and protesters. **AP**

Mobile internet disruptions seen in Iran amid water protests

Dubai: Mobile phone internet service in Iran is being disrupted a week into protests in the country’s southwest over water shortages, a monitoring group said Thursday, unrest that has seen at least three people killed.

Internet-access advocacy group NetBlocks.org attributed part of the disruption to “state information controls or targeted internet shutdowns.” It

identified the outages as beginning July 15, when the protests began in Khuzestan amid a drought affecting the oil-rich region neighboring Iraq.

While headline service continues, NetBlocks warned its analysis and user reports were “consistent with a regional internet shutdown intended to control protests.”

The effects represents “a near-total internet shutdown

that is likely to limit the public’s ability to express political discontent or communicate with each other and the outside world,” NetBlocks said.

There was no acknowledgement of an internet shutdown in Iranian state media. Iran’s mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment. **AP**

G20 environment Ministers meet in Italy amid floods, fires

Naples: With forest fires raging in the US and Russia and floods devastating parts of Western Europe, environment and energy ministers from the Group of 20 industrialised countries gathered Thursday for two days of talks ahead of November’s crucial climate change conference. Host Italy is hoping the Naples talks will help spur ambitious goals to be adopted at the COP26 conference in Glasgow, Scotland, which organisers have said represents “the world’s last best chance to get runaway climate change under control.” The Naples meetings Thursday and Friday are focusing on three main themes: biodiversity and protection of oceans; promoting circular economies, particularly in the fashion and textile sectors. **AP**

Iran bypasses Hormuz Strait to export crude oil

Tehran: Iran on Thursday began exporting crude oil for the first time in the Gulf of Oman, bypassing the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

During a ceremony marking the inauguration of the project, President Hassan Rouhani called the plan “strategic.”

Iranian state media described the move as an indication that sanctions imposed by the US were being defeated. Washington placed sanctions

on Tehran after former US President Donald Trump pulled his country out of a nuclear deal between Iran and world powers.

The project, which began in 2019 and will cost some \$2 billion in total, helps Iran lessen its dependency on its main oil export terminal on the Persian Gulf island of Kharg. The shortcut also reduces transportation and insurance expenses for oil tankers.

The facility currently allows the pumping of some 30,000 barrels of crude into tankers per hour, via a floating anchored offshore jetty, or single point mooring. It is located some seven kilometers (4.7 miles) off the coast.

“82 per cent of this project has been completed and so far more than 1.2 billion dollars have been spent on this,” Oil Minister ?Jan Zanganeh said. **AP**

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Email: info@sunilhealthcare.com; website: www.sunilhealthcare.com									
CIN No. L24302DL1973PLC189662									
Extract of Standalone and Consolidated Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter Ended 30th June 2021									
(Rs. in Lakhs)									
S. No.	Particulars	Standalone				Consolidated			
		3 Months ended 30.06.2021	3 Months ended 31.03.2021	3 Months ended 30.06.2020	Year Ended 31st March 2021	3 Months ended 30.06.2021	3 Months ended 31.03.2021	3 Months ended 30.06.2020	Year Ended 31st March 2021
		Unaudited	Audited (Refer note. 2)	Unaudited	Audited	Unaudited	Audited (Refer note. 2)	Unaudited	Audited
1	Total Income from Operations	2,636.58	2,393.36	2,114.62	9,525.18	2,675.19	2,445.01	2,176.42	9,583.52
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax,Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)-from Continuing Operation	37.09	15.20	1.64	34.94	31.81	(50.51)	(17.90)	(55.32)
	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax,Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)- from Discontinued Operation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)from Continuing Operation	37.09	15.20	1.64	34.94	31.81	(50.51)	(17.90)	(55.32)
	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)- from Discontinued Operation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)-from Continuing Operation	27.50	6.87	0.06	27.53	20.84	(59.76)	(19.97)	(63.79)
	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)- from Discontinued Operation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	27.50	6.87	0.06	27.53	20.84	(59.76)	(19.97)	(63.79)
6	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	27.50	8.85	0.06	29.51	14.60	(39.37)	(21.68)	(88.08)
6	Paid-up equity share capital (Face value Rs.10/- each)	1,025.48	1,025.48	1,025.48	1,025.48	1,025.48	1,025.48	1,025.48	1,025.48
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year	-	-	-	3,781.78	-	-	-	3,346.25
8	Earnings Per Share (after extraordinary items) (of Rs.10/- each)-from Continuing Operation								
	(a) Basic (Rs.)	0.27	0.07	0.00	0.27	0.20	(0.58)	(0.19)	(0.62)
	(b) Diluted (Rs)	0.27	0.07	0.00	0.27	0.20	(0.58)	(0.19)	(0.62)
9	Earnings Per Share (after extraordinary items) (of Rs.10/- each) -from Discontinued Operation								
	(a) Basic (Rs.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	(b) Diluted (Rs)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	Earnings Per Share (after extraordinary items) (of Rs. 10/- each)								
	(a) Basic (Rs.)	0.27	0.07	0.00	0.27	0.20	(0.58)	(0.19)	(0.62)
	(b) Diluted (Rs)	0.27	0.07	0.00	0.27	0.20	(0.58)	(0.19)	(0.62)
Notes:									
1 COVID - 19 pandemic has caused serious disruption on the global economic and business environment. There is a huge uncertainty with regard to its impact which cannot be reasonably determined at this stage. However, the Company has evaluated and considered to the extent possible the likely impact that may arise from COVID-19 pandemic as well as all event and circumstances upto the date of approval of these Financial results on the carrying value of its assets and liabilities as on 30.06.2021. Based on the current indicators of future economic conditions, the Company estimates to recover the carrying amount of these assets and to discharge its obligation adequate liquidity is available. These estimates are subject to uncertainty and may be affected by the severity and duration of the pandemic. The Company is continuously monitoring any material changes in future economic conditions.									
2 The figures for the quarter ended March 31, 2021 are the balance figures between audited figures for the full financial and published year to date figures up to the third quarter of the previous financial year.									
3 The figures for the previous periods have been regrouped/ rearranged, wherever considered necessary, to conform current period classifications.									
4 The above results were reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors in their respective meetings held on July 21, 2021 .									
Place : New Delhi									
Date : 21.07.2021									
Anil Khaitan									
Chairman Cum Managing Director									
DIN 00759951									

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all concerned that My client namely Ranjana Jeremiah is hereby cancelling the General Power of attorney dated 7th February 2018 in favour of Biplap@Bipal (Which includes their legal heirs) of the property no.B143 C.R.Park New Delhi back portion. Now they or their legal heirs will have no right , title, or any other claim qua the same and all the power will remain in name of my client Ranjana Jeremiah

SajalDhamija (Advocate),
S-265, L.G.F.,Greate Kailash1, New Delhi-110018

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform public in general that Kotak Mahindra bank ltd has organized an auction in below mention respect of Vehicles.

VEHICLES FOR SALE

1) T_LP1512 REG. NO. HR38AA2585-YOM -2020

2) T_LP1512 REG. NO. HR38AA7498-YOM -2020

3) T_LP1512 REG. NO. HR38AA4759-YOM-2020

UNDER HYPOTHECACTION WITH M/S KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS “AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION” INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS WITH IN 07 DAYS AT

KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK
3RD FLOOR, PLOT NO 7, SECTOR 125, NOIDA-201313 OR
CONTACT : SUNIL KUMAR
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD.
CONTACT NO. 9643819369

COURT NOTICE

In the court of the Principal Judge Family Court East Singbhhum Jamshedpur Maintenance Case No. 08/2020

Vandana Sharma Petitioner

Versus

Govind Sharma Respondent

To, Govind Sharma S/O Dharamnath Sharma @ Dharamnath Singh R/O Ujjawal Man Power Consultant, 2nd Floor, Sant Nagar East Kailash Nehru Place Delhi, NCR 110065.

Permanent Address: Govind Sharma S/O Dharamnath Sharma @ Dharamnath Singh, R/O Village Rampur Rathnagar Sarsai, P.S. Sarai, P.O. Rampur, Rathnagar Dist Vaishali Bihar

Whereas the applicant Vandana Sharma has filed the case in this court U/s 125 of Crpc, notice have been issued through the registered post but you have failed to appear before this court. You are hereby directed to appear before this court virtually through https://meet.jit.si/principaljudgefamily on 26th day of July 2021 at 10:30AM, to answer the same failing which the case shall be heard Ex Parte in your absence in accordance with law. Given under my hand and seal of this court 7th Day of July 2021

(Niraj Kumar Srivastav)
Principal Judge Family Court
East Singbhhum Jamshedpur

RBI mulls pilot launch of digital currency: Dy Guv

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank is working on a phased implementation strategy for its own digital currency and is in the process of launching it in wholesale and retail segments in the near future, RBI Deputy Governor T Rabi Sankar said on Thursday.

He said the idea of Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) is ripe, and many central banks in the world are working towards it.

Sankar further said CBDC is needed to protect consumers from the "frightening level of volatility" seen in some of the virtual currencies which have no sovereign backing.

He said central banks across the globe are engaged in exploring CBDCs, and a few countries have also introduced such concepts. "Perhaps the idea for CBDCs is near," he said while participating in an online discussion organised by The Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy.

In India, a high level inter-ministerial committee consti-



tuted by the Ministry of Finance has examined the policy and legal frameworks, and has recommended the introduction of CBDC as a digital form of fiat money in the country. "Like other central banks, RBI has also been exploring the pros and cons of introduction of CBDC since quite some time," he said, and added generally countries have implemented specific purpose CBDCs.

The Reserve Bank, he said, is currently working towards a phased implementation strategy and examining

cases which could be implemented with little or no disruption in the banking system and the monetary policy.

"...Conducting pilots in wholesale and retail segments may be a possibility in the near future. So, some progress has been made. You know we could likely come up with this in the near future," Sankar said.

The Deputy Governor further said legal changes would be necessary as the current provisions have been made keeping in mind currency in a physical form under the Reserve Bank of India Act.

He said consequential amendments would also be required in the Coinage Act, Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) and Information Technology Act.

"These are some of the things that... We are looking at internally," he added.

The Deputy Governor further said some of the key issues being examined by the RBI include scope of CBDCs, underlying technology, and validation mechanism.

Over 13 lakh MSME loan accounts restructured by public sector banks: Rane

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 13.06 lakh MSME loan accounts with an aggregate amount of ₹55,333 crore have been restructured by public sector banks till June 25 this year, Parliament was informed on Thursday.

MSME minister Narayan Rane also said that till July 2, ₹2.73 lakh crore have been sanctioned under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme.

The scheme was launched for an emergency credit line of up to ₹4.5 lakh crore to businesses including micro, small

and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and the same is backed by 100 per cent central government guarantee.

Till June 25 this year, "13.06 lakh MSME loan accounts with an aggregate amount of ₹55,333 crore have been restructured by public sector banks," he said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

In a separate reply, he said since the inception of the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme, till July 9, 6,97,612 units have been set up (including those by farmers) with MM (margin money) subsidy of ₹16,688.17 crore.



Sensex snaps 3-session slide with 639-pt leap; HUL slumps post results

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Market benchmarks roared back to life on Thursday after a three-session losing streak as investors piled into IT, banking and finance stocks amid a bullish trend overseas.

A recovering rupee and optimism surrounding the flurry of IPOs added to the momentum, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex soared 638.70 points or 1.22 per cent to finish at 52,837.21. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty vaulted 191.95 points or 1.23 per cent to 15,824.05.

Tech Mahindra was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, jumping 5.65 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finserv, Tata Steel, L&T, Infosys and ICICI Bank.

On the other hand, HUL was the biggest laggard, tumbling 2.27 per cent, even as the FMCG major reported a 10.7 per cent increase in its consolidated net profit at Rs 2,100 crore for the June quarter.

Asian Paints, Bajaj Auto and M&M were the other

losers, shedding up to 1.73 per cent.

Market breadth was in favour of bulls, with 26 of the Sensex 30 stocks closing in the green. According to Milind Muchhala, Executive Director, Julius Baer, Indian markets made a smart pull-back supported by the positive global set-up and a decent start to the Q1FY22 earnings season.

Rupee gains for 2nd straight session, settles at 74.46/USD

Mumbai: The rupee strengthened against the US currency for the second straight session on Thursday, closing 15 paise higher at 74.46 amid a rally in the domestic stocks.

At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened at 74.46, and hit an intra-day high of 74.33 and a low of 74.53. It finally finished at 74.46, higher by 15 paise over its last close.

About 1.5 L weavers onboarded on GeM: Min

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

About 1.5 lakh weavers have been onboarded on the public procurement portal GeM, a move which would enable wider market access for handloom weavers, artisans and producers, Parliament was informed on Thursday. Minister of State for Textiles Darshana Jardosh said steps have been taken to on-board weavers / artisans on the Govt e-Market place (GeM) to enable them to sell their products directly to various government departments and organisations. "So far about 1.5 lakh weavers have been onboarded on the GeM portal," she said in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha. In a separate reply, she said under the Scheme for Integrated Textile Park, 24 greenfield parks have been completed. The minister said SITP is being implemented with a view to increase investment, generate employment opportunities and boost exports in the textile sector.

E-commerce marketplace entity shall not sell any goods owned or controlled by it

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

In major changes to e-commerce rules, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs has specified that an e-commerce marketplace entity shall not sell any goods owned or controlled by it on such e-commerce marketplace platform. All the sellers on the platform shall only be third party sellers, and no e-commerce store can be run on the e-commerce marketplace platform.

These changes come in the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020 and the government has sought comments on it.

The changes in rules to be notified will cut on complaints of discounts, and sales by related parties by foreign e-commerce majors.

An e-commerce marketplace entity means an e-commerce entity, which provides an information technology platform on a digital or electronic network to facilitate transactions between buyers and sellers.

In addition, the changes in rules now prescribe that no e-commerce entity shall discriminate between consumers of the same class or make any arbitrary classification of consumers affecting their rights under the Act.

No e-commerce entity shall make any segmented offers to particular consumers on an arbitrary basis. The classification of consumers shall be on a transparent and objective basis and offerings shall be uniform across a class of consumers.

India's coffee exports witnessing decline, hit 9-year low in dollar value terms in FY20: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Seen a steady decline in the last decade amid growing need for value addition across multiple stages of coffee processing globally and rising demand for specialty coffees, according to a report. India exported nearly USD 720 million worth of coffee in 2020-21, out of which 42 per cent mainly constituted the Robusta coffee beans exports, according to a report by global trade finance company Drip Capital, which quoted the data from Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT). According to the report, India's coffee exports have dropped at an annual decline of 3 per cent between 2011-12 till 2020-21.



In FY12, India's coffee exports, the eighth-largest producer and exporter of coffee by volume, stood at USD 953 million. According to the report, the fall can partly be attributed to Covid-19, where in FY2019-20, India's overall coffee exports reached a 9 year low in dollar value terms and plummeted by 44% in April 2020.

No job loss in ports, shipping sector: Union Minister

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

There was no job loss in the ports and shipping sector despite the Covid-19 crisis impacting the major ports and causing a considerable decline in the total traffic and containers traffic, Union Minister Shripad Naik informed Parliament on Thursday.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shripad Naik said the ministry has given monetary compensation of ₹50 lakh to the dependent members or legal heirs of the employees who lost their lives due to acquired Covid infection at work place.

"The impact of Covid-19



at major ports started from March 2020. There was a considerable decline in the total traffic and containers traffic... There is no job loss in this sector," Naik said.

Cabinet approves ₹ 6,322-cr PLI scheme for specialty steel

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved ₹6,322-crore production linked incentive scheme for specialty steel, a move aimed at boosting domestic manufacturing and exports from the sector, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said.

He said that incentives worth ₹6,322 crore will be provided over five years and it would create over 5.25 lakh jobs.

"It will boost manufactur-



ing and help in reducing imports," he told reporters.

The scheme will cover coated/plated steel products, high strength/wear resistant steel, specialty rails, alloy steel goods, steel wires and electrical steel.

Office Of Executive Engineer, Maintenance Division.
Uttarakhand Jal Sansthan
No-1, Tarun Vihar, Mothrowala Road, Dehradun-24800,
Phone No/Fax. 0135 2671940, E-mail - eemdujs@rediffmail.com

Letter No.-1415 /E-Tender notice/2021-22

Date 22-07-2021

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING

निविदा सं०-1322/E-Tender Notice/2021-22/Dated-15-07-2021 से जल जीवन मिशन के कार्यों हेतु आमन्त्रित ई-निविदाओं की तिथियों में निम्नानुसार संशोधन किया जाता है।

S.No.	Description	Time Schedule (Key Dates)
1	Date of Online Publication	29.07.2021 at 17:00 Hrs
2	Document download : Start Date	30.07.2021 at 17:00 Hrs
3	Pre- Bid Meeting : Start Date	06.08.2021 at 11:00 Hrs
4	Bid Submission : Start Date	11.08.2021 at 11:00 Hrs
5	Bid Submission : End Date	18.08.2021 upto 17:00 Hrs
6	Offline Submission of Documents (Cost of bidding Document, Bid Security, Original affidavits and all supporting Documents in support of qualification).	23.08.2021 upto 17:00 Hrs
7	Date of Bid Opening	24.08.2021 at 11:00 Hrs.
8	Date of Financial Bid Opening	To be intimated later

सोप नियम एवं शर्तें निविदा के अनुसार यथावत रहेंगी।
For Full and Further details visit Uktenders.gov.in

Executive Engineer

Gujarat State Road Development Corporation Limited Gandhinagar
Tender Notice No 6 of 2021 (through E-Tendering only)

General Manager (Projects), Gujarat State Road Development Corporation Ltd (GSRDC, Ground Floor, Nirman Bhavan, Sector 10-A, Gandhinagar invites online tenders . The work's details is as under.

Name of work	Estimated Cost (in Rs, Crores)	Bid Security (in Rs. Lacs)	Tender Fee (Non-refundable) (In Rs.)	Tenure (months)
Collection Of User Fee Through Fee Collecting Agency On The Basis Of Competitive Bidding On E-Tender Basis At Bochasan Fee Plaza Located At Km 77-520 For The Section Km 53-800 (Near Tarapur Junction) Km 101+620 (Vasad Junction To Nh-48- Project Road End) of Tarapur To Vasad Section Of Sh-8 In The State Of Gujarat,	53.00	53.00	25000/-GST @18% i.e Rs. 29,500/-	12

The mode of submission in through online E-tendering on www.gsrdc.nprocure.com the schedule for E- tendering is as under. The complete tender notice details are available on www.statetender.com and www.gsrdc.com

Particulars	Date
Bid document downloading start Date / Time	22/07/2021 from 12.00 Hrs
Pre-bid Meeting	27/07/2021 AT 12.00 Hrs.
Online submission last Date / time	05/08/2021 upto 17.00 Hrs
Opening of Prequalification bid (online)	05/08/2021 at 17.30 Hrs
Tender Fee & EMD shall be submitted in physical form by RPAD to this office Date / time	Demand Draft for Bid Security, Solvency Certificate and Tender Fee shall be submitted in electronic format only, through online (by scanning) while uploading the bid. Accordingly offer of those shall be opened whose Bid Security solvency and tender fee is received electronically. However, for the purpose of realization of Bid Security, Tender fee, the bidder shall send the Demand Draft in original to General Manager (Projects) through RPAD/ Speed Post so as to reach to General Manager (Projects), GSRDC within 7 days (05/08/2021 to 12/08/2021, during 11.00 to 18.00 Hrs.) from the due date of opening, Penal action against bidder shall be initiated for not submitting Demand Draft in original. Exemption Certificate from paying Bid Security shall not be exempted. Bid Security, Tender fee shall be uploaded and submitted in hard copy with Tender Fee as per Schedule Any documents in supporting of bid shall be submitted in electronic format only through online (by scanning etc.)

No./NF/VPN/2021/G/690

उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल संसाधन विकास एवं निर्माण निगम
कार्यालय: अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, निर्माण मण्डल,
स्ट्रीट नं. 11 रावोद नगर, देहरादून। फोन नं. : 0135-2751679 ईमेल: adhicak10@yahoo.com

पत्रांक-3541 / निविदा / 210

ई-निविदा सूचना

दिनांक:- 20.07.2021

अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, निर्माण मण्डल, उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल निगम, देहरादून के पत्रांक 3539 / निविदा / 2019, दिनांक 20.07.2021 द्वारा जल जीवन मिशन कार्यक्रम के अन्तर्गत जनपद देहरादून के विकासखण्ड-सहस्रपुर की खुशहालपुर पेयजल योजना के निर्माण एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्यों हेतु राज्य सरकार की वेबसाइट <https://www.uktenders.gov.in> के माध्यम से दिनांक 23.07.2021 से 10.08.2021 तक ई-निविदा (e-tender) आमन्त्रित की जा रही है। निविदा की नियम एवं शर्तें उपरोक्त वेबसाइट से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

अधीक्षण अभियन्ता

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that Share Certificate of **Goodyear India Limited**, CIN No. is L2511HR1961 PL0008578 having its registered office at Mathura Road, Ballabagh, Distt: Faridabad (Haryana), held in the name of **P. P. Dhupar** bearing folio number 0530265, Certificate Number: 23463, 62759, 10421, 164811 Dist. No. 1718406 - 1718410, 2155844-2155851, 2729210-2729222, 5507251-5507260 has/have been lost or misplaced or stolen and a request for issuance of duplicate share certificate in lieu thereof, has been lodged with the said company. Members of the public are informed that said company will consider issuing duplicate share certificate(s) if no objection is received at its above Registers office within 15 days of this notice after which, no claim will be entertained by them.

PUBLIC NOTICE
I Vinod Kumar Sharma S/o R D Sharma R/o GD-156, Pitampura North West Delhi, Delhi-34 demand letter, Possession letter, Bank challan & NOC has been lost flat No.87A, Ground floor, Pkt.-NU, Pitampura Delhi-34 FIR against this effect has been lodged have any objection/found of documents may contact with above named person at 9811369523 within 15 days from this notice the person claiming any objection with respect to this property inform to Dy. Director (LAB-RS), Vikas Sadan INA New Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public that Mr. Narinder Kumar Sahni is claiming ownership of Property No.44, Block-F, measuring 268.5 sq. yds., Situated in the residential colony known as Rajouri Garden, Najafgarh Road, Delhi. The said property is by virtue of resp. Will dated 19.12.1977, executed by his mother late Mrs. Chandar Kanta Sahni, who was owner of the said property by virtue of Sale Deed dated 03.04.1963. All persons including other legal heirs of late Mrs. Chandar Kanta Sahni are hereby informed that above mentioned owner want to take a Loan from Yes Bank Ltd., if anybody has any objections upon the ownership of Mr. Narinder Kumar Sahni in respect of the said property is Sale Mortgage, and any kind of objections kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present. **Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)** 290, 2nd Floor, 22, Shivaji Marg, Connaught Place, Delhi-110028. Ph: 011-4112527-28 kumarassociatesadvocates@gmail.com

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NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE (Through e-tendering)

Name of work with its location	Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of HBL make IPS for 14 locations in Delhi Division for 3(03) years.
App. Cost of the work (₹)	₹ 53,23,224/- only
Address of the office	Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annexe-1, DRM Office, New Delhi-110055.
Date & Time for upload the tender/closing of tender	Tender uploading/closing date & time: 18.08.2021 up to 15.00 hrs.
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.	See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055.

Tender No. 558-Sig-16-M-Tender-AMC-051-2021-22 Dated : 22.07.2021 1647/2021
Serving Customers With A Smile

IRDA Licence No. 129

PUBLIC NOTICE

Health Insurance
INSURANCE IS THE SUBJECT MATTER OF SOLICITATION

We are happy to inform that our **Vaishali Branch Office** has shifted to the new location with effect from **01.07.2021** as per the following address.

Star Health and Allied Insurance Co Ltd.
No. 15-16, 3rd Floor, Tower C1 & C2, Sector-4, Vaishali, Ghaziabad-201010. Ph.: 120-4559984, 4559985, 4130157, 4127426.

Mail ID - vaishali.bo@starhealth.in

National Office Address : HDIL Towers, B-wing, 6th Floor, Anant Kanekar Marg, Station Road, Bandra (East), Mumbai - 400051.
Branch Address : Dhiraj Bag, Building "A" Ground & 1st Floor, Beside Axis Bank, Opp. Monalisa Building, Agave Road, Hari Niwas Circle, Naupada, Thane (West) 400602.

DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. (DHFL) under Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to DHFL, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to DHFL by the said Borrower(s) respectively.

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date	Description of secured asset (immovable property)
(LC No. 00042345 of Delhi - Pitampura Branch) Sunil Mathur (Borrower) Rajni Mathur (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 3069526/- (₹ Thirty lakh Sixty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Six) NPA (11-02-2020)	Plot No. AA & 1-B, Flat No. B-1, 1st flo Front side RHS Kharsa No. 800 extended Lal Dora Village Bura Delhi North West Delhi Delhi - 110084
(LC No. 00004422 of Dwarka Branch) Sanjay Kumar Jha (Borrower) Anita Jha (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 3050793/- (₹ Thirty lakh Fifty Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Three) NPA (11-05-2019)	Flat No E 10/ G-1 & G-2 Ground Fr (without Roof Right)ing, Kh No-362 Sd Vid Vihar, Vill-sadulabad Lon, Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201102
(LC No. 00000771 of Delhi Rajouri Garden Branch) Anuj Chhabra (Borrower) Amit Chhabra (Co Borrower 2) Ritu (Co Borrower 2)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 3036416/- (₹ Thirty lakh Thirty Six Thousand Four Hundred Sixteen) NPA (10-12-2020)	T-187-188, Top Floor, Left Back Side With Roof Rights Uttam Nagar, Delhi New Delhi Delhi : 110059
(LC No. 00003049 of Noida Branch) Pankaj Sharma (Borrower) Kusum (Co Borrower 1) Devender Bh-aradwaj (Co Borrower 2) Bharti Lal (Guarantor 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 3025622/- (₹ Thirty lakh Twenty Five Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Two) NPA (11-02-2020)	Plot No-54, Kharsa No-487, Village Peagarahi, West Delhi New Delhi Delhi : 110085
(LC No. 00004400 of Greater Noida Branch) Anant Verma (Borrower) Riju Verma (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 3006364/- (₹ Thirty lakh Six Thousand Thirty Six) NPA (11-03-2021)	Flat No 1207, 12th Floor, Tower B La Palacia, Plot No G H-09 A Techzone4, Greater Noida West G B Nagar Gautam Budh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201308
(LC No. 00000380 of Azadpur N S P Branch) Go-vinda Bagri (Borrower) Ravi Kumar (Co Borrower 1) Chet Ram (Co Borrower 2) Murti Devi (Guarantor 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2967084/- (₹ Twenty Nine lakh Sixty Seven Thousand Eighty Four) NPA (09-01-2021)	D-2/173, 3rd Floor, Block-d-2 Kh No-1121, Village Asalapuri Khadar Jeevan Park Uttam Nagar Delhi New Delhi Delhi : 110059
(LC No. 00001278 of Raj Nagar Branch) Ankit Dixit (Borrower) Pragati Dwivedi (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2941035/- (₹ Twenty Nine lakh Forty One Thousand Thirty Five) NPA (11-03-2021)	Unit No. B-406, 4th Floor, Tower- B Oxrich Developers & Promoters Pvt Ltd Royal Enclave, Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201011
(LC No. 00000848 of New Delhi-west Branch) Krishan Kumar (Borrower) Mrs Hemlata (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2917273/- (₹ Twenty Nine lakh Seventeen Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Three) NPA (10-12-2020)	L I G Flat No. 45 First Floor Block C1 Sector 55 Noida Gautam Budh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201301
(LC No. 00000600 of Noida Branch) Kamal Sharma (Borrower) Meenu Sharma (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2916978/- (₹ Twenty Nine lakh Sixteen Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy Eight) NPA (10-12-2020)	Flat No. 1702, 17th Floor Tower- T2, The Aranya Sector-119 Noida Gautam Budh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201301
(LC No. 00002328 of Noida 1 Rajendra Place Branch) Umesh Yadav (Borrower) Vikas Sahani (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2908766/- (₹ Twenty Nine lakh Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Six) NPA (09-01-2021)	WZ-36, 3rd floor rear side (Western por) without roof, Kharsa No. 1, Village Nangli Jallo, Gali No. 11 Krishna Puri, Delhi New Delhi Delhi : 110018
(LC No. 00043706 of Delhi - Safdarjung Branch) Praveen Kumar (Borrower) Priyanka Kumari (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2864866/- (₹ Twenty Eight lakh Sixty Four Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty Six) NPA (10-12-2020)	Plot No-209, Ground Floor Pocket-1, Phase-2, Sector-13, Dwarka Dwarka New Delhi Delhi : 110075
(LC No. 00000219 of Netaji Subhash Place Branch) Kamal Gupta (Borrower) Saroj Gupta (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2856444/- (₹ Twenty Eight lakh Fifty Six Thousand Four Hundred Forty Four) NPA (10-12-2020)	Flat No 123 B, First Floor Block A-1b, Janakpuri, New Delhi New Delhi New Delhi Delhi : 110058
(LC No. 00044800 of Delhi - Safdarjung Branch) Rakesh Arora (Borrower) Jeetu Arora (Co Borrower 1) Sunita Arora (Co Borrower 2)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2807441/- (₹ Twenty Eight lakh Seven Thousand Four Hundred Forty One) NPA (11-03-2021)	No 1/7536 Old Mc No 147360/13-a/15-a, 3rd Floor With Roof Right Gali No 12, East Gorkh Park, Kh No. 228 Shahdara New Delhi Delhi : 110032
(LC No. 00044085 of Gurgaon - Sohna Road Branch) Kamni Kashyap (Borrower) Rajender Kumar (Co Borrower 1) Anita Kashyap (Co Borrower 2)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2778776/- (₹ Twenty Seven lakh Eighty Five Thousand One Hundred Ninety One) NPA (09-01-2021)	Flat No Sh-10-2nd Floor Front Rhs With Roof Rights, plot No Mm -135 D L F ankur Vihar, Joti Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201102
(LC No. 00001462 of Greater Noida Branch) Yogesh (Borrower) Rekha (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2778776/- (₹ Twenty Seven lakh Seventy Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Six) NPA (09-01-2021)	House Old No-16 & New No-543 Single Storied, part Of Kharsa No. 1188 Ganspur Vill, village Pasoda Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201010
(LC No. 00043484 of Delhi - Safdarjung Branch) Meena Devi (Borrower) Dinesh Kumar Aggarwal (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2774455/- (₹ Twenty Seven lakh Seventy Seven Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Five) NPA (09-01-2021)	Flat No C113, 1st Floor, Block-c Pocket-1, Sector 11 Rohini, Delhi New Delhi Delhi : 110085
(LC No. 00043014 of Delhi - Safdarjung Branch) Umesh Yadav (Borrower) Kamlesh Kumar Yadav (Co Borrower 1) Kushal Yadav (Co Borrower 2)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2776201/- (₹ Twenty Seven lakh Seventy Six Thousand Two Hundred One) NPA (09-01-2021)	H.no. 1/1857a, plot No. 2, 3rd Floor 1/14 Share Of Roof Rights, old No. 558 Kh No 1/183/340, 1/164/350 & 1/169/351, shahdara New Delhi Delhi : 110032
(LC No. 00001915 of Noida 1 Rajendra Place Branch) Umeshi (Borrower) Vikas Sahani (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2771659/- (₹ Twenty Seven lakh Seventy One Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Nine) NPA (09-01-2021)	WZ-2, Old Plot No.199 3rd Floor With Roof, gali No. 3 and 4, Kharsa No. 3, Krishna Park, Tiak Nagar, Delhi New Delhi Delhi : 110018
(LC No. 00001624 of Delhi Rajouri Garden Branch) Soniya (Borrower) Gautam Kumar (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2769772/- (₹ Twenty Seven lakh Sixty Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Two) NPA (10-12-2020)	C-15/183, Upper Ground Floor, H.n.-3, Part Of Kharsa No.372, Sarup Nagar, Aja Enclave Extn, New Delhi New Delhi Delhi : 110018
(LC No. 00042455 of Noida -sector 2 Branch) Ravinder Singh (Borrower) Manpreet Kaur (Co Borrower 1)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2767925/- (₹ Twenty Six lakh Seventy Six Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Five) NPA (11-03-2021)	Property No. F-47, Ugf Without Roof, Block 4, Gali No. 10, Kharsa No.7/19 Village Malitia, Om Vihar Extn Uttam Nagar, New Delhi New Delhi Delhi : 110059
(LC No. 00001263 of Delhi Rajouri Garden Branch) Sanjay Mehrotra (Borrower) Anshul Mehrotra (Co Borrower 1) Sonia Mehrotra (Co Borrower 2)	30-04-2021 / ₹ 2758582/- (₹ Twenty Five lakh Eighty Five Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety Two) NPA (10-1	

NOT JUST POCKET CHANGE

ANKIT GERA shares some tips to inculcate a sense of financial literacy among pre-teens

While the mainstream model of education has its benefits, there are several key areas in need of improvement which are visible to the prying mind. One of these happens to concern money management and other vital aspects related to it.

Keeping in mind the times we live in, it is of utmost importance to impart financial literacy to the kids in their pre-teens. Such financial education will help in inculcating a sense of responsibility regarding the wise use of money from a very tender age. In order to lay the foundation of a secure financial future, parents should nurture their children and give them enough exposure regarding financial matters. Furthermore, the significance of savings can be best understood under parental guidance. Financial literacy also plays a role in the proper management of day-to-day expenses and the ability to make good financial decisions as one grows up.

Let's look at a few tips to help your kids become financially literate in their pre-teens:

FIXED POCKET MONEY

The first step towards developing financial literacy begins with giving the child a fixed amount of money, either weekly or monthly. Further, it enables kids in their pre-teens to deal with an emer-



gency, especially in the absence of their parents. Besides, they can also save some amount from their pocket money to spend on something that they longed to purchase. Take care to give them a pep-talk regarding any and all probable outcomes you foresee regarding their expenditure. What seems like a pretty straightforward concept to you might not be so simple for them.

DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN WANTS & NEEDS

Kids in their pre-teens must be taught the difference between wants and needs. It helps in shap-

ing the financial decision-making ability of a child. They must be explained at an early age that the needs (food, shelter, clothing and more) must be given priority as they are imperative for sustaining in this world. On the other hand, wants (including various luxury goods) must be considered as additional expenses.

IMPORTANCE OF SAVINGS

Kids must also be taught to save money. Savings play a crucial role in someone's financial security in the future. Teaching them the significance of saving a particular sum of money, at a certain

fixed interval, brings a sense of responsibility. To begin with, they can use a piggy bank to save a part of their pocket money. They can also set a savings goal for making a purchase. Parents can further encourage such steps by giving them some extra money once they achieve their savings goal.

CULTIVATING A REWARD SYSTEM

Rewarding a child with some money for completing a task is a good way to instil responsible behaviour in them. They can be given some extra pocket money as well if they accomplish a work before the given time.

Furthermore, they can also be made to do some household chores and other errands to get a weekly allowance. Incentivising such activities might additionally inculcate some positive values into their lifestyle for years to come.

KEEPING TRACK

Parents must teach their kids to keep a record of all their spendings. It can be done by noting down the transactions made each day. Keeping a track of the expenditure regularly could help them realise how long it would take to reach a particular savings goal. Accordingly, they can bring a good change in their pattern of expenditure and save more or less, according to the need.

It would be highly advantageous to kids in their pre-teens if their parents can successfully inculcate financial understanding in them. This would empower them to manage their spending properly and develop a habit of regular savings from a young age. As a result, children would become trained and experienced in monetary management for a successful future.

(The author is co-founder of Junio, a smart card focussed on imparting financial discipline to children.)

‘Feeling lucky’

Actor TAHIR RAJ BHASIN expresses his gratitude for being among the actors who could get good work despite the pandemic. By TEAM VIVA

Tahir Raj Bhasin has carved a name for himself with his performance in films such as *Mardaani* and *Chhichhore*. He will now be seen in *Loop Lapeta* as a romantic lead opposite Taapsee Pannu, in *Bulbul Tarang* alongside Sonakshi Sinha and *Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhein*, in which he has been paired with Shweta Tripathi. He will also be seen in the Ranveer Singh starrer, *83*, directed by Kabir Khan, in which he plays the role of the iconic Indian cricketer Sunil Gavaskar.

With four projects under his belt, Tahir finds himself extremely fortunate to be getting good work despite the pandemic crippling the entertainment industry of India.

He says, “It feels amazing to finish dubbing for my projects and watch them come alive. Post-production has been a big challenge through the pandemic and it's great to finally be able to meet the crew, get into the dubbing studio and get to work. We're in fifth gear, racing forward to completion and soon they will be ready for release.”

Tahir adds, “I consider myself very fortunate to be among those actors who could get good work despite the pandemic and felt satiated as an actor. I'm very proud of *83*, *Loop Lapeta* and *Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhein* and I can't wait for the audiences to see these projects. It's an amazing feeling to have good films to offer to audiences and critics.”



Tahir is confident of his work in these projects and wants to leave a mark with his versatile acting. He expresses, “I always aim to leave a solid mark with my performances and I'm anxiously awaiting the reactions. Currently, I'm dubbing for the Netflix series *Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhein*.”

Speaking about the series, he shares, “It's a very special project, a drama that is a thorough entertainer with a thrilling script that will have you on the edge. Shooting for the series has pushed and challenged me as a performer and I hope that people like it too.”

A perfect pair of earrings provides distinction to any outfit, western or ethnic. There is a range of earrings to choose from, to match different outfits, hairstyles and face shapes. If you wish to stand out in the crowd, you must choose a pair that suits you best, one that not just matches your outfit but also accentuates your features.

We would be exploring the wide variety of earrings that are commonly available and help you choose the perfect one, suited to the occasion, to complement your wardrobe and facial contours.

♦STUDS

The Wardrobe: The good thing about studs is that they go with any outfit, formal or semi-formal. Studs with single gems, cluster tops or pearls are great for the everyday look. Choose small designs and wear them with dresses.

Facial Outline: Women with oval or oblong faces — with a forehead as wide as the cheekbones and, narrow, rest of the face look great with studs.

♦HOOPS

The Wardrobe: Simple, heavy and with a huge circumference, hoops look great with formal and casuals alike, particularly with a cute, feminine hairstyle. But because of their size, they could also be perfectly styled with your hair let down. Smaller hoops earrings studded with diamonds add a shimmering glitter to your physical appearance. Pair them with your casual look or with conservative business attire.

Facial Outline: Women with heart-shaped facial outlines, diamond or oval faces — aiming to enhance their jawlines — should

Shape of things

C TRIVENI VINOD provides an elaborate guide on how to accentuate your appearance with earrings



go with hoop earrings.

♦CHANDELIERS

The Wardrobe: They are striking to look at and go well with ethnic dresses. You could also pair them with your casual outfits to



show off something very different and distinct. You can opt for contrasting colours to accentuate your look.

Facial Outline: Prefer designs that are with wider earrings if you have oval or angular face contour. In a case of a square face, go for long chandelier earrings that will add length to your face.

♦JHUMKAS

The Wardrobe: Whether you are wearing a simple kurta, a heavily embroidered saree or a lehenga, *jhumkas* suit all Indian attires. It instantly adds charm and grace



to your look.

Facial Outline: With an appearance resembling droplets, *jhumkas* compliment any face shape. It is a must-have for every Indian woman.

♦DANGLERS

The Wardrobe: A casual long dress that is usually made from a flowy fabric or a knitted one. Colour and print could vary, depending on height, weight, gait and complexion.

Facial Outline: Danglers will work wonders on a round face.

(The author is director of Bengaluru-based C Krishniah Chetty Group of Jewellers which was founded in 1869.)

Most of us who drive cars or any other motorised vehicle know that the power from the engine goes through a gearbox, so the power from the engine shaft is either stepped up or down into the driveshaft. There are direct-drive vehicles where the engine is directly connected to the wheels, but those are rare. What many folks do not know is that there is another set of gears on all motorised vehicles, this is the differential.

The differential exists because we do not drive in straight lines and the best example of why we need differentials is a horse-drawn chariot. While a horse can turn on a dime, a chariot really can't. And the simple reason is that the wheels are fixed onto the axle, which poses a problem on turns. You see, the outside wheel travels further than the inside wheels, meaning that it needs to go a lot faster than the inside wheel. A differential, which essentially allows both wheels to turn at different rotation speeds, hence the name, resolves this.

What most cars have is something called an open differential, and in most circumstances that is fine. That is until you encounter really bad and rutted roads or muddy surfaces. On such surfaces, a situation could emerge where one wheel could be pushed up into the air or get stuck in the mud and if you have ever been in such a situation you know what I mean. The wheel that is in the air or stuck in slippery mud gets all the power and spins aimlessly.

That brings me to the new Bolero Neo, this refresh of Mahindra's TUV 300, fits the top-end with a mechanically locking differential. Now, what this does is when the vehicle gets stuck in the mud, or when one of the rear wheels goes up in the air, a set of small weights inside the differential 'lock' it. What that does is to ensure that the rear wheels turn at the same speed. This means that it isn't just the 'free' wheel that is spinning aim-

Of brands and differentials

The Bolero Neo is Mahindra's attempt to rebrand and revive the TUV300. Will it convince Brezza, Sonet and Venue buyers to change?



KUSHAN MITRA



lessly, but also the wheel on the ground, the wheel with traction that also gets some rotation. While this is not a proper four-wheel-drive system, this does mean that the Bolero Neo can get out of some tough situations it might find itself in. That said, it is true that many modern cars with Traction Control Systems have electronically locking differentials, but a mechanically locking one in the Bolero Neo is not just cheaper but more effective one in the conditions that this particular vehicle might find itself in.

I hope I have managed to explain the concept of a differential and locking differentials a bit, without confusing you. If you look forward to the complicated details, start reading

up about limited-slip differentials that some performance cars have. But, let me now move on to the Bolero Neo and, yes, as almost everyone who replied to my tweet when I drove the vehicle last week mentioned, it does look like a TUV300. And it is one; basically, Mahindra has decided to use the stronger Bolero brand to rebrand the TUV as the car got a refresh. Is this a repudiation of Mahindra's numbering system that they came up with when they introduced the XUV500? I would believe so, but that system was already in doubt given that the second-generation XUV500 became the XUV700. That is another discussion altogether, but there is no doubt that over the past two decades, the Bolero has been Mahindra's most successful vehicle and while you may not see it a lot inside cities, in upcountry areas, it is and remains one of India's most popular utility vehicles. So Mahindra Auto deciding to go with the Bolero brand, hoping, one assumes, to rub off some of its aura on this vehicle, is not surprising.



The Bolero Neo, the top-spec model I drove, came with all the mod-cons that one expects on such a vehicle — a touchscreen infotainment system, a powerful air-conditioner and USB charging. It, also, surprisingly came with side seats behind the rear bench, making it a seven-seat vehicle. While there is demand for such seats in upcountry markets, such seats are not safe in accident scenarios and I was not alone in finding it surprising, even ironic, that Mahindra, which highlights the highly-rated crash safety of its Thar and XUV300, would do such a thing. One could make the argument that buyers in upcountry markets are not 'that concerned' about safety and while I'd agree that safety may not be as high on the priority list for such buyers, that is a fallacious argument. As I only drove the Bolero Neo on a stretch of uneven tarmac off the Gurugram-Faridabad Expressway, it does deal with the rough stretches pretty well, but I can't honestly tell you if it is a good highway cruiser.

However, beyond that, this is a vehicle that knows the segment it is targeting. There isn't an automatic, not even an AMT, option. No petrol option either. Am I disappointed? No. Because this is clearly not a vehicle designed for me, it is aimed at a more erudite, younger upcountry buyer who wants the ruggedness of a Mahindra vehicle with some of the comforts of a modern vehicle. However, those buyers are also shifting away from Mahindra because, whether we like it or not, many younger folks from upcountry areas are moving into the big, bad city. And therein lies the rub. While the rebranding might help, you are unlikely to see one of these in a city near you soon.

TRENDBLAZER



GLAD TO BE A PART OF FUKREY: MANJOT

Best known for his portrayal of the innocent Lali in *Fukrey*, actor **MANJOT SINGH** says that being recognised as such a popular character makes him feel like he has made it.

“I really like it when people refer to me saying, 'hey, isn't that the guy from *Fukrey*?' It is a blessing to be associated with *Fukrey*, which has its own cult following,” he shares.

Manjot would be next seen in the web series, *Chutzpah*, releasing today on Disney+ Hotstar.

fairtalk

KRITI KULHARI



‘I am fascinated by bikes. As a rider, not as someone who rides pillion. I know it's one of those unsaid rules where anything gearless/ easy like scooters are for girls and bikes is for boys. But isn't it just another instance of conditioning? Let bikes be a thing for girls as much as it is for boys and let us take the boys for a ride this time.’

dailytalk

SAMEERA REDDY



‘I have come a long way from the person I was in 2015, still reminding myself everyday how loving myself is so important irrespective of the standards expected. I keep on speaking about the person I was and my transformation so that anyone feeling this way should know that it's ok and that you are not alone.’

‘I WAS INSPIRED BY THE WOMEN IN MY LIFE’

Rapper **MEGAN THEE STALLION** has said that she takes inspiration from the women in her life.

“I grew up watching women who did it all. I saw people like my grandmother, my mother and my aunt pursue their education, while still showing off their curves, and working nine-to-five jobs. It shouldn't be hard for people to believe women can do it all, because we are in your face every day doing it,” she told Yahoo Life.





THE BREAD TAKES THE CAKE

Foodies who want to watch their weight or just eat healthy can head to Karamele for its all-vegan menu, says SAIMI SATTAR

Many moons ago, when I was in middle school, unlike all good convent-educated girls of the time, I did not show any interest in cooking. The only exception was baking, which I loved. While many of my tastes and interests might have changed, this one has sustained to date. And a new bakery in town inevitably evinces my interest and more so if there is a twist to the fare on offer.

So, when I heard of Karamele, an all-vegan bakery, I naturally looked forward to digging in. The venture by nutritionist and dietician, Kanupriya Khanna, aims to educate and encourage patrons to eat healthy without compromising on taste or curbing their cravings. Moreover, since the pandemic the shift to healthy eating has become of utmost importance, such a venture has tapped into a market that is on the upswing. The brand initially promised only healthy cakes and muffins but has now branched into breads, cookies, granolas, ice-creams and pizza bases.

Trained as a Nutritionist at King's College in London, Kanupriya has worked at Bombay Hospital, Hinduja Hospital, Jaslok Hospital and as a chief dietician at Fortis La Femme. It was a mix of her professional life, where she helped her patients eat right, and her experiments in the kitchen, where she tried to satisfy her children's cravings to create wholesome recipes, that led to the evolution of different offerings of the brand.

A word of caution before you order. The flip side of having healthy bakery products (if you consider it to be that), though, is that without the preservatives, the food starts going stale faster. But then, that is the entire point — to eat food that is fresh, healthy and minus additives.

So, over the weekend I decided to sample an assortment of bakes from the brand. The first on the list was *Eggless brownies*, which packed a dark chocolate punch. Unlike the chewy ones,



these were super soft and absolutely non-crumby. What came through was the taste of chocolate, which was rich without sitting heavy on the gut, that is the norm if we partake decadent ones.

Next up were two cakes — a carrot and an orange. Mildly sweetened with jaggery, these had replaced the all-purpose flour with sorghum in the ingredients. And trust me, you won't miss it one bit. Since I



a m

partial to oranges, it was the latter which I preferred with its slightly citrusy flavour. However, both of them were flavoursome as well as moist and just the perfect accompaniment to evening tea.

The *Granola with quinoa and honey* had rolled oats, dry fruits, nuts and seeds, each of, which added textures and flavour to the offering. Best had as a snack when you are feeling peckish in between work.

I reached out for *Peanut butter cookies* the next morning as the ingredient is something that I can have by the spoonfuls. Made out of flours of oats, almond and walnut and additions of flax seeds, dried cranberries, honey and peanut butter, these reminded me of old-fashioned goodness that was a given in products that were made at home by our mothers and grandmothers for it was chewy, with just a hint of sweetness. But I found the name somewhat misleading. Where I had hoped for a full-on blast of peanut butter and being satiated, I found it was a barely-there whiff.

So, I ferreted out the *Gluten-free and vegan bread with mixed seeds* which was neatly packed within the folds of paper. The label stated that it was free of additives like potato and arrowroot starch. It was here that I was pleasantly surprised. It toasts evenly and whether you have it lightly buttered or as a grilled sandwich, it was spectacular. Given that it again taps into sorghum for its main ingredient that, indeed, is something that you can look forward to for a healthy start to the day. This has all my heart (and tummy).

Definitely, worth a try by the health junkies who are easily tempted by the pleasures of the tongue. You just might find your balance here.

RAISE A CUPPA

Coffee is truly ubiquitous and seemingly unbeatable at its own game, boosting morales era after era, says SHIVRAM VEDULA



Have you heard the story of mystic rituals, goats and Sufi saints? If you have, you are well aware of the mystic powers of coffee. However, if you have not, let me take you on a time travel trip.

It is the 11th century and goat herders in Ethiopia drink a concoction with magical properties made of leaves of this tree that has cherry-like fruit. This fruit travels to Yemen via Sufi monks and becomes the most sought-after commodity from their monasteries. It spreads across the Ottoman empire despite the Sultan decreeing death to coffee drinkers, and although Western medicine initially acts apprehensive, coffee takes over most of Europe. The storming of the Bastille gets planned in a Parisian café house and leads to the French Revolution. Paris, London, and Vienna become the centres of café culture in the 17th and 18th century nurturing the ideas of artistes, thinkers, philosophers, and revolutionaries such as Rousseau, Isaac Newton, and Ernest Hemingway ever since. In the 20th century, this brew helps industrial workers work better and rightfully comes to be known as the lubricant of the human machine, coined by William H Ukers, the founder of the Tea and Coffee Trade Journal.

Coffee makes its way into India with Baba Budan, a 15th century Sufi, and makes its home quite comfortably in the Western Ghats and Tamil Nadu, generating cultural rituals with various brewing techniques unique to the Indian consumer.

The rich dark liquid and modern India

Coffee, until recently, was the undercurrent of the Indian experience despite India being the sixth largest coffee producer and fifth-largest exporter in the world. Indian coffee houses of the majoritarian tea-drinking country were instrumental in the Indian freedom struggle, especially in Mumbai and Kolkata (erstwhile Calcutta). They threw off the British stronghold on the coffee trade along with racial discrimination asserting Indianness to coffee. The frothy filter coffee of South India gains a special mention to

prove the presence of coffee fanatics in India.

Modern coffee chains mushrooming across the country, over the past decade, have seen coffee lovers come out of the shadows and have attracted a young demographic by making coffee a thing of quiet democratic luxury. The focus is sharp on self-proclaimed coffee connoisseurs, creating customer experiences that are unique to coffee drinkers. The beverage is expertly adapted to the modern work culture being a common and popular feature both in-office breaks and in the absence of a physical work environment, as evident from the Dalgona phenomenon of last year. It is now engaging with an even more dynamic generation, Gen Z. A young and stressed India finds its escape in a mugful that validates their hustle as well as allowing them to hit the pause button.

Is it healthy though?

This stimulating and uplifting drink has been found to have several health benefits from being hydrating to reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes. Recent studies even go so far as to suggest that the habit of drinking coffee can keep you from suffering heart complications. Besides, it is a well-known antioxidant and diuretic.

The new coffee wave

In 2020, Indians consumed over 1,170,000 of 60 kg bags of coffee. This number stands testament to the growing love for coffee that is undeterred by the pandemic. A social structure built around coffee continues to influence business and personal relations. In-person coffee sessions have moved online, and coffee accompanies all conversations on social media from music to podcast with coffee live sessions and streams. Coffee to this day affects all facets of life and is a quick energy fix for the needs of the WFH lifestyle. Everyday coffee break rooms at the virtual workplace are even a matter of policy.

Undoubtedly, coffee is truly ubiquitous and seemingly unbeatable at its own game, boosting morales era after era. It must be true what they say: Humanity does run on coffee!

(The writer is the senior brand marketing manager of Slay Coffee.)

R E C I P E S



SWEET POTATO WALNUT FALAFEL BOWLS

WHAT YOU NEED

For falafel:

- Raw sweet potato (peeled and cut into chunks): 1
- Cooked quinoa: 1 cup
- California walnut halves: 1/2 cup
- Sea salt: 1 tsp
- Ground cumin: 1/2 tsp
- Onion powder: 1/2 tsp
- Garlic powder: 1/2 tsp
- Flour: 1/2 cup
- Egg: 1
- Vegetable oil

For tahini dressing:

- Tahini: 1/4 cup
- Lemon juice: 3 tbsp
- Water: 2 tbsp
- Pure maple syrup: 1 tbsp
- Ground cumin: 1/4 tsp
- Garlic powder: 1/4 tsp
- Salt to taste

Bowls:

- Loosely packed curly kale (very coarsely chopped): 4 cups
- Cooked quinoa: 2 cups
- Julienned carrots: 1 cup

- Avocado (sliced): 1
- California walnuts and minced red onion (toasted, chopped)

METHOD

- Place sweet potato in a food processor and pulse until finely minced. Add quinoa, walnuts, seasonings, and pulse until all pieces are uniform in size. Add flour, egg, and pulse again until well mixed, scraping down the sides as needed.

- Shape mixture into 16 equal balls. (Using wet hands will keep the mixture from sticking.)

- Heat oil in a deep skillet or pot until very hot. Cooking in batches, fry falafel balls for a few minutes on each side or until golden brown and cooked through. Let them drain on a paper towel-lined tray.

- Whisk together all dressing ingredients in a small bowl.
- Place equal amounts of kale, quinoa, carrots, and avocado into four large salad bowls. Place four falafel in each and drizzle with dressing. Garnish with walnuts and onion if desired.

Courtesy: Chef Sabyasachi Gorai.

WALNUT CHOCOLATE BARFI

WHAT YOU NEED

- California walnuts: 3 cups
- Dark chocolate: 200 gm
- Unsalted butter: 50 gm
- Milk: 1/2 cup
- Milk powder: 2 cups
- Digestive biscuits (powdered): 1 cup
- Condensed milk: 1 cup

METHOD

- To a mixer jar, add the California walnuts and let them crush. Keep it



aside.

- Chop the dark chocolate and keep it aside.

- To a pan, add butter and then add the

ground walnuts.

- To this mixture, add the chopped chocolate and mix well.
- Add milk and milk powder to the pan. Mix everything gradually.
- Now add the powdered biscuits and mix well.
- Finally add the condensed milk and mix.

- Spread the barfi mixture in the pan and cool it completely.
- Cut the barfi into squares and serve.

Courtesy: Chef Hemasri Subramanian.

CHICKEN TAGINE WITH OLIVES AND PRESERVED LEMONS

WHAT YOU NEED

- Garlic cloves (finely chopped): 5
- Saffron threads (pulverized): 1/4 tsp
- Ground ginger: 1/4 tsp
- Ground cumin: 1/4 tsp
- Turmeric: 1/4 tsp
- Sweet paprika: 1 tsp
- Extra virgin olive oil: 2 tsp
- Onions: 3
- Chicken (cut in 8 to 10 pieces): 1 kg
- Cinnamon stick: 1
- Kalamata olives (pitted and halved): 8
- Cracked green olives (pitted and halved): 8
- Preserved lemons: 1 large or 3 small
- Chicken stock: 1 cup
- Lemon juice: 1/2 cup
- Flat-leaf parsley



- (chopped): 1 tbsp
- Salt and black pepper

METHOD

- Mix garlic, saffron, ginger,

paprika, cumin, and turmeric together. If not using kosher chicken, add 1/2 teaspoon salt. Add pepper to taste. Rub chicken with mixture, cover, refrigerate and

marinate for three to four hours.

- Heat oil in a heavy skillet. Add chicken and brown on all sides. Remove to platter. Add onions to skillet, and cook over medium-low heat for about 15 minutes, until lightly brown.

- Transfer to tagine, if you are using one, or leave in skillet. Add cinnamon stick.

- Put chicken on onions. Scatter with olives. Quarter the lemons, remove the pulp and cut the skin in strips. Scatter over chicken. Mix stock and lemon juice. Pour over chicken.

- Cover tagine or skillet. Place over low heat, and cook about 30 minutes, until chicken is done. Scatter parsley on top, and serve.

Courtesy: Chef de partie Farah Mohamed at Ozen Reserve Bolifushi, Maldives.



PRAWNS IN GREEN MASALA

WHAT YOU NEED

- Prawns: 8-10
- Onion: 1
- Ginger-garlic: 2 tbsp
- Coriander leaves: 25 gm
- Green chilli: 1-2
- Cumin: 1 tsp
- Black pepper: 1 tsp
- Fresh coconut: 25 gm
- Salt to taste

METHOD

- Clean prawns, deshelled, and keep aside.
- In a grinder, mix little water with coriander leaves, coconut, green chilli, salt and grind them to make a paste.

- Heat little oil in an iron pot, add chopped onions, pounded ginger-garlic paste, cumin, black pepper, and sauté for some time. Let it cool, and grind to make a smooth paste.

- In a bowl, mix both the pastes together along with prawns, marinate for 10 to 15 minutes.

- Now, take a pan and grill marinated prawns on low heat. Once done, garnish it with chopped coriander leaves and serve.

- You can use chicken or fish instead of prawns as well.

Courtesy: Senior executive chef Vivek Tamhane at BLVD Club, Bangalore.

India aim to whitewash SL



PTI ■ COLOMBO

India coach Rahul Dravid will have to choose between experimenting and continuing the winning combination in his bid to ensure a clean sweep against Sri Lanka in the third and final one-day here on Friday.

While Shikhar Dhawan-led India won the first game by seven wickets, Deepak Chahar pulled a heist in the second one with his match-winning unbeaten 69 as the visitors won by three wickets.

Now, it remains to be seen whether India continue with Prithvi Shaw, who got scores of 43 and 13, to partner the skipper at the top, or go in for classy Devdutt Padikkal or an equally elegant Ruturaj Gaikwad —

both superb List A players.

If Shaw gets another opportunity, he would be more than keen to get a big score, as he failed to convert his start in the first game.

Another dilemma for the team management would be whether to persist with aggressive Ishan Kishan or give an opportunity to Sanju Samson, another hard-hitting batsman, to make his ODI debut.

The likes of Manish Pandey and ever-improving Suryakumar Yadav are certain to maintain their places as the duo are the middle-order backbone. With vice-captain Bhuvneshwar Kumar making it clear that there are no fitness issues with Hardik Pandya, the flamboyant Baroda player and his brother all-rounder Krunal

are expected to play.

There are times when every player does not want to rest and play each game, but the team management would need to consider the workload of the bowlers, as they are playing six matches in just 12 days in humid Sri Lankan conditions.

In the two previous games, the Indian bowlers managed to contain the inexperienced Sri Lankan batting line up and pulled things back.

While Bhuvneshwar could continue to lead the attack, it remains to be seen whether the team management opts for young Navdeep Saini or uncapped impressive left-arm pacer Chetan Sakariya in place of last game's hero Deepak Chahar, who has been exceptional with his knuckle-ball.

But Chahar, who has now shown that he can bat, is also a key player in the T20 set up, and hence he could be rested, with the three shortest format games lined up.

The spin duo of Kuldeep Yadav (2/48 and 0/55) and Yuzvendra Chahal (2/52 and 3/50) did pretty well in the first two games. But with the likes of off-spinner Krishnappa Gowtham and talented Rahul Chahar, waiting in the wings, it

will be a difficult call on whom to play.

For Sri Lanka, a win in the final game would do wonders to their confidence after nearly pulling off a win in the second game.

Opener Avishka Fernando has been among runs, but needs support from the other batsmen.

A good outing for skipper Dasun Shanaka, Minod Bhanuka, Dhananjaya de Silva and others would not only help the team but also themselves in the career ahead.

Chahar learnt art of chasing from Dhoni

PTI ■ COLOMBO

India pacer Deepak Chahar, who starred with the bat (69 not out) in the second ODI against Sri Lanka, says he has learnt the art of chasing from the great MS Dhoni.

(Dhoni) he has had a very big impact on me. Not just CSK, while growing up, we have all seen how he (takes the match close). Every time we speak, he tells me that it is in your hands to take the game till the end and if you can do that, then you get some overs and that makes the match thrilling.

"So, that was the whole idea — to take the match till the last over," Chahar said on the eve of the third ODI.

Chahar has played under Dhoni at Chennai Super Kings.

And he pulled a heist in the second ODI as he led India to a stunning three wicket win chasing a stiff target of 276.

According to Chahar, he is currently not looking at the T20 World Cup but stressed that he is happy that he could prove himself with the bat when he got an opportunity.

"The (T20) World Cup is still far ahead. My target always is that whenever I get an opportunity with the bat or ball, is to prove myself. Selection is not in my hands nor in any player's hands, to perform is in our hands.

"I was fortunate enough that I got an opportunity that I could prove in batting and I am happy that I could convert it," said the 28-year-old right-arm pacer.

Mayank, Vihari, Jadeja among runs



PTI ■ CHESTER-LE-STREET

Mayank Agarwal and Hanuma Vihari spent some valuable time in the middle while Ravindra Jadeja scored his second fifty of the game on the final day of India's warm-up match against County XI here on Thursday.

After bowling out County XI for 220 on day two, Agarwal (47 off 81) and Cheteshwar Pujara (38 off 58), opened India's second innings on day three.

The duo shared an 87-run stand which ended when Agarwal charged down the wicket to off-spinner Jack Carson only to be caught at mid-on by fellow India teammate Washington Sundar.

Washington and pacer Avesh Khan, who are both set to fly back home due to injury, played for the County XI in India's only warm up game ahead of the first Test beginning August 4.

Like Agarwal, Pujara too had the opportunity to make a big score to boost his confidence ahead of the first Test. However, he fell to the trap laid by Carson and flicked one straight to leg slip.

Jadeja (51 off 77) and Vihari (43 not out off 105) then shared an 84-run stand before the southpaw retired out. Jadeja had scored 75 in the first innings.

Sundar out of Eng series

New Delhi: The Indian team in England was dealt another injury blow on Thursday when spin bowling all-rounder Washington Sundar was ruled out of the five-Test series beginning August 4.

It has been learnt that Washington has fractured a finger after being hit by a Mohammed Siraj delivery on the second day of the First-Class warm up game between India and County XI.

The match did not have the same intensity as it was witnessed on the first two days with the game heading for a drab draw.

Much to the opposition's surprise, India declared soon after Jadeja completed his fifty with 33 overs left in the game.

County XI batted for 15.5 overs, scoring 31 without a loss of a wicket before the players shook hands.

Pant recovers, joins team bio-bubble

Durham: India wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant has joined the team bio-bubble after recovering from Covid-19 ahead of the marquee Test series against England.

Pant, who had tested positive for the virus, has completed 10 days of isolation period, followed by two RT-PCR negative reports and proper cardio check-up which are mandatory before joining the team.

"Hello @RishabhPant17,



great to have you back," the BCCI said in a tweet, along with Pant's photo, on Thursday.

20 Indian athletes, 6 officials to take part in opening ceremony

PTI ■ TOKYO

A total of 20 Indian athletes from seven sports and six officials will participate in the Olympics opening ceremony on Friday as Covid-19 concerns and competitions lined up the next day led to a majority of the contingent deciding to stay away from the event.

Athletes from sports like shooting, badminton, archery and hockey, will skip the ceremony as the Indian delegation is not willing to expose them to the risk of contracting the virus with their events lined up on Saturday.

From hockey, only flag-bearer, men's team captain Manpreet Singh, will participate in the ceremony.

The list of 20 attendees include four paddlers, including Manika Batra and A Sharath Kamal, and as many sailing team members.

Lone fencer C A Bhavani



Opening ceremony
Live from 4:30pm IST
SONY TEN 2 & LIV

Devi, gymnast Pranati Naik and swimmer Sajjan Prakash besides as many as eight boxers will also be there.

Apart from MC Mary Kom, who is also a flag-bearer alongside Manpreet, Lovlina Borgohain, Pooja Rani, Amit Panghal, Manish Kaushik, Ashish Kumar and Satish Kumar will participate in the ceremony.

India is being represented by more than 125 athletes in

the Games with the overall contingent size being 228, including officials, coaches, other support staff and alternate athletes in view of the Covid-19.

"Archery, Judo, Badminton, Weightlifting, Tennis, Hockey (men and women), Shooting, the above are not participating due to matches on 24th, practice sessions on 24th and staying safe," Indian Olympic Association President Narinder Batra said.

"The march past will be in Japanese alphabetical order and India's number is 21st," he added.

"Both the flag-bearers ie M C Mary Kom and Manpreet Singh are participating in the opening ceremony," Batra said.

PTI ■ TOKYO

There is palpable tension, a sense of dread actually, but the Covid-hit Olympic Games starting Friday, could prove to be a watershed for the biggest ever Indian contingent with shooters, boxers and wrestlers expected to lead an unparalleled medal rush.

India, a nation of over 1.3 billion, has just 28 Olympic medals to its credit since making a debut back in 1900. That tally features just one individual Gold that Abhinav Bindra picked up in 2008.

This time the country is definitely more optimistic than before of what its 120 athletes — 68 men and 52 women — in Tokyo would achieve.

The expectations are of a first ever double digit figure in the medals tally, surpassing the best haul of six achieved in the 2012 London Olympics, none of them Gold. The foremost among the contenders are 15 shooters. Mostly young, with significant international success to their credit in the past two years and buzzing with energy.

A 19-year-old Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary, a 20-year-old Elavenil Valarivan are just some names from whom medal hopes are sky high.

They seem ready for the pressure and come July 24, there could well be a Gold



Clockwise: Wrestlers Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat, shooters Manu Bhaker & Saurabh Chaudhary, weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, shuttler PV Sindhu, boxer Amit Panghal and javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra

rush that India has never seen in the Games.

The jumbo shooting contingent is on one side.

On the other is a lone warrior — Mirabai Chanu (49kg) in weightlifting. The 26-year-old has come a long way since failing to record a single legitimate lift in the Rio Olympics five years ago.

If all goes well, hers could be among the first medals that India would celebrate this weekend.

Another bunch to watch out for is the

Indian archers look to exorcise past ghosts

Tokyo: Up against a familiar pre-Olympic hype and with history stacked heavily against them, Indian archers will have a feeling of déjà vu when they begin their Tokyo Games campaign with the rankings round here on Friday.

Notwithstanding the women's team's failure to qualify, the quartet of Deepika Kumari, Atanu Das, Tarundeep Rai and Pravin Jadhav entered the mega-event with renewed hopes of winning the country's first Olympic medal in the sport.

The biggest prospects are the husband-wife duo of Das and Deepika who would look to recreate the magic of the Paris World Cup in the mixed pair competition that would make its Games debut on Saturday at the Yumenoshima Park.

Competing in her third successive Olympics, two-time world No 1 Deepika has seen it all, from the lows of London to hitting rock-bottom at Rio 2016.

Five years down the line, the firebrand archer from Ranchi is in the form of her life having



already won five World Cup Gold medals in recent times.

Wiser and perhaps more daring, Deepika's biggest challenge would be to overcome the Koreans, who are both mentally and physically strong.

In the absence of defending champion Chang Hye Jin who failed to make the cut, Deepika's biggest threat is Kang Chae Young.

The promising 20-year-old An San, who had beaten Deepika in straight sets en route to win the Gold at the Tokyo

2020 Test Event in July 2019, would also pose a big challenge.

Having qualified for the first time since 2012, the Indian men's team also offers some promise and it would be a big achievement, should they make the last-four.

The world rankings don't give the correct picture as neither Korea nor Chinese Taipei, China and Japan really competed internationally since the second half of 2019. All four of these nations will be at full strength in the Japanese capital.

Neeraj is good but tough for him to beat me: Vetter

New Delhi: Rivals when they have spears in their hands, German javelin throw superstar Johannes Vetter and Neeraj Chopra are happy being friends when not competing even though the former is quite clear that the Haryana youngster wouldn't be able to beat him in Tokyo Olympics.

Former world champion Vetter is the favourite to claim Gold, while Chopra is being seen as India's best bet to end the country's Olympic medal drought in athletics.

"He (Chopra) threw good throws twice this year. Above 86m in Finland. If he is healthy and if he is in the right shape, especially in his technique, he can throw far," Vetter said.

"But he has to fight with me. I am looking to throw over 90m in Tokyo, so it will be tough for him to beat me."

Vetter is in red-hot form and



he is the only man in the world to have thrown beyond 90m in the past 24 months.

In fact, he has done so 18 times, including a record streak of seven competitions between April and June this year. He even threatened the world record last year, throwing 97.76m in Silesia, Poland to move to second on the world all-time list.

While the 23-year-old Indian, a medal prospect in Tokyo Olympics, has a personal best of 88.07m.

France thrashed by Mexico

Tokyo: France's bid for men's Olympic football glory got off to a nightmare start with a 4-1 defeat by Mexico on Thursday, while Richarlison scored a hat-trick as reigning champions Brazil beat Germany in a six-goal thriller.

Sylvain Ripoll's France are looking for a first Olympic medal since winning Gold in 1984, but collapsed in the second half at Tokyo Stadium.

Mexico took the lead less than two minutes after the break through Alexis Vega, before Sebastian Cordova doubled their advantage in the 55th minute.

The 35-year-old captain Andre-Pierre Gignac, whose last game for the French senior team was the Euro 2016 final loss to Portugal, pulled one back from the penalty spot with 21 minutes remaining.

But any thoughts of a comeback were quashed as Uriel Antuna and Eduardo Aguirre netted late on for 2012 champi-



ons Mexico.

France now face a tough task to get out of Group A with a top-two finish, ahead of games against Covid-hit South Africa on Sunday and hosts Japan on July 28.

Japan saw off South Africa, who had two players test positive for Covid-19 on Sunday, 1-0 thanks to Takefusa Kubo's second-half strike.

Brazil, who won Gold for the first time when inspired by

Neymar on home soil five years ago in Rio, downed Germany 4-2 in a dramatic match which saw forward Richarlison net a first-half hat-trick.

But Spain struggled in Sapporo, as a team featuring six players who reached the Euro 2020 semi-finals dominated possession but created few chances in a 0-0 draw with Egypt. Spain next take on Australia, who beat 10-man Argentina 2-0.

Bye for Panghal, 3 others; overall tough draw for Indian boxers

PTI ■ TOKYO

Top seed and world No 1 Amit Panghal (52kg) was among four Indian boxers who got byes into the Olympic Games pre-quarterfinals as the country's pugilists geared up for a tough campaign going by the draws unveiled here on Thursday.

An unprecedented nine Indian boxers would be vying for medals at the showpiece.

Panghal will step into the ring on July 31 in the last-16-stage against the winner of the contest between Botswana's Mahommed Rajab Otukile and Colombia's Yuberjen Herney Rivas Martinez.

Martinez was the light fly-weight Silver-medallist at the Rio Games.

The 25-year-old Asian Games champion Indian, who is expected to advance, might find China's Hu Jianguan, the 2016 Olympics Bronze-medallist, as a possible quarterfinal opponent.

In the women's competition, six-time world champion M C Mary Kom (51kg) will square off against Dominica's Miguelina Hernandez on July 25 and up next for her would be Colombian third seed 2016 Olympic Bronze-medallist Ingrit Lorena Victoria Valencia as she pursues a second Olympic medal.

Also getting a bye was former Asian Games Bronze-medallist Satish Kumar (+91kg), who is the first super heavyweight from India to make the Olympic cut.



He will face Jamaica's Ricardo Brown in the pre-quarters and if he wins, the Armyman will run into top seed Bakhodir Jalolov of Uzbekistan.

Debutant Ashish Chaudhary (75kg), who has been an Asian Silver-medallist, will be up against China's Erbieke Touheta in his Games opener.

The winner meets Brazilian third seed Hebert Sousa in the pre-quarters. Sousa was a Bronze-medallist at the 2019 world championships.

Commonwealth Games Silver-medallist Manish Kaushik (63kg), also making his Games debut, has Britain's European Silver-medallist Luke McCormack to contend with in the opener.

Another fancied Indian

Nagal vs Denis in first round

Tokyo: Indian tennis player Sumit Nagal will face Uzbekistan's Denis Istomin in the opening round of the men's singles event at the Olympics. Nagal, who qualified for the Games last week after large-scale withdrawals, was pitted against the lower-ranked Uzbek in the draw on Thursday.

A first-round win for the 23-year-old Indian, ranked 160, could see him face second-seeded Russia's Daniil Medvedev next.

In women's doubles, six-time Grand Slam champion Sania Mirza and Ankita Raina will lock horns with the Kichenok twins — Nadia and Lyudmyla — of Ukraine in the opening round.

seeded 2012 Olympic Gold-medallist Roniel Iglesias.

In the women's draw, Pooja Rani (75kg) will take on Algeria's Ichrak Chaib, in her opening bout and will be up against China's second seed Li Qian if she progresses.

Qian is the reigning Asian champion and the 2018 edition world champion.

Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) got a bye and will face Germany's Nadine Apetz in her opening clash.

Simranjit Kaur (60kg) also got a bye and has Thailand's Sudaporn Seesondee awaiting her in the pre-quarters.