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'One earth, one health' united bid: Modi to G7

PM calls for equitable distribution of resources to fight Covid; US for G7 efforts to compete with China on developing world infra outreach

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the world battles the Covid-19 pandemic, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday called for "One Earth, One Health," in apparent reference to collective effort to meet the challenge and equitable distribution of resources. He made this appeal while participating in the virtual ongoing G-7 summit in United Kingdom.

With the world now urgently needing vaccine to combat the pandemic, French President Emmanuel Macron favoured unhindered raw material supplies to countries like India to produce vaccine in large numbers, sources said.

Chancellor Angela Merkel specifically referred to Modi's mantra and conveyed strong support, news agency ANI quoted GoI sources as saying. Australian PM Scott Morrison referred to his discussions with PM Modi earlier about TRIPS waiver and conveyed strong support of Australia.

Modi also spoke on ways to come out of the pandemic at the earliest. He addressed the



outrage session on Saturday and will speak again on Sunday morning.

He was invited to attend the summit by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Given the situation at home, Modi opted to participate in the prestigious meet virtually.

Modi had taken part in this event in 2019 when France chaired the G-7. India participated then as a "Goodwill Partner" and Modi participated in the sessions on "Climate, Biodiversity and Oceans" and "Digital Transformation".

During the ongoing summit at Cromwell, Modi will virtually take part in three sessions on the themes "Building Back

Stronger", "Building Back Together" and "Building Back Greener".

Meanwhile, according to news agency AP, the United States plans to push democratic allies to publicly call out China for forced labour practices as the Group of Seven leaders gathered at a summit where they will also unveil an infrastructure plan meant to compete with Beijing's efforts in the developing world.

The provocative proposal is part of President Joe Biden's escalating campaign to get fellow democratic leaders to present a more unified front to compete economically with China in the century ahead, according to two senior administration officials who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the plans for the seaside summit publicly.

The officials said Biden wanted G-7 leaders to speak out in a single voice against forced labour practices targeting Uyghur Muslims and other ethnic minorities. Biden hopes the denunciation will be part of the joint communique released

at the summit's end, but some European allies have been reluctant to so forcefully split with Beijing. It may not be clear until the three-day summit ends on Sunday whether the leaders will take that step.

The wealthy nations' leaders were all smiles and unity as they were welcomed to the summit on Friday by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on the freshly raked sand of Carbis Bay in southwest England for their first gathering since 2019.

Last year's gathering was cancelled because of Covid-19, and recovery from the pandemic is dominating this year's discussions, with members of the wealthy democracies' club expected to commit to sharing at least 1 billion vaccine shots with struggling countries.

China also loomed large over the meeting on the craggy coast of Cornwall. Biden's proposed critique of China's labour practices was to be raised as the allies unveil an infrastructure proposal dubbed "Build Back Better for the World," a name that echoes the slogan of Biden's poll campaign.

Continued on Page 4

PIO journalist wins Pulitzer for exposing China's vast infra for detaining Muslims

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Megha Rajagopalan, an Indian-origin journalist, along with two contributors has won the Pulitzer Prize for innovative investigative reports that exposed a vast infrastructure of prisons and mass internment camps secretly built by China for detaining hundreds of thousands of Muslims in its restive Xinjiang region.

Rajagopalan from BuzzFeed News is among two Indian-origin journalists who won the US' top journalism award on Friday.

Tampa Bay Times' Neil Bedi won for local reporting. Bedi along with Kathleen McGroary has been awarded the prize for the series exposing a Sheriff's Office initiative that used computer modelling to identify people believed to be future crime suspects. About 1,000 people were monitored under the programme, including children. Bedi is an investigative reporter for the Tampa Bay Times.

"What Kathleen and Neil unearthed in Pasco County has had a profound impact on the community," said Mark Katches, Times executive editor. "This is what the best investigative journalism can do and why it is so essential."

Continued on Page 4

No GST on key drugs for Covid, black fungus

Tax rates on 14 Covid relief items slashed from 12% to 5%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) has been waived for two critical drugs against Covid-19 and black fungus Tocilizumab and Amphotericin B. Tax rates have been reduced to 5 per cent on 14 major pandemic relief goods, including testing kits and hand sanitisers, from prevailing rates in the range of 12 per cent and 18 per cent.

The 44th GST Council meeting on Saturday also decided to slash tax rates on medicines and equipment used for the treatment of Covid-19. A notification to this effect will be issued within a day or two. The 5 per cent GST levied on vaccines was left unchanged, following the recent changes in the country's vaccine procurement strategy that puts the Union Government in charge of augmenting supplies.

The reduced rates, which Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj said were aimed at providing some succour to the people amid the pandemic, will remain effective till September 30, but could be extended fur-

Medicine and equipment used in Covid-19 treatment	Existing GST rate	Reduction in GST rate
Tocilizumab, Amphotericin B	5 %	Nil
Anti Coagulants like Heparin, Remdesivir (Any other drug recommended by the Health Ministry and department of pharma for Covid treatment)	12 %	5 %
Medical Grade Oxygen, Oxygen Concentrator/ Generator including personal imports, Ventilators, Ventilator Masks/Canula/Helmet, BiPAP Machine, High flow nasal canula (HFNC) device	12 %	5 %
Covid testing kits, Specified Inflammatory Diagnostic Kits namely D-Dimer, IL-6 and LDH	12 %	5 %
Hand Sanitiser, Temperature check equipment, Gas/Electric furnaces for crematorium including their installation	18 %	5 %
Pulse Oximeters including personal imports,	12 %	5 %
Ambulances	28 %	12 %

ther based on later assessments. The decision to slash tax rates was based on a recommendation of a Group of Ministers, headed by Meghalaya Deputy Chief Minister Conrad Sangma, and would remain effective till September 30, 2021.

The GST rate on Covid-19 drug Tocilizumab and black fungus medicine Amphotericin B will be reduced to nil from the existing 5 per cent. The

GST rate on Remdesivir and anticoagulants like Heparin is lowered from 12 per cent to 5 per cent. The GST rate on ambulances has been cut to 12 per cent from 28 per cent. Tax on medical grade oxygen, oxygen concentrator (including personal imports), ventilators, BiPAP machines and high flow nasal cannula (HFNC) devices has been cut to 5 per cent from 12 per cent.

Continued on Page 4

CAPSULE

TERRORISTS KILL 2 COPS, 2 CIVILIANS IN SOPORE

Jammu: Two policemen and an equal number of civilians were killed while three cops and another civilian received critical injuries in a daring strike by a group of three motorcycle borne terrorists in the Arampora area of Sopore town of North Kashmir's Baramulla district on Saturday. According to police, two local and one foreign terrorist belonging to the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba terrorist outfit were suspected to be behind the attack.

5 SHOWROOMS DAMAGED IN FIRE AT DELHI MARKET

New Delhi: Five showrooms were damaged in a fire that broke out in a market area here, officials said, adding no injuries were reported.

AIMPLB MOVES HC OVER DEMOLITION OF MASJID

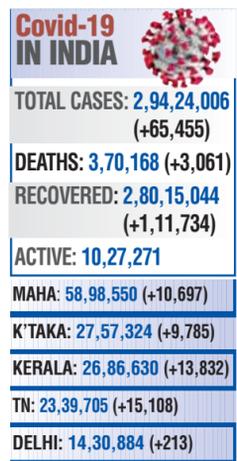
Lucknow: The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) has moved the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court over the demolition of the century-old Gareeb Nawaz Masjid in Barabanki, the advocate for the board said.

Pvt hospitals used 17% of 1.85 cr jab doses in May: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

At a time when the people, at least in the urban areas are hankering for the Covid-19 vaccines to protect themselves from deadly virus, Government data shows that only 17 per cent of the 1.85 crore doses were made available across the country in May, out of which 1.85 crore doses were earmarked for private hospitals. However, the Government data showed that only 22 lakh doses were utilised.

Experts feel that the huge stock lying with the private hospitals could be due to the high prices of vaccinations



and vaccine hesitancy. Continued on Page 4

Eriksen taken to hospital after collapsing at Euro 2020

AP ■ COPENHAGEN

Denmark midfielder Christian Eriksen was taken to a hospital on Saturday after collapsing on the field during a match at the European Championship.

The governing body of European soccer said Eriksen has been stabilised and the Danish soccer federation said he was awake. "Christian Eriksen is awake and is undergoing further examinations at Rigshospitalet," the Danish federation wrote on Twitter.

The Euro 2020 match between Denmark and Finland was suspended after Eriksen was given urgent medical attention on the field near the end of the first half.

He was treated for about 10 minutes after collapsing. He was then carried off on a stretcher. Detailed report on P11

War histories to be declassified

Rajnath approves policy on archiving to provide people authentic account

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Saturday gave the nod for declassification of war or military operations' histories to provide people an authentic account. However, it has the discretionary powers to withhold any information considered sensitive.

It means, some major events like the India-China war in 1962 chronicled in the Henderson Brooks report will not be made public as of now and will remain classified, sources said here.

Moreover, the new policy for declassification before the 25 years cap will be for inter-

nal consumption first and later a committee may decide to publicly release whole or parts of it, considering the sensitivity of the subject, officials said.

The requirement of having war histories written with clear cut policy on declassification of war records was recommended by the Kargil Review Committee, headed by K Subrahmanyam, as well as NN Vohra Committee in order to analyse lessons learnt and prevent future mistakes.

Giving details, officials said Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved the policy on archiving, declassification and compilation of histories of wars and operations by his Ministry.

The objective behind this move was that timely publication of war histories will give people an accurate account of the events, provide authentic material for academic research and counter the unfounded rumours, the Ministry said. Continued on Page 4

SAD, BSP reignite ties to fight Punjab Assembly elections

BSP to contest 20 of 117 seats

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) on Saturday announced an alliance to contest the 2022 Punjab Assembly elections together. An announcement was made jointly by SAD president Sukhbir Badal and BSP national general secretary Satish Chandra Mishra at the SAD head office in Chandigarh.

The SAD-BSP had entered into an alliance long back for the 1996 Lok Sabha polls and won 11 out of 13 seats in Punjab.

Termining the alliance as historic, the SAD chief Sukhbir Badal said it is not just limited



SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal felicitates BSP secretary general Satish Chandra Mishra during a joint press conference at the SAD head office in Chandigarh on Saturday. PTI

to the 2022 Assembly elections, but would continue in future also. Both the SAD and the BSP have the same ideology and have always worked for the welfare of the farmers, poor and labourers.

Continued on Page 4

BJP seeks Sonia, Rahul's replies on Digvijaya's 'Art 370 rethink' remark

Cong 1st love is Pak, both share same views on Kashmir: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the controversy over the Congress "Clubhouse" chat of former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh, the BJP on Saturday said the Congress' first love is Pakistan and "both share same views on Kashmir".

The BJP demanded answers from Congress leaders Sonia and Rahul Gandhi on Singh's comment on the restoration of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir.

Union Minister Giriraj Singh said Pakistan is the first love of the Congress. In a tweet, Singh said, "The Congress' first love is Pakistan.



Singh conveyed Rahul's message to Pakistan. The Congress will help Pakistan in grabbing Kashmir."

Lashing out at the Congress, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said the Congress should change its name from Indian National Congress to Anti-national Congress which he alleged "not only siding with Pakistan but also with China to show India down."

"What do Sonia and Rahul think about Digvijaya's Clubhouse statement? Is this Congress' stand too? We demand Rahul to hold a Press

conference and clarify," Patra said. He alleged the Congress and Pakistan are on the same page on the Kashmir issue and Article 370.

"Today an important topic going in TV channels is 'Clubhouse'. We all have seen through TV channels how the veteran leader of the clubhouse — Singh is spewing venom against India outside and how he is agreeing with Pakistan's demands. This is the same Singh, who had called the Pulwama attack just an accident, he had called the 26/11 attack a conspiracy of RSS and also tried to give clean chit to Pakistan at that time," said Patra.

As the BJP attacked him, Singh posted a tweet in Hindi in an apparent jibe at the ruling party.

"This bunch of illiterate people cannot probably differentiate between 'shall' and 'consider,'" he said. Continued on Page 4

Pilot lands in Delhi, Cong says all well

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

Disgruntled Congress leader Sachin Pilot on Saturday met Rajasthan incharge Ajay Maken and AICC general secretary (organisation) KC Venugopal in an effort to iron out the differences between him and the party for over a year now against Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot.

While Pilot has remained tightlipped since he landed in Delhi on Friday evening, Maken ruled out any differences and that both have been talking and meeting regularly. "I am speaking to Pilotji on a regular basis. Had he been angry, he would not be speaking to me," Maken, a former Union Minister, said.

Maken mentioned that vacant positions in the Rajasthan Cabinet, boards and commissions would be filled soon and leaders of the party



are engaged in resolving the issues. Continued on Page 4

Wider anti-BJP alliance must: NCP

Mumbai: A day after election strategist Prashant Kishor met NCP chief Sharad Pawar, a spokesperson of the party on Saturday said there is a need to have a "wider alliance" of political parties against the ruling BJP ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

None from outside Saudi can perform Haj this season

AP ■ DUBAI

Saudi Arabia announced on Saturday this year's Haj pilgrimage will be limited to no more than 60,000 people, all of them from within the kingdom, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The announcement by the kingdom comes after it ran an incredibly pared-down pilgrimage last year over the virus, but still allowed a small number of the faithful to take part in the annual ceremony.

A statement on the state-run Saudi Press Agency quoted the kingdom's Haj and Umrah Ministry making the announcement. It said this year's Haj, which will begin in mid-July, will be limited to those ages 18 to 65. Those taking part must be vaccinated as well, the ministry said.

"The kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is honoured to host pilgrims every year, con-



firm its that this arrangement comes out of its constant concern for the health, safety and security of pilgrims as well as the safety of their countries," the statement said.

In last year's Haj, as few as 1,000 people already residing in Saudi Arabia were selected to take part in the Haj. Two-thirds were foreign residents from among the 160 different nationalities that would have normally been represented at the Haj.

Continued on Page 4

JDU looks for respectable share for it in Modi Cabinet

PNS ■ PATNA/NEW DELHI

Amid the buzz of a Cabinet reshuffle in the Narendra Modi Government, the Janata Dal(U), which is part of the NDA at Centre and in the Bihar Government, on Saturday expected a "respectable" share in the Union Council of Ministers.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U) had opted out of a Cabinet berth when the NDA retained power in 2019.

"We are a part of the NDA... All constituents deserve a respectable share (in the Modi Government)," JD(U) chief RCP Singh told the media in Patna on Saturday.

After the exit of 18 MP-strong Shiv Sena, JD(U) has become the largest of BJP's allies in Parliament — 5 in the Rajya Sabha, and 16 in the Lok Sabha.

Continued on Page 4

‘Our responsibility was to land right with the sequel’

JD METHEJIA, producer of Sony SAB TV's *Wagle Ki Duniya* – Nayi Peedhi, Naye Kissey, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA how this series is different from the original, the challenge he is facing and why he chose the same starcast

I understand that you are reading a script. Is it for a new project?

No-no. *Wagle Ki Duniya- Nayi Peedhi, Naye Kissey* requires that we come up with a new storyline every day. We have tried to ensure that none of the stories in the series go beyond one episode. Out of the 78 episodes that have aired till now, there have been only a couple that have run into the second part. At the end of the day the creative writer has to send the storyline for the next day. That is what keeps me busy in the evenings.

What are the challenges you are facing having to shoot outside of Mumbai?

Wagle... as a show is all about daily trials and tribulations of the common man, we never expected to be at the resort, where we are shooting, for more than 15-29 days; it has now been 49 days. Then there is the whole thing of creating daily stories. We have based our show on real-life issues of the common man. To put out stories every day is not an easy task. Also, it is not possible for a middle-class family to afford to stay in the resort for such a long time. We have to work around these constraints and bring out the essence of the show that is all about morals, values, emotions and principles.

What makes *Wagle Ki Duniya* so popular?

The series is all about the common man and his trials and travails. People sitting at home identify with what is happening in *Wagle's* world. People find a connection with the actors and feel that what the characters are going through in reel life is something that they face everyday — problems at the workplace, kids have problems at home and the wife having to deal with household issues. These are small things but it makes what we call life — a common man's life. The show is about how a middle-class man thinks and people find a connection with the thinking that has been shown.

How is this series different from the 1988-90 show?

Here, the series takes a leap. While some of the cast is the same, there are new characters. This adds a new dimension to the show while keeping the essence of the original show that had 18 episodes. We wanted to showcase *Wagle's duniya* in the new setting. I call this show TV-web — a combination of TV show and web series.

How did the idea to revisit the show come up?

A few of us were working for a new show for the channel keeping in mind middle and higher middle class. Neeraj Vyas, business head of SAB TV called me at night and asked me what I thought of *Wagle Ki Duniya* of 1988. I told him it is an excellent idea. The next morning, I called Usha Laxman. She told me that she was about to call me with regard to 18 episodes that she had. I told her that why not do new episodes. She asked how we would do it without RK Laxman. I told her that we will begin with zero.

Why choose the same cast?

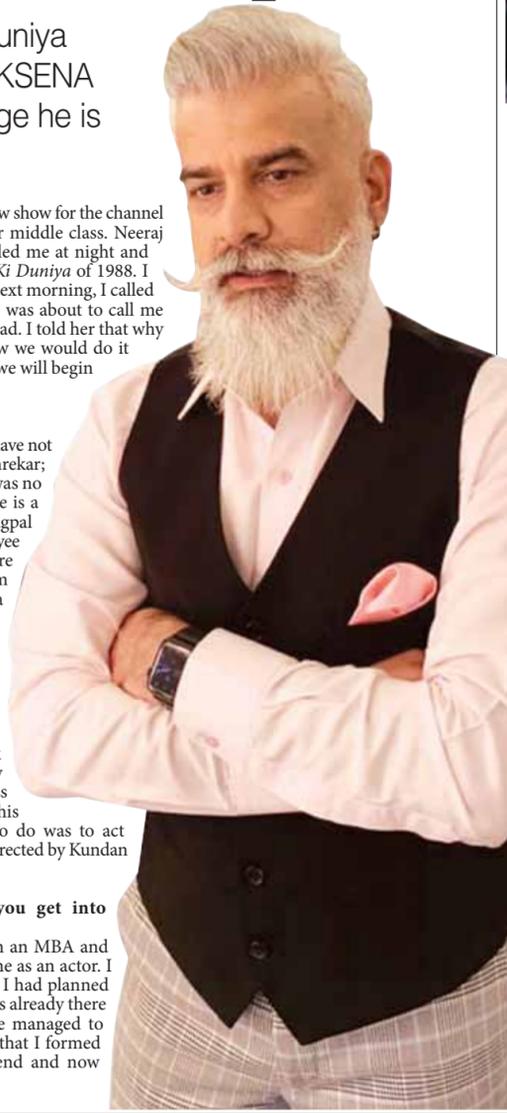
There was no way that we could have not taken Anjan Srivastav and Bharti Achrekar; they are the original *Wagles*. There was no reason not to take them. Since there is a leap, we couldn't take Dushyant Nagpal instead opted for two kids — Chinmayee Salvi and Sheehan Kapahi. Then there is Sumeet Raghavan; we wanted him to be there; then there is Pariva Pranati.

Were there any apprehensions since the series takes a leap and is set in present times?

No, we had no apprehensions. We have a wonderful team and we knew that this new series would work as well. We have worked on so many shows that talk about middle-class issues, we knew people would love this too. The only thing that we had to do was to act responsibly. The original show was directed by Kundan Shah; we had to land right.

You are an actor. How did you get into production and directing?

It was always on the cards. I am an MBA and when I left my job, I gave myself time as an actor. I had written a letter to myself where I had planned my life. Production and directing was already there on the cards. I am glad that I have managed to remain true to the letter. I am glad that I formed Hats Off Productions with my friend and now business partner, Aatish Kapadia.



PLAN YOUR STAY AT HOME SUNDAY



SWEET MOMENTS

Coffee mousse without cream, as good as that of the bar. Soft, creamy and tasty. The mousse coffee without cream is a pudding perfect for those little pauses in mid-afternoon or a cold dessert after lunch on a stay at home Sunday. Easy to make, ready in less than five minutes and as good as that of the bar. Do not you believe it? Let us move on to the recipe immediately.

INGREDIENTS

- 200 ml of soluble iced coffee
- 100 ml of cold water
- 200 ml of semi-skimmed milk
- 5 teaspoons of sugar
- Coffee

METHOD

Prepare the coffee and pour it into a bowl. Add sugar and water, mix. Put the mixture in the freezer to cool, remember that it must be well frozen. Now let's move on to milk.

Pour the cold milk into a bowl, start mixing, with the help of an electric whisk, until you get a very frothy mixture.

Take the coffee from the fridge, shake it hard to make it super creamy.

Add the frothy coffee to the frothed milk. Keep stirring for a few minutes until everything is smooth.

Store the coffee cream in a container and place it in the freezer to freeze.

GO FOR NO-BAKE TART

The no-bake tart with berries is the ideal dessert for a tasty snack, to end the meal with a sweet flavor and to surprise someone on the most refined occasions. Find out how to prepare a no-bake tart, and make a good impression in no time with your guests.

INGREDIENTS

- 500 gram wild berries
- 220 gram chocolate biscuit
- 150 gram white chocolate
- 100 gram butter
- 200 ml fresh cream
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar

METHOD

Crumble 220 g of chocolate biscuits, put them in the mixer, blend them and pour 100 g of melted butter over a very low heat. Blend for a few seconds until you get a homogeneous mixture (if you do not have the mixer on hand, collect the cookies in a paper bag and pound them with a meat mallet). Now, line a mold with baking paper, pour the biscuit and butter mixture, compact it with the back of a spoon to cover the bottom and part of the walls. Put everything in the freezer,



and prepare the cream for the filling.

Chop 150 g of white chocolate, melt it in a double boiler, turn off and let it cool. Whip 200 ml of fresh cream with a spoon full of icing sugar. Then add the melted chocolate cream with soft movements from the bottom up.

Pour the white chocolate mousse into the chocolate chip cookie shell. Spread it with a spatula; place the washed berries on top.

Then put the no-bake tart with berries in the fridge for at least a couple of hours, so that the chocolate mousse is slightly firmer. When serving, distribute the fruit with the remaining icing sugar.

— By Girish Chandra, Beverage Training Manager, Lavazza India

TELLY TALE

SHOCKING TWIST

Trouble knocks at the doorsteps of Garima and Susheela again, with their father getting missing suspiciously. Sony SAB's show *Kaatelal & Sons* is gearing towards a shocking twist where Garima and Susheela's Mama would kidnap Dharampal so that the girls' dream to open their salon comes to a halt again. The audience would see how the girls will put their entire energy to find their father in the upcoming episodes.

Garima and Susheela try their best to seal the deal for their salon, but the problems are not coming to an end. Both the sisters had to return before signing the agreement as they are informed that their father is missing. Both begin the investigation and start questioning everyone before finding out



their Mama is involved in their father's kidnapping. They get furious and try to come up with a plan to save their father.

However, when Mama gets to know the girls have an idea about his mission, he plans a brutal attack on them.

Will Garima and Susheela find their father and how will they get out of this troubled situation?

Jiya Shankar who essays the role of Susheela said: "The upcoming track would be very interesting for the viewers to watch how Garima and I leave no stone unturned to find our father. We might fight with our parents, but we put our entire energy to get them out of those situations whenever they are in difficult situations, and that's what makes a father and a daughter relationship so special."

Megha Chakraborty who essays the role of Garima said: "The upcoming track has all the right ingredients to make you excited as well as anxious. Susheela and I do everything possible to find our kidnapped father in a terrific sequence of events that promise to be full of excitement."

TWENTY YEARS OF GADAR AND LAGAAN



20 years ago, two truly path-breaking films of Indian Cinema, *Lagaan* and *Gadar: Ek Prem Katha*, released at the box office on the same day. 20 years later, the viewers will witness that historic moment again as Zee Bollywood celebrates the glorious two decades of Ashutosh Gowariker's spirited *Lagaan* and Anil Sharma's fearless *Gadar: Ek Prem Katha*, films that created a legacy with their record-breaking footfalls. *Gadar: Ek Prem Katha* was the first movie produced by Zee Studios. These movies shaped the face of Indian cinema with their unabashed stories, iconic characters, remarkable music and unmatched dialogues. These movies have been proudly passed down generations as two of the most exceptional entertainers of all times. Along with Zee Bollywood, Zee Hindi movie cluster has come together to relive the nostalgia of these two epic movies. On June 15, *Gadar: Ek Prem Katha* will simulcast on

Zee Bollywood and Zee Cinema HD at 7:30 pm. On the same day, *Lagaan* will simulcast on Zee Bollywood and & pictures HD at 11 am. Additionally, the documentary *Chale Chalo* (Making of *Lagaan*) will be showcased on &explor HD and Zee Classic, June 15 at 2 pm and 5 pm respectively.

Lagaan was a movie that made its mark in not just Hindi Cinema, but World Cinema too. The National Award-winning documentary *Chale Chalo* highlights the making of this masterpiece, showing us the struggle and belief that went behind Ashutosh Gowariker's dream project. The Oscar-nominated, *Lagaan*, is an imposing success story laced with the director's unwavering vision and Aamir Khan's faith. Made on a then-unprecedented budget of approximately 25 crores, *Lagaan* is a story of perseverance and inspiration which also reflects through its team's conviction. The movie production went through multiple challenges like gathering a crowd of 10 thousand local people for the cricket match sequence, shooting under severe weather conditions, limited supply of water-electricity, transforming a building into a hotel in a small village in Gujarat for accommodation of the cast. A.K. Hangal braving his injury to finish shooting his part, and even Ashutosh Gowariker directing from a cot after suffering a slipped disc. All this brought out the warriors in each one who were part of the movie and pushed them forward with clear focus. A lot of such interesting fables will be unravelled in the documentary.

RUN POOJA RUN



Zee TV's popular fiction show, *Kumkum Bhagya* has been an audience favourite courtesy its intriguing plot and the authentic portrayal of relatable characters like Abhi (Shabbir Ahluwalia), Pragya (Sriti Jha), Rhea (Pooja Banerjee), Ranbir (Krishna Kaul) and Prachi (Mugdha Chapekar). While the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown 2.0 continues, the whole wedding drama between Abhi and Tanu has kept the viewers at the edge of their seats. However, it looks like there are more interesting twists coming up with Ranbir and Prachi's wedding being finalised.

During the upcoming episodes, you will see Rhea dressing up as a bride for her wedding with Ranbir. Like every bride, she will dress up elegantly in a beautiful red *lehenga*. While

dressing up wasn't hard, Pooja found it difficult to run in a 25 kg *lehenga*. For a sequence, the actress had to run in her wedding outfit and seems like she was exhausted after the whole day of shoot. While, the team could have opted for cheat shots, Pooja wanted the sequence to look genuine and shot for it with full vigour and excitement.

Talking about the difficulties she faced, Pooja Banerjee who plays the role of Rhea in *Kumkum Bhagya* revealed: "For the wedding sequence, I had to dress up as a bride. While I was excited about wearing the designer red *lehenga*, getting into the dress and running in it was tough. To be honest, the outfit was very heavy, it was almost 25 kgs. On top of it, there was the wedding jewellery. In fact, it also took me nearly two to three hours every day to get in and out of the look. To climb up and down the stairs to go to the *Kumkum Bhagya* set and then having to run for several sequence was a task, but I wanted it to look real and hence, I gave my best. I feel all my hardwork was worth it and I have to say, I felt wonderful and pretty in the bridal outfit. The whole wedding sequence was fantastic to shoot, and I can't wait for our fans to see the twists and turns that will take place."

While Pooja seems very excited for the wedding sequence of her on screen character Rhea, will it be a happily ever after for Ranbir and Rhea? Or is there a new twist in the tale?

WATCH OUT FOR

IMDb (www.imdb.com), the world's most popular and authoritative source for movie, TV and celebrity content, today unveiled the most popular Indian films and web series of the year so far. Rather than base its rankings on box office, small statistical samplings or reviews from professional critics, IMDb determines its list based on IMDbPro data on the page views of IMDb users in India.

IMDb Most Popular Indian Movies and Shows of 2021, so far*

Master (streaming on Prime Video): An alcoholic professor is sent to a juvenile school, where he clashes with a gangster who uses the school children for criminal activities.



Aspirants (streaming on TVF): It is the story of the journey of three UPSC (public service competitive exams in India) aspirants and their friendship against all odds.

The White Tiger (streaming on Netflix): An ambitious Indian driver uses his wit and cunning to escape from poverty and rise to the top. An epic journey based on the New York Times bestseller.



Drishyam 2 (streaming on Prime Video): A gripping tale of an investigation and a family which is threatened by it. Will Georgekutty be able to protect his family this time?



November Story (streaming on Disney Plus Hotstar): A celebrated crime novelist suffering from Alzheimer's is found at a murder scene with no memory of what happened. Now, it is up to his daughter to save him.



Karan (streaming on Prime Video): Karan, a fearless village youth, must fight for the rights of the conservative people of his village, due to the torture given by a police officer.

Vakeel Saab (streaming on Prime Video): Three girls find themselves accused of attempt to murder after escaping molestation. Their only hope is an alcoholic lawyer who agrees to take up the case.



Maharani (streaming on Sony Liv): A political drama set in Bihar of 1990's.

Krack (streaming on Aha): Krack is an action film which follows Veera Shankar, a hot headed police sergeant, who forms a vicious rivalry with notorious crime figure, Katari Krishna.

The Great Indian Kitchen (streaming on Prime Video): After marriage, a woman struggles to be the submissive wife that her husband and his family expect her to be. The story follows her journey, as she changes herself and, even more so, changes the household.



* These 10 movies and web series released theatrically and/or online in India between January 1 and June 3, 2021 generated the most IMDb page views in India within a four-week post release window, based on IMDbPro data. All of the titles have an IMDb user rating of 7 or higher and are available to stream online, based on data from June 7, 2021. IMDb users can add these and other titles to their IMDb Watchlist at <https://www.imdb.com/watchlist>.

Capital ready to take on 3rd wave: Kejriwal

DELHI GOVT INSTALLING 22 OXYGEN PLANTS IN CITY

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday said the possibility of third wave hitting was real and the Government is preparing to tackle it on a "war footing". The city Government has started 22 Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) Oxygen Plants in nine hospitals.

Inaugurated PSA plants, Kejriwal said, "A total of 17.3MT oxygen plants will be produced from these plants, and will start 17 more plants by July." Kejriwal also thanked industrialists and corporates for their support. "All entities, doctors, nurses, paramedic staff, and sanitation workers, etc., played a huge role in fighting this war against Corona," he said.

Reiterating days of Delhi's 2nd corona wave, Kejriwal said, "It was the time when 28,000 cases of Covid-19 were reported per day. The intensity of the wave was severe as many have lost their loved ones," he added and thanked Roshni Nadar for providing 6,000 oxygen cylinders for corona patients in Delhi. While the national Capital registered 213 cases and the positivity rate recorded at 0.30 per cent, Kejriwal cautioned people and said, "We are now at the risk of the third wave of Corona." "UK has started experiencing it, cases are increasing there."

Learning from past experiences when the city witnessed medical oxygen scarcity, Kejriwal said that Delhi needs 150-200 MT of medical oxygen for non-Covid purposes, apart from some amount of industrial oxygen. This requirement rose to 700 MT during the corona crisis because every patient needed oxygen.

"We have to be fully pre-



pared, Public Work Department (PWD), HCL, Maruti, engineers and hospitals helping us to start the 22 PSA plants," Kejriwal said.

Delhi now has 27 PSA plants. Six plants have already been started by the central Government and seven are going to begin soon, another 17 plants will be installed by July. "We are also procuring oxygen tankers to mitigate the impact of the third wave of Corona. I pray to God that the third wave does not emerge. Our vaccination program has been running successfully. The shortage of vaccines is still a problem, but our 'Jahan Vote, Wahan Vaccination' is a success. I want to congratulate all of you on this effort," he added further.

Health Minister Satyendra Jain was also there and said HCL will be supplying more plants, which will arrive soon.

The Delhi Government has installed plants in Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Satyawadi Raja Harishchandra, Ambedkar Nagar hospital, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital, and Burari Hospital. These plants have already been started in these five hospitals.

The bifurcation of further 22 plants being installed are - Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital-3 plants with a combined capacity (CC) of 1000

LPM Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital-3 plants CC of 1500 LPM, Deep Chand Bandhu Hospital - 3 plants with a CC of 1200 LPM, Babasaheb Ambedkar Hospital - 3 plants with CC 1200 LPM, Guru Tegh Bahadur Hospital - 4 plants, CC of 2000 LPM, Nirankari Field Hospital - 1 plant with the capacity of 1000 LPM, Burari Hospital - one plant with a capacity of 400 LPM, ILBS Hospital - 2 plants with 1000 LPM each, Madan Mohan Malviya Hospital - 1 plant with capacity of 170 LPM.

Importantly, all these hospitals have a capacity of 9500 LPM, this further means that 1000 beds daily will be able to show this oxygen from the hospital itself.

Earlier, Delhi Government had started a 2700 LPM which could cater to 275 beds daily. With this, 1300 patients can be given oxygen on a single day in the hospitals themselves.

Roshni Nadar Malhotra, Chairperson of HCL Technologies, said, "HCL is contributing 21 ready-to-install oxygen plants, imported from France, and 17 of these have already been installed across seven hospitals in Delhi. The remaining four have also arrived and will be installed over the next few days.

Sisodia alleges 'secret' friendship between Modi, Punjab CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Saturday raised strong objection against the 'Performance Grading Index' (PGI) 2019-20 released by the Centre in which Punjab was ranked number one for hosting the best Government schools in the country.

Sisodia alleged a 'secret' friendship between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Punjab CM Amarinder Singh, saying that the report is prepared considering the Assembly elections scheduled in 2022.

"Crediting the Punjab Government of running the best schools in the country at a time when the State has seen the closure of more than 800 schools and several schools found to be functioning as alcohol factories is a farce. It is crystal clear that Captain Amarinder Singh has the blessings of Modi and Central Government for the upcoming elections and we can consider this report as a gift to Captain Singh," he said.

The Deputy Chief Minister said "This report claims that government schools in Punjab have emerged to be the best while pointing that Government schools in Delhi are not up to the mark. This report is just another way to show the blessings Modi has showered on Capt Amarinder Singh."

This report has been released at a time when people have been raising questions regarding the performance and inadequacies of the Punjab Government in education," he added.

Speaking on the abysmal conditions of Government run schools, Sisodia said, "Quality education and learning has become a joke in schools run by the Punjab Government. Modi has released this report to hide the



inadequacies in quality education of Punjab. In the last 3-4 years, almost 800 Government schools have shut down in Punjab, and have been given to NGOs or other institutions to function."

"Many Government school students have had to suffer due to gross negligence of the Punjab Government. Many children had to bear the brunt and parents had to transfer their children to private schools.

In fact, a few Government schools in Punjab were also found to be hosting alcohol fac-

ories in their premises," he said.

In a few days, Modi will release another report claiming that hospitals run by Punjab government are the best in the country, he said, adding that this is just a collaborative tactic for the upcoming elections. Sisodia reiterated that Captain Singh has made a "joke" out of the whole education system in the State. Following the release of this report, all that the Punjab Government has done is release advertisements and hide behind this farce to cover up for its inadequacies, he added.

Remove GST on Covid medical equipment: Deputy CM to Centre

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a meeting of the GST Council, Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Manish Sisodia recommended changes for making Covid-19 medical equipment like vaccine, masks, sanitisers, thermometer and oximeter tax-free.

Sisodia said, "It is necessary for us to make Covid-19 medical equipment like vaccines, masks, sanitisers, thermometer, oximeter and other equipment. Expenses related to masks, sanitisers, thermometers have now been added into the monthly budget of people.

Speaking on the possibility of a 3rd wave, Sisodia said, "We can compare our Covid waves to that of the United Kingdom.

As Covid cases reported peak in the UK, we can say that India will also see another peak. Keeping in mind the possibility, Central and State Governments across the nation have already starting ramping up medical facilities."

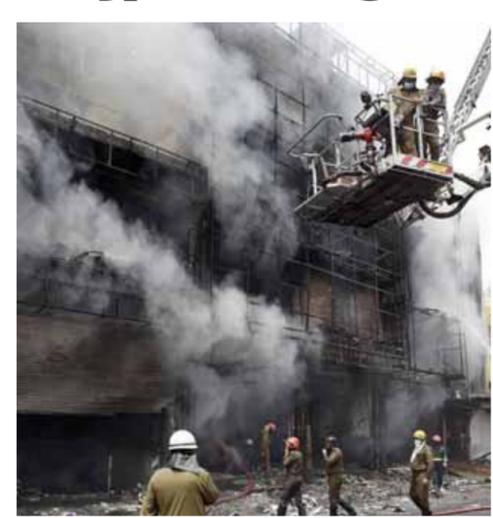
"Private sectors have also been asked to invest in public healthcare. If a State Government asks a private company to invest 10 lakh in a hospital to increase its ICU hospital, does this mean that the hospital will get the full amount or does it mean that the hospital will receive a deducted amount after tax?" he said.

Sisodia said, "These suggestions have been put across keeping in mind the rising expenditure related to Covid-19 material for our junta, who now have to create a margin from their daily expenditure to spend on these medical apparatus. People of the nation want their Governments to not make money out of this expenditure to actually aid them and support them by making the equipment tax-free."

"I appeal to the Centre to have an open heart to make this equipment tax-free. It is the need of the hour and will help many people reduce their cost in monthly budgets," he said.



Lajpat Nagar blaze doused



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A major fire broke out at four showrooms and later spread to another store in south Delhi's Lajpat Nagar Central Market area on Saturday morning. No injuries were reported during the incident. Soon after the fire incident was reported, taking to Twitter, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had said that fire tenders have reached the spot, relief and rescue work is going on. "I am constantly monitoring the situation and in constant touch with the fire department officials," the CM tweeted in hindi.

According to Atul Garg, the Director, Delhi Fire Services (DFS), a call about the blaze was received around 10.20 am, following which 16 fire tenders were rushed to the spot.

"Around 10.30 am, when

fire tenders reached the spot, all four showrooms were on fire and later spread to the fifth shop. So, it is very difficult to say at this point that from which shop the fire broke out first. It appeared that the fire must have started early morning and spread to rest of the areas because it is very unlikely that fire can start in all the four separate showrooms simultaneously. It must have started from one and spread to rest," said Garg.

"The fire could control the fire from spreading further because they deployed several fire tenders on ground as soon as they received an initial call. In total, 30 fire tenders were deployed on ground and over 100 fire-fighters were involved in bringing the fire under control," said Garg adding that the cause of the fire is not known yet.

PICTALK



Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar e-inducts Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) built indigenously designed state-of-the-art Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) Mk-III marine version in Indian Coast Guard (ICG), in New Delhi

Man arrested for posing as cop

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a 26-year-old man for allegedly impersonating as a police officer and taking away mobile phones and wallet from another man in southeast Delhi's Lajpat Nagar area.

The accused has been identified as Mahender Pal alias Sandeep. Police said he works as a private guard at an outlet near Udhog Vihar Metro Station and was previously found involved in a case of cheating.

According to R P Meena, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Southeast district, the incident took place on June 9, when Rajender Kumar Tiwari along with his friends was going to his residence from market.

"At about 10.40 AM, near Moolchand flyover, one person on motorcycle wearing Khaki pant, khaki shocks, black shoes posing himself as a police officer overtook and stopped them. He took their mobile phones and wallet to check their identity and run away from the spot," said the DCP.

"A case under section 419 (Punishment for cheating by personation) and 420



(Cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property) of Indian Penal Code was registered and police teams were found involved in a case of cheating.

"With the help of ownership details of the offending bike, the suspect was identified as Mahender Pal, a resident of Mundka, outer Delhi. The team raided the location and nabbed him. Three mobile phones, one wallet, an offending bike and clothes worn at the time of incident were recovered from his possession," said the DCP.

"During sustained interrogation, the accused disclosed that he is addicted to alcohol and drugs. To fulfill his drug requirements, he started to cheat passers-by with the identity of a police officer," the DCP added.

2 cops assaulted at Singhu border kisan stir site, says Delhi Police

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Two on duty Special Branch officials of the Delhi Police were assaulted allegedly by a group of people at Singhu Border where farmers have been protesting against the Centre's farm laws for over six months now.

Police said the two policemen on duty in civil clothes are Assistant Sub Inspectors (ASI) and they were allegedly beaten up by the group of people on June 10 when they were at the Singhu Border to oversee the security arrangements.

It is alleged that the two policemen were allegedly found clicking pictures at the protest site when they were allegedly assaulted by the group.

According to a senior police official, during the incident, one of the policemen got a fracture in his wrist while the other ASI sustained severe injuries on his leg.



"Both of them have been discharged after treatment. They were beaten up by people present at the spot. Some of them involved in the incident have been identified but we are yet to find out who they were," he said.

Police said the nature of job of the policemen posted with Special Branch is different. "They are regularly deployed to keep an eye on the situation and security arrangements in place. To report on the appropriate action taken by the local police," said the senior police official.

"A case has been registered under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections of assaulting public servant while on duty, voluntarily causing grievous hurt and other relevant sections including Delhi Disaster Management Act at Narela police station," he added.

Meanwhile, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella body of over 40 farmer unions, said they will organise dharnas at governor houses across the country on June 26 to mark the completion of seven months of their agitation against the three new Central agri-marketing laws.

World record holder Murtoza wants to make you fit

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

Many people have forced to stay indoors during Covid-19 pandemic and as a result, overall health and fitness has taken a hit.

But M A Murtoza, a world record holder, is determined to change the situation. The 42-year-old had made India proud by winning the Guinness World Record for 'Most full contact knee strikes in one hour (team)', - 55,475 - on July 14, 2019 in Gurugram.

Murtoza is also a fitness trainer on a mission to make society fit and healthy and at present contributing the concept of fit India.

"My purpose behind attempting the world record was to make the society aware about the importance of health and fitness in today's life. Fit India is not just a mission. It's my passion to encourage people to adopt a healthy and fit lifestyle," said Murtoza.



He trains students and youth on Martial Arts, Self-Defence, Physical and Mental health.

Along with training and physical fitness Guru, Murtoza's research on physical fitness has been published in some of the most eminent journals, including International Journal of Engineering Science and Computing (IJESC), International Journal of Innovation in Engineering Research & Management (IJIERM) among others.

"In today's senario people need fitness inspiration and proper guidance, and I am happy to be contributing in it. I feel that every citizen's need to adopt the concept of Fit India, which is the key to hale and hearty society," he added.

"Exercise is a must during covid 19 or normal time. Doing

SECOND WAVE OF COVID-19

Country paid price for Modi Govt's incompetence: Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday alleged that the country paid the price for the Modi Government's "incompetence" during the second wave of Covid-19. The party targeted the Centre over the handling of the pandemic with the hashtag "ZimmedarKaun" (who is responsible) on social media and raised the issue of shortage of beds, oxygen and medicines when India was at the crest of the second wave.

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of putting politics and propaganda ahead of Indian's well-being while Priyanka Gandhi launched a series of attacks against the government over its handling of the second wave of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic.

The Congress leaders criticism of the Prime Minister was a part of her 'Zimmedar Kaun?' (Who is responsible?) campaign where she said that during the crisis PM Modi's 'incompetence at governance' was on display.

"He (the prime minister) simply retreated and waited for the worst to pass. The

Prime Minister of India has behaved like a coward. He has let our country down," Priyanka Gandhi said in a statement which she posted on her Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts.

"Indians do not come first for him. Politics does. Truth does not concern him, propaganda does," t

Priyanka alleged and urged people to question the government over its handling of the crisis.

Priyanka also said that PM Modi concentrated on building image when he decided to export vaccines to other countries and did not bother to think about his own countrymen. She also said that the vaccine registration platform is 'convoluted' and 'designed to slow down the vaccination process' in her statement.

"Instead of distributing free vaccines across the world to boost his own image, had he paused for a moment and protected his countrymen first, the people would not be standing in line today grappling with a convoluted registration system designed to slow down the vaccine process," Priyanka said.

Rahul alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi

chose not to listen to the recommendations of the Empowered Group, which was set up by his own government to tackle the pandemic and also ignored the recommendations of the parliamentary committee on health. Priyanka also said that from the beginning of the pandemic the Modi-led government avoided taking responsibility and hid the truth.

"As a consequence, when the second wave hit us with unprecedented force, the government lapsed into a state of inaction. This inaction enabled the virus to spread with far greater ferocity and cause untold suffering," she further added.

Priyanka Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Congress Chief Sonia Gandhi along with other senior leaders, including former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, have been very critical of the government's handling of Covid-19, especially when cases and deaths rose during the second wave.

Manmohan Singh and Sonia Gandhi on separate occasions have also written to the Prime Minister providing suggestions and urging him to implement those.

Maha logs 1,966 deaths, 10,967 infections

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

With the reconciliation exercise continuing to play spoilsport, the daily Covid-19 deaths jumped to 1,966 on Saturday, as the health authorities added a staggering 1,606 old and unaccounted fatalities to the day's tally of 360.

A day after the state recorded 2619 deaths - comprising 406 current fatalities and 2,213 previous unaccounted deaths, the daily deaths in Maharashtra jumped further to 1966.

However, the infections dropped from Friday's tally of 11,766 to 10,697 cases on Saturday, while 14,910 patients were discharged from various hospitals after full recovery.

The state health authorities have been adding the previous unaccounted deaths to the daily fatality almost on a day-to-day basis for nearly weeks now. Between May 1 and June 12, a whopping 29,962 deaths were recorded in the state, of which 14,097 were added to the State's cumulative death tally, after reconciliation of figures.

During the last five days alone, 6148 deaths (June 8-407, June 9-400, June 10-1,522, June 11-2,213 and June 12-1606) have been added to the

state's cumulative tally.

Meanwhile, with 1966 daily deaths reported on Saturday, the Covid-19 toll in the state jumped from 1,06,367 to 1,08,333.

Similarly, with 10,697 new infections reported on Saturday, the total number of cases in the state went up from 58,87,853 to 58,98,550.

As 14,910 patients 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 56,16,857 to 56,31,767. The recovery rate in the state rose from 95.40 per cent to 95.48 per cent.

The total "active cases" in the state dropped from 1,61,704 to 1,55,474. The fatality rate in the state went up from 1.81 per cent to 1.84 per cent.

Mumbai logged 18 deaths and 749 infections. The infections in the city remained below 1000 level in the country's commercial capital for the 14th consecutive day.

With fresh deaths and infections, the Covid-19 toll in Mumbai increased from 15,079 to 15,097, while the infected cases went up from 7,14,216 to 7,14,965.

Over 25 crore doses of vax administered till now, says Govt

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Over 25 crore doses of Covid-19 vaccine have been administered till now in the country, with more than 31 lakh jabs given on Saturday, the Union Health Ministry said.

In a statement, the ministry said that India has also crossed the "historic landmark" of 20 crore (20,46,01,176) first dose administration.

It said that 18,45,201 people in the 18-44 age group received their first dose and 1,12,633 got their second dose of the vaccine on Saturday.

Cumulatively, 4,00,31,646 people across the country have received their first dose and 6,74,499 their second dose since the start of Phase-3 of the vaccination drive.

Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have administered more than 10 lakh beneficiaries of 18-44 years age group their first vaccine dose, the ministry said.

The total number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country has reached 25,28,78,702, according to a provisional report compiled at 7 PM.

The number includes 1,00,47,057 healthcare workers (HCWs) who have taken their first dose, 69,62,262 HCWs who have taken their second dose, and 1,67,20,729 frontline workers (FLWs) who have received their first dose, and 88,37,805 FLWs who have taken their second dose.

Besides, 7,53,56,174 and 1,19,35,606 beneficiaries in the 45-60 age group have been administered the first and the second dose respectively, while 6,24,45,570 and 1,98,67,354 beneficiaries above 60 years of age have taken the first and the second dose respectively.

On Day-148 of the vaccination drive on Saturday, a total of 31,67,961 vaccine doses were given, with 28,11,307 beneficiaries vaccinated with the first dose and 3,56,654 beneficiaries with the second dose, according to the provisional report till 7 pm.

Infection on the wane in Bihar; State left with less than 6,000 active cases

Patna: Bihar reported less than 500 fresh Covid-19 cases and under 20 fatalities on Saturday when it was also left with an active caseload of under 6,000, all reassuring signs that the second wave was on the wane.

According to the State health department, the number of fresh cases was 432 which took the overall tally to 7,16,728 while 18 fatalities raised the death toll to 9,484.

Moreover, 701543 Covid-19 patients have recovered so far and the recovery rate was a healthy 97.88 per cent.

The let up in the situation has also caused the number of active cases, which was in six figures till a month ago, to plummet and reach 5700.

The state, which remained relatively less severely affected by the pandemic last year, was hit hard during the recent nationwide surge when more than five lakh of its people caught the contagion and over 8,000 died in just a couple of months.

Meanwhile, vaccination drive is continuing at a steady pace. Nearly 1.11 lakh people took the jabs during the day raising the total number of beneficiaries, so far, to 1.20 crore.

The drive is expected to pick up with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar having set the target of inoculating six crore people by the end of the year.

None from outside Saudi...

From page 1
One-third were Saudi security personnel and medical staff.

Each year, up to 2 million Muslims perform the Haj, a physically demanding and often costly pilgrimage that draws the faithful from around the world. The Haj, required of all able-bodied Muslims to perform once in their lifetime, is seen as a chance to wipe clean past sins and bring about greater humility and unity among Muslims.

The kingdom's Al Saud ruling family stakes its legitimacy in this oil-rich nation on overseeing and protecting the Haj sites. Ensuring the Haj happens has been a priority for them.

Disease outbreaks have always been a concern surrounding the Haj. Pilgrims fought off a malaria outbreak in 632, cholera in 1821 killed an estimated 20,000, and another cholera outbreak in

1865 killed 15,000 before spreading worldwide.

More recently, Saudi Arabia faced danger from a different coronavirus, one that causes the Middle East respiratory syndrome, or MERS. The kingdom increased its public health measures during the Haj in 2012 and 2013, urging the sick and the elderly not to take part.

In recent years, Saudi officials also instituted bans on pilgrims coming from countries affected by the Ebola virus.

Saudi Arabia had closed its borders for months to try and stop the spread of the coronavirus. Since the start of the pandemic, the kingdom has reported over 462,000 cases of the virus with 7,500 deaths. It has administered some 15.4 million doses of coronavirus vaccines, according to the World Health Organization. The kingdom is home to over 30 million people.

Pilot lands in Delhi, Cong says all well

From page 1

Pilot has been demanding his MLAs be accommodated in the Gehlot Cabinet and important posts for his men in the State administration and State unit. AICC sources said party high command has already conveyed to Gehlot to fill up the nine Cabinet vacancies, and, if need be, also expand it.

In the wake of Jyotiraditya Scindia deserting the Congress and joining the BJP last year and now with the exit of Jitin Prasada, the grand old party seems serious about placating Pilot even though he has clarified he would "not join the BJP and do their cow politics".

However, Pilot has raked up the issue of non-resolution of commitments made to him a year ago following which he reportedly received a phone

call from party leader Priyanka Gandhi. "It has now been 10 months. I was given to understand that there would be swift action by the committee, but now half of the term is done, and those issues haven't been resolved. It is unfortunate that so many of the party workers who worked and gave their all for getting us the mandate are not being heard," Pilot had told reporters in Jaipur on Friday.

Six MLAs met Pilot at his residence in Jaipur on Thursday. All the six were part of the 18 MLAs who had rebelled against Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot. They reportedly questioned the "delay" in Cabinet expansion and political appointments by Gehlot.

AICC sources said Pilot who is camping in Delhi may not get chance to meet

Congress president Sonia Gandhi or Rahul Gandhi. While Rahul has not given him time so far, Priyanka is out of Delhi, sources said.

A senior leader requesting anonymity recalled that this is how good leaders like Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Jyotiraditya Scindia quit the grand old party out of exasperation when they could not get time to meet Rahul. Pilot, Scindia, Jitin, Himanta were all in the close circuit of Rahul Gandhi against whom there has been allegations of avoiding meetings with the party leaders even during crisis.

Pilot reached Delhi on Friday evening on the day he brushed aside claims by BJP leader and a Minister in UP Government Rita Bahuguna Joshi that he was at the Congress exit door.

Pvt hospitals used 17% of...

From page 1

Private hospitals across India procured 1.29 crore vaccine doses of the available 1.85 crore shot, as per the Government data.

In what could corroborate these alarming revelations, as per reports, for instance while the vaccination centres run by Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation and the State Government were shut in Mumbai due to shortage in June, lakhs of doses were still available with private hospitals. Maharashtra had procured 25.10 lakh vaccine doses in May, private hospitals, on the other hand, purchased 32.38 lakh doses, the highest in any State. In Mumbai the private hospitals procured 22.37 lakh doses, four times more than the 5.23 lakh doses the civic body BMC was allocated by the State Government.

The report also said the data of the BMC showed that

from May 1 till June 2, private hospitals administered only 3.34 lakh doses in Mumbai. This means, they could utilise only about 15 per cent of their total stock.

Earlier this month, the Centre brought changes in the vaccination policy fixing the maximum price that private hospitals can charge for Covid vaccines. It fixed the Covishield shot at Rs 780, Covaxin jab at Rs 1,410 and Rs 1145 per Sputnik V dose. The new price is according to the revised guidelines issued by the Health Ministry.

According to the revised policy, the Government will procure 75 per cent of the vaccines being produced by manufacturers in the country. "The vaccines procured will continue to be provided free of cost to states and UTs as has been the case from the commencement of the national vaccination programme."

BJP seeks...

From page 1

When asked about Singh's remarks, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera said, "The Congress Party has clearly stated its position on Jammu and Kashmir, in its resolution of August 6, 2019 of the Congress Working Committee. This is the only official stance of the party. I urge and request all senior leaders to refer to the same."

BJP IT Cell chief Amit Malviya shared a clip of the alleged Clubhouse chat of the Congress party, where Singh is purportedly hinting at a possible return of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, when his party returns to power. In the 1-minute clip shared by Malviya, Singh tells a Pakistani journalist that the decision to revoke Article 370 was an 'extremely sad decision,' and that when the Congress comes to power, they will 'certainly have to relook on this issue.'

'One earth, one...

From page 1

The plan calls for spending hundreds of millions of dollars in collaboration with the private sector. It's designed to compete with China's trillion-dollar "Belt and Road Initiative," which has launched a network of projects and maritime lanes that already snake around large portions of the world, primarily Asia and Africa. Critics say the projects often create massive debt and expose nations to undue influence by Beijing.

Britain also wants the world's democracies to become less reliant on economic giant China. The UK Government says Saturday's discussions will tackle "how we can shape the global system to deliver for our people in support of our values," including by diversifying supply chains that currently heavily depend on China.

Not every European power has viewed China in as harsh a light as Biden, who has painted the rivalry with the techno-security state as the defining competition for the 21st century. But there are signs that Europe is willing to put greater scrutiny on Beijing.

Weeks before Biden took office last year, the European Commission announced it had come to terms with Beijing on the Comprehensive Agreement

on Investment, a deal meant to provide Europe and China greater access to each other's markets. The Biden administration had hoped to have consultations on the pact.

But the deal has been put on hold, and the European Union in March announced sanctions targeting four Chinese officials involved with human rights abuses in Xinjiang. Beijing responded by imposing sanctions on several members of the European Parliament and other Europeans critical of the Chinese Communist Party.

Biden administration officials see the moment as an opportunity to take concrete action to speak out against China's reliance on forced labour as an "affront to human dignity."

While calling out China in the communicate wouldn't create any immediate penalties for Beijing, one senior administration official said the action was meant to send a message that the G-7 was serious about defending human rights and working together to eradicate the use of forced labor.

An estimated 1 million people or more - most of them Uyghurs - have been confined in reeducation camps in China's western Xinjiang region in

recent years, according to researchers. Chinese authorities have been accused of imposing forced labour, systematic forced birth control, torture and separating children from incarcerated parents.

Beijing rejects allegations that it is committing crimes. The leaders of the G-7 - which also includes Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan - also hope the meeting at the seaside resort will enrage the global economy.

Opening three days of talks, Johnson on Friday warned that world leaders must not repeat errors made over the past 18 months - or those made during the recovery from the 2008 global financial crisis. If not, he said the pandemic "risks being a lasting scar" that entrenched inequalities.

He said the G-7 will announce a package of health measures aimed at reducing the chances of another pandemic. The "Carbis Bay Declaration" will aim for a 100-day goal to develop vaccines, treatments and diagnostics for future diseases and to bolster surveillance for new illnesses.

Johnson said the goal of the measures was "to make sure that never again will we be caught unawares." Brexit will also cast a shadow on the summit Saturday, as Johnson meets one-on-one with European leaders, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron, amid tensions over Britain's implementation of UK-EU divorce terms.

Macron will also hold talks with Biden - a meeting between allies who recalibrated their relationship during the four years of President Donald Trump's "America first" foreign policy.

JDU looks...

From page 1

Asked whether the JD(U) would "demand" a respectable share for itself in the expected expansion of the Union Cabinet, Singh, the party's leader in the Rajya Sabha, quipped "where is the question of demanding? It is a matter of understanding. It has to be natural."

Singh succeeded Kumar as the national president of the party after the Chief Minister relinquished the top party post.

Notably, after the NDA returned to power with a thumping majority in 2019,

speculations were rife that the party would join the new government. However, Kumar put his foot down, unhappy over the BJP's assertion that since it had secured a majority on its own, coalition partners would have to be content with "token" representation of one member each.

But now with BJP on a shaky ground, having suffered defeat in the high-stakes West Bengal Assembly polls recently, the JD(U) obviously sees an opportunity to extract its pound of flesh, JD(U) is one of the few allies left with the BJP after one of its oldest partners, Shiromani Akali Dal, pulled out in protest against the farm Bills.

PIO journalist...

From page 1

In 2017, not long after China began to detain thousands of Muslims in Xinjiang, Rajagopalan was the first to visit an internment camp - at a time when China denied that such places existed, BuzzFeed News said.

"In response, the government tried to silence her, revoking her visa and ejecting her from the country," BuzzFeed News wrote in its entry for the prize.

"It would go on to cut off access to the entire region for most Westerners and stymie journalists. The release of basic facts about detainees slowed to a trickle."

Working from London, and refusing to be silenced, Rajagopalan partnered with two contributors, Alison Killing, a licensed architect who specialises in forensic analysis of architecture and satellite images of buildings, and Christo Buschek, a programmer who builds tools tailored for data journalists.

"The blazing Xinjiang sto-

ries shine desperately needed light on one of the worst human rights abuses of our time," said Mark Schoofs, editor-in-chief of BuzzFeed News. Minutes after she won, Rajagopalan told BuzzFeed News she wasn't even watching the ceremony live because she wasn't expecting to win. She only found out when Schoofs called to congratulate her on the victory.

"I'm in complete shock, I did not expect this," Rajagopalan said over the phone from London.

She said she was deeply grateful to the teams of people who worked with her on this including her collaborators, Killing and Buschek, her editor Alex Campbell, BuzzFeed News' public relations team, and the organisations that funded their work, including the Pulitzer Center.

Rajagopalan also acknowledged the courage of the sources who spoke to them despite the risk and threat of retaliation against them and their families.

SAD, BSP...

From page 1

Badal announced that BSP would contest 20 out of the 117 seats under its alliance with the SAD, including eight seats in the Doaba region, seven in Malwa and five in Majha region. The seats are -- Kartarpur, Jalandhar West, Jalandhar North, Phagwara, Nawanshahr, Hoshiarpur City, Tanda, Dasuya, Chamkaur Sahib, Bassi Pathana, Mehal Kalan, Ludhiana North, Sujanpur, Boha, Pathankot, Anandpur Sahib, Mohali, Amritsar North, Amritsar Central and Payal.

"A coordination committee of leaders from both the parties would be formed soon to ensure seamless working in all the constituencies," he added.

Mishra said BSP supremo Mayawati has approved the alliance, and added that both the parties would strive to form the next Government in Punjab under the leadership of Sukhbir Badal. The BSP General Secretary appealed to the Dalits and disadvantaged sections of the society to support the alliance wholeheartedly. He also said that Mayawati wanted to come and announce the alliance herself, but was not able to make it due to the Covid restrictions.

No GST on key...

From page 1

Hand sanitisers, temperature check equipment, gas/electric furnaces for crematoriums too will attract a lower 5 per cent tax, compared to 18 per cent earlier.

The GST rates on Covid-19 testing kits, inflammatory diagnostic kits like D-Dimer, IL-6, and Ferritin, and pulse oximeters slashed down from 12 per cent to 5 per cent. The GST on ambulances is proposed to be reduced from 28 per cent to 12 per cent.

The GST rate on Covid vaccines was, however, retained at 5 per cent as the Council felt that majority of the vaccine procurement was being done by the Centre and given free to people. Explaining the 5 per cent levy on vaccines, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the 5 per cent levy will not put any additional burden on the common man as the Government was procuring all vaccines and giving them to citizens for free.

"It was felt that the GoM's recommendations have

brought in a lot of substantial change. Many items, which were at 18 per cent and 12 per cent, brought down to 5 per cent. So there was a lot of substance in the recommendation made by GoM. The Council largely agreed to go with GoM's recommendation..."

Sitharaman said while briefing reporters after the 44th GST Council meeting.

"Central government is purchasing 75 per cent and is paying GST also. But the impact of this GST on people will be nil since people would be getting vaccines free of cost at government hospitals. Centre is purchasing and it is given free to people," said Sitharaman.

Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj said vaccines would continue to attract 5 per cent rate and the GST Council discussed that the Centre is purchasing all the vaccines -- at least 75 per cent is being purchased by the Centre. "The GST will also be borne by the Centre. But out of the income from GST, 70 per cent will be shared with the states," Bajaj said.

Ch. Charan Singh University, Meerut
Admission Announcement: 2021-22
 Applications are invited for admission to M.Ed. and LL.M (through Entrance Test) and B.P.Ed. and M.P.Ed. (through Physical Fitness Test) in Ch. Charan Singh University campus and affiliated colleges. Application form and admission rules will be available on the University website www.ccsuniversity.ac.in w.e.f. June 15, 2021 to July 10, 2021.
Registrar

Won't let Cong bring back Art 370 : BJP's J&K chief

PTI ■ JAMMU

In a scathing attack on the Congress over its senior leader Digvijay Singh's remarks on Article 370, Jammu & Kashmir BJP president Ravinder Raina said on Saturday that his party will not allow the Congress leaders' "conspiracy" against India to succeed even if they take "100 rebirths".

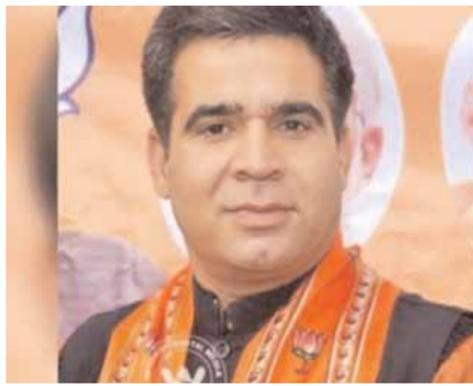
Raina accused the Opposition party of being hand-in-glove with Pakistan, separatists and terrorists, and said the nation would never forgive it for "conspiring and backstabbing Bharat Mata".

"The script was originally written by Gandhis and directed from Pakistan," he said on remarks by Singh in a clubhouse conversation that the revocation of Article 370 and stripping Jammu and Kashmir of statehood was an "extremely sad" decision and his party will have a "relook" at the issue.

He said the people of Jammu and Kashmir are happy over the revocation of Article 370 as it was the main reason for Pakistani ideology to take roots and strengthen separatism.

It gave birth to terrorism which has bled the region, Raina said.

"The Article was responsible for the grave injustice with various communities including Gujjars and Bakewals, Pahari speaking people, women and West Pakistani refugees," the



BJP leader said.

He said its revocation on August 5, 2019 fulfilled the dream of 'Ek Nishan, Ek Vidhan and Ek Pradhan' and alleged that the Congress is feeling the pain and is, therefore, "conspiring" which is evident from the statement of its senior leader.

Let them take 100 rebirths, their conspiracies against the nation will not succeed. We have Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, and every BJP worker is like a soldier, ready to sacrifice his life for the nation and the tricolour.

"We will not allow Sonia Gandhi, Rahul and Singh to implement Pakistani agenda in J-K," Raina said.

He said the Congress leaders are enjoying facilities in India and even fighting elections but their hearts "beat for Pakistan".

CBI, MEA launch legal battle against Choksi in Dominica High court



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) have sought to implead in the habeas corpus petition filed by fugitive Mehul Choksi's lawyers by filing two affidavits in the Dominica High Court. Choksi is an accused in the multi-crore PNB Scam.

According to officials, the CBI will focus on establishing criminal culpability of Choksi, his fugitive status, the pending warrants, Interpol Red Notice and the charge sheets against him. The External Affairs Ministry will argue that Choksi continues to be an Indian citizen.

The affidavits, if admitted, will pave the way for noted lawyer Harish Salve to plead India's case in Dominica, they said.

The Dominica High Court has denied bail to fugitive diamond merchant Mehul Choksi in the case of illegal entry into the island country after his mysterious disappearance from neighbouring Antigua and Barbuda where he is staying as a citizen since 2018, local Caribbean media reported.

The high court on Friday (local time) gave the ruling by

concluding that Choksi was a "flight risk", did not have any ties with Dominica and the court could not impose any conditions which will stop him from leaving the country, news outlet AntiguaNewsroom said. Choksi had approached the high court after the magistrate had rejected his bail petition.

Choksi's lawyers had filed a habeas corpus petition calling his arrest illegal and alleging that he was abducted, tortured and handed over to Dominica authority to deny him rights available to him in Antigua and Barbuda as a citizen. CBI and External Affairs Ministry is going to implead in this petition by claiming India's demands to hand over the fugitive.

The 62-year-old diamond merchant, who has an Interpol Red Notice against him, had mysteriously gone missing on May 23 from Antigua and Barbuda where he has been staying since 2018 as a citizen after fleeing from India.

He was detained in the neighbouring island country of Dominica for illegal entry after a possible romantic escapade with his rumoured girlfriend.

Coronavirus Delta variant spreads fast in household setting: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Infectious Delta variant (B.1.617.2) first discovered in India and now making rounds across the countries, particularly the UK, spreads fast in a household setting, according to a study by Public Health England, a UK Government health organisation, thus decoding why several households have reported multiple cases of Covid-19 infection this time as compared to mostly single cases in families in the earlier wave.

The report noted that the Delta variant is fueling the Covid-19 second wave in many parts of India including south Indian states and spurt in cases in some countries like the UK. However, the report said that those vaccinated do not show severity of infections, thus calling for an increase in global vaccinations.

While other variants mostly infect one person in a household, the Delta infects more than one. This explains why several members in many families were down with Covid-19 this time. The Public Health England has compared the transmission rate of the Delta variant in a household setting with that of the Alpha variant (B.1.1.7), which is also a variant of concern. The Alpha variant was first discovered in the UK.

"Overall, we found increased household transmission of Covid-19 associated

with B.1.617.2 compared to B.1.1.7. These findings show households are important settings for rapid transmission of the lineage B.1.617.2. With household settings being an important factor in wider community spread, strategies to prevent transmission in these settings are vital to control the Covid-19 pandemic," the PHE study said.

It noted that there is a 64 percent increase in the odds of household transmission associated with infection with B.1.617.2 variant compared to B.1.1.7. "This study provides early real-world evidence of the effect B.1.617.2 variant on household transmission. The findings support existing evidence that B.1.617.2 has a substantially increased transmissibility advantage over the B.1.1.7 variant," the PHE researchers said.

This study also found evidence of increased household transmission among households with an index case of Asian ethnicity," the researchers added. They said households are high risk settings for transmission of Covid-19 and are an important factor in wider community spread. "By assessing the extent to which B.1.617.2 results in onward transmission to household members compared to B.1.1.7, we can assess the relative transmissibility of this variant, and provide information vital to the national and international pandemic response," they added.

Amity varsity scientist gets DRDO award



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A senior scientist from Amity University has bagged the first prize in the Dare to Dream 2.0 innovation contest organized by Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO). Dr. Shivani Verma of Amity Institute of Space Science & Technology (AISST) submitted an innovative concept "AI Based detection of a person based on physiological parameters" based on identification of a person using physiological parameters with innovative way of data and information fusion. The concept was submitted under Life Science Technology Domain.

The DRDO launched a Dare to Dream 2.0 innovation contest under "Atma Nirbhar Bharat" in August 2020 where-in participants were invited to submit innovative ideas on emerging technologies to promote the individuals and startups for innovation in defence and aerospace technologies.

Verma under the guidance of Dr. M.S. Prasad, Director (AISST) has developed an intelligent inferring recognition system based on physiological parameters of a person with built-in high accuracy of recognition.

Covid 3rd wave may not hit kids hard: Lancet



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

There appears to be no substantial evidence to suggest that children will be more affected or have greater illness severity due to Covid-19 in the anticipated third wave, according to a new report prepared by the Lancet Covid-19 Commission India Task Force after convening an experts group comprising leading paediatricians to examine the issue of 'paediatric Covid-19' in India.

However, it cautioned, the health system needs to gear up for a paediatric case load with adequate infrastructure, earmarked facilities at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of care, oxygen availability, appropriate equipment, trained manpower, drugs and injectables among others, all of which are specific to children.

The report authors, which included three doctors from AIIMS, Delhi including Sheffali Gulati, Sushil K Kabra and Rakesh Lodha said the infection's symptomatology in children in India appears to be globally comparable.

"Most children with Covid-19 are asymptomatic, and amongst those sympto-

DCGI OK's trial of Colchicine on Covid patients

New Delhi: The Drugs Controller General of India has given green signal to the CSIR and Laxai Life Sciences Private Limited to conduct clinical trials of Colchicine on Covid-19 patients. Colchicine in combination with standard care is seen as an important therapeutic intervention for Covid infected patients with cardiac co-morbidities and also for reducing pro-inflammatory cytokines, leading to faster recovery. PNS

matic mild infections are predominant. Most children have fever with respiratory symptoms, and often present with gastrointestinal symptoms (such as diarrhea, vomiting, pain in abdomen) and atypical manifestation compared to adults. The proportion of symptomatic children increases as age increases as does the severity in such age groups," the report stated.

In the absence of a national database on clinical pre-

IMA to hold stir on June 18 over attacks on doctors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) will hold a protest on June 18 against assault on doctors, with the slogan 'Save the saviours'. This comes days after the apex medical body had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking his personal intervention in ensuring 'optimum milieu' for medical professionals so that they can work without any fear.

Citing incidents of doctors and other healthcare professionals being assaulted by the family members and relatives of patients, the IMA, in a statement, asked all its state and local branches across the country to observe the protest by wearing black badges, masks, ribbons, shirts and running an awareness

campaign against violence targeting healthcare professionals. However, no hospital will be closed, it said.

The IMA said press conferences will also be organised and they will also meet local NGOs and voluntary service leaders.

It termed "extremely disturbing" a series of violence against doctors in the last two weeks in Assam, Bihar, West Bengal, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and other places.

It demanded the implementation of central hospital and Health Care Professionals Protection Act with IPC and Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), standardisation and augmentation of security in each hospital, and declaring hospitals as protected zones among others.

"Nine per cent of all hospitalised COVID-19 positive children presented with severe illness, under 10 years of age. The above observations were similar during the two surges of COVID-19 infections India has experienced," the Lancet document said.

On multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C) in children, the report said, risk factors for this condition include obesity, asthma, compromised breathing, developmental disorders, cardiac disease, cancers or immunocompromised children as well as those who have undergone surgeries.

presentation and outcomes of infected children during the two surges noted thus far, the data of approximately 2,600 hospitalised children, below the age of 10 years (excluding neonates), from 10 hospitals (both public and private), in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra and Delhi-NCR region, was collected and analysed.

According to the data, mortality rates amongst these surveyed hospitalised Covid-19 positive children below the age of 10 years was 2.4 per cent and about 40 per cent of the children who died had comorbidities.

Twitter account of BKU Ekta Ugrahan 'restricted' on Sat

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Twitter account of Punjab's biggest farmers union Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) Ekta Ugrahan, protesting at Delhi's border, was restricted on Saturday. The US-based social media giant also sent notices to cartoonist Manjul, fact-checking website Alt News co-founder Mohammed Zubair and others to take down certain tweets.

Sources said the Ministry of Electronics and IT was not involved in sending these legal requests to Twitter. It wasn't clear which agencies have flagged these tweets by and for what violations.

Restricting the BKU Ekta Ugrahan handle, Twitter said "Caution: This account is temporarily restricted." "You're seeing this warning because there has been some unusual activity from this account," it said.

Ugrahan had sparked controversy last year by commemorating the International Human Rights Day on December 10 by holding up posters of detained activists such as Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam, Sudha Bhardwaj and Gautam Navlakha, among others.

Meanwhile, the screenshot shared by Manjul showed Twitter as saying: "In the interest of transparency, we are writing to inform you that

Twitter has received a request from Indian law enforcement regarding your Twitter account @MANJULtoons... that claims the content violates the law(s) of India."

It further stated that Twitter has "not taken any action on the reported content at this time as a result of this request".

Mails sent to Manjul, and others do not mention the details of the law enforcement agency that had raised the legal request.

Twitter, in its notice, said it is the company's policy to notify users if it receives a legal request from an authorised entity (such as law enforcement or a government agency) to remove content from their account. Twitter further informed the account holders that while the platform is unable to provide legal advice, "We want you to have an opportunity to evaluate the request and, if you wish, take appropriate action to protect your interests."

"This may include seeking legal counsel and challenging the request in court, contacting relevant civil society organisations, voluntarily deleting the content (if applicable), or finding some other resolution," Twitter added.

Twitter has been facing heat for delay in complying with the IT rules that mandate large digital platforms to undertake greater due diligence.

Yoga lovers to again celebrate int'l Yoga Day from confines of homes



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Like last year, this time too, Yoga and health enthusiasts across the world will be celebrating the International Yoga Day, the seventh in the series, on June 21, within the confines of their homes as the Covid-19 pandemic continues to disrupt normal life.

Various Ministries, organisations in the private and government sector and State Governments are holding events to mark the D-Day in a big way, with the Union Ayush Ministry

Online crossword contest in Patna

PNS ■ PATNA

With cities across the country making a determined fight-back in the face of Covid-19 and the resulting lockdown, it is time to celebrate the indomitable human spirit. To mark a determined progress on the way to normalcy and pay tribute to the resilience of the human mind, an online crossword challenge is being organised on Sunday.

According to a Press statement by the organiser Extra-C, a civil society initiative based in Patna, there will be two categories in the contest - Student

taking the lead by marking the beginning of a 10-episode series on various aspects of the protocol to be telecast on Doordarshan India from June 11 to June 21. The Ministry also announced launching of a mobile application, "Namaste Yoga", devoted to Yoga, at the curtain raiser event organised online on Friday here.

At the event, Union Ayush Minister Kiren Rijiju said that the series' central message will be "Be with Yoga, Be at Home", which is relevant in these times of health emergency while Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar talked in details about how yoga can become a way to a healthy and happy life.

The series is produced by Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY).

Smriti urges citizens to report about child labour



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On World Day Against Child Labour, Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani on Saturday appealed to every citizen to report instances of child labour on PENCIL portal or call on Childline 1098.

Reaffirming her commitment towards combatting child labour, Irani said it is with people's participation that we can ensure our children get a childhood they deserve. "I appeal to every citizen to



"Every child has a right to education and a happy childhood. On World Day Against Child Labour, let us reaffirm our commitment towards combatting child labour. It is with people's participation that we can ensure our children get a childhood they deserve," Irani tweeted.

"I appeal to every citizen to

North India to soon get relief from sizzling heat

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As Mumbai continues to be lashed with heavy to very heavy rains for the last four days, north India is expected to get relief from the scorching heat soon as the southwest monsoon is expected to cover it in the next two three days except south Rajasthan and Kutch region of Gujarat.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the southwest monsoon will arrive in Punjab, Haryana and Delhi by June 14-15. The southwest monsoon has advanced into the northwest Bay of Bengal and some parts of Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Bihar on Saturday.

The IMD said that under the influence of east-west trough, heavy to very heavy

rainfall might occur over Odisha, Chhattisgarh, East Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, Telangana, coastal and adjoining Ghats' districts of Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka during the next 3-4 days. The weather department has also ruled out any heat wave conditions over the country during the next five days.

IMD senior scientist RK Jenamani said the southwest monsoon has already advanced into remaining parts of NW Bay of Bengal, Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Bihar and it will cover Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh by Sunday.

The IMD said that Mumbai has measured a total of 641.3mm rainfall so far, thereby surpassing its monthly normal of 493.1mm. Over



500mm of rain occurred over Mumbai in the last four days. Base station Santacruz recorded 107mm in the 24 hours. Mumbai completed a hat trick of century rainfall by registering three digits in the 24 hours rainfall

on 10th June (231mm), 11th June (107mm) and 12th June (107mm).

In Delhi, the expected arrival date of monsoon this time is around June 15 as per the IMD and it should cover the entire country in the next

two-three days except south Rajasthan and Kutch region of Gujarat. The normal onset date of monsoon in Delhi is June 27, however, this time it is likely to arrive about two weeks early due to a number of meteorological factors.

Migrant workers return as 2nd wave subsides

IANS ■ PATNA

As the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic subsides, migrant workers across different States have started returning to work leaving their native villages. The Government has assured about providing employment to the workers who have returned to the cities for resuming employment.

After the onset of the second wave of coronavirus and the imposition of lockdown across the country, the migrant workers had returned to their native villages fearing a repeat of the chaos and apathy faced last year.

However, due to the gradual opening of businesses in big cities the migrant workers have again started coming back to the cities.

Train tickets are being sent by mill owners to several migrant workers living in Muzaffarpur and other districts of north Bihar. The workers living in Sakra block of Muzaffarpur district have left for Mumbai, Delhi and other places.

The migrant workers say that when they returned to the cities, they thought they would find some job but they are not getting the kind of jobs in which they are skilled. They say



that in some areas employment is being provided under the MNRGA scheme but it is not possible for all people to get work under it. Niranjan Kumar of Charpokhari village in Bhojpur district says, "At present, farming and agriculture is almost at a standstill. Work is expected to be available only at the time of planting. However, so many people have returned from their native villages that there is no possibility of getting fair wages in agriculture. Money is available working outside their native villages."

In Gopalganj district, at present a large number of migrant workers are not returning to the cities but many who had returned were called by their owners. However, there are many workers across villages who fear a third wave of

the coronavirus. Such labourers say that they will venture outside but hearing about the danger of a third wave they will have to return again to their native villages.

They say that they are looking for work in their native villages but if they fail to get any work then they will have to move to cities to feed themselves. The migrant workers of Gopalganj, Bhojpur, Kaimur are moving towards Punjab for farming.

It is a relief that the situation is not as bad as last year. After the second wave of Covid-19, many migrant workers who returned to their native villages are still in search of work.

Last year, migrant workers were called back for work by sending interstate buses from many big cities.

2 cops, 2 civilians killed in Sopore terrorist attack

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Two policemen and an equal number of civilians were killed while three cops and another civilian received critical injuries in a daring strike by a group of three motorcycle borne terrorists in the Arampora area of Sopore town of North Kashmir's Baramulla district on Saturday.

According to police, two local and one foreign terrorist belonging to the Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist outfit were suspected to be behind the attack. The policemen were deployed in the area to strictly enforce Covid-19 protocol.

A massive manhunt to track down the footprints of local terrorists were launched soon after they ran away after hitting the target.

The terror strike took place at a time when peace talks centering around the Kashmir issue started gaining currency and the stakeholders were weighing their options on whether to grab the opportunity or not. Earlier, Rakesh Pandita a BJP councillor from Tral area of Pulwama was killed in cold blood on June 2.

Inspector General of Police, Kashmir range Vijay Kumar who reached the spot told reporters, "the terrorists targeted police naka set up in the Arampora area to strictly

enforce Covid-19 protocol".

Kumar said, motorcycle borne terrorists targeted the policemen from behind leading to critical injuries. Policemen also retaliated against the fire. "Two policemen and two local civilians succumbed to their injuries in the Sopore hospital".

Among the injured cops, ASI Mukesh Kumar has been referred to a Srinagar hospital for specialized treatment. Another injured police man has been identified as SPO Danish.

Lt-Governor Manoj Sinha and leaders of several other mainstream political parties condemned the terror attack on the police party.

According to a police spokesman, "at around 12.00 p.m unidentified terrorists fired indiscriminately upon a police party which was performing Covid enforcement duties at main market Sopore".

In this terror incident, "four policemen and four civilians received bullet injuries who were shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment. Among the injured police personnel, Ct Showkat Ahmad & Ct Waseem Ahmad succumbed to their injuries and attained martyrdom. Two civilians identified as Manzoor Ahmad Shalla resident of Shalimar Colony Sopore and Bashir Ahmad resident of Mahrajpora Sopore also succumbed to their injuries".

₹40 lakh relief to family of martyred BJP leader Rakesh

PNS ■ JAMMU

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday sanctioned an ex-gratia amount of ₹40 lakh to the family of Rakesh Pandita killed by terrorists in Tral, Pulwama on June 2. Conveying condolences to the family members of the deceased President of Municipal Committee Tral, the Lt Governor said that the whole administration stands with the family of late Rakesh Pandita in this hour of grief.

During his visit to their home in Jammu Lt Governor assured the bereaved family of stringent action against the perpetrators, and informed them that a high-level investigation has already been initiated. He added that the terrorists involved in this heinous act of violence will be brought to justice soon.

Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Dr. Raghav Langer, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Anshul Garg, Deputy Commissioner Jammu accompanied the Lieutenant Governor.

Kingpin of IL&FS held in Chennai, sent to judicial custody for 15 days

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI:

Ravi Parthasarathy (69), Rchairman of the high profile Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) was arrested by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Tamil Nadu Police on Friday and a Chennai court remanded him to judicial custody for 15 days.

Ravi Parthasarathy, a close associate of former Finance Minister and Congress strongman P Chidambaram, and his company IL & FS have been slapped with crimes ranging from cheating to criminal breach of trust in the repayment of deposit amount of Rs 200 crore invested in debentures by the complainant company 63 Moons Technology Private Ltd. The company 63 Moons Technology Private Ltd is one of the many companies/individuals who were taken for a ride by the IL&FS and its directors by offering attractive interests on the investments made by the former in their Non Convertible Debentures of 1,000 and 2,000 having face value of Rs 10 lakh each. The 63 Moons Technology invested Rs 200 crore in the NCDs when the IL&FS directors showed them highly inflated balance sheets as well as high ratings from reputed credit rating agencies.

In 2018, the IL&FS and its Mumbai based subsidiary IL&FS Transportation Network India Ltd defaulted on the payment of interest on debentures, the aggrieved company filed cases against the former. Investigation by Enforcement Directorate and Serious Fraud Investigation Office brought to light the role of key management personnel in mismanaging the lending business.

The Economic Offences Wing of Tamil Nadu Police had arrested Ramchand Karunakaran and Hari Sankaran in connection with the case. There are 21 accused in the case including Ravi Parthasarathy.

Parthasarathy had approached the Madras High Court seeking anticipatory bail and this put brakes on the efforts of Chennai Police to bring him to book. The EOW officials said that the IL&FS group which consists of more than 350 companies was used as a vehicle to perpetuate fraud. The EOW further stated that the aggrieved depositors and investors of IL&FS and ITNL can come forward with their claims.

The IL&FS was launched with fanfare as a road construction finance company and grew to boast 347 subsidiaries and had amassed debt pile of Rs 91,000 crore by the time the crisis broke out.

K'taka Police arrests 38 illegal immigrants from Sri Lanka

IANS ■ MANGALURU

In a major crackdown on human trafficking, the city crime branch police have arrested 38 Sri Lankans who had migrated illegally to India.

The arrests were made on Friday, following raids on several locations in Mangaluru and its surrounding localities.

According to Mangaluru police commissioner N. Shashi Kumar, the illegal immigrants had allegedly been promised jobs in Canada, before being trafficked to India. After shipping them from Sri Lanka to Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu on March 17, the traffickers had shifted the immigrants to Karnataka, to evade heightened scrutiny during the Tamil Nadu assembly polls.

In Mangaluru, the illegal immigrants had been claiming to be daily wage workers and fishermen from Tamil Nadu. The police commissioner said that a tip off from Tamil Nadu police, had led to the raids.

Six local persons have also been arrested on charges of sheltering the illegal immigrants.

'Move to build resorts in Lakshadweep ill-conceived'

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI:

The controversy over the proposals by Praful Patel, the administrator of the Lakshadweep Islands is much ado about nothing and it is likely to blow over in a few weeks' time, according to experts keeping a close watch over the developments in the archipelago.

"The administrator and officials in charge did not apply their minds properly when they drafted the reforms meant to develop the islands," N Sathyamurthy, security expert based in Chennai who focuses on the developments in Sri Lanka, Lakshadweep and Maldives told The Pioneer.

Sathyamurthy pointed out that the move to build resorts in Lakshadweep with the intention of making the archipelago similar to that of Maldives was an ill-conceived proposal. "Maldives islands function based on Sharia Law. The five star resorts in the atolls do not serve liquor. It is a crime to carry liquor to Maldives and there is every chance of you getting prosecuted if caught with liquor," said a frequent traveller to the islands on condition of anonymity.

He said there are Star grades hotels and resorts that offer liquor. "But they are all



uninhabited islands. During the months of Ramadan, the visitors are advised to stay indoors and no food will be served in the eateries," he added.

According to Sathyamurthy, it is another thing that resorts are built in the uninhabited areas. "The mission to launch resorts in islands inhabited by the local population does not augur well," he said.

Businessmen in Kochi and Kozhikode said that the move by the Island administration to make use of Mangalore Port for trading activities to the islands instead of Beypore was long overdue. "The trade unions controlling the workers of Beypore Port are to be blamed for the move. Kerala workers are militant and strike work at the drop of a hat. The islanders

are at the mercy of the Port workers in Beypore," said a trader in Kozhikode who has business dealings with the islands.

Meanwhile the agitators themselves are making faux pas while issuing statements against the administration. A struggling movie artist in a bid to catch public attention alleged during a channel discussion that the administrator was using bio weapon to kill the islanders. A group of criminal petitions have been filed against the artist in various courts of the State and this forced her to make a volte-face. The wannabe star tendered a public apology and blamed the media for distorting her comments. But the allegation made by her has gone viral and chances are that the issue may snowball into another controversy.

Tamil Nadu logs 15,108 new cases of Covid-19

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI/KOCHI:

Tamil Nadu logged 15,108 new cases of Covid-19 on Saturday as the Directorate of Health and Preventive Medicine tested 1.82 lakh persons across the State. The pandemic claimed 374 lives taking the death toll in the State to 29,280 till date.

The total lock down in the State has started yielding results as the number of new cases registered every day show a decrease. Chennai, which used to be a hotspot, recorded 989 new cases on Saturday while the industrial hub of Coimbatore tested 1982 new cases making the district top the table. Its neighbors Erode (1353) and Tirupur (844) continued to be areas of concern for the administration as these three districts constitute the main industrial and business hub of Tamil Nadu.

Test Positivity Rate in the State too has shown a remarkable climb down from 13 per cent to 9 per cent in the week that ended Friday.

Situation in neighboring Kerala remained critical despite the fall in the number of new cases diagnosed with the pandemic. While 13,832 persons tested positive on Saturday across the State, 171 succumbed to the pandemic. Though the average TPR across the State showed 12.72 per cent, the powers that be were reluctant to describe the situation as normal. Kerala's test to isolate the COVID affected remained low as on Friday the State had tested 1.08 lakh samples.

Aligarh 1st district to win lease deed in Centre's Defence Corridor project

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

Aligarh has become the first district in the map of India to get its first lease deed done in the UP Defense Industrial Corridor project. UPEIDA got the first lease deed done in Aligarh in the Defense Corridor that is being developed in five districts of UP. The first lease deed was done with Aligarh's Allen & Elvon Private Limited (drone maker). In Khair tehsil, the officers of UPEIDA gave the certificate of land on lease for 30 years. More investors will have lease deeds done in the next week. Aligarh had taken a steady lead in the Defense Corridor project.

The UP Defense Industrial Corridor projects were announced in Aligarh in August 2018. In this, including the Defense Minister, the Chief Minister, the Minister of State for Defense and ambassadors from abroad had come. The administration had seen land for this in Khair's Andla. The construction agency of the Defense Corridor, UPEIDA, had put the final seal on the land. The CEO of UPEIDA also visited Andla once. Defense corridors are being developed in Aligarh, Agra, Jhansi, Kanpur, Lucknow, Chitrakoot in UP.

Apart from UP, the central government had announced the second defense corridor in Tamil Nadu. So far in Tamil Nadu and UP, the first lease deed has been done in Aligarh. In Tamil Nadu also, no investor's lease deed has been done yet. MP Satish Gautam, DM

Chandrabhusan Singh and FIM played an important role in advancing the Defense Corridor in Aligarh. It is a matter of pride for Aligarh that the first lease deed of Defense Corridor in India was done here and the records were handed over. On this occasion, UPEIDA's ACEO Shrichandra Verma, OP Pathak, Sanjay Singh, Sanjay Chawla, Dhanev Vadra, Dhan Jeet Vadra, Mukesh Jain were present.

UPEIDA's ACEO Shrichandra Verma, Chief Engineer Sanjay Singh, Land teaching officer Omprakash Pathak, Sanjay Chawla came to get the first lease deed done in the Defense Corridor. Handed over a 30-year lease of land in Khair tehsil to Dhanjeet Vadra, MD of Aligarh-based company Allen & Elvon Private Limited, which makes drones for the army. UPEIDA is currently doing lease deed for 30 years, but it will be renewed twice with a total tenure of 90 years. UPEIDA has allotted 8 hectares of land to Allen & Elvon. Next week some more investors will have lease deed and possession will be given to the investors. The investor had to deposit the registration fee and 20 percent of the land.

In Andla, Khair, 14 companies have invested more than Rs 1400 crore with UPEIDA to make defense equipment. In this, land has been allotted to 14 companies. Anchor Research Lab and Allen & Elvon have been allotted maximum 8 hectares of land. Land ranging from 0.2 hectare to 5 hectare has been given to the investors.

World day against Child Labour: No hope for Aligarh children

PNS ■ ALIGARH

The observance of June 12 as child labour elimination day brings no hope for betterment to about 22,000 child laborers employed in Aligarh's lock and hardware units and hotels and dhabas.

Notwithstanding the Supreme Court's order forbidding the employing a children as labourers, the District administration and the labour department of Aligarh have failed to take effective steps to impose a ban on child labour in various lock and hardware units in Aligarh.

About 5000 lock and hardware units are functioning as semi-organized and tiny groups in industrial estate and in the city especially in Muslim populated areas here.

According to study of Sociology Department of Aligarh Muslim University, commissioned by Geneva based institute of child labour found that child labour was rampant in six of 16 processes, said Dr. Noor Mohammad, a prominent Sociologist and ex Chairman of Sociology Department of Aligarh Muslim University. According to Nagar Nigam Survey, of one lakh workers are



employed in Lock and Hardware units in Aligarh, of whom nearly 22,000 are children of these most of the children are Muslims. According to a detailed survey study. It was found that the children had been doing all sort of work in these units about 2,300 children were employed in plate cutting, 2500 in body drilling, 2170 in the manufacturing of lock machines, 2700 in casting, 2500 in the lock fitting process, 1500 in the washing of locks, 2200 in key manufacturing, 1100 in the designing of locks, 5670 in electroplating polish, 1900 in packing and 7000 in other related processes.

18 years old Mujeeb is doing work in one electroplat-

ing plant in Bhujpura area lost childhood in hazardous fume of chemicals, even this day, getting education is a mirage, for earning little sums, they pay a heavy price in terms of their health by working in closed room under unhygienic conditions.

12 year old Rafeeq of Shahjamaal, suffers from frequent breathlessness after inhaling dust generated from electroplating polishing machine.

13 year old Ramesh of Surendra Nagar succumbed to nickel ailments of lungs when he was working at cutting machine now he is under treatment in TB Chest Department of J.N. Medical College.

5 children drown in Saharsa pond

IANS ■ SAHARSA (BIHAR)

A pall of gloom descended on Bihar's Saharsa district on Saturday morning after five children died due to drowning in the Basti area of the district.

The children had gone to take bath in a pond when they slipped into deep water and drowned. All the children were aged between 8 and 14 years.

A police officer said that five children had gone to a nearby pond to take bath. While taking bath, one of them slipped into deep water and started drowning. The others too went into deep water in order to save him, but unfortunately all of them drowned.

Sadar police station in-charge Sanjeev Kumar told IANS that the deceased have been identified as Golu, Arif, Israfil, Mohammad Gulab and Abu Bakr.

He said the police reached the spot after getting information about the incident. With the help of local people, all the bodies have been fished out of the pond and sent for post-mortem.

80% in Patna unaware of clean air action plan: Survey

IANS ■ PATNA

Majority of the people in Patna are not aware of air pollution, according to a survey conducted by the Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) the report of which was released on Saturday.

The report said that 80 per cent of the people are not aware of Patna's Clean Air Action Plan, an initiative launched by the Bihar government in 2019.

Nearly 55 per cent are not satisfied with the steps taken by the respective departments and enforcement agencies to control air pollution in the city, it said.

The report indicated that 88 per cent of the people do not have an idea where to go and lodge any complaint on polluting sources or subsequent violations.

"The main objective of this public survey was to gauge the mood and perception of the people on air pollution and its impact on public health. This study also presents the overall awareness of the people on various initiatives taken by the state government to contain air



pollution," said Ankita Jyoti, Senior Programme Officer at CEED.

The survey was conducted in March and April this year in the Patna urban agglomeration area covering suburban and central regions with directly interviewing cross-section of people to get a representative view of the city.

The major findings clearly state that 96 per cent of the people do see air pollution as a major factor impacting their health, especially risks like asthma, respiratory diseases and breathing-related disorders.

The survey also pointed out that 80 per cent of the people are completely unaware

about the government initiatives to contain the rising air pollution in the city.

Nearly 65 per cent of the people indicated that there must be a better and regular communication strategy on air quality-related information.

The results of the survey strongly favour the significant role of issuing health advisories because scientific evidences also suggest that air pollution is strongly linked to health risk.

Nearly 90 per cent of the respondents are of the view that regular health advisory is critical to reduce the exposure level especially during high pollution days.

Telangana CM's surprise visits to review village, town progress

IANS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao will personally make surprise visits from next week to check the progress of Palle and Pattana Pragathi programmes (village and town progress), including the functioning of Panchayati Raj and municipal officers all over the State.

Rao will also hold a review meeting with additional collectors and district panchayat raj officers (DPOs) on Sunday at pragathi bhavan on various programmes being implemented in the State.

"There is a decrease in coronavirus cases in the State and the positivity rate has fallen to 4.7 per cent; another round of Palle and Pattana Pragathi programmes would be launched in the state," he said in a high level review meeting of these programmes on Friday.

According to the CM, Telangana brought in new Panchayat Raj and Municipality Acts to support rural and urban areas in a big way.



BOMBS HIT 2 MINIVANS IN KABUL, 7 DEAD

Kabul: Separate bombs hit two minivans in a mostly Shia neighbourhood in the Afghan capital Saturday, killing at least seven people and wounding six others, the Interior Ministry said. The attacks targeted minivans on the same road about 2 km apart in a neighbourhood in western Kabul, Interior Ministry deputy spokesman Ahmed Zia Zia said. It wasn't immediately clear what type of bombs were used and no one immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks. The Islamic State group has carried out similar bombings in the area, including four attacks on four minivans earlier this month that killed at least 18 people.

BRAZIL CRIME GANG LEADER KILLED

Rio De Janeiro: One of Brazil's most wanted criminal suspects was killed in a police operation Saturday in Rio de Janeiro, police said. Wellington da Silva Braga, better known as Ecko, was believed to command so-called militia groups in more than 20 neighbourhoods. The police communications office said a confrontation erupted when officers arrived at a house to try to arrest Braga.

MAN WOUNDS 13 IN AUSTIN SHOOTING AND ESCAPES

Austin: Someone opened fire in a busy entertainment district in downtown Austin early Saturday, wounding 13 people, including two critically, before getting away, authorities said.

5 KILLED; 6 HURT IN RAIN RELATED INCIDENTS IN PAK

Peshawar: At least five people were killed and six others injured in rain related incidents in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Saturday, officials said. The Provincial Disasters Management Authority (PDMA) said that rain along with heavy storm hit many parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa killing five people and injuring six others besides inflicting damages to eight houses. The PDMA also issued travel advisory restraining the people from visiting the hilly areas during the current rainy spell.

China says opposed to US plans to deploy missiles in neighbouring countries

PTI ■ BEIJING

China is opposed to US plans to deploy missiles and defensive systems in neighbouring countries that could undermine strategic stability and has called for advancing international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation processes.

Addressing the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva via video link on Friday, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi proposed jointly maintaining global strategic stability, abiding by international arms control treaties, addressing the non-proliferation issue via negotiations and improving global security governance in new frontiers.

"China opposes the development and deployment of regional and global missile defence systems by a certain country that undermine strategic stability, and China opposes the deployment of land-based intermediate-range ballistic missiles in the neighbourhood of other countries," Wang said.

Though Wang has not named the US, China in the past has threatened to take countermeasures if the US deploys intermediate-range missiles in Asia opposed Washington's move to deploy the high tech Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) in South Korea over concerns that the American

system will monitor China's missile movements.

In the text of his address posted on the Chinese Foreign Ministry website, Wang said the five permanent members of the UN Security Council should reaffirm the important formula that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, strengthen cooperation in strategic risk reduction and deepen strategic dialogue on a broader range of strategic security issues to enhance strategic trust.

He said China is committed to a policy of not using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states and nuclear-weapon-free zones unconditionally.

Without disclosing the numbers of China's arsenal of nuclear weapons, he called on the US and Russia to reduce their nuclear weapons.

"China always keeps its nuclear capabilities at the minimum level required for national security, and does not compete with any other country in the size or scale of nuclear force," he said.

China so far has not disclosed how many warheads it has, but an assessment by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute put the number at 320, in comparison to Russia's 54,000 or the 70,000 US warheads, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

Biden sells G-7 on global tax, but US Congress is a hurdle

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden might have persuaded some of the world's largest economies to hike taxes on corporations, but the US Congress could be a far tougher sell.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said on Friday that leaders of the Group of Seven — which also includes the United Kingdom, France, Canada, Germany, Italy and Japan — agreed with Biden on placing a global minimum tax of at least 15 per cent on large companies.

The President hopes a G-7 endorsement can serve as a springboard for getting buy-in from the larger Group of 20 complement of nations.

The agreement is not a finished deal, as the terms would need to be agreed upon by countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and implemented by each of them. The President needs other countries to back a global minimum tax to ensure that his own plans for an enhanced one in the US don't hurt American businesses.

"It has the potential to stop the race to the bottom," said Thornton Matheson, a senior fellow at the Tax Policy Center.

"It would be a huge sea change in the way things have been going in corporate taxes for the last three decades."

The idea of an enhanced global minimum tax is also an integral part of Biden's domestic agenda, but it faces resistance in Congress.

to avoid taxes, and could possibly supplant a digital services tax that many European nations are imposing on US tech firms that pay at low rates. Biden administration officials believe the use of overseas tax havens has discouraged companies from investing domestically, at a cost to the middle class.

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UK-EU Brexit spat over N Ireland clouds G7 leaders summit

AP ■ FALMOUTH

Turbulence from the divorce between the UK and the European Union provided an unwanted distraction at the Group of Seven summit taking place in southwest England, with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson saying on Saturday that post-Brexit agreements will fail if the EU continues to take a "theologically draconian" approach to the rules.

Johnson held meetings with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron and the bloc's top officials on the sidelines of the summit he is hosting. Afterwards, the prime minister claimed the EU was not taking a "sensible or pragmatic" approach to post-Brexit arrangements, and he threatened to use an emergency clause to suspend agreed upon rules if the bloc did not compromise.

Britain and the EU are locked in an escalating diplomatic feud over Northern Ireland, the only part of the UK that borders the 27-nation bloc. The EU is angry over the British government's delay in implementing new checks on some goods coming into Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK, while Britain says the checks are imposing a big burden on businesses and destabilizing Northern Ireland's hard-won peace.

US President Joe Biden



Britain's PM Boris Johnson, right, greets German Chancellor Angela Merkel ahead of a bilateral meeting during the G7 summit in Cornwall, England on Saturday. AP

has gotten drawn into the spat, raising concerns about the potential threat to Northern Ireland's peace accord.

The new arrangements, designed to keep an open border between Ireland and its northern neighbor, have angered Northern Ireland's British unionists, who say they weaken ties with the rest of the UK. Tensions over the new trade rules were a contributing factor to a week of street violence in April, largely in unionist areas of Northern Ireland, that saw youths pelt police with bricks, fireworks and firebombs.

European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen tweeted after meeting Johnson that Northern Ireland peace was "paramount," and the binding Brexit agreement protected it.

"We want the best possible

relations with the UK. Both sides must implement what we agreed on. There is complete EU unity on this," she said.

Johnson told Sky News at the summit site in Carbis Bay, Cornwall, that "the treaty we signed, I signed, is perfectly reasonable," but he added: "I don't think that the interpretation or application of the protocol (by the EU) is sensible or pragmatic."

The EU says Britain must fully implement the agreement, known as the Northern Ireland Protocol, that the two sides agreed and ratified. It is threatening legal action if the UK does not fully bring in the checks, which include a ban on chilled meats such as sausages from England, Scotland and Wales going to Northern Ireland from next month.

France's Macron says US again Europe's partner

AP ■ CARBIS BAY

French President Emmanuel Macron says it's good that US President Joe Biden is able to lead through cooperation, adding that the United States is "definitely" back as Europe's partner.

Biden and Macron met Saturday as part of the Group of Seven summit in southwest England, where they and other leaders of the world's wealthy democracies are discussing the coronavirus pandemic, the environment, national security, relations with China and economic issues.

Former US President Donald Trump took an adversarial approach with NATO allies, but Macron said Biden has shown that "leadership is partnership."

The desire for cooperation cuts both ways. Biden described the European Union as "incredibly strong and vibrant," which he said not only helps with tackling economic challenges but also provides a backbone for NATO.

Biden to return diverted border wall money, spend down rest

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Former President Donald Trump's signature border wall project would lose much of its funding as well as the fast-track status that enabled it to bypass environmental regulations under a Biden administration plan announced Friday.

President Joe Biden suspended construction of the wall upon taking office while his administration reviewed the project. That angered Republicans in Congress eager to see it go forward amid an increase in apprehensions of migrants along the southwest border.

The new plan does not cancel the wall project outright, but it's still likely to face opposition in Congress, where many Republicans are eager to promote a project closely associated with the former president.

Biden plans to return more than \$2 billion that the Trump administration diverted from the Pentagon to help pay for the wall and use other money appropriated by Congress to address "urgent life, safety, and environmental issues" created by the construction. It also asks lawmakers not to provide any additional funding for what the Biden team believes is an unnecessary effort.

"Building a massive wall



A pair of migrant families from Brazil pass through a gap in the border wall to reach the United States after crossing from Mexico in Yuma, Ariz., Thursday to seek asylum. AP

that spans the entire southern border and costs American taxpayers billions of dollars is not a serious policy solution or responsible use of federal funds," the Office of Management and Budget said in a statement outlining the plan.

The government has built walls and other barriers along the 2,000-mile (3,200-kilometer) US-Mexico border for decades to eliminate some of the easier routes of avoiding checkpoints. Trump turned the issue into a centerpiece of his political identity.

Trump vowed to build a

"virtually impenetrable" wall, insisting it would be paid for by Mexico, which never happened. Instead, his administration set aside about \$15 billion through a combination of congressional appropriations and taking the money from the Pentagon and other parts of the government.

The Trump administration built about 725 kilometres of wall, moving quickly and waiving requirements for environmental reviews and mediations, though only about 52.84 kilometres were in areas where no barrier previously existed.

Iran nuclear talks aimed at reset, face major challenges

AP ■ VIENNA

Talks between Iran and global powers restarted Saturday with the goal of trying to restore a landmark agreement to contain Iranian nuclear development that the Trump administration abandoned in 2018. Senior diplomats from China, Germany, France, Russia, and

Britain planned to meet at a hotel in the Austrian capital.

Top Russian representative Mikhail Ulyanov said in a tweet that the talks would allow the participants to "exchange views on how to arrange further work in order to complete the negotiations successfully and expeditiously."

The United States is not

formally part of meetings that launched in Vienna earlier this year. But the administration of President Joe Biden has signaled willingness to rejoin the deal under terms that would broadly see the United States scale back sanctions and Iran return to abiding by the limits on its nuclear activity contained in the 2015 agreement.

China, US diplomats clash over human rights, pandemic origin

AP ■ BEIJING

Top US and Chinese diplomats appear to have had another sharply worded exchange, with Beijing saying it told the US to cease interfering in its internal affairs and accusing Washington of politicizing the search for the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Senior Chinese foreign policy adviser Yang Jiechi and Secretary of State Antony Blinken held a phone call Friday that revealed wide divisions in a number of contentious areas, including the curtailing of freedoms in Hong Kong and the mass detention of Muslims in the northwestern Xinjiang

region. Calls for a more thorough investigation into the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes Covid-19 are particularly sensitive for China because of suggestions that it might have escaped from a laboratory in the central city of Wuhan, where cases were first discovered.

Yang said China was "gravely concerned" over what he called "absurd" stories that the virus escaped from the Wuhan lab. China "firmly opposes any despicable acts that use the epidemic as an excuse to slander China and to shift blames," Yang was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua News Agency.

Oli displaying 'ugly form of lust for power', say Nepal's five former Prime Ministers

Kathmandu: Condemning beleaguered Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's "undemocratic acts" and his "lust for power," five former prime ministers on Saturday appealed to the country's administration and security agencies to not be involved in such wrong activities that have long term effect on the nation. The former premiers — Sher Bahadur Deuba, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, Madhav Kumar Nepal, Jhalanath Khanal and Baburam Bhattarai made the joint appeal in a statement.

Prime minister Oli, currently heading a minority government, has continuously been attacking the Constitution of Nepal and undermining the long and arduous struggle of the Nepali people to achieve the federal republic and its rule of law, the Kathmandu Post reported, citing the statement.

"We warn the caretaker government not to do anything or direct others to do anything that would have a long-term impact on the country and people and appeal to the administration and security agencies not to be involved in such wrong activities," they said in the statement.

"He has displayed the ugly form of lust for power that has never existed in Nepal's political history. We condemn such undemocratic acts by Oli," they said.

The statement comes at a time when the Supreme Court started hearing on the case regarding the reinstatement of the House of Representatives, which was dissolved by President Bidya Devi Bhandari on May 22 at the recommendation of Prime Minister Oli, who lost a trust vote in the House last month. PTI

Iran hard-liners target sole moderate in Presidential debate

Tehran: Iran's seven presidential candidates offered starkly different views on Saturday in the country's final debate, with hard-liners describing those seeking ties with the West as "infiltrators" and the race's sole moderate warning a hard-line government would only bring more sanctions for the Islamic Republic.

Analysts and state-linked polling put hard-line judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi as the clear front-runner in Friday's upcoming vote, with the public now largely hostile to the relative moderate President Hassan Rouhani after the collapse of Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers.

But that didn't stop Rouhani's former Central Bank chief Abdolnasser Hemmati from harshly criticizing Raisi, at one point getting up from his chair to hand him a list he described as naming individuals who haven't paid back huge loans from state banks. He again tried to link Raisi to former President Donald Trump, whose decision to unilaterally withdraw America from Iran's nuclear deal has seen the country crushed by sanctions.

"Mr. Raisi, you and your friends have played in Trump's ground with your extremist policies," Hemmati said. For his part, Raisi said he'd make sure the government returns to the nuclear deal. The deal "would not be executed by you, it needs a powerful government to do this," Raisi said. The election Friday will see voters pick a candidate to replace Rouhani, who is term limited from running again. The vote comes amid tensions with the West as negotiations continue to try and resuscitate the nuclear deal, which saw Iran agree to limit its enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. AP

Moscow orders new restrictions as coronavirus infections soar

Moscow: Moscow's mayor on Saturday ordered a week off for some workplaces and imposed restrictions on many businesses to fight coronavirus infections that have more than doubled in the past week.

The national coronavirus taskforce reported 6,701 new cases of infection in Moscow, compared with 2,936 on June 6. Nationally, the daily infection tally has spiked by nearly half over the past week, to 13,510.

After several weeks of lockdown as the pandemic spread in the spring of 2020, Moscow eased restrictions and did not reimpose any during subsequent case increases.

But because of the recent sharp rise, "it is impossible not to react to such a situation," Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said. He ordered that enterprises that do not normally work on weekends remain closed for the next week while continuing to pay employees. In addition, food courts and children's play areas in shopping centers are to close for a week beginning Sunday, and restaurants and bars must limit their service to takeout from 11 pm to 6 am. AP

Israeli police say woman with knife shot dead in West Bank

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israeli police say a private security guard at a checkpoint near Jerusalem shot and killed a woman on Saturday who allegedly planned to carry out a stabbing attack.

The police said in a statement that the guard at the Qalandia checkpoint north of Jerusalem saw the woman with a knife and shot her.

Several amateur videos captured by Palestinians at the crossing showed the woman lying on the ground at the Israeli side of the crossing. Police later said she was a 28-year old Palestinian woman.

Qalandia is the main crossing point for Palestinian residents of the West Bank entering Israel, especially those bound for Jerusalem. The checkpoint is operated by private security firms, but Israeli police deploy after violent incidents. The official Palestinian news agency, Wafa, reported that Israeli forces closed the crossing point on both sides.

Starting five years ago, Palestinians launched stabbing and car-ramming attacks against Israelis in the occupied West Bank and annexed east Jerusalem, but the attacks have waned in recent years. The Palestinians seek the West Bank, where the Palestinian Authority exerts limited self-rule, as part of a future state alongside Gaza and east Jerusalem. Israel says Jerusalem is indivisible. Peace negotiations have stalled for many years.

WESTERN RAILWAY				
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No.S/22/2021 Date 09.06.2021				
S.N.	Short Description of Items	Quantity	T.O.D.	
583	Filter Element	648 Nos.	21.06.2021	
584	Stainless Steel Air Refresher	1350 Nos.	25.06.2021	
585	Acetone AR Quality	665 Ltrs.	28.06.2021	
586	Stranded Annealed Copper Jumper Wire	4500 Mtrs.	28.06.2021	
587	Battery Operated LED Based Torch Light	3000 Nos.	28.06.2021	
588	Pad for Secondary Suspension	3400 Nos.	28.06.2021	
589	Machined Bogie Frame Assy.	6 Nos.	28.06.2021	
590	Brake Gear Pin	14128 Nos.	28.06.2021	
591	Modified Elastomer Pad for Casnub bogies	64680 Nos.	28.06.2021	
592	Metal Bonded Rubber Pad for Side Bearer	561 Nos.	28.06.2021	
593	Packing for Side Bearer	2666 Nos.	28.06.2021	
594	Cast Steel Bolster Complete	11 Nos.	28.06.2021	
595	Complete Assy. Of Swing Door	186 Set	28.06.2021	
596	Transceiver VHF Digital DMR Hand Held 5 W	1251 Nos.	30.06.2021	
597	Clear Silica Sand, Free From Clay.	1355 MT	01.07.2021	
598	POH Kit for ELGI Make WRA Compressor	17 Set	01.07.2021	
599	Traction Transformer	2 Set	01.07.2021	
600	Primary Brake Beam Assy.	28 Nos.	01.07.2021	
601	Jelly Filled Quad Cable Size 06 Quad 0.9 mm Dia.	555 KM	02.07.2021	
602	Set of Must Change Item	75 Set	02.07.2021	
603	Measuring and Monitoring Relay	142 Nos.	02.07.2021	
604	H.C. Thermoplastic Polyester Elastomer	941 Nos.	02.07.2021	
605	Crowned Gear Coupling	8 Nos.	02.07.2021	
606	Outer Spring (Motor Truck)	143 Nos.	02.07.2021	

Corrigendum:- Please visit www.reps.gov.in for corrigendum issued to following Tenders: Sr.No. 406 (415 V ac 3 phase tower AC system) of Tender Notice No. S/18/2021 dt.12/05/21 due on 01.06.2021 is postponed to 21.06.2021.

Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website www.reps.gov.in and www.ir.indianrailways.gov.in.

0180 For Principal Chief Materials Manager

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Regd. Office : 503, Rohit House, 3 Tolstoy Marg, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001
AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021 (Rs. in Lakhs)

Particulars	Quarter Ended			Year Ended	
	31-Mar-21	31-Dec-20	31-Mar-20	31-Mar-21	31-Mar-20
	(Audited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)	(Audited)	(Audited)
1. Total Income from operations	6.75	8.64	31.95	37.45	56.73
2. Net Profit for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	-1.57	0.59	23.57	7.19	26.21
3. Net Profit for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	-1.57	0.59	23.57	7.19	26.21
4. Net Profit for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	-4.66	0.49	24.50	2.73	20.78
5. Total Comprehensive Income for the period (comprising profit for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	154.48	86.74	-206.18	482.70	-171.30
6. Equity Share Capital	338.04	338.04	338.04	338.04	338.04
7. Earnings Per Share (Face Value of Rs. 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinuing operations)					
-Basic	-0.14	0.01	0.72	0.08	0.61
-Diluted	-0.14	0.01	0.72	0.08	0.61

Notes:

- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year ended March 31st, 2021 which have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by Board of Directors and filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the aforesaid Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year ended March 31st, 2021 is available on the Stock Exchange website (www.bseindia.com) and on Company's website (www.bbinvestments.in).
- The above Audited Financial Results have been prepared in accordance with Ind AS notified under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with relevant rule made thereunder and other accounting principles to the extent applicable.
- The above financial results were reviewed and recommended by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on 12.06.2021.
- The figures of the previous period have been regrouped/reclassified, wherever considered necessary.
- The figures of the last quarter of the current year and of the previous year are the balancing figures between the audited figures for the full financial year and the published year to date figures up to the third quarter of the respective financial year.
- Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 globally and in India, the Company's management has made an initial assessment of likely adverse impact on the economic environment in general, business, and financial risks up to the date of financial statements and conclude that there is no material impact on the long-term performance of the Company. However, the Company will continue to monitor any material changes to the future economic conditions.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Sd/-
Vijay Bhushan
Director
DIN: 0002421

Place : New Delhi
Date : 12.06.2021

Govt asks Ministries to target 20% cut in controllable expenditure

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has asked all Ministries and government departments to target 20 per cent reduction in expenditures like domestic and foreign travel, overtime allowance, rent and office expenses, in the current fiscal year as it tightens its purse strings amid the second wave of the pandemic.

The Department of Expenditure under the Finance Ministry issued an office memorandum in this regard on June 10.

"All the Ministries/ departments are requested to take steps to curtail all avoidable non-scheme expenditure and aim for 20 per cent reduction in controllable expenditure... Expenditure in 2019-20 may be taken as the baseline for this purpose," the memorandum said. However, expenditure related to containment of the pandemic is excluded from the scope of this order.

The memorandum said,

The memorandum said, Ministries should aim to control expenditures like overtime allowance, rewards, domestic and foreign travel, office expenses, rents, rates and taxes, royalty

ministries should aim to control expenditures like overtime allowance, rewards, domestic and foreign travel, office expenses, rents, rates and taxes, royalty.

Besides, expenditures related to publications, other administrative expenses, supplies and materials, cost of ration, clothing and tentage, advertising and publicity, minor works and maintenance, service or commitment



charges, grants-in-aid general, contribution and other charges, should also be cut.

The Savings that would accrue to the Government due to this move cannot be exactly ascertained. This is the second year in a row that the government has come out with measures to rationalise expenditure. Last year, the expenditure department had asked all ministries /departments to review appointments of consultants, curtail functions and ban use of imported paper for printing as part of measures to rationalise non-priority expenditure.

As per estimates, the gov-

ernment is staring at an additional expenditure of up to Rs 1.45 lakh crore to provide free vaccines and foodgrains to people devastated by the deadly second wave of covid infections.

Reversing a policy where states competed for vaccine supplies for certain age categories, the government earlier this week announced that the central government will procure vaccines for all adults.

All above 18 years of age would get free vaccines from June 21. Also, the free food-grain scheme that was to end in June has been extended till November 2021.

Higher subsidy under FAME II to be game changer in adoption of EVs, say makers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Electric two-wheeler makers on Saturday termed as "a phenomenal move" by the Government to increase subsidy for such vehicles by 50 per cent under the FAME II scheme saying it would be a game changer in the adoption of eco-friendly vehicles.

The Government on Friday made a partial modification of the scheme for Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India Phase II (FAME II Phase II), including increasing the demand incentive for electric two-wheelers to ₹15,000 per KWh from the earlier uniform subsidy of ₹10,000 per KWh for all EVs, including plug-in hybrids and strong hybrids except buses.

In the latest modification, the department of heavy industries also capped incentives for electric two-wheelers at 40 per cent of the cost of vehicles, up from 20 per cent earlier.

"The revision in the FAME (II) policy, increasing

In the latest modification, the department of heavy industries also capped incentives for electric two-wheelers at 40 per cent of the cost of vehicles, up from 20 per cent earlier

the subsidy by 50 per cent per KWh is a phenomenal move. Sales of electric two-wheelers have grown despite the pandemic and with this additional subsidy, we expect electric two-wheeler sales to disrupt the market, and clock 6 million-plus units by 2025," Ather Energy CEO and Co-founder Tarun Mehta said in a statement. The Government's continued support to drive adoption of EVs, with a keen focus on locally built electric two-wheelers will make India the manufacturing hub of EVs, he added.

Welcoming the "government's continued support to EVs", TVS Motor Company Joint Managing Director

Sudarshan Venu said, "Sustainable mobility solutions are very important for the future and TVS is investing significantly behind this. The improved incentives for electric two-wheelers will increase penetration." He further said, "Such policy direction should lead to indigenous development of future technology."

Expressing similar views, Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV) Director General Sohinder Gill said, "It's an important and an admirable decision taken by the government, a move that will bring down the prices of electric two-wheelers nearer to the IC (internal combustion engine) vehicles and remove one of the biggest blockade of the high sticker price of electric two-wheelers."

Elaborating further, he said a 'city speed electric scooter' with a range of 100km/charge will now cost less than Rs 60,000 and a high-speed scooter with a range of 80 km will come nearer to the price tag of Rs 1 lakh.

India to require 400k charging stations for 2 mn EVs by 2026, says report

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

India needs about 400,000 charging stations to meet the requirement for two million Electric Vehicles (EV) that could potentially ply on its roads by 2026, said a report on Saturday.

The Grant Thornton Bharat-Ficci report said for India to reach its vision of 100 per cent EVs by 2030, factors such as increasing government support, decreasing cost of technology, and distressing pollution levels, would be key to accelerate this transition.

As per EV industry body - Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles - there are 1,800 charging stations in India as of March 2021 for approximately 16,200 electric cars, including the fleet segment.

"Overall, the EV infrastructure is tightly coupled with the EV and charging station characteristics, battery technologies, and electricity markets," the report said.

G7: Why major economies are delaying a break with the fossil fuel industry

Cardiff (UK): The climate crisis is certain to be a hot topic at the G7 summit in Cornwall.

While the leaders of the world's richest countries agree in theory on the need to reach net zero emissions by 2050 at the latest, they remain faithful to a fossil fuel industry reluctant to substantively change its business model.

A recent report by the International Energy Agency, a typically conservative advisory body, argued for an immediate ban on new fossil fuel projects. But investments by oil, gas and coal companies into finding new sources continue, as does industry lobbying to undermine regulation.

The environment ministers of the G7 countries committed to end funding for new overseas coal projects by the end of 2021.

But 51 per cent of their Covid-19 economic recovery funds - a total of USD 189 billion - paid between January 2020 and March 2021 were earmarked as financial aid for the fossil fuel industry. Worse, USD 8 of every USD 10 dedicated to non-renewable energy was paid with no conditions on these companies to reduce their emissions.

Why does it seem so hard for G7 leaders to match their words with action when it comes to the fossil fuel industry?

Betting on the long-term business case Despite setbacks in volatile markets and oversupply risks, there is still a lot of money to be made from extracting, producing and selling hydrocarbons. Demand for coal has plateaued, but oil and



gas demand is predicted to rise at least for the next 15 to 20 years, particularly in emerging economies such as China and India. This puts G7 leaders in an awkward position. On the one hand, governments

need to reboot economic growth after the pandemic slowdown - a profitable energy sector nourished by rising demand abroad is welcome, even though hydrocarbon extraction can be especially polluting in developing countries.

Governmental support for the industry in the form of subsidies or tax breaks artificially inflates the profitability of fossil fuels, in turn making renewables a less attractive investment. Put simply, it is less risky and more profitable to - at least for now - invest in oil and gas. Carbon lock-in

The fossil fuel industry continues to shed public support, but it can rely on the fact that it's embedded within a complex system of consumers, suppliers and contractors, politicians and the media.

This interdependency is

referred to as carbon lock-in. Economies have evolved in such a way that they perpetuate an energy landscape dominated by fossil fuels and plagued by an inability to radically change.

Not only does carbon lock-in result in inertia, it causes a tragedy of the commons-type problem.

Big oil companies such as BP, Exxon Mobil and Shell are unlikely to make meaningful changes until the rest of the system acts in unison. National oil companies and smaller privately owned fossil fuel companies comprise the bulk of known fossil fuel reserves.

But they often evade the spotlight and so can operate with more freedom. For a big oil company to make high-risk changes to its business model while others enjoy a free ride would be seen as a bad business decision.

Lock-in, as the name suggests, is very difficult to break. That said, G7 members are powerful nodes within this complex network. Strong leadership - such as divestment from fossil fuels and strong support for renewables - would cause reverberations throughout the whole system.

Low base: India's pharma sector growth accelerates in May

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Low base effect accelerated the growth of India's pharma sector in May, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said.

The ratings agency opined that the 47.8 per cent YoY growth in India's pharmaceutical market (IPM) during May 2021 was led by a low base effect.

Last year, the IPM declined by 8.5 per cent YoY in May 2020 due to the lockdown.

"IPM growth would have been stronger on an adjusted basis," Ind-Ra said in a statement.

"Acute therapies namely anti-infective, analgesics and vitamins benefited significantly due to the second Covid wave as these therapies have a direct/indirect role in the treatment of Covid patients. Acute therapy growth was also aided by the low base in May 2020."



As per the report, during May 2021, volumes grew 31.5 per cent YoY, price growth was 7 per cent and products launches were at 9.3 per cent, attributed to acute therapy products.

"Ind-Ra estimates the market to grow 8-10 per cent YoY in size during FY22."

Besides, it cited that acute therapies such as anti-infectives, analgesic and vitamins witnessed sales growth of 141.19 per cent YoY, 50.3 per

cent YoY and 59.8 per cent YoY respectively, while gastro grew 47.7 per cent YoY during May 2021. "Growth under-performance was observed in chronic therapies during the month, with cardiac and anti-diabetic growing 31 per cent YoY and 20.2 per cent YoY, respectively."

"However, on a moving average total (MAT) May 2021 basis, a growth out-performance was observed across these therapies."

India Power clocks ₹27 cr profit in FY21

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India Power Corporation Ltd on Saturday said its profit after tax (PAT) jumped 60 per cent to ₹26.66 crore in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021.

In 2019-20, it recorded a profit of ₹16.69 crore, a company statement said.

The Kolkata-headquartered company is an integrated power utility with distribution licence covering 618 square kilometres in Asansol-Raniganj region of West Bengal. It provides power to industrial, commercial and domestic consumers.

Total income for the year was at ₹518.37 crore, it said without disclosing the comparative figure.

India Power further said its sales increased by 2 million units in 2020-21 despite the impact of the pandemic and



lockdown during the first two quarters of the financial year.

"We were able to overcome the setback of the coronavirus pandemic by adding a large number of consumers across voltage levels, which resulted in accelerated sales growth from second quarter onwards."

Our ability to procure power at competitive prices led to cost savings and further improved our earnings," India Power Whole-time Director Somesh Dasgupta said.

Adani Enterprises incorporates new subsidiary for cement biz

New Delhi: Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) on Saturday said it has incorporated a wholly-owned subsidiary, Adani Cement Industries Limited (ACIL), to manufacture all types of cements. In a filing to BSE, the company said it incorporated the wholly-owned subsidiary on June 11, 2021 and the subsidiary company yet to commence its business operations. The new company will carry on business as manufacturers, producers, processors of all types of cements.

Lock-in, as the name suggests, is very difficult to break. That said, G7 members are powerful nodes within this complex network. Strong leadership - such as divestment from fossil fuels and strong support for renewables - would cause reverberations throughout the whole system.

CAIT asks Goyal to direct CCI probe into Amazon, Flipkart

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the Karnataka High Court judgement dismissing the petition of Amazon & Flipkart, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) on Saturday sent a communication to Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal urging him to direct the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to immediately initiate investigation proceedings against Amazon and Flipkart without any further ado.

The CAIT has also urged Goyal to immediately issue a



fresh Press Note replacing Press Note 2 of the FDI policy with a Monitoring mechanism to ensure that law of the land prevails and no one should dare to violate the policy, law or the rules.

The CAIT has also pro-

posed that to bring greater transparency in e-commerce business, every company indulging into any e-commerce activity through any type of electronic mode should have to take a Registration Number from the DPIIT.

CG Power plans ₹135 cr capex, to close some overseas subsidiaries

IANS ■ CHENNAI

CG Power Industrial Power Solutions Ltd has planned a capex of ₹135 crore this fiscal, the company said.

The capex to be funded out of internal accruals will be on balancing, debottlenecking and modernising the facilities at the plants for productivity improvement.

CG Power also said barring four wholly owned overseas operating subsidiary companies in Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands and the US, rest of the subsidiaries are being closed or in the process of being wound up.

Entities which are under investigation, would be closed after obtaining necessary approvals of the authorities, the company said.

CG Power said it is ensuring business continuity during Covid-19 pandemic by working with extended and staggered shifts in the plants and digital transformation through online customer inspections, online service advice, sharing pictorial procedures with onsite customer personnel, remote support for testing equipment.

The company closed last fiscal with a total income of ₹2,568.06 crore and a net loss of ₹208.93 crore down from a total income of ₹3,226.36 crore and a loss of ₹1,799.20 crore registered in FY20.

However CG Power has posted a net profit of ₹673.77 crore during the last quarter of last year.

Last year CG Power was acquired by Murugappa Group's Tube Investments of India Ltd.

Under the one time settlement scheme, the entire debt of ₹2,160 crores were settled at ₹1,000 crore - (₹500 crore in cash and the rest by recognising a new debt of ₹150 crore and issue of zero coupon non-convertible debentures aggregating to ₹200 crore).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General public that the client Ms Khyati Singh R/O 7B Doctors Lane Gole Market New Delhi 110001 is owner of all Movable and Immovable Properties owned by Late Mr Matang Singh by virtue of his Last Will dated 21st January 2021. All persons are hereby informed that as per the above will of Late Mr. Matang Singh she is absolute owner of all movable and immovable properties, if anybody has any kind of objections upon the above will and my ownership / Title its sale etc, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 15 days of the present.

Advocate, Mukesh Kumar Jha Ch. No. 9 DDA Vikas Sadan INA New Delhi-110023. Contact No: 729990005

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that my client has entered into an Agreement to Sell for the purchase of Entire DDAMIG freehold flat bearing No. H-271, Situated at Naraina Vihar, New Delhi-28 from Smt. Vijay Lakshmi Kausal (hereinafter called the Seller) That the Smt. Vijay Lakshmi Kausal named above declares that she is the absolute owner and in possession of the aforesaid flat under sale and there is no legal flaws & she is fully competent and have full power, absolute authority and unrestricted rights to sell and transfer the same, and the same is free from all sorts of encumbrances, burden, sale, mortgage, gift, lien, decree, charges, court injunction orders, stay orders, liability, transfer, attachment, litigation, legal flaws, dispute, notices, surety, security, notifications, acquisition etc. Smt. Vijay Lakshmi Kausal also declares that there is no Court case/civil/criminal suit/litigation still pending before any Competent Courts. Any other person(s)/institution(s) having any sort of rights, claims, titles or interests of any kind whatsoever in the said property or any part thereof, under any deeds or documents or otherwise is required to put forth his/its claim in writing with documentary proof with the undersigned within 7 days of publication of this notice, failing which it shall be presumed that the aforesaid owner have clear and remarkable title to the said entire flat and my client shall proceed to complete the transaction as it is free from all encumbrances whatsoever.

Sumit Mehta (Advocate) D/3157/2009 B-80, Inderpuri, ND-12, Ph.: 9868001948

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client Anoop Sehrawat S/O Late Kundan Singh and Suresh Devi W/O Anoop Sehrawat. R/O Plot No-A-76, Nangal Dewat, Vasant kunj New Delhi-110070. Disowned their son Vikas Sehrawat and Daughter in-law Poonam Sehrawat D/O Joginder Singh. From All their movable and immovable properties. Due to disobedience, misconduct towards my client. My client shall not be responsible for any acts of them in future.

Prem Prakash, Advocate Legalpath Competent Lawyers LLP 207, Plot No. 1, MLU Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075 Phone: 9871283399

United Textiles Limited

Regd. Office 7th K.M. Stone, Barwala Road, Hisar - 125001 (Haryana) CIN: L17115HR1993PLC032092

Notice

Pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations & Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, Notice is hereby given that the Meeting of Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, 29th June, 2021 at 11.00 AM at the Regd. Office of the Company to consider the Audited Financial Results for the Quarter/Year Ended 31st March, 2021.

For United Textiles Limited (Amit Kumar Aggarwal) Director Dated 10.06.2021 (DIN 07079171)

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is notified for the information of Rail Passengers that Railways have decided to divert the route of Train no. 09805/09806 Kota - Udhampur - Kota Special Express with revised timings and stoppages.

09805/09806 Kota - Udhampur - Kota Special Express (Weekly)			
Train No. 09805	STATIONS	Train No. 09806	
ARR. DEP.		ARR. DEP.	
-- 16.40	KOTA JN	12.40 --	
12:10 --	UDHAMPUR	-- 18.40	

Days of Run : 09805 Ex. Kota on Every Wednesday from 16.06.2021 to till further advice & 09806 Ex. Udhampur on Every Thursday from 17.06.2021 to till further advice.

Accommodation : AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Reserved Second Seating.

Stoppages : Indargarh, Sawai Madhopur, Gangapur City, Hindaun City, Bayana Jn., Bharatpur Jn., Mathura Jn., Faridabad, Hazrat Nizamuddin Jn., New Delhi, Rohtak Jn., Jakhhal Jn., Dhuri Jn., Ludhiana Jn., Jalandhar Cantt., Pathankot Cantt., Kathua and Jammu Tawi Stations.

For any kind information such as timings and stoppages enroute passengers are advised to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

RailMadad Helpline No. 139

Please join us on

Visit RailMadad website: www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in & Download Railmadad app.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Visit us at: www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE



The Shrieks

Rape of minor by minors is a clarion call to look within, to wake up and give voice to the calls for help by the 10-year-old that went unheard, says MUSBA HASHMI

On a usual busy morning of May 24, a 10-year-old girl left her house to play with friends, only to return with a trauma that will continue to haunt her for many years to come. The incident is of Rewari, Haryana, where a group of about seven boys, all minors except for one who is 18, raped the girl in a school building. This was not all. The accused went a step ahead and filmed the act. The video went viral in no time.

It was not until a villager informed the girl's parents about the video that the family came to know about the horrific incident. One can only imagine what trauma the little one must have suffered that made her take to silence.

While rape is not something we haven't heard of before, the fact that boys as young as 12 don't shy away from committing such acts is what is both shocking and unfortunate.

What made these young ones take to such heinous crimes? There can be no one answer to this. But it gives us a reality check of the society we live in and the world we will be leaving behind for the generations to come.

"The young ones are the most vulnerable of all. We don't know what exactly might have happened that led to such a crime, but we can anticipate that it was because of the company those boys shared. The 18-year-old was indeed aware of what he was doing, and he might have lured other boys into the crime," Pulkit Sharma, a clinical psychologist, says.

WATCH YOUR KIDS
The only way out here is to have a close eye on your child's friends. The parents must take charge of the company that their child shares. Keep a look at what your child does when alone. The need is such that even children as young as ten are having access to mobile phones and WiFi; this increases the risk of internet abuse.

"Parents must monitor the watch and search history when their child uses the phone. There are times when a child ends up watching inappropriate videos or ads, not because he searched for it, but because it appeared as a suggestion. It is all toxic and addictive. Hence, try to put your phone in kid-safe mode before giving it to your child; this will eliminate any chances of incorrect use of the Internet," Sharma opines.

He adds that many children grow up with difficult emotions such as loneliness, hatred, aggression and envy because of our current social structures; this makes them hardened and aggressive and predisposes them to such criminal behaviours.

DISCUSS AND EDUCATE KIDS
Pooja Sareen, advocate, women and child rights activist, says that parents' biggest problem is not opening up with their children. "The biggest problem in India is that the parents do not open up with children on a very critical subject such as sex, sexual needs and sexual restrictions, what should be and should not be done. Most of them watch web series with their children that are often full of abusive hurls and sexual and love-making scenes. While some skip them, others don't think that the child is juvenile, or a teenager. It is disheartening to hear some parents say 'dekhne do, ladka hai, seekhne do, isi ne sambhalna hai'". We read too many articles on child rapes, rape on children by children or juveniles and we have read about 'Bois locker room' too; this is one way to expose the young minds towards such a sensitive topic, and due to the lack of proper guidance, they fail to understand what is right and wrong," Sareen says.

The lack of dialogue on sexual crimes at the school and community level is the reason behind



A 10 or 12-year-old, when committing a crime, won't think of the consequences. A child cannot comprehend a crime at such an age and calculate the actions. As most people say, it is nothing but a result of criminal mentality, and it is because they are not educated enough about right and wrong. They see what is happening in their family or area and replicate it
— Urmi Chudgar, Lawyer, HAQ: Centre for Child Rights

"A LOT OF MORAL PREACHING IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR. WE NEED TO EDUCATE CHILDREN ABOUT CONSENT AND RAPE PUNISHMENTS. SADLY, THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM COVERS SEX EDUCATION AS A MERE TOPIC. BUT DOES IT COVER STI, STDS, AIDS, RAPE, PREGNANCY AFTER RAPE, THE COMPLICATIONS THAT RAPE VICTIMS GO THROUGH AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENTS THEY REQUIRE? THE ANSWER IS NO. ALL THESE TOPICS SHOULD BE COVERED WITH THE HELP OF EXAMPLES AND SUGGESTIVE ROLE PLAYS
— POOJA SAREEN, ADVOCATE, WOMEN AND CHILD RIGHTS ACTIVIST

the increasing cases. The more educated children are about such acts and crimes, the instances of such cases will reduce. "The Government should work towards the prevention of such crimes because the general trend is to respond to a crisis and not prevent it. Also, children don't fall under the vote bank, and the Government thinks that work for children is more charity-driven; this shows in the budget as well, where only 0.6 per cent is spent on child protection. They often see investment and result as two parallels, but the need is to merge the two and work on things. You can't expect results if you don't invest. The investment here is to be done in the prevention of such crimes," Urmi Chudgar, Lawyer, HAQ: Centre for Child Rights, tells you.

Experts emphasise that educating children and creating awareness is the only way to reduce these crimes. "A lot of moral preaching is the need of the hour. We need to educate children about consent and rape punishments. Sadly, the school's curriculum covers sex education as a mere topic. But does it cover STI, STDs, AIDS, rape, pregnancy after rape, the complications that rape victims go through and the psychological treatments they require? The answer is no. All these topics should be covered with the help of examples and suggestive role plays," Sareen opines.

A MIRROR TO SOCIETY
Sareen adds that rape by a 10-year-old or a 6-year-old, is not just an example of a mentally sick and frustrated child, but it also holds a mirror to the parenting, teaching from school, friends and highlights the dearth of efforts made on him. "Such news makes headlines every other day. We read them, think about them and often forget. The question is: are the boys only to be blamed? And not their parents who fail to teach them the difference between right and wrong," Sareen asks.

DO WE NEED STRICTER LAWS?
While many people demand that there should be stern laws for such heinous crimes, Chudgar feels that the current laws are sufficient. "Amending the laws and increasing the punishment is not the way forward. When the Nirbhaya Case happened, there was a change that 16-18 years olds also could be tried as adults in case of heinous crimes; this in itself is a deviation in the principle of the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act. Also, because India is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) bringing in such changes in the law that are against the benefit of the child are not in line with the principle of JJ Act and UNCRC. Hence, the need is for proper implementation of the existing laws and not thinking of newer

ones. The POCSO and Juvenile Justice Act are strong enough," she emphasises.

She adds that it is not because of the loopholes in the law that juveniles are taking to such crimes thinking they will get away with it; instead, it is because they commit a crime without thinking of the consequences.

"A 10 or 12-year-old, when committing a crime, won't think of the consequences. A child cannot comprehend a crime at such an age and calculate the actions. As most people say, it is nothing but a result of criminal mentality, and it is because they are not educated enough about right and wrong. They see what is happening in their family or area and replicate it. So, parents have to work with their children from the beginning. And especially when a crime has been committed, and they are in the shelter homes, there has to be intensive counselling to make them realise and understand that what they have done will have consequences on them as well. They should not think that they are juveniles and will get away," Chudgar tells you.

VICTIMS HESITATION TO REPORT
While these cases are fortunate enough to make headlines and reach public notice, hundreds of cases go unnoticed and even unreported. The reason being public shame and harassment that follows. Some people even doubt the law and think they will not get justice.

"Some people think that reaching out to the court and attending the hearings will further traumatise the survivor. But in such cases, the law has several provisions for the survivor. There's a separate room for the vulnerable survivors. There's no lawyer or the culprit in the room. The survivor is accompanied by a support system and can put her point forward. There are no direct questions thrown on these young survivors. Not only this, but the law even allows them to avoid multiple visits to the court. If they want, the survivor can give out their statement in one go. Also, when they need to be questioned, police don't go in uniform," Chudgar explains.

It is nothing but a result of a lack of knowledge and awareness related to law. It's high time we should start creating awareness instead of just talking about it. "In the rural areas, the Asha workers can be trained and educated about the law, and they can further pass on the knowledge to the people. The Government can organise short informative sessions on such topics. Further, hoarding and posters can be put in public places. It is said that you tend to remember things that you have read for a long time. Posters will prove to be helpful as they will initiate that dialogue and also educate people about such sensitive topics," Chudgar opines.

TALES OF HORROR

- Six people have been arrested this month for allegedly raping a 16-year-old girl in Mumbai.
- Another minor was allegedly sexually assaulted by four youths near Shivamogga, last year. The girl was taking care of her mother at a COVID care centre when the incident happened.
- In November, 2020, a 68-year-old priest was arrested for raping a 10-year-old at his daughter's home in Bengaluru.
- An eight-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a 70-year-old man in a village in Uttar Pradesh. The girl was playing around when the incident happened.
- A man was held for allegedly raping a 17-year-old girl and filming the act and sharing it on social media. The accused was arrested for repeatedly raping the minor girl for the past one year.

NEED TO STREAMLINE TECH USE
Both Sareen and Chudgar agree with Sharma that the unrestricted use of technology is also leading to such crimes. "Giving them gadgets is a key to easy access to sex. Especially during the lockdown, when both classes and tuitions have gone online, how fair is it to not mentor them on what's essentially a part of them. I beseech to all parents, hold hands of your children, educate them on sex. Educate them on repercussions of rape, talk to them as friends, they need you," Sareen says.

And the even more horrifying trend that is, of course, a result of technology — shooting videos and posting them online, is becoming infamous. Chudgar says that it is part and parcel of technology. "It is a strange world that we live in. Not only children but even adults have the habit of recording whatever is happening near them; this is both good and bad. However, being in possession of child pornographic material is a crime in itself; it is again because of the lack of awareness that people don't shy away from recording and circulating such crimes. The need is to educate people about the wise use of technology because there's not much we can do about this infamous trend," she suggests.

Impossible achieved

Novak defeats 13-time champion Nadal in French Open semis, will face Tsitsipas for title today

AFP ■ PARIS

Men's Final
Live from 6:30 pm IST
STAR SPORTS 1 & SELECT 1

Djokovic will play Stefanos Tsitsipas in Sunday's final with the chance to not only add to his 2016 French Open title but also move to 19 Grand Slam titles, just one behind the men's record 20 held by Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer

Novak Djokovic handed 13-time champion Rafael Nadal only his third defeat in 16 years and 108 matches at the French Open on Friday to reach his sixth Roland Garros final after an epic showdown which even beat the country's Covid-19 curfew.

In their 58th career clash, Djokovic triumphed 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/4), 6-2 and stays on course to capture a 19th major and become the first man in over 50 years to win all four Slams twice.

Djokovic, the 2016 champion in Paris who had also beaten Nadal at the 2015 tournament, will face Stefanos Tsitsipas in Sunday's final in what will be his 29th championship match at the Slams.

Tsitsipas had earlier become the first Greek to reach a Grand Slam final with a 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 4-6, 6-3 victory over Alexander Zverev.

Nadal, 35, remains tied on 20 majors with Roger Federer. "It was a privilege to face Rafa in such an incredible match," said Djokovic after four hours and 11 minutes of intense action. "Tonight it was my greatest ever match in Paris."

He now leads Nadal 30-28 in their career rivalry.

"It's hard to find words for Rafa's achievements at Roland Garros. The amount of wins on this court is incredible," he added.

"You have to climb Mount Everest when you meet him here."

It was Djokovic's second win in eight meetings in Paris with Nadal, a sequence which also included three losses in finals.

It was Nadal's first defeat



in 14 semi-finals in the French capital.

"Probably it was not my best day today, even if I fought," said Nadal. "Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. I had a big chance. There were some crazy points but there was fatigue there."

Djokovic finished with 50 winners; Nadal committed 55 unforced errors under the relentless assault.

Djokovic had two break points in the opening game of the first set which stretched to 10 minutes but was unable to convert.

Nadal made him pay, sprinting away for a 5-0 lead before the top seed got on the board.

Djokovic clung on, retrieving one break to get to 2-5 but Nadal eventually prevailed after one hour on court even if he required seven set points to edge ahead.

The old rivals exchanged breaks in the second and third games of a big-hitting second set but it was Djokovic who repeated the feat for a 4-2 lead before levelling the tie.

Twice in the third set Djokovic edged ahead, only to be reeled back in by Nadal who broke back in the 10th game as the world number one served for the set.

Djokovic then saved a set point with an ice-cool drop shot in the 12th game.

"You cannot play better clay court tennis than this. It's perfect," tweeted Andy Murray.

A 92-minute third set ended with Djokovic taking the tiebreak. Nadal then broke in the first game of the fourth set but Djokovic levelled for 2-2 and broke again for 4-2.

He finished it off on a second match point when Nadal hit wide and long to conclude a match on the same court where they first met in 2006.

AFP ■ PARIS

Barbora Krejickova won her maiden Grand Slam singles title at the French Open on Saturday, beating Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova to become the first Czech woman in 40 years to conquer Roland Garros.

Krejickova, ranked 33 in the world and playing just her fifth main draw in a Slams singles event, triumphed 6-1, 2-6, 6-4 for a second career title.

The 25-year-old emulates compatriot Hana Mandlikova who claimed the trophy in Paris in 1981.

The 25-year-old Krejickova dedicated her victory to her mentor, the former Wimbledon champion Jana Novotna who died of cancer at the age of 49 in 2017.

"It's hard to put into words. I cannot believe I have just won a Grand Slam," said Krejickova who was still outside the top 100 when the 2020 French Open took place last October.

"I spent a lot of time with Jana before she died. Her last words to me were 'enjoy tennis and try and win a Grand Slam'."

"I know she's looking after me. All this is pretty much because she is looking after me."

"It was amazing that I got the chance to meet her. She was such an inspiration. I miss her and I hope she's really happy."

In a nervy start to the final, Krejickova was broken in the first game, serving up two double faults.

However, the 29-year-old Russian was unable to capitalise and dropped

CZECHMATE

Barbora beats Anastasia in three sets to join Hana Mandlikova as the second Czech women's singles champion at Roland Garros

the next six games as her Czech opponent grabbed three breaks and raced way with the opener inside half an hour.

Krejickova was rewarded for her bold attacking, hitting 13 winners to the Russian's seven.

Pavlyuchenkova, who made her Slam debut back in 2007, was the more composed player in the second set, stretching out to 5-1.

A medical timeout at 5-2, during which she was seen munching Haribo gummy bears, merely delayed the Russian levelling the final.

In the decider, the players exchanged breaks in the third and fourth games, before the Czech broke to love for 4-3 on the back of a 10-shot rally.

Pavlyuchenkova saved two championship points in the ninth game and a third in the 10th but Krejickova became champion on the fourth when the Russian hit long.

Both women capitalised on a draw in which the top seeds fell and just kept falling.

World number one and 2019 champion Ashleigh Barty hobbled out in the second round.

Serena Williams was knocked out in the fourth round, world number two Naomi Osaka withdrew after one match, while 2018 champion Simona Halep never even made it to Paris.



Sehwag looking forward to Boult vs Rohit contest

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Opener Rohit Sharma countering Trent Boult's incoming deliveries will make for a fascinating contest, something that Virinder Sehwag will be looking forward to during the World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand, starting in Southampton on June 18.

Sehwag, who redefined the art of opening batting in Test cricket, feels that Rohit's qualities and recent form at the top of the order certainly makes him a candidate to succeed during the six Test matches in England this summer.

"No doubt Trent Boult-Tim Southee combination will pose a lot of challenge for Indians. They can move the ball both ways and are brilliant while bowling in partnerships also," Sehwag said.

"Boult vs Rohit Sharma will be a contest that I would



be looking forward to. If Rohit gets set and see off Boult's opening spell, it will be a treat to watch," feels one of India's greatest match winners.

While this would be Rohit's first shot at opening in English conditions, the experience of playing Tests in 2014 will certainly help him.

"Rohit is a fantastic batsman and he has played Test cricket in England earlier also (2014) so I think he can manage well as we have seen in recent times when he has opened the batting. I have no doubt that he will score runs in England this time."

"Obviously, as it is for any opener, he would have to be careful for the first 10 overs and see off that new ball to understand the conditions first. I am sure he will get a chance to show his range of strokes," said the man, who has scored more than 8000 Test runs.

Sehwag also believes that

rather than going in with four pacers, India should go with two spinners in their five-man bowling line-up as it would also strengthen their lower middle-order batting.

"I don't know how the wicket would look like on June 18th but one thing I have always believed is that you need to play to your strengths. If India can play with five specialist bowlers that will be great thing because I still believe that two spinners will come into effect on fourth and fifth day."

"Two spinners will be good for India because both Ashwin and Jadeja are capable all-rounders. That also adds depth to your batting. You don't need a sixth batsman with both of them around."

Sehwag also wants Pant to bat the way he knows and not get bogged down by too much analysis and dissection about technique and temperament needed to be successful in England.

Boult hopes playing Edgbaston Test will put him in 'good stead'

Birmingham: Initially not expecting to feature in the ongoing second Test against England, New Zealand pacer Trent Boult is hopeful that achieving game fitness rather than bowling in the nets will put him in 'good stead' in the upcoming World Test Championship final against India.

"Initially I wasn't expecting to play this game but everything fell into line, and I gave myself that chance to get out there and I think I'll definitely be better off for that head out," Boult was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

"It's one thing loading and getting through numbers in the nets but to simulate that kind of game fitness and having to come back three, four or five times in a day ... there's no real other



way to do that. So I'm hoping it puts me in good stead (for the WTC final)."

New Zealand have plenty of bowling options ahead of the marquee Test next week with pacers Tim Southee, Kyle Jamieson, Neil Wagner and Matt Henry performing well in ongoing series but Boult feels some 'hard calls' are on the cards.

"Healthy competition," Boult said about their pace-bowling options for the WTC final.

"The boys are very excited about the prospect, but they've put in a lot of hard yards not just over the last couple of weeks but over a couple of years of a Test Championship cycle."

"Some hard calls will have to be made but the big picture is the collective goal of lifting the world title," he added. PTI

Rabada takes 5 in SA innings win

Gros-Islet: Kagiso Rabada completed a five-wicket haul as South Africa formalised their demolition of the West Indies by an innings and 63 runs just before the lunch interval on the third day of the first Test in St Lucia on Saturday.

Having taken just one wicket in the first innings on day one when the home side were routed for 97 after choosing to bat first, Rabada led the way for the Proteas in the West Indies second innings with figures of five for 34.

It was his 10th five-wicket haul in Test cricket. The Caribbean side, trailing on first innings by 225 runs and resuming from an overnight position of 82 for four, were dismissed for 162. Only Roston Chase, with a top score of 62, offered any meaningful resistance to the South African bowlers, the next best effort being 14 from replacement opening batsman Kieran Powell. AFP

India's SL bound squad to have 14-day quarantine in Mumbai

New Delhi: India's white ball squad, led by Shikhar Dhawan, will quarantine in Mumbai from June 14 to 28 and undergo six RT-PCR tests on alternate days before flying off to Colombo for the six-match series against Sri Lanka, starting on July 13.

It is understood that all the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that will be followed by the Lanka-bound squad will be same as those of the first team currently in the United Kingdom for the World Test Championship final and five-match series against England.

"All the rules will be same like we followed in England. The outstanding players will come by charter flight and some fly business class of commercial airline," a BCCI source privy to development said. "They will do seven days of room quarantine and

then can meet in common areas inside the bio-bubble. The players will do gym sessions in staggered manner."

While the three-match ODI series starts on July 13, it is expected that Indian team will have match simulation practice (situational training) after individual sessions, following three days of room quarantine at the team hotel in Colombo.

"It will be just like what's happening in England. Match situations will be created and that's how the intra-squad training will be held."

"You can't have your main players get out of the first ball and not bat again or bat for the whole innings. Everyone needs training so it won't be practice games as such," the source said. The Indian teams over the years have always stayed at the Taj Samudra Hotel in Colombo.



Pant smashes ton, Gill 85 in intra-squad game



Southampton: The flamboyant Rishabh Pant took his senior bowling colleagues to the cleaners with an unbeaten century while opener Shubman Gill also warmed up with a polished 85 during the Indian team's intra-squad match simulation over the last two days.

The two teams are being led by Virat Kohli and KL Rahul with all the first team batsmen packed in one side and the regular bowlers on the other, with reserves like Wriddhiman Saha and Hanuma Vihari.

Pant, who has been in the form of his life, hammered every bowler including the spinners in his unbeaten 121 off 94 balls. Opening the batting with Rohit Sharma, Gill scored 85 off 135 balls.

Kohli's team was only troubled by veteran pacer Ishant Sharma who returned the best figures of 3 for 36. PTI

NZ eye series win as Poms collapse



AFP ■ BIRMINGHAM

London: The England and Wales Cricket Board is to launch a 'social media review' that could lead to disciplinary action following the fall-out from Ollie Robinson's Twitter posts.

The Sussex seamer was suspended from England duty pending an investigation after historic racist and sexist posts made in 2012 and 2013 re-emerged during his Test debut against New Zealand at Lord's last week. Since Robinson's

Zealand side that drew the first Test at Lord's, took the first three wickets to fall en route to fine figures of 3-36 in 12 overs.

New Zealand are eyeing only a third series win in England after their 1986 and 1999 triumphs — an ideal way to prepare for their appearance in next week's inaugural World Test Championship final against India at Southampton.

England are facing a first series loss on home soil in seven years since a 2014 reverse against Sri Lanka.

Their slim hopes of setting a challenging target rest with tailenders Olly Stone (15 not out) and James Anderson

ECB to review players' social media

posts re-emerged, the social media feeds of a number of Internationals have been scrutinised, with an unnamed player found to have sent offensive tweets while under the age of 16.

The ECB board met on Wednesday and have decided to look into the issue in more detail, with a statement issued on Saturday saying: "The board agreed to the executive's recommendation for a social media review to address any

(nought not out), whose England record 162nd Test is unlikely to be one the pace great remembers fondly.

Henry struck with just the second ball of England's innings when opener Rory Burns, who made 81 first time around, was well caught in the slips for a duck by stand-in skipper Tom Latham.

New Zealand's close-catching, far superior to England's this series, also accounted for Dom Sibley (10), well-taken in the cordon by Daryl Mitchell off Henry;

Specialist batsmen Zak Crawley made 10 and Ollie Pope 23 as their run of low scores continued.

Dan Lawrence, who topped scored with 81 not out in England's first innings, was powerless to prevent further collapse as he went for a duck, caught off left-arm quick Neil Wagner (3-18) by diving wicket-keeper Tom Blundell.

New batsman James Bracey at avoided a third successive nought in Test cricket but could only manage eight before he

played on trying to sweep left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel.

Patel was well used by Latham. The spinner then captured the prize wicket of Joe Root for 11 when the England captain and star batsman was caught behind off an edged cut.

Fast bowler Wood followed his first-innings 41 with a game 29 as he shared a stand of 44 with fellow quick Stone.

But a knock featuring five fours and a six ended when he skied a pull off Wagner to Blundell.

Italy start Euro party

Four time World Champions hammer Turkey 3-0 in opening match of European Championship

AFP ■ ROME

Italy got their Euro 2020 campaign off the mark with an impressive 3-0 win over Turkey in the curtain-raiser for the postponed continental tournament in front of their home fans in Rome on Friday.

Playing their first major tournament in five years after failing to qualify for the 2018 World Cup, all the goals came in the second half in front of a Stadio Olimpico that was filled to a quarter of its capacity.

Merih Demiral's own goal put Italy ahead before Ciro Immobile and Lorenzo Insigne netted for Roberto Mancini's side in the Group A opener.

The win capped an emotional night in the Italian capital which saw 16,000 fans return to the Stadio Olimpico.

"It was important to start well in Rome and I think it's a satisfaction for the public and for Italians," said Mancini, whose side are now on a 28-match unbeaten run.

"There was a lot of help from the crowd. It was a beautiful evening, I hope there are many others, but there are still six more for Wembley."

"We were hoping for another result, but Italy was dominant," said Turkey coach Senol Gunes.

"The first goal changed



things in the second half and we lost control of the game."

BERARDI IMPRESSES

On the pitch, Italy dominated early on with a three-man attack led by Immobile, who plays for Lazio.

The 31-year-old had several near misses in the first half,

coming up against a solid Turkey defence who held their own.

Turkey could also thank goalkeeper Ugurcan Cakir for pulling off a big save on 23 minutes, tipping over Italy captain Giorgio Chiellini's powerful goal-bound header off an Insigne corner.

Italy finally got on the score-

board eight minutes after the break when the unfortunate Demiral found himself in the path of a Domenico Berardi cross for Immobile, the Juventus defender bundling the ball into his own net.

Leonardo Spinazzola had a chance for a second minutes later, with Immobile sending the

rebound wide.

Immobile finally got his goal, his 14th for Italy, and first in a major tournament, in the 66th minute, scoring from a rebound after Cakir had saved from Spinazzola.

And Insigne curled in the third with 11 minutes to go. Sassuolo winger Berardi had

a role in all three goals, with Italy scoring three for the first time in a European Championship match.

All three Italy forwards proved efficient on the night, with a defence organised around Juventus veterans Chiellini and Leonardo Bonucci holding firm, securing a ninth straight clean sheet.

"We struggled at the start, we tried to accelerate but we hit a wall," said Immobile.

"In the second half, they were a little more tired, they tried to rush us but the spaces opened up, and we saw our quality at that time."

Gianluigi Donnarumma was largely unworried in the Italy goal apart from a dangerous Burak Yilmaz cross after half an hour and a solo run by Cengiz Under after coming off the bench after the break.

"From a tactical point of view, Italy was superior," said Gunes.

"Italy mastered the pitch and the ball. They suffocated us with pressing and high pace, and they took advantage of playing at home. 'We have to react now.'"

Italy, looking for a second European title after 1968, next play Switzerland in Rome on Wednesday, with 2008 semi-finalists Turkey taking on Wales in Baku.

Moore grabs point for Wales

AFP ■ BAKU

A header from towering Kieffer Moore claimed a point for Wales in a 1-1 draw with Switzerland in Baku on Saturday to start both teams' Euro 2020 campaigns.

Moore responded to Brel Embolo's second-half opener with a quarter of an hour remaining. Both sides trail Group A leaders Italy, who beat Turkey 3-0 in Friday's tournament curtain-raiser.

Wales coach Robert Page named Gareth Bale on the left wing as the Real Madrid attacker was one of three Wales survivors in the starting line-up from the 2016 semi-final loss to Portugal.

Switzerland boss Vladimir Petkovic kept Benfica's Haris Seferovic and Borussia Moenchengladbach's Brel Embolo up front despite Mario Gavranovic scoring four times in two pre-tournament friendlies.

With Petkovic naming a narrow back three, Bale and fellow winger Dan James found space out wide early on in front of an estimated 10,000 crowd as local authorities allowed up to 50-percent capacity in the 69,000-seater Olympic Stadium.

After a quarter of an hour played, James broke free down the left before finding 1.95 metre-tall Moore who forced Swiss goalkeeper Yann Sommer to tip the ball over the bar.

From the resulting corner, Moore rose highest again and clashed in the air with Manuel Akanji, which left the Cardiff forward playing the remainder of the game with red tape around his head.

With Moore bandaged, the momentum swung towards Petkovic's side and they dominated the remainder of the half but Seferovic wasted three chances.

Moore returned after the interval despite completing just one of his team's 101 passes in the first half.

Petkovic's Switzerland, who reached the last 16 five years ago, remained in control with captain Granit Xhaka, Liverpool's Xherdan Shaqiri and Atalanta's Remo Freuler dominating midfield.

They broke the deadlock four minutes into the second half as Embolo sparked into life after a quiet opening 45 minutes.

He broke down the middle and forced Danny Ward into a save, which gave Shaqiri a corner on the right flank.

He delivered to Embolo who headed home after beating Wales right-back Connor Roberts with ease for just his sixth goal in 44 international appearances.

Shaqiri, who played just 14 Premier League games for Liverpool last season, was substituted on 66 minutes for the more defensive Denis Zakaria.

Despite Petkovic's pragmatic change in personnel, Wales equalised with 16 minutes remaining.

Manchester United's James played a corner short which ended up at Joe Morrell's feet and he crossed into the box.

Moore lost his marker and headed a well-placed effort passed the out-stretched Sommer to send the roughly 300 travelling Wales fans into a frenzy behind the opposite goal.

James was then replaced by David Brooks as both sides searched for a winner.

Seferovic was substituted for 31-year-old Gavranovic on 84 minutes and the Dinamo Zagreb forward thought he had claimed all three points for his side with his first touch.

After edging past the Wales backline he beat Ward but his effort was chalked off for offside by VAR. Switzerland pressed on in five minutes of injury time and Gavranovic was denied another potential winner, this time Ward saving with his finger tips.

Ramsey left the field for Ethan Ampadu during time added on and Page's men held on for a point.

shortpasses

PM MODI TO GIVE SEND-OFF

NEW DELHI: In a bid to boost the morale of the country's Olympic-bound athletes, PM Narendra Modi is set to accord an official send-off to the Indian contingent tentatively between July 10-15. The send-off will only be for those athletes who are currently based in the country and will fly out from here.

CILIC VS ALIASSIME IN FINAL

BERLIN: Former US Open winner Marin Cilic will face Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime in Sunday's final of the ATP grass court tournament in Stuttgart. Cilic, who is bidding for his 19th ATP title, was 6-3, 1-0 up in Saturday's semi-final when Austrian wild-card Jurij Rodionov retired injured.

SHAKIB BANNED FOR 3 GAMES

DHAKA: Star Bangladesh cricketer Shakib Al Hasan has been let off lightly with a three-match suspension from the Dhaka T20 Premier League along with a fine of \$5800, following his on-field meltdown during a match between Mohammedan Sporting and Abahani Limited.

STERLING HONOURED BY QUEEN

LONDON: Manchester City and England forward Raheem Sterling was named in Queen Elizabeth II's Birthday Honours list in recognition of his work to promote racial equality in sport. Raheem who has been involved in anti-racism and anti-discrimination campaigns, has been made an MBE.

MURRAY FACES PAIRE IN OPENER

LONDON: Former world number one Andy Murray has been given a tough draw as he bids to get match-fit for Wimbledon with a first round clash against France's enfant terrible Benoit Paire at key warm-up tourney Queen's.

WOAKES RETURNS FOR SL T20S

LONDON: Chris Woakes was recalled to England's T20 squad for the first time in almost six years on Saturday after being included in a 16-man party for this month's three-match series at home to Sri Lanka. But Ben Stokes (broken finger) and Jofra Archer (elbow) remain unavailable through injury, with Reece Topley's side strain leading to a recall for his fellow left-arm paceman David Willey.

MOYES SIGNS NEW CONTRACT

LONDON: David Moyes has been rewarded for guiding West Ham to sixth place in the Premier League with a new three year contract and says he is "really excited by the ambition" at the club.

IWF CONFIRMS MIRABAI FOR TOKYO

NEW DELHI: The International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) on Saturday confirmed that star Indian lifter Mirabai Chanu has qualified for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics in the women's 49kg category. Chanu, the 2017 world champion in weightlifting, had secured her place in Tokyo by winning a bronze medal in the Asian Championship in Tashkent in April with a world record in clean and jerk.

HORTON WILL NOT DEFEND TITLE

ADELAIDE: Olympic 400 metre champion Mack Horton will not be defending his title in Tokyo after failing to qualify at the Australian trials, stunned by Elijah Winnington who swam the world's fastest time this year.

11 SIGN UP FOR USA LEAGUE

NEW YORK: As many 11 cricketers with domestic experience in India, including former Delhi batsman Milind Kumar and ex-Gujarat pacer Siddharth Trivedi have been named in the roster for Minor League Cricket T20, a 27 city-based franchise tournament in US. Agencies

Eriksen taken to hospital after collapsing

AFP ■ COPENHAGEN

Denmark midfielder Christian Eriksen was taken to a hospital on Saturday after collapsing on the field during a match at the European Championship, leading to the game being suspended for more than 90 minutes.

The governing body of European football said Eriksen has been stabilized and the Danish football federation said he was awake.

"Christian Eriksen is awake and is undergoing further examinations at Rigshospitalet," the Danish federation wrote on Twitter.

The Euro 2020 match between Denmark and Finland had been halted in the 43rd minute with the score 0-0 but was to resume at 8:30 pm local time.

UEFA said both teams had held an emergency meeting before deciding to continue playing. The players came back out onto the field at around 7:15



pm to a huge ovation as they started warming up for a second time.

Eriksen was given urgent medical attention on the field for about 10 minutes after collapsing near the end of the first half. He was then carried off on a stretcher. UEFA then announced the game had been suspended "due to a medical emergency."

Eriksen had just played when he fell face-forward onto the ground. His teammates immediately gestured for help and medics rushed onto the field. Eriksen was given chest compressions as his Denmark teammates stood around him in a shielding wall for privacy.



Dutch without De Ligt vs Ukraine

AFP ■ AMSTERDAM

The Netherlands will go into their first game of Euro 2020 against Ukraine on Sunday without Matthijs de Ligt as the Juventus defender recovers from a groin injury, coach Frank de Boer confirmed.

"It is a bit too early so we don't want to take any risks with him and we also have two other games in the group phase to go," De Boer told reporters at a news conference on Saturday.

"His injury is not that bad and we are sure he will play a part in the next game."

De Ligt missed the Netherlands' final Euro 2020 warm-up match against Georgia last weekend and his absence is a major blow given they are coming into the tournament without their other leading central defender in Virgil van Dijk.

The Liverpool star is still recovering from a serious knee injury.

De Boer is also coming into the tournament without goalkeeper Jasper Cillessen, who was left out of the squad after testing positive for Covid-19.

The veteran Maarten Stekelenburg, 38, will take over between the posts, preferred to Tim Krul of Norwich City. "He is our number one at this moment," De Boer said of Stekelenburg, who played in the side that lost to Spain in the 2010 World Cup final.

The Netherlands are returning to a major tournament after failing to qualify either for Euro 2016 or the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

Maguire could play against Croatia

AFP ■ LONDON

Harry Maguire could play for England in their opening Euro 2020 clash with 2018 World Cup finalists Croatia on Sunday although manager Gareth Southgate says it "is a longshot."

The 28-year-old central defender has not played since injuring ankle ligaments in Manchester United's Premier League defeat by Aston Villa on May 9.

However, he resumed training with England on Thursday and trained again on Saturday.

Southgate told *ITV* it was not beyond the realms of possibility that Maguire — a key player as England reached the 2018 World Cup semi-finals



where they lost to the Croats — could appear.

"It is a long shot but he is further ahead than we thought he might be at this point so we are certainly not going to rule it out," Southgate told *ITV* on Friday.

Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson also trained with the group as he builds fitness, but Maguire's United team-mate goalkeeper Dean Henderson — set to be back up to Jordan Pickford this summer — sat it out due to a knock.

Real Kashmir FC coach Robertson honoured with BEM for his football work in valley

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

David Robertson, coach of Kashmir's famous football club Real Kashmir FC, has been honoured with British Empire Medal (BEM) for his services to the community in the valley and strengthening UK-India relations, a feat he dedicated to the people of Kashmir and the team he has been engaged with.

According to the list released on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth II's birthday on Friday evening, "Manager, Real Kashmir Football Club, India, receives a British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to the community in Kashmir and UK-India relations."

The awards were announced on Saturday by the British Government to mark the monarch's official

birthday. The 52-year-old Robertson, who has been coach of Real Kashmir Football Club, has received a British Empire Medal (BEM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to the local community.

"The award recognises Mr Robertson's outstanding contribution to the sport and the community as head coach of RKFC since January 2017. This included guiding the football team into the I-League — the first time the team has competed at this level," the official list read.

"The last season of the I-League saw RKFC attain the highest number of home ground match attendees, averaging 25,000 people per match," Robertson said he was

12 Covid cases among Venezuela players, staff

Brasilia: Twelve people from the Venezuelan national football team, including players and staff, have tested positive for Covid-19, officials said on Saturday, a day before they play the opening match of the Copa America against hosts Brazil.

In the latest in a cascade of bad news for the troubled South American championships, the health department in Brasilia, which is slated to host Sunday's kickoff match, said it had been informed of the positive test results by tournament organizers on Friday night, shortly after the Venezuelan team arrived.

"The health department was notified by CONMEBOL that 12 members of the

Venezuelan national team's delegation, including players and coaching staff, tested positive for Covid-19," it said in a statement.

"All are asymptomatic and isolated in individual hotel rooms. They are being monitored by CONMEBOL's team and health department officials."

The department did not say how many players had tested positive.

CONMEBOL said on Friday it would allow teams unlimited substitutions for players who are ruled out because of positive Covid-19 results or contact with positive team-mates, meaning the cases were unlikely to force the cancellation of any matches. AFP



talktime

ELNAAZ NOROUZI

The actor who was once told that she had only one per cent chance to make it into the industry, now has projects like Sacred Games and Hello Charlie in her kitty. She speaks with Musba Hashmi about what is keeping her busy and how she always wanted people to not see her only as a pretty face, but a good actor as well

'I HAVE SAID NO TO MANY FILMS INITIALLY'



What is keeping you busy?

I have been in Germany since the second lockdown happened. There's something new which I am working on, but we haven't disclosed it yet. It's something special. Other than that, I am busy with a new release that will happen in July; the announcement will be made in a week. Without giving away too much details, it's a web series that I have done with Maddock Films. That's again, something which is different and I will be seen in a new avatar in it. And lastly, there's Sangeen, a thriller with Nawazuddin Siddiqui, we will begin dubbing for it soon.

Your performance in Hello Charlie is well recognised. How did you come on board the project?

I remember Excel Entertainment had asked my management for me to go for an audition for the film. I went to their office and we enacted a couple of scenes. Two days later, they called to inform me that they liked my performance. After that we had a lot of meetings for me to understand how it all will shape. It took me a while to agree to do the film because I was not sure of how much attention my role is going to get, because the gorilla at the end of the day is the star of the film. But then, my thinking is there's no too small role for an actor. Not to mention, I like the script and the idea of how Mona,



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the character that I played, was the moving force of the film. I even had a song in the film, but later on it was cut out. Also, it is my aim to make sure that people not only see me as a pretty face, but notice my acting skills as well. That's what I made sure when I played Mona.

Some memories that you have to share from the sets of the movie.

The only memory that I have is the heat. The shoot was done mostly on roads and I was wearing a leather jacket with tights. It was crazy. Most of the time, I was just sweating to death. (laughs)

You made a mark with your performance in Sacred Games. How easy or hard was it to get there?

Getting Sacred Games per se was hard, but the way to get there was even harder. In all these years before Sacred Games happened, I have said no to so many movies. I was about to do two big films, one was with Salman Khan Productions and the other was another huge film which I am not going to name, both of them were about to start when one of them got shelved and for the other one they wanted to go with a much bigger star. I remember preparing for an entire one year for my first film. We were just two weeks away from going to London for the shoot and it got shelved. There were days where I worked hard learning Hindi, dance and doing everything in a country that I didn't know that well. Then the films got dropped and people told me: 'Listen, the chance for you to get large or even any project here is just one per cent. You are a model, people don't believe you can act and speak Hindi.' There were some people

from Bollywood itself who said: 'Why will they look at you?' But, I just took that one per cent chance and started auditioning. Sacred Games was one of the first few auditions that I gave and they liked me.

You started as early as 14. In all these years of your career, do you think you should have done something differently or shouldn't have done at all?

There's nothing that I feel I shouldn't have done. I don't have any regrets. But, of course, there are a lot of things that could have been done differently, but back then you obviously don't realise it. And now, I don't even remember about it. Also, that is what is called experience. You learn with time. And as far as starting early is concerned, I am happy about that. And if I had a child, maybe I would have allowed him/her to start early. I learnt so much in these years. I was 20 when I came to India. I always went with the flow.

You have emphasised on how you like to pick fleshy scripts. Are they easy to choose?

It's easy if you know what you want. If you are reading a script and you know exactly what you are looking for and if that script is not bad, it's easy. The most nos I have said in my life was before doing any other movie and even before Sacred Games. The reason was the kind of scripts I got, I was new and so nobody cared and they were giving even the smallest of films. Sometimes there was big money involved, but I still chose to not be a part of those films. It was hard, but I knew what I wanted to start with. If you know what you want you will recognise a fleshy script.

Be smart, keep cool

The Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati researchers have developed smart window materials that automatically control climate of the buildings cutting one's carbon footprint. SHALINI SAKSENA tells you more

Last week, the heat index in the Capital touched 48°C even as the temperatures hovered around 41°C. While these readings are not alarming given that June is the hottest month in North India, the fact remains that temperatures are rising. This has resulted in more and more people to switch to air conditioners. The individual carbon footprint is on the rise.

According to the United Nations Environment Program, buildings around the globe account for 36 per cent of energy use and 39 per cent of energy-related carbon dioxide emissions annually. Also, to meet the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement, a building's energy intensity will have to improve by 30 per cent by 2030.

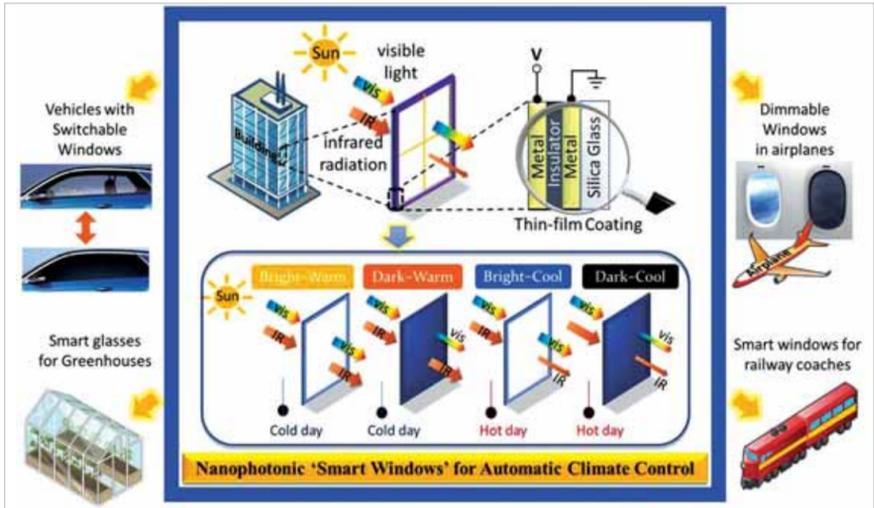
Keeping in mind the climate change and global warming, a team from the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT Guwahati) have developed smart window system to keep the buildings cool.

Dr Debabrata Sikdar, assistant professor, Department of Electronics and Electrical Engineering, along with research scholar, Ashish Kumar Chowdhary have designed a smart window material that can control the amount of heat and light passing through it. The materials used will help to develop automatic climate control systems in buildings.

Dr Sikdar tells you that the idea of these smart materials for windows stemmed from the global warming and the huge amount of energy that is used to keep the building cool during summer months via air conditioners and other cooling systems.

"Let me give you a fact. Almost 48 per cent of the energy of a residential building in the US is used to cooling the building. This is a huge amount of energy consumption. When we look at the vast country like ours, where we have plenty of sunlight for a major part of the year, there is need to smartly manage sunlight so that we can reduce the necessity of using cooling systems," Sikdar says.

He tells you that due to the COVID-19, people have switched off



their ACs due to the fear of cross-infection through aerosol transmission. "Turning off ACs would be a good way to prevent the spread of the virus. However, temperatures are high? There has to be a solution. In India, every room has a window in the house. If one is able to make these glass windows into a device that can control the amount of sunlight and heat that enters the room, we can make a better utilisation of the energy—to maintain the temperature and indoor lighting," Sikdar says.

This idea led the team to design a smart window material. This window solution can be tuned to allow the right amount of light and heat to enter the room. These windows have been designed to work in four modes.

Bright and warm; bright and cool, dark and warm and dark and cool. Take an example. Most people wake up by 6 am. This is time when as person wants the right amount of light to enter the room but doesn't the room to be cool



Dr Debabrata Sikdar (Supervisor) Ashish Kumar Chowdhary (PhD Student)

since it is a bit cool and he wants a bit of warmth. In such a situation he can turn the device to bright and warm and the smart window will allow the light and warmth to enter the room.

"When we talk about light and heat, it is the visible spectrum of the solar radiation and the heat is coming from the infrared radiation. In other words, from the solar radiation we can allow the light and heat to enter, Sikdar explains.

Now, suppose it is afternoon and

the temperatures have risen. In such a situation all that the person has to do is turn the device to bright and cool mode and the window will go to a mode where it will allow the light to enter but not the heat. "While the room is getting all the light throughout the day, it will not get heated up," Sikdar says.

Interestingly, the system is a combination of a few materials that are used with a device that helps the window to become smart for automatic climate control. For this, one will have to add sensors. Sadly the materials are not available in the market but there are various techniques to make the windows smart.

The team is working towards finding ways to introduce it in the market at the earliest. But the second wave of the COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdown made it difficult for Sikdar and Chowdhary to look for avenues to market it. However, plans are in place to ensure it is available to the people as soon as possible.

Another reason for the team to look for smart solution stemmed from the fact that there has been increased attention to sustainable architectural designs for better light and heat management in buildings.

Having a smart windows system is the first step for such structures," Sikdar says.

While initially, the team thought of using gold and silver as the metal layers for the windows, the model was made using cheaper alternatives like copper and transparent semiconductor like as indium tin oxide to keep the cost down. Plans are afoot to use cheaper material and the smart glass material can easily fabricated using existing state-of-the-art nanoscale fabrication methods and find its application in vehicles, trains and airplanes.

However, the solution is not like an AC nor does it work on the same principle. "The smart system is not an AC where say the outside temperature is 45°C and a person a turns on the device and the room temperatures comes down to 25°C in a few minutes. It is a device which is in the room and if one turns it on to the mode of choice — bright and cool one is essentially not allowing the heat to enter the room. It doesn't mean that the room will not heat up. There are other factors that contribute to the heat in the room like how many walls are exposed to direct sunlight. Heat can be absorbed by the walls. The only difference that this device will make is that if the room temperature would have gone up to 36°C, with the smart windows material system it may remain at 25°C," Sikdar says. It took the team two-three years of research before that came out with this smart solution.

The device can work on 24X7 and 365 days. One is told that the device doesn't have much night-time utility but one can use the mode on dark and cool. Heat from other sources are also at the minimum keeping the room somewhat cool in comparison. Also, the dark and cool mode can work like a curtain," Sikdar says.



'Acting is my passion, love being part of this magical world'

RUHI SINGH, who debuted with Calendar Girls, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about her latest web series, Runaway Lugaai, working with Sanjay Mishra and upcoming projects

Runaway Lugaai has been receiving a lot of appreciation. Any special message or compliment that you received?

Yes, Runaway Lugaai people have really liked the show and the audience has shown me a lot of love. I have been regularly getting messages and compliments. It's nice to receive messages and love. Bulbul has touched many hearts and I am very grateful about this.

Your character in the series is different from what you've done before, how was it like playing this role?

This time, I don't play an urban girl. My character here is somewhat from a rural background. She has got a lot of colour, has a vibe and is super confident. When it comes to dialect and body language, I had to work on everything. Bulbul also has a temper issue so it was fun playing her. However, I only had two days to get everything right. I learnt things from observing people around me.

How was it working with Sanjay Mishra, Ravi Kishan, Naveen Kasturia?

It was absolutely amazing working with Sanjay Mishra sir and Ravi Kishan. These people are great actors; it gave me an opportunity to learn and grow as an actor.

Has it been a conscious decision to portray a variety of characters so early on in your career?

I have been blessed these last five months. I've been playing different characters. Yes, it is a conscious decision. As an actor, I always try to do what gives me pleasure, what gives me happiness and satisfaction when I get to bring various distinguished storylines and narratives to life. I would also love to play glamorous roles once again. Who doesn't want to play the lead heroine?

How did you get into acting?

My first film was Calendar Girl. I also worked in The World Before Her by Anurag Kashyap, it was a documentary film. I would say this marked my entry into the industry. I was curious, wanted to explore and understand the industry. I fell in love with the world of cinema; it's such a magical place to be.

A lesson learnt as Miss India.

It has changed my life totally; it made me super confident and proud of my country. It was an honour. It was a lifetime experience. It is something that one does at a certain age. I met people from different cultures and made me explore the world. I've traveled so much giving me exposure.

You played Sagarika in Chakravayuh. Tell us about that.

I would say Charkavyuh was a serious crime show that had layers to the character I played — Sagarika. She was a victim of the dark web and the show explores the pain she goes through and how that translates into her physical is what playing this role so satisfying. I'm grateful that I got to play this character.

What next?

My next project is something very special. It's something that I've not done before. It's going to shock people. I'm really looking forward to it. It got pushed ahead by a few months due to the second wave of the present pandemic. Health is more important and keeping safe, maintaining social distancing and wearing masks is a priority.

WEEKLYNATTER

MALLIKA DUA'S MOTHER NO MORE

Actress-comedian Mallika Dua took to social media on Saturday to share the news that she lost her mother Dr Padmavati Dua to Covid the night before.

Dr Dua and her husband, eminent journalist Vinod Dua, were battling COVID-19 for quite some time and Mallika kept sharing their health updates.

The comedian posted the news of demise on Instagram story. "She left us last night. My whole heart. My whole life. The only God I know. My Amma I am sorry I could not save you. You fought so hard my mama. My precious. My heart. You are my whole life," Mallika wrote on Instagram story about her mother, who was also known as Chinna Dua.

"It's not about my loss and grief. It's about a life cut short. I always knew I didn't deserve her. But she deserved to live. I don't know if I will ever be able to pray again," she further wrote. /ANS

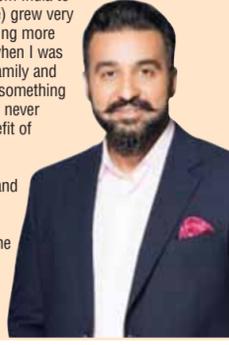


RAJ KUNDRA'S ACCUSATIONS ON EX-WIFE

British-Indian businessman and actress Shilpa Shetty's husband Raj Kundra has claimed in an interview that his ex-wife Kavita allegedly had an affair while she was married to him, with his sister's husband. He cited the affair as the reason of divorce between him and his first wife.

"We were living in one house with my mum, dad and my sister and her husband had moved over from India to try and settle in the UK. She (ex-wife) grew very close to my ex-brother-in-law spending more and more time with him especially when I was out on business trips. Many of my family and even my driver would say we sense something fishy between these two and I would never believe it. I gave my ex-wife the benefit of doubt..." Kundra told Pinkvilla in an interview.

"The relationship that my wife and ex-brother-in-law Vansh were sharing, going out for work together meeting and sitting in the same room so often, etc. I guess my sister felt it best to move back," he further told the portal. /ANS



KRITI TURNS 12 BOLLYWOOD YEARS OLD

Bollywood actress Kriti Kharbanda has completed 12 years in Bollywood. On Saturday, she took to Instagram to share her experience about the journey with fans. "12 years ago, on the 12th of June, I began a journey. As a teenager, I took my first steps into this industry, that has ultimately shaped me into the person I am today," Kriti wrote on Instagram.

"In my time as an actor, I've met so many people who I'm grateful for. I've learned lessons, and so much about myself. I found my calling, it became my identity. I've had the privilege of working with some of the best people in the industry. So, to everybody associated with my career — be it for a minute, a day, or the last 12 years, I have nothing but gratitude for you," she expressed.

"From Pragati, to Dr Swathi, to Aarti Shukla to Rajkumari Meena, and now Aditi, somewhere along the line I grew up. I went from being an immature teenager who was timid to an adult who is strong and bold. I was the kid who loved playing dress up and dancing to the kicass numbers of the 90's and now I get to do that for a living. I cannot imagine a bigger blessing. Today I watch a full generation and more perform to my numbers, recreating things that I have done, and the feeling is surreal," the actress shared. /ANS



the pioneer agenda

I always knew that saying the unsayable was going to be a powerful thing
— Phoebe Waller-Bridge



FROM THE INSIDE

The vaccine solution

As the Maldives tourism industry faces the brunt of rising Covid-19 cases, it is time cut the losses & buy effective vaccines

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Need based use of Shakti

Shakti ought to be applied intelligently, with all the care and caution, and focused towards serving need based aspirations

THE WORLD WIDE WEB OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI can be great to increase the wealth and happiness of humans but we must be making more intelligent choices about when to let it in, writes AKSHAT TYAGI as he warns against the manipulation/misuse of knowledge engineering

Narender Modi has shown the people of India that he is the only leader who can lead India to become a developed country. The first thing he did in his reign was to eliminate the corruption that was rampant all over India. The corrupt bureaucrats were fired and the black money that was stashed away was brought back to India. The people were fed up of the scams that were taking place in the country. Modi has made sure that the corrupt people are punished and put behind the bars. Modi has shown that the country is secure in his hands. He has made sure that no terrorist would be able to penetrate into the country and destroy the peace that we have in India. He has also made sure that the Chinese are not able to cross the border and conquer any of the Indian territory.

The passage above is neither my opinion nor my writing. In fact, it was not written by a human being at all. It was generated using one of the most advanced language models ever — OpenAI's GPT3. The instruction I gave the model was: Write an essay about Prime Minister Narender Modi and his ideology. Using publicly available information it can generate coherent thoughts best resembling a human writer. The model can create new ideas, classify information like moods and intentions, summarise content, chat like an empathetic friend and even write basic computer code. It can often ramble and throw meaningless sentences too, like most humans, I guess.

The model is so good at producing human-like sentences that the company which built it has decided to not give out access to this tool to the general public. They sell the right to use GPT3 to a selected group of people and strongly review what you do with it. They do not permit its use for political campaigns, spam, hateful content, content that incites violence, or other uses that may cause social harm.

Whether the paragraph above is for a political campaign or not is for you to judge, or might depend on where it is published. It can easily qualify as public awareness advertising with some skillful explanation.

Absurd, isn't it? A company limits its customer size when so many others are waiting in line to give them their money. It doesn't have to market its product, it has to keep it quiet and control what you do with it. Imagine you go to buy a new car, and you first have to submit an application describing where you're going to drive it and the car manufacturer says they can anytime decide you're a bad driver and take the car back. You would probably think the car ain't worth the fuss.

And you'd mostly be right. You can do pretty horrible things with a car if you want but the damage is still going to be limited. When you start crashing into other cars and killing pedestrians, the car would either break down or you will soon enough hit a police barrier. This level of insanity is pretty rare not because of the policing by Hyundai or Suzuki, but because there are real-life consequences to such behaviour. You'll land up in jail and the rest of your life would get very difficult.

OpenAI has to go out of its way to make

sure you are not a bad person with ill intentions because the kind of damage AI can do to our democracies, relationships, health and communities are far more severe than we currently understand. And this damage is going to be deeper and more nuanced, like murder without a murderer, a fountain of blood but no knife.

It is the closest we have come to the sci-fi dystopia feared for so many decades. AI doesn't need to be a conscious entity with a desire for power, nor does it need an Iron Man suit to do real damage to real people. When we talk about not-yet-possible AI in anthropomorphic form, we forget a form of it is already here. And until we understand how it can hurt us, we will not know how governments and companies can use it to manipulate common people for greater power.

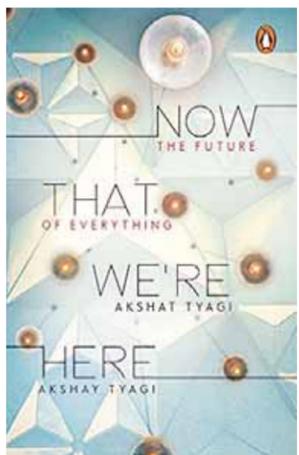
Stuck at homes we are spending more time on social media and the internet than ever. It means more of our beliefs are shaped by a virtual world that we would never verify and experience personally. AI may have had the distant potential to disrupt our lives for years, but now more than ever it has an immediate chance to touch us as we scroll our timelines for sharing SOS messages and distracting ourselves from the horror outside.

WHY DOES AI CONTENT MATTER?

Let's look at the anatomy of a conversation on social media. For example, you hear about a report of political corruption at the highest levels of government. You create a hashtag like #CorruptionHurts. Your friends and their friends share it, popular pages use the same hashtag and some big celebrities also join in. Twitter picks up your chatter and features it in the 'Trending' section.

The leader in question is of course threatened by this public mobilisation. So they get their own troll army to use the same hashtag to either tweet gibberish, highlighting the corruption of the Opposition or calling the dissenters a gang of hooligans. When the next person tries to click on the hashtag to learn more or search the trend, it will appear to be a partisan issue where one can pick their monster or declare the whole thing a hoax. Unimaginable? We don't know if this was government-sponsored obfuscation but this is what happened during the Russian protests of 2011 when people came out against ballot stuffing and voting irregularities in the elections. After the Russian police detained protestors at Moscow's Triumphal Square, activists created a massive tweetstorm with the hashtag #Triumfalnaya (in Russian). It wasn't much later that the same anti-government hashtag was polluted by pro-Kremlin messages. If you never heard about it, they did a good job.

Scholars call this censorship by noise. AI with its ease of believable content generation at scale will make this problem almost impossible to tackle. Every time that the powerful need to change the narrative and get away with their failings, they wouldn't even have to summon an army of trolls to that. A few skilled employees with access to advanced language models will take care of millions of disgruntled citi-



THE ONLY BULWARK AGAINST AI IS TO BE BETTER-INFORMED CITIZENS. WE SHOULDN'T BE OKAY WITH OUR GOVERNMENT BOASTING ABOUT SELLING OUR DRIVING LICENSE DATA IN THE PARLIAMENT OR USING FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY TO IDENTIFY PROTESTORS. NEITHER SHOULD WE NAIVELY GET EXCITED EVERY TIME A COMPANY TALKS ABOUT A 'PERSONALISED' DIET, MUSIC PLAYLIST, BOOK RECOMMENDATION, CAREER COUNSELLING OR THE NEXT SHINY THING MADE JUST FOR US

zens. Detecting bot accounts and misinformation is already hard for social media companies. What happens when they have to distinguish between the thoughts of flesh beings and silicon avatars?

Even when the political moment is over, imagine how it changes people. If AI can tweet and talk like a person, would you be more alarmed about the account which replied to your post yesterday? Would you be sure they actually agreed with you, are they genuine allies? Suspicion and mistrust can be lethal weapons to make us doubt the reality around us.

MANY LIVES OF AI

Even though an AI program has a predefined objective, we don't quite know how it will go around achieving that objective. There is no simple mathematical function AI follows to get the outputs from the inputs, even though it has been designed purposefully to get those specific outputs. We can observe and study how it behaves by adjusting levers in a controlled environment, but we still don't know what kind of relation it develops between the input and output and whether these relations can be translated into real-world properties at all.

Many traditionally human-intensive jobs are already being augmented by tech, making people's skills less central to the equation. Ever had a bad day and a worse Uber driver who wouldn't pay any heed to the Google Maps' traffic-congestion warnings? He thinks he knows these streets better than any American corporation ever will. He knows which route is shorter and quicker because driving is what he has spent his life doing. There's no point fighting to persuade each other when confirming both his and Google's hypothesis that the traffic will cost you more time than taking a bad option. Even when he surrenders to your arguments about Google Maps' algorithm and takes that unintuitive path to drop you at the destination on time, he still cribs about the path not taken. In any case, he is always right.

Of course, the algorithm is not always right. We selectively remember the times it didn't alert us about the diversion, but there is a logic behind its accuracy that we generally trust. It gathers data from millions of other cars, analyses the historical traffic-movement patterns of a neighbourhood and predicts the soon-to-be congestion on your path.

Even though this sophisticated synthesis of data has been around for a while, it has gained increasing traction in the past decade. Never before have we had the capacity to collect these many data points nor the computing power to make any meaning of them. Just fifteen years ago, the best way to predict the shortest and quickest path to a destination was individual human intelligence. And that largely meant you were a frequent commuter of that route to have formed at least a stable opinion of traffic movement. The more outgoing you were, the more personal data you had, the smarter your decisions turned out to be.

In this pre-Google Maps era, individuals with greater social freedom turned out to be better decision-makers. To be clear, this wasn't

a difference of intelligence or any other genetic advantage; it was merely a case of a larger pool of data. The compounded benefit of better decision-making strengthened their position as better deserving of making important decisions. It created a self-serving cycle that kept improving the decisions made by them, earning them even greater power. These pocket machines work the same way but have the data of all the earth's drivers combined and augment drivers to be much better at their jobs.

That's just one example of how a combination of AI and algorithms changes our lives every day right now. It impacts who has the power to lead and who is left behind.

NOW THAT WE'RE HERE

When a breakthrough in AI happens, it can be deployed before any government can blink an eyelid. There limits to how we can regulate a technology the creation of which doesn't even need an office building let alone a registered GST address. It doesn't come asking for environmental and labour permits. Governments can attempt to control big corporations from following some ethical principles and defining what's okay. Sadly, Indian politicians and bureaucrats are highly unlikely to lose sleep over the design and data of AI anytime soon.

The transport ministry will be better off beginning the work of mitigation now rather than after all the driving jobs in transportation are lost. Transport minister Gadkari may or may not be around to defend his position of not letting autonomous driving happen in the country. India spent a lot of effort wooing Tesla to India when the car maker's ultimate pitch is vehicles that can drive themselves. We want Tesla's factory jobs but fear its main product. India is like a man in his midlife crisis who likes looking at children but not spending time with them.

The only bulwark against AI is to be better-informed citizens. We shouldn't be okay with our government boasting about selling our driving license data in the parliament or using facial recognition technology to identify protestors. Neither should we naively get excited every time a company talks about a 'personalised' diet, music playlist, book recommendation, career counselling or the next shiny thing made just for us.

AI can be great to increase the wealth and happiness of humans but we must be making more intelligent choices about when to let it in. Exciting technology solutions should not steal our attention from things that matter and make life worthwhile. If there are no vaccines in a country, talking about a facial authentication system for efficient distribution is like talking about interior design for cloud castles. Sounds fancy but is pretty useless. Or even deadly.

The writer is the founder of WorkHack and a Rajeev Circle Fellow. AI and Automation is one of the ideas in his book, Now That We're Here: The future of everything (published by Penguin), amongst Design, Data, Behavioural Economics and so much more



SUSTAINABILITY IS NO LONGER ABOUT DOING LESS HARM. IT'S ABOUT DOING MORE GOOD
 —JOCHEN ZEITZ

THE VACCINE SOLUTION

As tourism industry faces the brunt of rising Covid-19 cases in the Maldives, now might be the time cut the losses and buy the more expensive, but more effective, vaccines, writes SONU SHIVDASANI

The Maldives, along with Dubai, the Seychelles, the United Kingdom, and Israel, are counted among the most vaccinated countries as of now. But while Israel and the UK are seeing the virus almost disappear, the Maldives, Dubai, and the Seychelles are witnessing the opposite, with cases skyrocketing.

In the Maldives, the number of cases has risen from a low of 19 per day in December to over 2,000 in late May, the number of deaths, 45, represents one third of all deaths that we have suffered since the beginning of the pandemic. This is in spite of the fact that 58% of the population has received one vaccine shot, and 30% has received both.

THE HUMAN AND ECONOMIC TOLL

The recent rise in cases in Male has led to hospitals overflowing with patients, and a tragic rise in deaths. Out of the 125 Covid-19 deaths in the Maldives, 45 occurred during the past month. While the fatality rate remains extremely low (0.2% of people who caught Covid-19 in the Maldives have died), that statistic doesn't provide much solace to those who have lost loved ones.

The high case load in recent weeks has also inflicted economic damage. Out of the top ten markets this year, four are no longer able to travel. Indians (the number two market this year) are no longer permitted to visit the Maldives. Germany, the UK, and France (markets number three, seven, and nine) have put the Maldives on their red lists. In the UK, citizens returning home from the Maldives have to quarantine in a miserable hotel for 14 days.

According to the Maldives Inland Revenue Authority (MIRA), US Dollar revenues collected in January 2021 were USD 46 million — just 1% down on January 2020. But in January, things were looking good. Now as many countries' citizens cannot travel here, and revenues in May and June are likely to be similar to October 2020 — 58% down on the year earlier. On an annualised basis, this could cost the Government as much as USD 250 million in lost revenues.

THE UNDERLYING REASON

One reason could be the choice of vaccine. The first vaccine Israel used was the Pfizer-BioNTech. They also have an excess supply of Moderna. Dubai and the Maldives had a similar vaccination program using a combination of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine and Sinopharm. The Seychelles is the most vaccinated country in the world but has relied almost exclusively on Sinopharm.

At Soneva, we consulted six leading infectious disease experts from around the world to assist us with our Covid strategy. Unfortunately, the feedback on the Chinese vaccine was not great.



According to one of the experts: "The mRNA vaccines (Moderna and Pfizer) are the only ones with published data showing high performance even against the new virus variants. The Chinese vaccines that are being used in many parts of the world appear to be only weakly protective, from the limited amount of information available... The problem is that we do not have reliable data on the Chinese vaccines."

Shared another expert: "Sinopharm, unlike the vaccines noted above, is more of a "classical" vaccine design (i.e. inactivated whole virus) — the kind of vaccines which have been trialed (and failed) for decades for combating seasonal Coronavirus. Although the Sinopharm licensing studies suggest the vaccine has 80% effectiveness, the trials had very few people over 60 years and I have concerns about Sinopharm's effectiveness in older individuals in particular. Whether Sinopharm will provide more or less resilience to emerging Covid variants, such as the new strain found in India remains unclear."

When one considers the relative performance of countries using different vac-

cines, as well as the feedback of these experts, it would seem that Sinopharm may not be as effective as we have been led to believe.

PROTECTING A PATIENT FROM CATCHING THE VIRUS V/S PROTECTING THE PATIENT FROM GETTING SERIOUSLY ILL

All data shows that while some vaccines are more effective in preventing you from catching the virus, all the vaccines are generally effective in preventing serious illness and, most importantly, death. As one of the experts consulted said: "Even the weakly protective vaccines may be quite helpful in preventing serious disease or death."

While the number of cases have spiked, and last month, 5 out of 45 fatalities were from people who had already received a second dose of the vaccine, the performance in the Maldives in terms of fatalities is amongst the best in the world. A few months ago, the survival rate here was 99.7%. It is now 99.8%. This is second to Singapore at 99.95%. It is also a commendable performance when compared to India (98.88%), the U.S. (98.21%), Germany (97.6%), and the U.K. (97.16%). The Seychelles at 99.65% is slightly behind

ACCORDING TO MIRA, US DOLLAR REVENUES COLLECTED IN JANUARY 2021 WERE JUST 1% DOWN ON JANUARY 2020. NOW AS MANY COUNTRIES' CITIZENS CANNOT TRAVEL TO THE MALDIVES, REVENUES IN MAY AND JUNE ARE LIKELY BE SIMILAR TO OCTOBER 2020 — 58% DOWN ON THE YEAR EARLIER

the Maldives. So, whilst the vaccines might be less effective in preventing one from getting the virus, they are generally protective against serious disease and death. There are more deaths in Male at the moment simply because there are many, many more cases.]

A NEED FOR PERSPECTIVE

As we discuss the benefits and drawbacks of different vaccines, it is important to remember that the experience in the Maldives, is that if one gets Covid, one has a 99.8% chance of survival.

Furthermore, it is important to remember to boost one's immunity. Immune-boosting diet, rich in foods including garlic, turmeric, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, and red onions is considered to be of great help. As is popular Ayurvedic herb, Andrographis paniculata. Fortunately, we have had no fatalities among the people who tested positive at our resort.

Dr. Abdul Slocum, a Turkish Oncologist, who treated his cancer patients that caught Covid recently shared: "We used anti-coagulants, anti-biotics, antivirals as conventional therapeutics togeth-

er with high dose vitamin C, Andrographis, Thyme extract etc. as complementary therapies and all of our patients have gotten better with such treatment." So, irrespective of whether one has had the vaccines or not, maintaining a healthy lifestyle is still very important to ensure that one does not succumb to this disease.

MIXING AND MATCHING VACCINES

Call it the way forward, but if the Maldives wants to get both the health and economic long-term benefits of its vaccine roll-out, it might consider changing the brand of vaccines it uses for second shots. There is little information on the effects of combining Sinopharm with other vaccines. However, a recent article in the Lancet finds that pairing the Pfizer-BioNTech and AstraZeneca vaccines appears to increase the likelihood of mild to moderate side effects, but no serious outcomes were reported. In fact, the article goes on to say that:

"MIT Technology Review reports that such an approach could become more common if mixing and matching Covid-19 vaccines is proven to boost the overall level or duration of immunity — as tantalizing, early evidence suggests might be the case."

"Several trials have been launched to examine the question MIT Technology Review reports, including a study in Spain assessing the viability of mixing a first doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine with a second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech, as well as a study between AstraZeneca and Russia's Gamaleya Institute examining how AstraZeneca's vaccine works in combination with Russia's Sputnik V vaccine."

Early evidence suggests that it is possible to combine vaccines and change course. The Pfizer vaccine is considerably more expensive than other options. Covishield is generally available for somewhere between USD 2-4 per vaccine (if you can get hold of the shots, that is). The cost of the Pfizer vaccine is approximately USD 25. Israel was the first to receive a large amount of Pfizer because they offered the company 23 Euros vis-a-vis the 12 Euros the E.U. countries were offering. It is my understanding that Dr Reddy's Laboratories, the Indian manufacturer of the Sputnik V vaccine, proposed a price of USD 14 for the vaccine.

However, as I mentioned earlier, we are starting to see a big drop in tourism as a result of the spike in cases. The economic consequences could affect MIRA's revenues by as much as USD 10 million to USD 20 million per month — considerably more than the cost of more expensive vaccines. Now might be the time cut our losses and buy the more expensive, but more effective, vaccines.

The writer is the CEO and Joint Creative Director of Soneva

The low hanging fruit of agroforestry

India was the first country to adopt a national agroforestry policy in 2014. However, most farmers are reluctant to embrace this ecologically and socially sound practice due to lack of policy support, write ELISA VALLETTE & SIJO ABRAHAM

Agroforestry designates land-use systems that deliberately integrate woody perennials (trees, shrubs, palms, bamboo, etc.) with crops or animals. The "forest" within the "agroforestry" can be an existing native forest, the edge of a forest or a planted forest by the land's owner. But agroforestry should not be reduced to the addition of trees. Agroforestry is a regenerative agricultural practice which, through topsoil regeneration, enables biosequestration that is the capture and storage of atmospheric carbon dioxide. Moreover, agroforestry seeks to optimise the vibrant interplays within local ecosystems to make farms more productive, self-sustained and resilient without a lot of external human inputs. Indeed, the dynamic ecological equilibrium between trees and crops increases biodiversity while improving natural water cycles and enhancing ecosystem services.

Despite its ancient origins, the practice of agroforestry declined at the expense of intensive agriculture promoted during the green revolution in the 1970s. Today, the agriculture sector suffers from climate change while still largely contributing to it. Indeed, agriculture is responsible for 16% of India's annual greenhouse gases emissions, making it the second most polluting sector. However, the flip side of the coin is that climate change threatens agriculture, on which about 58% of India's

population depend on as their primary source of livelihood. Thus, increased socio-environmental concerns have sparked renewed interests for agroforestry practices. Agroforestry provides the opportunity to mitigate climate change by reducing emissions from agriculture, capturing atmospheric carbon, while simultaneously helping farmers to adapt to harsher climate conditions. Already practised on 13.5 million hectares in India, the potential to expand is enormous, especially for the 80% of small-holders farmers in the country with two hectares of land or less. Numerous low-hanging fruits stem from tapping into this potential.

While at first glance agroforestry did not seem profitable, today's socio-environmental crisis makes this long-neglected practise an undeniable solution. According to the Restoration Opportunities Atlas, India has 87 million hectares of land that could benefit from agroforestry. 952.5 million tons of above-ground carbon could be sequestered by just a 20% increase in tree cover. Beyond climate change mitigation, agroforestry farmers are better equipped against climate variations. Although decades of intensive agriculture have depleted soils and threatened natural ecosystem services, regenerative agriculture could repair these damages and conserve soils.

For instance, while agriculture devours and tends to contaminate



water, agroforestry favours and takes advantage of natural water cycles. Also, scientific evidence shows that trees stimulate evaporation and transpiration thereby increasing local rainfalls. Then, as the roots of trees extend deeper than annual crops, water can more easily infiltrate into the ground, preventing floods and making communities resilient in the face of natural disasters.

Roots also take up nutrients from deeper layers of soil that otherwise cannot be reached by the crops and prevent the groundwa-

ter from being contaminated by excess fertilizers or manures. In addition to efficient water management, a forest's inherent native biodiversity helps prevent pest attacks and soil erosion. Therefore, agroforestry allows restoration of depleted soils, maintenance of biodiversity and climate resilience.

These environmental benefits coincide with socio-cultural positive externalities for farmers and consumers. Indeed, agroforestry diversifies types of crops, makes harvests more resilient, and there-

fore secures farmers' livelihood. It also boosts agricultural productivity since, on smaller plots of land, agroforestry grows more food than mono-crops per hectare, alleviating the current pressure on land. This maximisation of potential yields is all the more pleasing as harvests prove to be more nutritious. Therefore, agroforestry provides hope for long-term food security to a growing nation. However, several barriers prevent agroforestry from becoming a mainstream practice.

First, since 2014, the policy

rather than alleviating political obstacles has added confusion. Indeed, the creation of a national agroforestry board, which aimed at aligning existing programmes and providing better coordination between the ministries of agriculture, forest and rural development, never gained enough authority. Therefore, despite successfully simplifying regulations, the enabling legal environment is shadowed by an ambiguous governance system.

Secondly, the policy offers farmers extension services and capacity-building training. However, inadequate awareness failed to popularise these policy initiatives. Non-governmental organisations such as Saytrees, who have helped more than 700 farmers, planting 1500 fruit trees over the past 4 years, act as useful bridges between national programs and on-the-ground realities.

Wider local-knowledge dissemination might still be insufficient to overcome farmers' reluctance since at first sight, agroforestry might not seem profitable. Indeed, yields might decrease in the first few years until the soil quality has fully recovered. To countervail perceived risks during the transition phase, the policy should provide safety nets so the farmers can safely without risking their livelihood in addition to information about agroforestry's longer-term benefits.

Another major obstacle the policy failed to address is the lack

of clear land ownership rights which discourages farmers from planting trees, perceived as a long term investment. Social discriminations along with gender, caste or tribal lines further force farmers to focus on short term yields and profits. Therefore, for the agroforestry policy to be successful, it is essential to first clarify land tenure rights while subsidising access to land, water, technology and credit across caste and communal barriers.

Finally, despite the stated objective of the policy to boost market linkages, rural farmers still encounter difficulties to find outlets for these products. However, the growing demand given the popularity to buy local, organic and nutritious-indigenous varieties, should incentivise farmers to overcome these supply-chain gaps.

To conclude, despite the agroforestry policy seeking to extract agroforestry's tremendous benefits, farmers still face many challenges to make the transition. Therefore, complementary services and additional support, especially during the transition phase, should work in synergy with the agroforestry policy. India has already established itself to be a global agricultural powerhouse and by the successful implementation of agroforestry, it could champion sustainable agriculture and inspire other nations to adopt and implement similar policies.

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China's new population policy a long shot

China's current demographic structure is bringing a new reality to the forefront. The seventh National Census conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC) in 2020 records the slowest population growth in decades since 1950s. As per the census, China's population stands at 1.41 billion. It's an increase of 5.8 per cent that is 72 million people over the population of 2010. The NBSC reports that Chinese mothers gave birth to 12 million babies in 2020, whereas it was 14.65 million in 2019. This indicates that there is a straight fall of 18 per cent birth rate. The fact of the matter is that this is the fourth consecutive drop in the annual birth rate across China. However, these figures do not include the population of Hong Kong and Macau.

The national demographic data released by the Chinese Government in May will have long-term social and economic policy implications across the country. If the current trend of population growth continues, the number of young people will start decreasing and the older generation would increase.

Eventually, at one point, the population will stabilise and start declining.

The thrust of the census is that the country is ageing fast. It also highlighted that the overall population growth of the country is at its lowest in generations and its fertility rate has gone down to 1.3 children per woman.

This is the lowest among countries with similar incomes. Also, it is right below 2.1 that is required to sustain a stable population in such countries. Interestingly, this is a level lower than Japan, which has been experiencing population decline and very rapid ageing.

In a crucial meeting of the Politburo of the Communist Party of China (CPC), chaired by President Xi Jinping, the country declared the historic three-child policy. It announced that it will allow each couple in the country to have up to three children. It's a marked departure from its two-child policy announced in 2016.

China's population control dates back to post-Mao party state controlled by legendary Deng Xiaoping in the 1970s. The primary motivations behind coercion population



A child holds a dinosaur balloon during Children's Day at a mall in Beijing on June 1, 2021

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control in China emerged from alarmist writings of the 1970s, mostly published in Europe and America. One such fundamental and acclaimed work was the Club of Rome's Report called "The Limits to Growth" (1972) authored by Donella H Meadows, Dennis L Meadows, Jorgen Randers and William W Behrens. Also, the historic findings of the study were first presented to the global audience in Moscow and in Rio de Janeiro in the year 1971. The other was the Stanford University biologist Paul Ehrlich's book known as "The Population Bomb" (1968). Professor Ehrlich cautioned the international community about the high growth of population. He even opined that it was too late to prevent a doomsday apocalypse emerging from the rapid growth of population around the world.

The book predicted the coming of famine in the 1970s and 1980s due to overpopulation and other unusual societal upheavals around the same period.

Succinctly, these works issued an urgent call to the international community to limit the growth of population. Also, such writings spread the fear that overpopulation would result in resource depletion and the shortage of the same for all. In the same decade, massive funds released by the UN Population Fund, the World Bank and finally, the Swedish International Development Authority encouraged many countries to adopt strict population control measures.

In totality, the fear of population growth funnelled money, manpower, resources and scientific research towards immediate population control. One such country that immediately stepped into the task was no other than the People's Republic of China. Then China's top leader Deng introduced the infamous "One Child Policy" to halt the birth rate in the country.

What led Song Jina, a famous scientist, to rewrite the modern history of popula-

tion science in China was his background in the defence science establishment and his position as an elite scientist of the nation. This gave him the leverage of using cultural, scientific, economic and political resources to redefine the country's population growth. Thus, he was able to create a new and radical framework to fix China's population bomb once for all. And his scientific solution called "One Child Policy for All" was accepted in the power corridors of Beijing as the only way out to take the nation from the mess i.e. "demographic impasse".

However, the reality dawned on the Communist leadership in the middle of the last decade. China officially ended its one child population policy on January 1, 2016. This was done by signing into a Bill allowing all married couples to have a second child. The new policy came into practice in March same year after it was ratified by the Chinese parliament i.e. National People's Congress.

In March 2017, the National Health and Family Planning Commission reported to the 12th National People's Congress that live births in national hospitals reached 18.46 million and fertility rate increased up to 1.7 per cent in 2016. And this was recorded as the highest since the year 2000. Even to encourage couples to have two children, the 18th meeting of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress reviewed the crucial "Amendment to the Population and Family Planning Law of the People's Republic of China".

Afterwards, the new draft of the law brought forth a comprehensive package for the couples to have a second child in the country. Needless to say, in the revised law, the Government "advocated" rather than "allowing" couples to have two children.

The aim of the second child policy was to cope with the country's ageing population and fast shrinking workforce. By 2018, the new National

Health Commission simply took over the responsibility of the task of population management from the National Health and Family Planning Commission. And the once popular phrase "family planning" disappeared from the lexicon of all government transactions.

Today, the new three-child policy is not all about adding up to China's declining labour pool. It has some other aspects as well. Lack of availability of affordable childcare, rising living costs and gruelling work hours have forced many young couples to abandon the thought and efforts of having another child. Housing is not a problem but lack of working opportunities in some parts of China like the ones bordering with Russia is bothering the young couples to have two or more children. There is again huge shortage of live-in helpers as most of them are migrant workers. That is why it is more expensive to hire a domestic help in China than bringing a foreign one in many other

fast-growing and developed Asian metropolis such as Singapore, Hong Kong, etc.

In fact, high labour force participation brings pressure on fertility rates. It has been observed that having a child has a negative impact on women's wage across China. According to China Health and Nutrition Survey of 2014, about 7 per cent of the women's wages were being reduced on the birth of every child.

However, the new three-child policy won't fix China's economic problems. Its demographic crisis cannot be solved by an approach called "go all out on pro-birth policies". It's ridiculous. President Xi Jinping and other powerful leaders in the Communist Party are worried about the country's existential threat and its clout in the power calculus of the world.

It's a new challenge for Xi and his regime. A recent survey of 1938 millennials published in March by the Social Survey Centre of the China Youth Daily reveals that 67.3 per cent young people expressed inability to find domestic helps. And this could be one of the main reasons for them not to opt for another child.

Around 61.7 per cent indicated high financial pressure, followed by a lack of safe and adequate nurseries at 54 per cent, higher demand for housing at 41.6 per cent and finally 24 per cent cited the impact on a woman's career and employment prospects after having one more baby.

At the moment, China needs an adequate and affordable childcare support system to boost its flagging birth rate. And this will encourage young and economically capable parents to think of having more than one child in the days to come. As the country is blighted by a declining fertility rate, the Xi regime needs to think about innovative policy measures to address the woes of the millennials.

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The aim of the three-child policy is to cope with the country's ageing population and fast shrinking workforce. However, the lack of availability of affordable childcare, rising living costs and gruelling work hours have forced many young couples in China to abandon the thought of having another child. Also, it has been observed that having a child has a negative impact on women's wage. According to China Health and Nutrition Survey of 2014, about 7 per cent of the women's wages were being reduced on the birth of every child



MAKHAN SAIKIA

PERSPECTIVE

Scourge of child labour: No end in sight

Until a holistic approach is taken where the parents' need to push children into child labour is obviated, the scourge of child labour — aided and abetted by Covid-induced economic slump — is there to remain for long



BRAJESH KUMAR TIWARI

Childhood is the most beautiful journey of life, and children are the future of the country. The UNICEF emphasises that every long-term plan for human resource investment or human resource creation should begin with children, but this is not the case; today child labour is a worldwide problem.

According to the latest report (June 10, 2021) jointly published by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the UNICEF, the number of child labourers increased to 160 million from 152 million in 2016. The report says that 10 per cent of total children are involved in gainfully employed worldwide.

In India, there are 20 million child labourers, as per the Government statistics; however, the ILO puts it at 30 million, of which about 20 per cent children work as domestic helps. According to the Indian Constitution, a child between 5 years and 14 years is considered a child labourer if s/he does paid work for livelihood or to pay back family debt through labour; while the United Nations considers a worker below the age of 18 years as a child labourer.

The compulsive urge for a child to indulge in menial

labour is primarily driven by family destitution. Children are thrown into risky, back-breaking labour to lend their family a helping hand for sustenance. Unemployed parents send their children to work. And as most of the employers seek cheap labour, children who can't negotiate wage or working conditions are the best workforce.

The child labour class is contributing about 6 per cent to the Gross National Product. Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have the maximum number of child labourers. About 45,000 children are employed in Tamil Nadu's Sivakasi firecracker and matchbox factories. There are 50,000 in the Firozabad glass industry. A large number of children are employed in stone grinding in Jaipur, in the Moradabad brassware industry, in the Aligarh lock making units, in the slate making in Markapura (Andhra Pradesh), and in the carpet industry in Mandsaur (Madhya Pradesh). Apart from this, there are million others employed as domestic helps, restaurant waiters/waitresses and street vendors.

The Government is empowered to make separate laws for children by Article 15(3) of the Constitution.



Sami Ullah, 10 years old, works at an automotive repair shop to earn living for his family in Lahore, Pakistan, on June 12, 2021. The ILO observes June 12 as the World Day Against Child Labour to highlight the plight of child labourers

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There were several legal provisions to safeguard the childhood; for example Article 23 prohibits the buying and selling

of children and their doing illegal and immoral acts and Article 24 prohibits employment of children below the age

of 14 in factories, mines and industrial establishments.

In 1986, the Child Labour Prevention and Regulation Act

was enacted. In 1996, child labour in hazardous industries was declared illegal by the Supreme Court. Child labour cells were formed.

The "National Agenda" (1998) announced by the Government demonstrated the commitment of the Government to make special efforts for education, nutrition and medical facilities for children. Programmes like Rashtriya Shishu Sadan Yojana (1994), Mid-Day Meal Scheme (1995), Balika Samadhi Yojana (1997), Udishya Yojana (2000), Kishori Shakti Yojana (2000), etc, aimed to end the scourge of child labour. But all these efforts proved insufficient due to irresponsible administration and the compelling situation of the parents' destitution.

To eliminate the problem of child labour, the Government should provide employment to the parents of children, so that they can maintain their family and children do not need to indulge in paid work. Attention should be given to agricultural development so that the parents of rural children can become self-dependent and the children do not face the lack of job opportunities. Social organisations should spread awareness against child labour.

Some employers abuse child workers, especially girls, mentally and physically. And they continue to break with impunity the laws protecting children because the law enforcers either don't take the child labour seriously, or the child labour has become an established social reality.

The problem of child labour is a problem related to socio-economic background, which can't be eliminated without strong willpower and effective steps.

The study shows that in today's consumerist era, the market forces are increasing day by day. Sensitivity and morality have no place in the market, so the respect for labourers is also decreasing and cheap labour is being promoted in the form of children.

Until a holistic approach is taken where the parents need to push children into child labour is obviated, the scourge of child labour — aided and abetted by Covid-induced economic slump — is there to remain for long

(The writer is Associate Professor, School of Management and Entrepreneurship, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi)



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

This week your priorities will focus on others such as children, spouse, and any elderly members in the family over your health. For those following an unhealthy diet, this is a wake-up call. A poor level of vitamin and protein will make you feel tired and irritable. The time is not favourable healthwise, you must take care and eat healthy to increase metabolism. Professionally, those who are looking for a job will get hired in a few days that will test their skills and potentials. This will be a very demanding job. Believe in yourself. Some of you will be weighed down with far more responsibilities. On a personal level, you will have concern for others and people around you will be grateful, and reciprocate well.

Lucky number 14
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Thursday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week you may need a medical examination. You are likely to face some confusion regarding health and it will make you feel low. This is the time to lift yourself and transform your life. You must be honest with yourselves and decide what best action should be implemented to rise to the challenges and embrace the good life. Career-wise, this week will be in your favour. You are likely to appreciate your sincere and hard work. Financially the week will be satisfactory but you need to follow a budget to avoid any tough times. Relationship wise, you will experience freshness and a blissful state. This week you will be passionate and energetic and will enjoy a charming personality.

Lucky number 8
Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Friday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

You will spend time in spiritual pursuits to find peace and inner calm. Follow meditation, yoga, and Pranayam to bring balance and gain strength to fight any stress. You will be able to find solutions to most of the issues of life. Don't be in a hurry for any work. Give time to pamper yourself. The divine connection will show you the right path. This week financial worries are indicated. Professionally, you are not happy and some of you feel demotivated. If possible, interact with people to keep up your morale. Do not give up on a temporary low phase. This is the time to wait for the good times. Things are not so good in the relationship area. Your partner will have a long list of accusation; sit and discuss them. Things will move into a lighter phase.

Lucky number 18
Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Wednesday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week take your time to identify hidden issues that are preventing you from seeing the reality. Some of you may look out for emotional support from a female person to identify the emotional trouble and what can be done about it. Meditation is beneficial at this time. Don't be disappointed about not getting the things done as this would spoil your day or maybe the week. On the career front, investing your time in attending a webinar or any online skill development class will be favourable. These programmes will help you virtually connect with people. This will further provide you unique guiding light and moral force. This week relationship area needs your attention and clear expression. Express yourself before it is too late.

Lucky number 6
Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Friday



VirGO Aug 23-Sep 22

You will feel great about yourself. Overall health remains good. This week is a period of great productivity. You will have a sense of fullness and confidence that will make you feel that you have found your niche. This time is the changing point in your life. Don't get stuck on or be aggressive about things that are not working in your favour. Choose a middle path. On the career front, you will face opposition. Your colleagues might not agree with your thought process. Aggression is indicated. You need to understand the mentality of others and stay away from conflicts. On the personal front, you will use your charm to attract people. Be careful as a complication is indicated in your relationships.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Saturday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

You can enjoy this week as per your planned out schedule and bring a smile to your face. Your health, wealth and happiness are co-related. It is recommended that you learn some stress-free techniques to keep you healthy. Take some time out for a walk amidst nature that could be a great energy provider and refreshing for you. Career-wise, you need to ease your expectations. Those in business will see a good response and hike in financial matters. Those in the job need to sit down with a financial planner and figure out exactly your needs and plan their finances accordingly. On the personal front, you are likely to feel a tight leash around you. There is a lack of understanding and feelings for each other. Married couples need to communicate well.

Lucky number 7
Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Saturday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

After recovering from certain health issues, you feel recharged with energy and stamina. You will find your self-confidence unharmed. This is your greatest achievement that helped you to regain an inner sense of direction. Be grateful for all the blessings that surround you. You will reflect on the positive influence and will prove to be a motivator for others. Career-wise, you will experience roadblock and feel stagnated in your present job. The current scenario is not bright and this could demoralise you. Those in business will get some monetary gains. Prioritise your expenses and avoid unnecessary spending, this will help you now as well as in the long run. On the personal front, your maturity plays an important role at home.

Lucky number 15
Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Thursday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week brings participation in social activities. You will be shifting the balance in your life from work to social engagements. This will improve your health and give you more energy. You will be of help to your family as well as society. On the career front, you may feel a little confused with your career. Try not to get overworked. Your modest approach and shift to a different track/department would be helpful. This is the time to define yourself; do not let other people's perspective bother you. There will be a time when you might think that everything has come to a standstill. Use this time to enhance your skill. On the personal front, your partner is supportive. You can try and talk to your spouse and relieve yourself from the stress.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Beige
Lucky day Sunday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This is a good week for your emotional and physical well-being. Your positive approach to things will be of great help. Those waiting on health test results may relax and know all is good. You are likely to enter new realms in your spiritual exploration. You will get attracted to herbal ingredients and homemade remedies for health cures and join some courses. For those in the retail business, this week will be fruitful. Those working from home should not take it as leisure time, otherwise, this might take a negative turn on you. On the personal front, you may be involved in a serious conflict. Feelings of helplessness and lack of understanding are indicated. The situation may be lightened up with the support of a close family member.

Lucky number 2
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Sunday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week, you must shun any neglect with respect to health. Give extra attention to your diet, and follow physical exercise for at least half an hour daily to stay fit. On the career front, it is time to take a stand and make some tough choices. You need to be straightforward in your communication and to the point. This will bring satisfactory change and improvement to a specific matter in life. You will find happiness in accomplishment. This week, if you implement certain important pending decisions, it will have the potential to change the rhythm of life for the better. On the personal front, you have very forceful energy this week. You are likely to be diplomatic and know how to get things done in your favour.

Lucky number 19
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Tuesday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week count your blessings and enjoy the good things that life has to offer. Whatever you do, keep it simple and enjoy it. Stay safe and enjoy a good meal with your family. Some of you would like to stay close to nature, therefore, may spend time gardening. Women may feel sensitive and nurturing and would work towards making life meaningful. Professionally, good times are on the cards. Moneywise week is satisfactory, and your generosity will earn you goodwill. Overall, it is an extremely good period in your career life, and you should take full advantage of it. Do not indulge in gossip as it might hurt your image. On the personal front, you will find emotional stability. This is the time to enjoy your relationships.

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour Mauve
Lucky day Monday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week you will feel charged and ready to take up physical activity. You are focused and goal-oriented. You are well directed and clear on what your hopes and dreams are and what you should do to get there. Your enthusiasm and charismatic personality will impress others. You are optimistic about your future. Your overall health will remain good. On the career front, you are trying your best to be in your senior's good books. Your determination and ambition will make you move forward. You'll need to use both your intellect and your heart to be successful. On the personal front, it is advised not to let small issues blow out of proportion in your mind. Beware that there is someone who does not want your relationship to grow and is working against you.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Tuesday

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Need based use of *Shakti*

We need to be on guard and in a combative mode against the evil forces so as to service the needs of our existential order. To drive home this point, the simile of Demon is used to exemplify and forewarn us about impending dangers. About the demons, it is said that they are inherently conjurers. They are capable of hoodwinking us by making varied illusionary presences and charge us from all possible directions unannounced, to their asking. We, therefore, need to be on full alert to checkmate such evil forces.

Truth is that no such forms exist. It is so characterised to exemplify the danger inherent in the evil forces existing both within and beyond us. The evil forces dwelling within us are no less potent than those from beyond. For, human beings, armed with power of freewill, but also carrying animalistic tendencies, may prove a greater danger than a carnivorous animal, which is why some of the demons are shown with animal heads.

Here again, it may not be out of place to mention that the negative memory implants in our minds and the pre-conditioning thereof, can act a great devil for the self and those around. Such

negative tendencies often overtake our mind to distract our attention from priority preferences, and which foray into uncontrolled and fanciful inconsequential thoughts. We, thus, often misdirect our energies towards unproductive ends. In the process, our creative potential gets restricted from blooming out in full. Trapped into such unproductive voluminous thoughts, we are hardly left with the mind-space necessary to invoke our faculty of discrimination. We, thus, lose our sense of reason and direction, and thereby objectivity. It, thus, becomes imperative upon us to consciously and intelligently strike upon such unbecoming tendencies, for which we are capable. Otherwise, they will keep chasing us from within to our detriment, and with inevitable consequences.

The question now is: how to figure out the true intent and character of varied demonic presences in disguise, well in time? And then, identify the most appropriate weapon to checkmate their assault? Evidently, it calls for being on full mental alert all the time.

The Mother having 10 arms also correspond to the positive and negative implications of human's sensory organs



— five of perception and five of action. Experience suggests that in our flow of life, more often than not, our sensory perceptions get stuck to the illusionary glare and glitter of the seeming world. Ego, further driving one's mind, makes him/her believe that what is apparent has to be taken as an absolute truth. In the process, s/he does not feel the necessity of invoking the indwelling faculty of discrimination necessary to figure out the underlying truths, otherwise eluding him/her. True picture thus missing, one may inadvertently respond unintelligently on instinctive judgment. By the time one realises, the danger would have caught him/her unawares. It, therefore, becomes incumbent upon us to figure out one's limitations of mind through self-reflection, and address them well within time to ensure being in full control of the self.

Now, why a Lion as Mother's mount? A lion is known to be a very intelligent animal and supposedly the king of the jungle. When a lion goes for a hunt to feed itself, it moves strategically, carefully, cautiously, without wasting much of its energy. But its eyes are fixed on its prospective kill. It ensures not being

noticed by its prospective kill. However, once the prey comes within its reach, it extols all its energy and pounces upon it. But, remember, the lion does not go for its next kill till it has become hungry once again after exhausting its feed. The killing too is therefore, need based and not out of greed. The animals, unlike human beings, invariably live in their present moment, and are never tempted to encroach upon other's share to secure their future concerns. Accordingly, *Shakti* too, ought to be applied intelligently, strategically, with all the care and caution, and focused promptly towards serving need based productive aspirations alone.

If these inputs are made to sink in deep in one's mind through continued reflection, it will induce a person to act accordingly, which one could carry on effortlessly. Following which, s/he may be able to successfully steer life with ease and comfort, despite all oddities and hazards coming in the way. Life will then turn into a beautiful experience.

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