



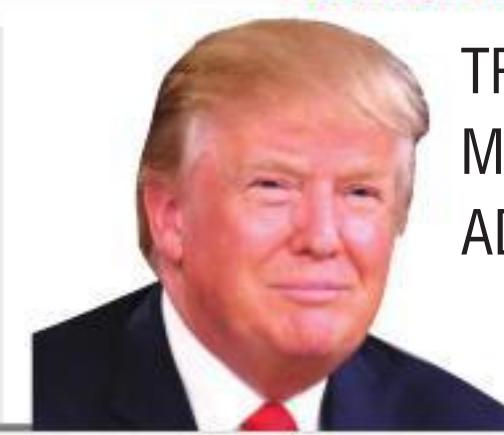
'CENTRE ABDICATING
RESPONSIBILITY ON
GST COMPENSATION'

P4



ALLIANCE A
REALITY IN BIHAR:
SUSHIL MODI

P5



TRUMP GOES
MOSTLY DARK IN TV
ADVERTISING FIGHT

P10



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BARCA HIGH-UPS
WANT HAPPY
EXIT FOR MESSI

P12

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WEATHER

Generally cloudy sky with possibility of very light rain/drizzle. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 35 and 26 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 89% Min: 54%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 34.7°C (0) Min: 24.8°C (-2)

SUN RISES 06:00 hrs SUN SETS 18:41 hrs

MOON RISES 19:07 hrs MOON SETS 06:44 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Auto, taxi and bus owners protest for their various demands, in the Capital on Tuesday.

SNS

Kafeel Khan's detention quashed: Allahabad High Court on Tuesday quashed the detention of Dr Kafeel Khan under the National Security Act and ordered his immediate release. The bench, comprising Chief Justice Govind Mathur and Justice Saumitra Dayal Singh, passed the order on a petition filed by Khan's mother Nuzhat Parveen. The petition alleged that Khan was granted bail in February by a competent court and he was supposed to be released on bail. However, he was not released for four days and the NSA was subsequently invoked against him. Hence, his detention was illegal, the petition argued.

P4

Rajiv Kumar takes over as Election Commissioner: Ex-bureaucrat Rajiv Kumar on Tuesday assumed charge as the new Election Commissioner. He takes the place vacated by Ashok Lavasa who joins the Asian Development Bank as vice president. Kumar, a retired 1984-batch IAS officer of the Jharkhand cadre, will have a five-year tenure and retire in 2025. He will preside over the next Lok Sabha polls in 2024.

Covid-19: Tally nears 37 lakh; recovery rate 76.94 per cent

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

Of the top six worst Covid-hit states, Delhi, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh have peaked out while new cases in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh are not yet seeing a downward curve.

According to a Covid tracker report by JM Financial, of the top 6 worst-hit states, Delhi, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh have peaked out based on a 7-day moving average.

The top 20 districts constitute 39 percent of total cases led by Delhi. The others are Pune, Mumbai, Chennai, Thane, Bengaluru Urban, East Godavari, Hyderabad, Kurnool, Hyderabad, Anantapur, Kolkata, Nashik, Visakhapat-

nam, West Godavari, Chittoor, Guntur, North-24 Parganas, Ahmedabad, Raigad, SPS Nellore.

India's Covid-19 tally is though the third-largest in the world. India's recovery rate has been steady and the death rate is moderating. India's deaths-to-positives ratio has moderated to 1.79 percent versus 1.86 percent last week. The daily recoveries-to-new cases ratio for India averaged 88 per cent in line with last week, the Ministry of Health data showed.

As per the tracker, the daily growth in cases is now lower than testing per million. The deaths per test for India remain below most nations while the daily growth in testing per million (at 2.4 per cent) is now above daily case growth (at 2.2 per cent).



Moratorium on loan repayment extendable by 2 yrs: Centre, RBI to SC

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

The Centre and Reserve Bank of India on Tuesday informed the Supreme Court that the moratorium on repayment of loans is extendable by up to two years but a waiver of interest on interest during moratorium would go against the basic canons of finance.

On August 6, a RBI circular had permitted lenders to allow a moratorium of up to two years.

In an affidavit, the Ministry said: "The resolution plans may inter alia include rescheduling of payments, conversion of any interest accrued, or to be accrued, into another credit facility, or granting of moratorium, based on an assessment of income streams of the borrower, subject to a maximum of two years."

The affidavit was filed in

Sabha in 1969. He served as Deputy Minister, Industry; Shipping and Transport, Steel and Industry and Minister of State for Finance during 1973-75. He assumed office as the Finance Minister of India for the first time in 1982 and was Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha from 1980 to 1985. He became Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission from 1991 to 1996; concurrently Minister for Commerce from 1993 to 1995 and Minister of External Affairs from 1995 to 1996; Minister of Defence from 2004 to 2006. He again served as the Minister of External Affairs from 2006 to 2009 and Minister of Finance from 2009 to 2012. He was Leader of the House in the Lok Sabha from 2004 to 2012.

Mukherjee assumed office as the 13th President of India on July 25, 2012 and served his full five-year term till 2017. As President, Mukherjee lent dignity to the highest office and left an imprint with his scholarly and humanitarian outlook on national and international affairs.

SEE INSIDE PAGES

A prolific reader, Mukherjee has authored several books on an eclectic variety of subjects including the Indian economy and nation-building. The many honours conferred upon him include the Best Parliamentarian Award in 1997, the Padma Vibhushan in 2008 and the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award, in 2019.

The government has announced a seven-day State mourning from August 31 to September 6 as a mark of respect to the leader. The tricolour is flying half-mast on all buildings throughout the country.

There will be no official entertainment during these seven days.

Failure to pay the instalments of the dues would incur penalty, interest and contempt of court, the bench cautioned the telecom firms.

The top court said that the issue of sale of the spectrum by telcos facing insolvency proceedings shall be decided by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

The bench delivered its verdict on the issues, including the timeline for staggered payment of the dues by telcos over a period of 20 years.

The bench reserved the verdict on July 20 on staggered payments, saying that it will not hear "even for a second" the arguments on re-assessment or re-calculation of the AGR-related dues.

Prior to this, it had asked the telecom companies to file their books of accounts for the last ten years and give a reasonable time frame for clearing the dues.

The top court had in October 2019 delivered a verdict on the AGR issue, primarily its definition for calculating government dues of telecom companies such as licence fee and spectrum usage charges.

The DoT in March this year moved a plea seeking permission for allowing staggered payment of the dues by telcos over a period of 20 years.

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*The ruining of the country's economy began with demonetisation.
Since then, the government introduced one erroneous policy after another*

RAHUL GANDHI
CONGRESS LEADER

Capital sees 2,312 new Covid cases, highest in about 2 mths

Delhi's fresh round of monthly serosurvey begins and will cover its all 272 municipal wards; health minister Satyendar Jain says it is aimed at assessing the city's coronavirus situation at 'micro-level'

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

Delhi today recorded 2,312 fresh Covid-19 cases ~ its highest single-day Covid spike in nearly two months ~ which took the city's coronavirus tally to 1,77,060, according to the latest health bulletin issued by the Delhi government.

Eighteen fatalities due to coronavirus have been recorded today that pushed Delhi's Covid death toll to 4,462 so far, the health bulletin said.

The national capital has seen a fresh surge in daily Covid cases over the last couple of weeks.

The city had recorded its highest single-day spike in August last Sunday when it reported 2,024 new coronavirus cases. Yesterday, 18 Covid deaths were reported and the coronavirus count was 1,358, even as much lower number of coronavirus tests were conducted then. Today, 24,198 Covid tests were conducted in the city.

On July 1 and July 2, Delhi had recorded 2,442 and 2,373 Covid cases respectively. On July 3-4, the single-day spikes were over 2,500. It had dipped to 2,244 on July 5.



The number of active coronavirus cases in the city today rose to 15,879 from yesterday's 14,626. The positivity rate today stood at 9.5 per cent, while the recovery rate dipped to 88.51 per cent, the bulletin stated. The number of containment zones in Delhi rose to 846 today from 833 the previous day.

According to the bulletin, out of the total number of beds in Covid hospitals in the city, 9,962 were vacant while 3,656 beds in Covid Care Centres were occupied by persons under quarantine, including travellers who have returned via the Vande Bharat Mis-

sion and "bubble" flights.

The bulletin said 1,56,728 Covid patients have recovered in the national capital so far.

The number of patients under home isolation stood at 8,119.

The number of rapid antigen tests conducted today was 17,000, while the RT-PCR, CBNAT and the True NAAT test figures added up to 7,198, according to the bulletin.

The Union home secretary held a meeting through video-conferencing to review the management of the Covid situation in Delhi, the bulletin said.

Meanwhile, the national capital's fresh round of monthly sero-prevalence survey began today covering all 272 municipal wards to assess its Covid situation at 'micro-level', Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain said.

The sample size this time will be 17,000 and the exercise will continue for seven days, Jain said at a press conference.

The last serosurvey in Delhi was held from 1 August for a week, which showed that 29.1 per cent of the people surveyed had antibodies against the coronavirus infection.

"The fresh round of serosurvey began today. This time we will be doing it ward-wise. So, all 272 municipal wards of Delhi will be covered, plus two Assembly areas. Sampling will be done for a week. After that, results should come in 7-10 days," Jain said.

The previous surveys were done district-wise. But this time, it is being done ward-wise to analyse the Covid situation in the city at "micro-level", the minister said.

While announcing the results of the August survey, Jain had said that 15,000 representative samples were then taken from the city's 11 districts.

The sero-prevalence survey before the August exercise, carried out in the city during June 27-July 10 by the Delhi government in association with the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), had used 21,387 samples and found that around 23 per cent of the people surveyed had exposure to Covid.

Jain had on 22 July announced that after analysing the results of the June-July serosurvey, it was decided that such exercise would be done every month to formulate better policies for tackling the Covid pandemic in Delhi.

Kejri urges Modi to consider more viable options for providing GST dues to states

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal today wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to urge him to consider more legally viable and sustainable options for providing Goods and Services Tax (GST) dues to states to help them tide over the financial crisis triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The two options of borrowing presented by the Union finance ministry, which primarily require the states to borrow and then meet repayment liabilities will put an extremely onerous burden on states, Kejriwal told Mod.

According to an official statement, the Delhi CM stated that the GST Council should consider authorising the Centre to borrow on its behalf and extend the period of collection of cess beyond 2022.

Terming the GST as a landmark reform in the indirect tax structure of India, Kejriwal, in his letter to Modi, said the assurance of the GST compensation to states to meet the shortfall in collections is one of the pillars on which the entire GST edifice rests.

He said that all states will overcome the unprecedented situation that the Covid pandemic has brought before the country by working collectively.

"The two options of bor-



rowing presented by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India which primarily require the states to borrow and then meet repayment liabilities will put an extremely onerous burden on states, Kejriwal told Mod.

The BJP-led Centre and the Opposition-ruled states have been at loggerheads over the financing of the Rs 2.35 lakh crore GST shortfall in the current fiscal. Of this, as per Centre's calculation, about Rs 97,000 crore is on account of GST implementation and rest Rs 1.38 lakh crore is the impact of Covid on states' revenues.

The Centre last week gave two options to states to borrow either from a special window facilitated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) or from the market and has also proposed extending the compensation cess levied on luxury, demerit and sin goods beyond 2022.

No major impact of Ola, Uber drivers' strike in Capital

PTI

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

A strike called by a section of Ola and Uber drivers here on Tuesday had no major impact as passengers said they did not face any hassle in booking the cabs.

A section of drivers associated with the two cab aggregators went on a strike to demand a fare hike and a

moratorium on loan repayment.

Kamaljeet Singh Gill, the president of the Sarvodaya Drivers Association of Delhi said that nearly 250 drivers gathered at Mandi House here to raise their demands but police dispersed them.

Meanwhile, passengers claimed that they did not face issues while booking a ride even though Gill claimed that

the strike affected cab availability in many parts of the city.

"In some areas like Dwarika and Uttam Nagar, people paid more money to travel as cabs were not available," he claimed.

Rashmi Dixit, a resident of Palm Olympia Housing Society in Greater Noida, booked an Ola from the society to her office in Naraina around 7.30 am on Tuesday and did not

face any hassle.

"I had heard about the strike and was initially apprehensive about finding a cab. But I found a cab within five minutes and did not face any

issues during the entire trip apart from the morning rush hour traffic," she said.

Another commuter, who travelled from east Delhi to south Delhi, said that he did not face difficulty in booking a cab and the waiting time was also not high and even the fare was normal.

Cab aggregator Uber regretted the "minor inconvenience" caused to a small section of

its riders due to the strike, whereas Ola did not comment on it.

"Drivers remain at the heart of our business, and we will continue to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for them, while also ensuring we have robust processes in place to both hear them and address their concerns," said an Uber spokesperson.

Taxi drivers of various associations in Delhi-NCR, who work with Ola and Uber, decided to go on strike from Tuesday as their appeals for help did not lead to any action by the government, Gill said.

"Due to the acute financial crisis caused by the coronavirus-induced lockdown, drivers are unable to pay their EMIs. The moratorium of loan repayment ended and the

banks are already putting pressure on us. Drivers are scared that banks will tow away their vehicles for not paying EMIs," he said.

The drivers have also demanded that fares should be hiked and their commission increased by the cab aggregators.

Gill said fares should be fixed by the government instead of the cab aggregators.



Ensure travel of students with disabilities to Capital for DU exams: HC to railways

PTI

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

The Delhi High Court Tuesday directed the Ministry of Railways to ensure that all students with disabilities who need to travel to the national capital to appear in physical exams being held by Delhi University are provided confirmed tickets.

The court said it needs to be ensured that the students belonging to the persons

with disabilities (PWD) category do not miss the chance to appear in the second round of final year examinations, which will be held in physcal mode from September 14.

A bench of justices Hima Kohli and Subramonium Prasad said that in view of the limited number of trains running currently, effort shall be made to provide them confirmed tickets.

It said students can book

tickets in waiting list and inform the Railways two days in advance.

The court also asked DU to file an affidavit stating the number of students who have registered for the second phase of exams.

The university will also mention in the affidavit as to when the results of both the phases can be declared.

It listed the matter for

ber 22. Advocate Jagjit Singh, representing the ministry, said the Railways already gives concession to several categories of PWDs including those with visual and speech impairment.

He said the procedure to avail the concession is set out.

The court asked senior advocate S K Rungta, representing petitioner National Federation of Blind, to provide a list of PWD students

who propose to travel to Delhi from far off places.

The high court was hearing pleas by law student Praateek Sharma and NFB seeking to set up effective mechanisms PWD students so that educational instructions can be transmitted to them properly and teaching material is provided to them through online mode of teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic.

do not have the videos of the time when Kalita was allegedly making instigating speeches during the riots incident.

It had said that they have the videos of her allegedly instigating people before the riot incidents that took place on February 24 and 25 and also of February 22 and 23 when a large gathering was sitting and protesting outside Jafraab metro station against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

The high court, in its verdict, said Kalita satisfied the triple test which has been upheld by the Supreme Court in Congress leader P Chidambaram's money laundering case in the manner that she was arrested without even a notice under the CrPC and she remained available at her home on May 23 and even provided her phone to the police previously and had also joined investigation.

Evidently, she did not try to evade arrest or even file for anticipatory bail because she had no reason to believe that she ought to be in custody. The petitioner is a student pursuing her higher education and sufficient standing in society without any possibility of fleeing from justice, the court noted.

Regarding tampering with evidence, the court said the material in relation to her participation in the protests are available with the investigating agency and there is no documentation or evidence of any other nature in her possession.

On the third test, influencing witnesses, the court said she was not in a position to influence witnesses in the FIR, which in any event appears to relate to public servants/ police officials.

The court said it is settled law that the purpose of incarceration during trial is not punitive and incarceration is to be limited to cases where it is absolutely essential.

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In my considered opinion, no prejudice would be caused to the respondent's investigation by grant of relief to the petitioner, and she would be prevented from suffering further unnecessary harassment, humiliation and unjustified detention.

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It was the Tamil Nadu government that protected quota for government doctors in PG admissions.

K. PALANISWAMI
TAMIL NADU CHIEF MINISTER

Delhi HC holds physical courts after 5 months

Lawyers give mixed response to commencement of physical hearings by the Delhi high court, with some of them asking the court that their matters be heard via video links amid the Covid pandemic

PTI
NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

The legal fraternity gave a mixed response to the commencement of physical hearings by the Delhi High Court on Tuesday, after a gap of more than five months, with several lawyers asking the court that their matters be heard via video conferencing.

The high court has been conducting hearings through video conferencing since March 24 to contain the spread of ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Two division benches -- one of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan and other of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rajnish Bhatnagar -- and three single judges -- Justices Jayant Nath, VK Rao and Yogesh Khanna -- held physical hearing of cases on Tuesday.

The same set of division benches and judges will hold the court on Wednesday, September 2; thereafter, on the next two days it will be another set of division benches and judges.

Other division benches



and single judges would hold court via video conference as they did on Tuesday.

The staff of the respective courts of the Chief Justice, Justice Nath and Justice Rao said that in several matters the lawyers indicated their preference for hearings via video conferencing and urged that their cases be listed on dates when virtual hearings would be held.

However, in the separate courts of Justice Sanghi and Justice Khanna all the matters listed for physical hearing were conducted without a hitch and no one sought dates for virtual hearings, the respective court staff

said.

According to the standard operating procedures (SOP) issued for holding physical courts, the high court would be open all five days of the week from September 1, but the judges/benches will sit on rotation basis.

As per the SOP, the entry in the court blocks for the purpose of attending physical hearings will be restricted to only one advocate per party whose case is listed that day and party-in-person who is pursuing his/her case without any legal assistance.

Besides, senior counsel engaged by any advocate, registered clerks for deliver-

ing bulky case files to advocates and standing or nominated counsel for any of the party or entity whose cases are listed for physical hearing that day will be allowed.

Juniors, interns or law students associated with the advocate concerned, relative of any litigant and non-registered clerks will not be allowed entry in the court blocks, the SOP, issued by the office of Registrar General Manoj Jain, has said.

All those who will be permitted entry have to mandatory wear mask all times, undergo thermal screening at the designated entry points, sanitise hands at the time of entry, follow social and physical distancing of six feet and adhere to all directions and guidelines issued by the government in respect of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to ensure strict adherence to the norm of social distancing, seats in each courtroom have been limited to bare minimum and entry time to any court block shall be regulated as per the time slots mentioned in the cause list for different batches of cases.

The SOP has also said

each batch shall consist of 10 cases and no person shall be permitted entry inside the court blocks before the designated time-slot as per the cause list.

"Entry of the first batch to the particular floor of the court block shall take place at 10.00 am. Second batch shall be permitted entry to a designated waiting space inside the court block at 11.15 am and the third batch at 12.15 pm. No person shall be permitted entry inside the court blocks before the designated time slot," it has said.

It has also said that medical facilities in the form of an additional ambulance with complete infrastructure to tackle COVID-19 emergencies shall be stationed during working hours in the high court. There will be an earmarked room in the high court dispensary dedicated as COVID-19 isolation room, to be used as and when any person reflecting coronavirus symptoms is found.

He or she will be shifted to the isolation room till he or she is taken to the hospital after which the room will be sanitised, the SOP has said.

Final year college, varsity exams to be held in Haryana by Sept end

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 1 SEPTEMBER

After much delay, the final year examinations of all universities and colleges in Haryana will be conducted by the end of September.

After this, all the results will also be declared before 31 October. This decision was taken on Monday in a meeting organised by Haryana State Higher Education Council through Video Conferencing. The meeting was attended by the vice chancellors and controllers of examination of all the government aided Universities.

The meeting was chaired by Haryana State Higher Education Council chairman, Professor Brij Kishore Kuthiala



Haryana State Higher Education Council chairman, Professor Brij Kishore Kuthiala

per the directions issued by the Central government and the state government regarding 'Standard Operating Procedure' for Covid-19 will be followed meticulously.

Provisions have also been made for compartment and reappear examinations for final year students in all universities. The spokesman said that some of the universities which have already started taking the examinations have also declared the results.

The spokesman said the examination question papers will be of multiple choices, short answers and explanatory answers. He said that some of the universities which have already started taking the examinations have also declared the results.

He informed the work of holding online classes of final year students is going on at a rapid pace. He said that along with the examinations, new admissions will also take place in the month of September and from October 2020 depending on the circumstances normal classes will start. Students, who will not be able to take the exam due to any valid reasons, will be given one more chance, the spokesman said.

Centre of Excellence for Tourism and Hospitality to come up in Solan

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 1 SEPTEMBER

Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam (HPKVN) would sign a contract agreement with the operating partners for a period of five years for setting up and operating the Centre of Excellence for Tourism and Hospitality at Waknaghat in Solan district and thereafter the contract agreement would be extended on the performance of partner on mutually agreed terms and duration.

It was decided at the 9th meeting of the Board of Directors of the Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam was held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur here on Tuesday.



The Chief Minister said that the state government would provide subsidy on tuition fees to the Himachali students but the students would have to pay boarding and lodging charges including internship themselves. He said that about sixty percent seats would be reserved for the students of Himachal Pradesh in this

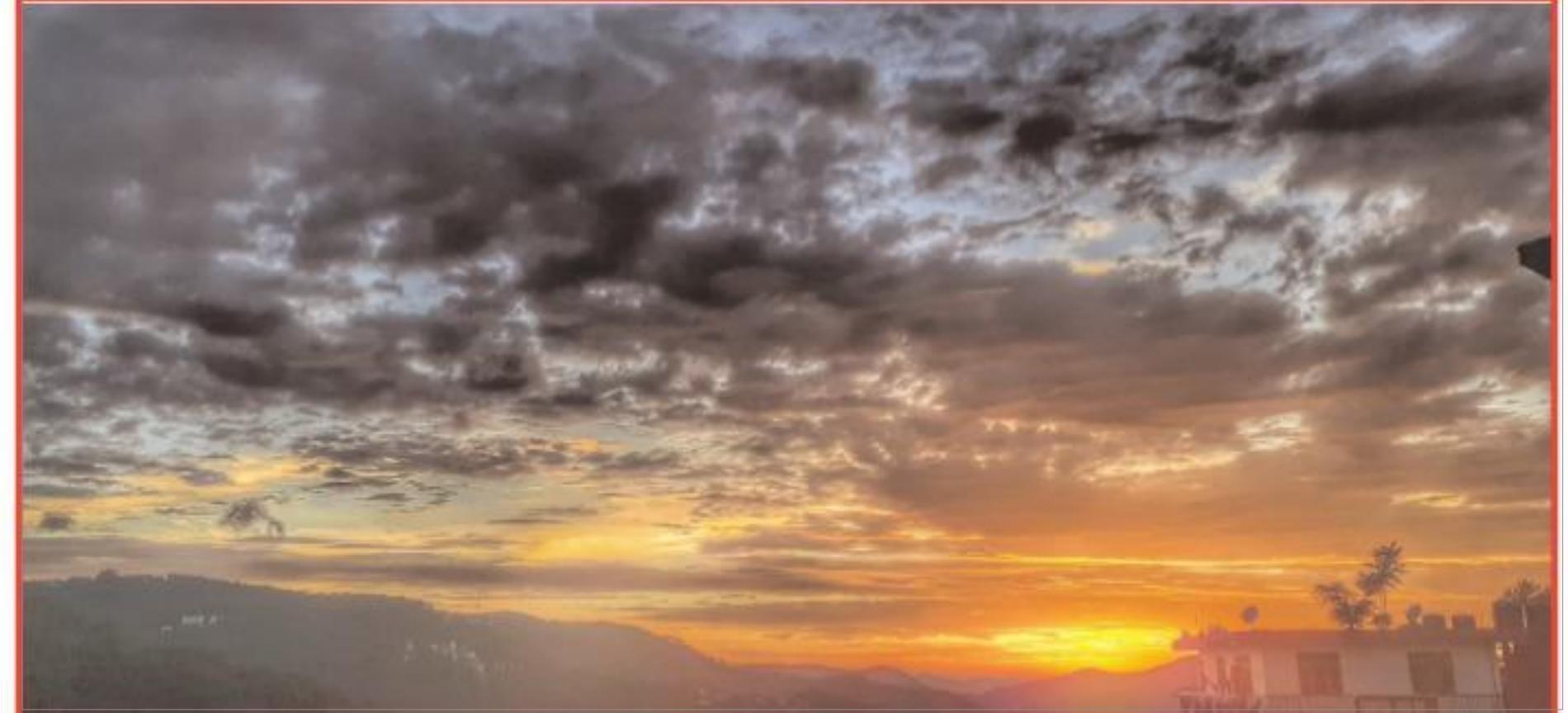
institution, but during the first academic session, only Himachali candidates would be eligible for admission in the PET courses. He said that a few seats would also be reserved for the NRIs and foreign students. Thakur said that training and equipment required for operationalisation of the Centre of Excellence would be

procured by the HP Kaushal Vikas Nigam in consultation with the Operating Partner and Management Committee. In addition to this the Nigam would also provide basic IT facilities in the Centre as per the recommendation of Operating Partner, he added.

The Chief Minister said that responsibility of maintenance of machinery and equipment including repair and upgradation would be of the Operating Partner.

Technical Education Minister Dr. Rani Lal Markanda, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Virender Kanwar, Education Minister Govind Singh Thakur and State Coordinator HP Kaushal Vikas Nigam Navin Sharma, also spoke in the meeting.

PICTURE POSTCARD



A view of horizon during sunset in Shimla on Tuesday.

LALIT KUMAR

Covid: Himachal govt considers reopening temples in the state

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 1 SEPTEMBER

The Himachal Pradesh government is considering reopening of temples in the state for which Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) would be prepared to facilitate the devotees.

Addressing the Deputy Commissioners, Superintendents of Police and Chief Medical Officers through video conferencing from Shimla on Tuesday, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said the Deputy Commissioners have been directed to simplify the process of entry to the state but at the same time the process of e-pass would remain in force.

He said that the government is ensuring that development in the state does not affect due to Covid-19 pan-

demic.

The Chief Minister directed the officers to ensure that doctors and other para medical staff involved in treatment of COVID-19 patients use complete protection against the virus.

Thakur said that asymptomatic patients should be kept in home isolation. He said that health workers should regularly visit such patients for their medical check up.

He said that better quarantine facility must also be provided for doctors and other para medical staff. He said that industrial units must be asked to create their own quarantine facilities with a minimum 10 percent of total strength of their employees. He said that small industrial units must be encouraged to create such facilities by pooling.

The Chief Minister said that the Central government has provided 500 ventilators, 1,60 lakh PPE kits and over 3 lakh N-95 masks to the state for effectively fighting COVID-19 pandemic.

He said regarding people accompanying patients and students/candidates, who need to move in and out of the state due to competitive examinations, their movement may be facilitated by waiving off the condition of quarantine, if they exit or re-enter the state or vice versa within a period of 72 hours.

Thakur said the life of virus during the rainy season as per medical experts is longer, thus, greater caution must be adopted to check the corona pandemic.

He said that effective steps must be taken to check spread of the virus amongst corona warriors like doctors, para-

medical staff, police and sanitary workers.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Rajiv Saizal said that we need to be more specific in testing facilities. He said that the curve of COVID-19 pandemic could come down only by actively involving the people in sensitizing them to adopt social distancing, use face masks and sanitizers. He also felt the need for providing proper quarantine facilities for doctors and other paramedical staff.

Chief Secretary Anil Khachi, Additional Chief Secretary Home Manoj Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary Health RD Dhiman, Principal Secretaries JC Sharma and Onkar Sharma, Additional Director General of Police, Ashok Tiwari, Special Secretary DC Rana and other officers attended the meeting.

Absconding govt teacher who furnished fake certificates to get job arrested

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 1 SEPTEMBER

A team of Uttarakhand police finally managed to arrest a person, who allegedly took a government teacher's job by furnishing fake certificates and served for 22 long years in the hill state.

Khawani Singh, joined the education department as an assistant teacher and after his long service was promoted as principal of government school at Sirali Budhakot (Salt) in district Almora. The bad days of the government teacher started in 2018, when the Special Investigation Team of the Uttarakhand Police began probe into use of fake certificates by various candidates for obtaining teaching jobs in



government schools. Khawani Singh was among many others who were found guilty of using fake certificates. As the investigation tightened its nets around Khawani, he disappeared from Uttarakhand. Khawani Singh remained absconding for over two long years. Dharendra Kumar Pant, in-charge of Salt Police station, said, "The person was absconding since 2018 and we arrested him on Monday evening from Rambagh road at Marchula."

Haryana sweet shop owner wins ₹1.5 cr lottery


The Rakhi Bumper draw was held on 20 August and Pal was informed by the Lotteries Department on 21 August about the 1st prize of ₹1.50 crore on ticket no B-315094.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 1 SEPTEMBER

A sweet shop owner in Haryana has won the Rs 1.50 crore lottery after buying lottery tickets for nearly 13 years.

500 civil society groups set to hold nationwide campaign for protection of constitutional rights

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 1 SEPTEMBER

More than 30 civil society groups from across Himachal Pradesh working on various human rights and public interest issues have joined hands to participate in a nationwide campaign for protection of people's constitutional rights and values in the country.

The call for action in this regard will be observed by about 500 organisations from across the country on 5 September while raising the slogan "If we do not rise... (Hum agar uthe nahi toh...)".

Eight representatives of the campaign gave an overview of Himachal issues, which will be raised on 5 September, at a

virtual press conference on Monday. In Himachal Pradesh, which was considered as one of the progressive states of the country, almost neck to neck with Kerala, we have seen not just dwindling pro-people and environment policies and governance measures over the last few decades but the growing polarisation in society, informed Himdhar Asher, an activist with Himdhar Environment Collective, Palampur.

Some of the organisations, which have joined hands in HP for the cause, include All India Democratic Women's Association, Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan, Ghumanit Pashupalak Mahasabha, Himachal Gyan Vigyan Samiti, Himachal Kisan Sabha and Himachal Van

system, instead of implementing the Forest Rights Act 2006 to provide secure tenure to the community and individual resource rights of pastoralists and landless communities, the state government is working pushing construction of airports, hydropower projects, four lane highways and hydropower projects which are a threat to the land, rivers and forests of the state," she said.

Asher said a state which is already vulnerable to various climate and ecological crisis, will see unprecedented disasters if the natural ecosystems along with people's livelihoods are not protected. The state governments just seem to be following in the footsteps of the Centre, in facilitating acceding for communal hatred and divide people on religious lines through laws like The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), NRC and NPR, dilution of environment laws etc. Asher said the organisations participating in the campaign will hold various events, protests, make submissions to authorities as well as hold online events on social media.



Incidents of atrocities on Dalits show 'jungle raj' prevails in Uttar Pradesh.

BSP CHIEF MAYAWATI

TARGETING BJP-LED UP GOVT OVER THE DEATHS OF FOUR DALITS IN AGRA & RAEBARELI

India

THUMBNAILS



Devotees maintain social distancing at a temple during Unlock 4.0, in Chennai on Tuesday. ■ AFP

Bengaluru violence: Searches were carried out at offices of the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) by the Central Crime Branch (CCB) on Tuesday in connection with Bengaluru violence case. The raids at DJ Halli, KG Halli and Halasuru Gate offices of SDPI come in the backdrop of statements made by minister Basavaraj Bommai regarding outfit's role in 11 August violence. ■ PTI

Kerala records 1,140 fresh cases: Kerala on Tuesday reported 1,140 new Covid-19 cases, taking the total number of persons affected with the virus in the state to 76,525. With four more deaths the toll has risen to 298. As many as 2,111 patients recovered on Tuesday. ■ SNS

'Higher viral load in asymptomatic'

Scientists advise testing of asymptomatic patients

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

Indian scientists have observed a higher association between asymptomatic Covid-19 cases and viral load, or the amount of virus in an infected person's bodily fluid, in a study of over 200 patients with SARS-CoV-2 virus in Telangana, a "surprise" finding that may better inform the policymakers about the spread of the novel coronavirus infection.

The researchers, including those from the Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (CDFD) in Hyderabad, advise testing asymptomatic primary and secondary contacts followed by surveillance.

"It is important to consider the possibility of infection from asymptomatic patients - presumably harbouring good immunity - spreading into individuals possessing not so robust immunity leading to increased morbidity and mortality," Murali Dharan Bashyam, from CDFD's Laboratory of Molecular Oncology, told.

The researchers noted that Telangana has seen an unusually high rate of infection with a sharp spike observed in the number of cases beginning from the second half of April. A majority of the samples belonged to the age group between 15 to 62 years, with males (61 per cent) dominating the profile distribution over females (39 per cent), they said.

Symptomatic cases appeared to be associated with higher Ct values, thus lower viral load, compared to asymptomatic ones, which was unexpected, the study found.

There was a reduction in the Ct values in samples analysed near the end of June, implying that more recent samples seemed to carry a higher viral load than earlier samples, according to the scientists.

genome.

"We observed that a majority of the population under study (over 95 per cent) was infected with the 20B clade (or strain), while a few samples belonged to other clades and subclades," Bashyam told.

"More importantly, 100 per cent of the virus from period May to July belongs to the 20B clade," he said.

The scientist noted that while initial entry of the virus in the state came from 2-3 different viral clades, 20B was able to establish itself as the majority strain starting from May.

According to the scientists, the samples collected from late May till July represented a higher proportion of asymptomatic cases when compared to samples collected earlier.

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SC on migrant workers hit hard by Covid lockdown

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

The Supreme Court on Tuesday expressed displeasure over non-filing of affidavits by Maharashtra and Delhi on implementation of three enactments which are aimed at helping workers. Non-filing of affidavit clearly indicates that the states are not interested in implementing the aforesaid enactments, a bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan said, while hearing the matter related to migrant workers who were hit hard by the Covid-19 lockdown. Maximum number of migrants are working in Maharashtra and Delhi, the bench said.

The bench said that in its 31 July order, the apex court had directed states to file affidavit with regard to operation of three enactments - Inter State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act 1979, Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act 1996 and Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008. ■ PTI

He urged the Prime Minister to reverse the decision of asking the states to meet the shortfall in the compensation through borrowing and proposed that the "Centre can borrow the entire shortfall amount based on the strength of receipts into cess amount. The entire debt servicing - both principal and interest can be paid from the cess collected for such an extended period beyond 2022, as the GST council may decide."

Battling for cooperative federalism in the strongly worded letter the Telangana chief minister reminded Modi that the Centre has more resources than states and particularly with the introduction of GST, states are left with no major buoyant taxes of their own. Moreover, the option given to the state to borrow in order to meet the shortfall is not in accordance of the act either.

KCR: Centre abdicating responsibility on GST compensation to states

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 1 SEPTEMBER

Accusing the Centre of flouting the provisions of GST Compensation Act by asking the states to borrow in order to meet the shortfall in GST compensation, Telangana chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying that the central government was abdicating its responsibility of fully compensating the states for revenue losses.

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"Linking these options to additional borrowings allowed under the *Aatmanirbhar* package is only to deny the states the full benefit of the package," complained Rao.

In addition, since the Centre has already increased the cess on petrol and diesel by Rs 13 per litre which would contribute additional revenue over Rs 2 lakh crore per annum it has preempted the states from increasing the VAT on petroleum products, argued the chief minister. He said states which are at the forefront of fighting with the pandemic requires more resources.

"The Centre is abdicating its responsibility of fully compensating states by taking recourse to legal opinion. The Centre has violated the provisions of the GST Compensation Act by parking the surpluses in the Compensation Fund in its Consolidated Fund instead of parking them in the non-lapsable Compensation Fund in the Public Accounts and using the surpluses for meeting its expenditure in the years 2017 to 2018 and 2018 to 2019. Now that there is a deficit, states are being asked to borrow," wrote Rao choosing not to mince his words on the prickly issue.

The Telangana chief minister signed off by urging the Prime Minister to continue the tradition of taking unanimous decisions in GST Council.

'Unlock tourism' call grows louder

MANAS R BANNERJEE
SILIGURI, 1 SEPTEMBER

remains the worst affected. "As such, we need to get together and send a message. We organised a limited gathering by maintaining Covid protocols and also paid homage to former Indian President Pranab Mukherjee," Mr Ghosh said.

EHTTOA president Debasish Maitra said stakeholders of the tourism industry are fighting for their right to livelihood, while all sectors are working at present.

"With established protocols, hotels should be allowed to function and restrictions should be eased in a phased manner. We expect a special package from our soft loans with minimum interest," Mr Maitra said. Notably, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), North Bengal Chapter, has urged state Chief Secretary Rajiva Sinha to "unlock" the tourism industry in the region.

Chairman of Tourism, CII, Raj Basu, said: "We have urged him to ready a common agenda as well as an SOP to reopen tourism in Bengal. We have also requested him to begin sensitisation and awareness programmes in eight districts for rural tourism. The Chief Secretary has asked district magistrates to begin it from the second week of September."

"Secondly, we also pointed out that many home stay owners are being deprived of financial support of Rs 1.50 lakh owing to lack of deed of land rights, mainly in the Hills, comprising Darjeeling, Kalimpong and adjoining tea areas in the Dooars," Mr Basu added. Following discussions with Mr Sinha, the Darjeeling District Magistrate has sent a proposal to the state government for reopening of transportation services for tourist destinations like Tiger Hill and others, Mr Basu said.

Idol Pranabda's slippers these are, venerated and worshipped

RADHAMADHAB SAHA
RAIGANJ, 1 SEPTEMBER

Shyamal Brahma, a businessman in Raiganj in North Dinajpur district, could very well be called the most ardent follower of former Indian President Pranab Mukherjee, who passed away in Delhi yesterday.

Since 2009, Mr Brahma, who had good relations with Mukherjee, has been worshipping a pair of slippers worn by the former President, which he has kept inside a glass case.

"So we purchased a pair of black sandals and presented it to Pranabda. In exchange for this, I asked for a pair of white slippers he used. He immediately wore my black sandals and handed me his used white slippers. Since then, I have kept them in the glass case and I worship them till date, because he is an idol to me," Mr Brahma said.

"My son Champak reached Delhi and attended his funeral too. I am greatly shocked with the news of his demise," he added.



Shyamal Brahma, a businessman in Raiganj in North Dinajpur district, says he shared good relations with Pranab Mukherjee and that he still worships a pair of slippers that belonged to the former Indian President



Kerala gold smuggling: NIA scans CCTV footage of Secretariat

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
1 SEPTEMBER

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) investigating into the Kerala gold smuggling case, examined the CCTV footage of the secretariat on Tuesday. The NIA team also examined the room at the general administration department where some files were gutted in a mysterious fire last week. CCTV footages were examined in the presence of IT secretary Mohammed V Safirulla. The team first examined the server room of the general administrative department where the servers which collect CCTV visuals are kept. Later examined the CCTV visuals of the North Block where the office of the former principal secretary to the CM, M Sivasankar is located.

Some files were gutted in a mysterious fire last week. While government sources said the fire occurred due to a short circuit, Opposition alleged conspiracy to destroy evidence.



TENDER

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

Sr. DEN/M/MB acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against Tender No. 74-DRM-MB-20-21 closing date 24.09.2020, 16:00 hrs. Name of work : Through Rail Renewal (P) in the section of ADEN/HRI-I. Tender closing date/time : 24.09.2020 16:00. Cost of work : Rs. 6014492.00. Earnest Money : Rs. 120300.00. Tender Cost : NIL. Bidding start date : 10.09.2020 and Period of Completion : 09 Months. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. For detail information please log into www.ireps.gov.in. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through online payment modes available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker's cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. Tender No. 74-DRM-MB-20-21 Dated : 01.09.2020 1897/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Notice inviting "Expression of Interest"

For

Engaging Professional Agency for Producing documentaries, putting up exhibition and preparing Coffee Table Books both in Hindi and English languages on developmental Journey of the State for celebration of Golden Jubilee Year of the Statehood.

The Department of Information and Public Relations, Himachal Pradesh proposes to engage a professional Agency for showcasing the 50 years development journey of the State through Documentaries, Exhibition and Coffee Table Book.

This EOI document is to provide details about scope of work, expectations from the agency, bidding procedure and other terms and conditions. This can be downloaded from the website of the Department <http://www.himachalpradesh.gov.in>. Response to this tender shall be deemed to have been done after careful study and examination of this document with full understanding of its implications. This document provides general information about the Issuer, important dates and addresses and the overall eligibility criteria for the parties. The cost of EOI document amounting to Rs. 2,000/- is to be submitted with EOI in shape of crossed demand draft on any Nationalized bank/Scheduled Bank in favor of "Director, Information and Public Relations, Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-171001 (India)" payable at Shimla.

Issued by

The Director,
Information and Public
Relations,

Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-171001 (India)

2650/2020-2021 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPAK

Allahabad HC quashes Kafeel Khan's detention under NSA, orders his immediate release

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ALLAHABAD, 1 SEPTEMBER

Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) during the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) protests in December last year. He is lodged in Mathura jail. Parveen, who left for Mathura soon after the court pronounced its order, said she is very happy that her son is coming out of jail and she will be able to see him after long.

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also hailed the court's decision and hoped the Uttar Pradesh government will immediately release Khan "without any malice".

Quashing Khan's detention order, the court said, "A complete reading of the speech prima facie does not disclose any effort to promote hatred or violence. It also nowhere threatens peace and tranquility of the city of Aligarh. The address gives a call for national integrity and unity among the citizens. The speech also deprecates any kind of violence.

"It appears that the District Magistrate had selective reading and selective mention for few phrases from the speech ignoring its true intent."

The court further said in the instant case, the "causal link is found to be missing or completely broken".

"In absence of any material indicating that the detainee continued to act in a manner prejudicial to public order from December 12, 2019 up to February 13, 2020, or that he committed any such other or further act as may have had that effect, the preventive detention order cannot be sustained," it said. "In fact, the grounds of detention are silent as to public order at Aligarh being at risk of any prejudice in February 2020 on account

of the offending act attributed to the detainee on the date December 12, 2019," the court said in its order.

"What remains is a mere apprehension expressed by the detaining authority without supporting material on which such apprehension may be founded," it added.

The court said it had also tested the legality of the detention "on the count of giving effective opportunity to the detainee to represent at ear-

liest".

"The grounds for detention along with material were supplied to the detainee in light of clause (5) of Article 22 of the Constitution of India enabling him to submit representation to the competent authorities at earliest," it said.

"The material so given was a compact disk of the speech delivered by Dr. Kafeel Khan on 12th December, 2019, at Bab-e-Syed gate of Aligarh Muslim University," it said.

"On asking, it is conveyed to us that no transcript of the speech was supplied to the detainee. The non-supply of transcript would have been of no consequence, if a device would have been supplied to the detainee to play the compact disk. It is the position admitted that no such device was made available to the detainee," it added.

One more important aspect of the matter is that the orders of extension of detention were never served upon the detainee, the court said.

"The record shown to us and the pleadings of the petitioner also refer that only radiograms relating to decision of the State Government for extension of the term of detention were supplied to the

detainee," it said.

"The radiograms mention that the actual order shall be sent through speed post but in fact nothing except the radiograms were given to the detainee. In light of the discussion above, we are having no hesitation in concluding that neither detention of Dr. Kafeel Khan under National Security Act, 1980 nor extension of the detention are sustainable in the eye of law," it said.

Under the NSA, a person can be detained without a charge for up to 12 months if authorities are satisfied that he or she is a threat to national security or law and order.

Khan has already spent over six months in jail under the NSA.

In its order, the court said, "The writ petition for the reasons above is allowed. The order of detention dated 13th February, 2020 passed by District Magistrate, Aligarh and confirmed by the State of Uttar Pradesh



TMC is trying to fool the refugees. Under the CAA, citizenship would be granted so what is the meaning of this land deed?

ON WEST BENGAL GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO DISTRIBUTE FREE HOLD LAND TITLE DEEDS

BJP NATIONAL SECRETARY RAHUL SINHA

The Statesman

05

NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY 02 SEPTEMBER 2020

India, China hold talks on border flare-up

Agenda included fresh developments at 3 contentious points on Pangong Tso

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

Amid heightened tensions, India and China today held another round of brigade commander level talks at Chushul/Moldo to resolve the situation arising from the Saturday night incident in which the Indian Army thwarted a major attempt by Chinese troops to alter the status quo at the southern bank of the Pangong Tso Lake in eastern Ladakh.

Sources said the agenda of the meeting included fresh developments at three contentious points on the southern bank of the Pangong Tso Lake. India also raised concerns about Chinese deployment in areas near the Black Top and Helmet Top. Indian troops have also occupied hill tops and the Chinese want them to step back.

In New Delhi, National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval is understood to have reviewed the situation at LAC with the top military brass. Doval is India's Special Representative (SR) for boundary talks with China.

Sources said the Indian action on Saturday came after the People's Liberation Army (PLA) tried to transgress into the Indian areas using a sizeable number of troops. The Indian soldiers responded with alacrity and preempted the PLA activity, undertaking measures to strengthen their positions and thwart Chinese intentions to unilaterally change facts on ground.

The Indian troops of the Special Frontier Force (SFF) are believed to have occupied key mountain heights which China claims as its own.

The swift response by the Indian Army to the PLA activity in the area has come as a rude shock to the Chinese side.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 1 SEPTEMBER

Amidst the ongoing stand-off with Chinese troops in Ladakh, the 'Fire & Fury' Corps of the Indian Army on Tuesday celebrated its 21st Raising Day during which a solemn Wreath Laying Ceremony to honour 'Martyrs of Ladakh' (in photo) was held at the War Memorial at Hall of Fame, Leh.

Lieutenant General Harinder Singh, General Officer Commanding, Fire & Fury Corps, who held several rounds of talks with his Chinese counterparts in a bid to defuse the situation, laid a wreath and honoured the martyrs.

On 1 September 1999 in



the aftermath of Kargil War this elite Corps was raised and has successfully ensured security of both, the LoC with Pakistan and LAC with China while maintaining eternal vigil at the Actual Ground Position Line in the highest

battlefield of the world - the Siachen Glacier. It has been instrumental in substantially enhancing the infrastructure for common use of the Army and the civilians, thereby providing succour to the people of Ladakh.

In a statement today, Chinese Embassy spokesperson Ji Rong accused Indian troops of violating the consensus reached in previous multi-level engagements and negotiations between the two countries, illegally trespassing the LAC again at the southern bank of the Pangong Tso Lake and near the Rechin Pass, and conducting flagrant provocations, which again stirred tension in the border areas.

"India's move has grossly violated China's territorial sovereignty, seriously violated relevant agreements, protocols and important consensus reached between the two countries, and severely damaged peace and tranquility along China-India border areas. What India has done runs counter to the efforts made by both sides for a period of time to ease and cool down the situation on the ground, and China is resolutely opposed to this," she said.

The Chinese spokesperson said China has made solemn representations to the Indian side, urging it to control and restrain its frontline troops, earnestly honor its commitments, immediately stop all provocative actions, immediately withdraw its troops illegally trespassing the LAC and immediately stop any actions leading to the escalation and complication of the situation.

State-run Chinese daily the *Global Times*, meanwhile, continued to indulge in anti-India rhetoric, claiming that the southern bank of the Pangong Tso Lake where the latest confrontation took place was under China's control. "India is trying to turn it into a new disputed area as a bargaining chip in negotiations. Obviously, India is taking an aggressive approach on border issues rather than prioritising stability in border regions," it added.

The daily said India must know it was facing a powerful China and the PLA has sufficient force to safeguard every inch of the country.

"Chinese people have shown support to the government which won't seek to provoke India, but does not allow it to encroach on China's territory. China is strategically firm in the southwestern border areas and is also prepared for any circumstance, it added.

The newspaper said China would welcome it if India wanted to coexist in peace. If India wanted to engage in competition, China has more tools and capability than India. If India would like a military showdown, the PLA was bound to make the Indian Army suffer much more severe losses than it did in 1962.

Meanwhile, India today claimed PLA troops again indulged in provocative action.

"India's move has grossly violated China's territorial sovereignty, seriously violated relevant agreements, protocols and important consensus reached between the two countries, and severely damaged peace and tranquility along China-India border areas. What India has done runs counter to the efforts made by both sides for a period of time to ease and cool down the situation on the ground, and China is resolutely opposed to this," she said.

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The nation's loss

While it is customary to term the death of a former Head of State as an irreparable loss, the departure from the scene of Pranab Mukherjee, India's 13th President, truly merits the phrase. For in a political career spanning more than half a century, Mukherjee essayed the roles of, first, a politician, and then a statesman with consummate skill. As long as he was part of the governments of Indira Gandhi, P V Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh, he was the quintessential politician, armed with all the skills required to negotiate the tortuous by-lanes of governance including the ability to read people and situations; draw upon his immense intellectual skills to find solutions to problems; deal effectively with the myriad favour-seekers who court those in power and marshal facts effectively to defend the positions he took. As a senior member of the Congress party, he was trusted by his colleagues to present cogent analyses of political issues and chart a course that others could follow, including the drafting of party manifestos. He stumbled politically just once, immediately after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984 and spent a few years in the wilderness for the perceived offence of being ambitious, even though he was entitled to believe he was best qualified to succeed his mentor. Under Narasimha Rao, he regained his place in party and government and did not look back. While he ought to have been the first choice for Prime Minister in 2004, if only for the immense experience and knowledge he would have brought to the job, his shrewd reading of political situations would not have allowed him to nurture the hope. Thus, when he was nominated by the Congress for President in 2012, he would have accepted the honour with the knowledge that he would bring the necessary gravitas to it.

In the event, he discarded his political robes when he stepped into Rashtrapati Bhavan and emerged as the statesman he was to leave an indelible mark as. The reasons for this metamorphosis are not hard to find. Mr Mukherjee had a deep understanding of the Constitution and understood as well if not better than any of his predecessors the nuances of the President's role as prescribed by the supreme law of the land. His conduct as Head of State, as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and as the conscience-keeper of the nation was exemplary. At every stage, he behaved with propriety. Most important, he was able to keep to the side his own deep-rooted ideological convictions and his background as a Congressman to become a true First Citizen. It is no wonder then that after having worked for two years with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, he developed an easy and cordial relationship with his successor. Mr Mukherjee was an exceptional President and just for that, he deserved the Bharat Ratna a grateful nation bestowed on him. He will be missed by many.

Control on education

The National Education Policy, 2020, adopted by the Union Cabinet recently, weakens the federal character of India by promoting centralised control of school education from primary to high school. Until the Emergency, education remained a State subject. It was made a concurrent subject through the 42nd Constitution Amendment in 1976. A good educational institution is one where every student feels welcomed and cared for, where a safe and stimulating learning environment exists, where a wide range of learning experiences are offered, and where good physical infrastructure with appropriate resources are available, says NEP 2020. The Union Ministry of Human Resource Development has been named Ministry of Education and the Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Union Ministry of Education, has written a letter dated 22 August to School Education Secretaries of all States and Union Territories to obtain suggestions from teachers for the policy implementation process. The letter states that the department has decided to call for suggestions from school teachers and principals all over the country on how to take the implementation process of NEP 2020 forward and requests States and the UTs to disseminate it widely among all teachers. The NEP 2020 has not been placed in Parliament. Implementation of the policy would require parliamentary legislation and the concurrence of States. In a country of infinite diversities, no system of education will suit all States and UTs. Implementation of NEP 2020 in its present form will deprive the constitutional right and duty of State and UT governments to frame their own policies or enact laws concerning education in accordance with the needs and aspirations of the people of the state. Disregarding elected Chief Ministers of States, the Union Education Secretary has written to School Education secretaries in States with regard to implementation of NEP 2020, a serious breach of the federal structure in vogue in India. China moved away from a national education policy in the late 1980s and encouraged multiple policies in provinces and regions to connect with real-life interests and experiences of students in a modern society. NEP 2020 states the Right to Education Act will be reviewed to ensure that all students shall have free and compulsory access to high quality and equitable schooling from early childhood through grade XII. In order to realise the objective of NEP 2020, India will need an additional 5.7 million teachers over the next five years, according to calculations made by the National Council for Social Development. This is only one factor essential for universalising quality school education. Has the government taken into account the cost of implementing the new education policy? The NEP was not part of the BJP's 2019 election manifesto and therefore lacks the people's mandate. Under the circumstances, the best thing to do is to opt for a democratic and decentralised policy in line with constitutional norms.

The Congress

Let us turn to Gandhiji, who ruled the Congress with an iron fist concealed by goat's milk, from 1920 to 1946. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose won the Congress presidential election with a substantial majority in the AICC, defeating Gandhi's favourite, Pattabhi Sitaramayya. The great leader strongly disapproved of Netaji's conduct. He had been president in 1938 and his standing again for the election was not to Gandhi's liking. He, therefore, saw to it that Netaji could not function in office



The Congress should not be measured in terms of a typical political party like the Communist Party (Marxist), the Bharatiya Janata Party or the Hindu Mahasabha. These have distinct ideologies; they aim to make India in the image of their respective ideology. Anyone who is admitted as a member is expected to believe in a particular ideology. There are rules and procedures that each party tries to follow. The Congress, on paper, has all these, but in practice, operates on the "Führerprinzip" or the leadership principle. This was demonstrated vividly from 1977 to 1979. Many a stalwart tended to discount Indira Gandhi after she lost the 1977 election. For a few months, she had to lie low as a member of the Congress (K). The 'K' stood for K Brahmananda Reddy.

As the year progressed, the lady began to assert that she ought to be the president of the party. Initially, the party stalwarts, many of whom still wore the white Gandhi cap and khadi attire, took no serious notice. Eventually, however, an AICC meeting was held on 31 December 1977. Well before midnight, Indira Gandhi left the meeting in a huff after informing the attendees that she would be available at the Glass House, which was one of the focal points of Bangalore. Soon after midnight four Congressmen, namely Kamalapati Tripathi, (UP), Subroto Mukherjee (West Bengal) and two others, a total of four, went to the Glass House. Led by Indira Gandhi as president, the Congress (I) came into being. It did not take many months for this party to proliferate in the then prevailing political scenario. Long before 1980 most Congressmen had shifted to the Congress (I). The Congress (K) disappeared and in its place, a dozen-member Congress (S) came into being, the (S) standing for socialist.

The media had rightly commented in those momentous

months that the 'Congress is not where leaders attend. The Congress is where its supreme leader sits'. The then president of the Congress, Dev Kanta Barooah declared that "India is Indira and Indira is India" in 1974. In the 1980-81 general elections, the Congress (I) led by Indira won a thumping victory and thereafter she ruled India till her assassination in October 1984. For the leader who is not entirely convinced by this theory of the Führerprinzip, she/he is entitled to other examples. But in essence it is inner-party autocracy and not inner-party democracy as Vladimir Lenin had desired for the Bolshevik Party following the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Let us turn to Gandhiji, who ruled the Congress with an iron fist concealed by goat's milk, from 1920 to 1946. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose won the Congress presidential election with a substantial majority in the AICC, defeating Gandhi's favourite, Pattabhi Sitaramayya. The great leader strongly disapproved of Netaji's conduct. He had been president in 1938 and his standing again for the election was not to Gandhi's liking. He, therefore, saw to it that Netaji could not function in office. He ensured that the 21-member Congress Working Committee (CWC), comparable to the cabinet of a government, could not be formed. No one would join in the face of the displeased Bapu. Netaji Subhas was left with no choice but to leave the Congress Party; he resigned his presidentship and soon quit the Congress.

We now come to Jawaharlal Nehru who was a favourite of Gandhiji but not of the Congress Party. In 1946, when its leaders were released from jail after the Quit India agitation, they realized

that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had been the party president for six years. It was time there was a change also especially because Independence was in the air and whoever was Congress president was likely to become prime minister. As was the party procedure all the 16 Pradesh Congress Committees were consulted. Fifteen of 16 PCCs were for Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and one was for Acharya JB Kripalani; no one showed any interest in Nehru. Yet Gandhiji asked the Sardar to step aside and let Nehru become Congress president. Thus Jawaharlal became president and then became Vice-President of the

Interim government headed by Viceroy Mountbatten and partnered by the Muslim League. On 3 June 1947, the Viceroy declared Partition effective on 14th and 15th August when Nehru became Prime Minister. As an obedient disciple of Gandhiji, the Sardar worked earnestly as deputy PM and helped the Government of India. Nehru came to be recognized as the leader of the party also and remained so until he died in May 1964. Notwithstanding the terrible failure of his China policy, the humiliation and above all, the loss of territory by November 1962, Nehru remained Prime Minister and head of the Congress until he died. This shows to what length Congressmen were willing to remain loyal to their leader. To reiterate, out of loyalty to Gandhiji, the party accepted Nehru and out of loyalty to Nehru, they continued to support him no matter his blunders. Indira Gandhi's only substantial qualification was that she was Nehru's daughter. Choosing her as Prime Minister was out of loyalty to her father; she was only a gudiya in the eyes of senior Congressmen. The handling of

Within days of Narasimha Rao being sworn in as Prime Minister, he overturned the socialism planted by Nehru at the Congress' Avadi session in 1955. In less than two years, doubts were cast that Rao also overturned secularism, which had been fathomed by no less than Gandhi. The Muslims widely believe that the Rao Government had a hand in the demolition at Ayodhya. Yet, he remained PM till the end of his term in 1996. Thereafter, the party was on the lookout for a more permanent leader. Sonia Gandhi was elected defeating the only opposing candidate (the late) Jitendra Prasad. To this day, she remains president of the Congress.

often engaged in violence against the Muslim communities. The recent violence that was unleashed against Muslims in New Delhi is just one example. Under these circumstances, I wonder how many individuals with names like Mohammad will ever feel safe in contemporary India. Finally, thinking that India still is a "true" melting pot, reflects not only a certain degree of naivete but also being out of touch with reality.

Yours, etc., Abhik Roy,
Los Angeles, USA,
31 August.

WORST PERFORMER

SIR, This refers to the report 'Covid-hit economy contracts 23.9 pc' (*The Statesman*, Sept 1). In an unprecedented fall, the economy shrank in the April-June quarter by 23.9 per cent. It provided the first overview of the extent of the economic damage on account of the outbreak of Covid-19 and subsequent lockdowns. The data needs to be viewed in context. Gathering of data was disrupted by the pandemic, resulting in improvisations. Moreover, formal sector data is used extensively to proxy the fortunes of the informal sector. The damage to the informal sector is likely much worse.

India is possibly the worst performer among major economies. China, now challenging India across the LAC, actually

Sant Bhindranwale, more so the Akal Takht and the Punjab problem of 1984 left much to be desired. Yet, Congressmen remained loyal to their leader. They also accepted her son Rajiv Gandhi the new general secretary of the party as if he was inevitably going to be their next leader.

After Indira Gandhi was assassinated, Congressmen patiently waited till Rajiv Gandhi was able to return to Delhi from West Bengal where he was on tour. He was ready to be sworn in as next fuhrer, when it was realized that the rashtrapati was overseas. Giani Zail Singh was rushed to Rashtrapati Bhavan within minutes of having landed at Palam airport. He swore Rajiv at exactly 6 pm, seven hours after BBC Radio had announced Indira's demise. As a loyal Congressman, the Giani did not insist on Rajiv being elected leader of the parliamentary party. When Rajiv was unfortunately assassinated at Sriperumbudur in 1991, no one questioned his presidency of the party, although as Prime Minister he had lost the 1989 election. The bereaved family chose P V Narasimha Rao to be the successor. Despite being over 50 Lok Sabha votes short after the general election, Congressmen remained loyal to the government and Rao remained Prime Minister for his entire term.

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A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN VOICES

Vietnam has no forced in-jail labour

Organizing for inmates to work in prisons demonstrating the humanistic traits in the policies of the Party and the State of Vietnam in order to re-educate the criminals to help them grow better and beneficial for the society as well as promote them to acknowledge fully the values of working thereby respecting the labor. Simultaneously, teaching occupation in the detention camp would help inmates orient their occupation and seek a proper job after the release, therefore, they could better immerse themselves in the normal social life and have their living more stable. There are completely not what is called "forced labor" in jails in Vietnam.

Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) ratified by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on June 28 in 1930 has been approved by as many as 175 countries so far. On January 29 in 2007, Vietnam joined the Convention, which officially mentioned the conception of forced or compulsory labor. According to paragraph 1 of Article 2 of the Convention, the phrase forced or compulsory labor is: "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily." According to the definition, anybody would be the object of forced labor when they perform a certain job or service, regardless of whether they are male or female, or young or old; they can be persons with or without expertise for that work or service ... Under Convention 29, forced labor can be understood as work that is performed involuntarily and under the menace of any penalty. It refers to situations in which persons are coerced

Vientiane Times

to work through the use of violence or intimidation, or by more subtle means such as manipulated debt.

However, there are five kinds of work or service are exempted from this definition including Compulsory military service ~ any work or service exacted in virtue of compulsory military service laws for work of a purely military character; Normal civic obligations ~ any work or service which forms part of the normal civic obligations of the citizens of a fully self-governing country; Prison labor under governmental supervision and control ~ any work or service exacted from any person as a consequence of a conviction in a court of law, provided that the said work or service is carried out under the supervision and control of a public authority and that the said person is not hired to or placed at the disposal of private individuals, companies, or associations; work in cases of emergencies ~ any work or service exacted in cases of emergency and minor communal work ~ minor communal services of a kind which, being performed by the members of the community in the direct interest of the said community. Besides, another platform adopted by ILO on June 25 in 1957 was Convention 105, with 173 countries approving. The National Assembly has voted for the ratification of ILO Convention 105 on the Abolition of Forced Labour on June 8 in 2020.

ROLE ABDICATED

SIR, New Delhi has been ignoring pressing geopolitical issues in its obsession with Pakistan's terrorism. Delivering a lecture at the prestigious The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), the Minister of External Affairs dwelt on Pakistan as a hub of terror, which the whole world knows. While TERI is engaged in research and advocacy on issues like climate change, it has nothing to do with counter terrorism. The minister's speech shows that India's diplomacy has sunk to the level of Pakistan.

Does it not have the capacity to speak directly with Pakistan? Does it have to complain at every global meeting and to every visiting dignitary about its problems with Pakistan to get bilateral issues resolved? In the process, geopolitical issues including the Chinese threat to our border, Beijing's growing strategic ties with countries in the Indian Ocean region and its mounting influence in the neighborhood have taken a back seat.

Endlessly raising Pakistan and terrorism may be useful to the government's Hindutva agenda; it also keeps the public's attention diverted from its poor governance and failures in dealing with the economic crisis and the pandemic. India has the capacity to play a leadership role on global issues like climate change and environment. It has abdicated this role.

Yours, etc., Shovanlal Chakraborty, Kolkata, 1 September.

Not so Christian, after all

SIR, This letter is in response to Mr Sunil Sharan's article titled 'A Hindu America?' in *The Statesman* (August 31). I certainly cannot dismiss Mr Sharan's views about America being a Christian country and the pressure often felt by Indians, including the writer himself, to change one's Indian name to a Christian one or even adopt a more American accent in order to assimilate. This is Mr Sharan's opinion, which, I believe, is based on his personal experience. Although there's blatant racism and bigotry in the US and I have certainly faced my share, however, unlike the writer, I have never felt the need to give myself an "American" identity by changing my Bengali name, or my Indian accent just to assimilate. This is Mr Sharan's opinion, which, I believe, is based on his personal experience. 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Climate proofing cities is key to urban resilience



ARMIN ROSENCRANZ AND GOVIND SINGH

Changing weather patterns in recent times have greatly altered the global hydrological regime. This results in frequent and more severe floods during every monsoon season in many parts of India. Torrential rainfall in the Himalayas results in more frequent landslides and flash floods. Untimely or suboptimal rain in the agricultural belts of India is devastating for the farmers and threatens our food security. Cities, which are sometimes considered the greatest of human inventions, are equally affected by the changing climate.

Cities are supposed to be planned with technical and political inputs, for exhibiting resilience against any adverse change. The

crumbling infrastructure in most cities coupled with the tragic loss of human lives due to floods is a testimony to the severity of climate change impacts on cities and urban sustainability. India has more than 50 urban centres with population above ten lakh (1 million), and more than 450 cities with population above one lakh. Delhi, the most populous urban agglomeration in India, is also the second largest urban agglomeration in the world. It is projected to overtake Tokyo by 2030. The next three largest urban agglomerations in India – Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai – are all low-lying coastal cities. This makes urban India highly vulnerable to climate change.

Cities are engines of economic growth and their functioning is critical for human sustenance and well-

being. It therefore goes without saying that urban India cannot afford a business-as-usual scenario. This calls for a sustainability appraisal of our existing urban infrastructure and planning. It also calls for climate proofing of all vulnerable urban centres.

Climate proofing is the technique or practice of developing infrastructure after incorporating the environmental alterations that will take place due to climate change. In case of cities that are already well established, climate proofing can mean both retrofitting existing infrastructure as well as making policy-level changes before developing new urban infrastructure. Climate proofing will help cities better adapt to abrupt changes in temperature and precipitation, and prepare for hazards like floods, droughts and elevated heat. Doing so

will make cities more resilient and optimise their functioning for the sake of people, planet and profit.

But how exactly do we make cities climate proof? The answer lies in the fact that we are living in a climate-constrained world today. And this must reflect in our planning and actions at all levels, from individual to the government and the corporate sector. We can no longer construct buildings, roads, bridges or develop river fronts and coasts without taking into account the projected changes in the ambient environment. This requires us to begin conducting nation-wide, climate change impact studies and develop city-wise scenarios and trends for the next 50 to 100 years.

It is not enough to just carry out these studies. There is also a need to widely disseminate the outcome and

trends in respective cities so that every urban stakeholder is made aware and sensitized. The modelled scenarios need to become part of mainstream urban planning activities at all levels, be it the case of a citizen constructing her house to a municipal agency building a residential or commercial complex. India has a vast coastline which is among the most vulnerable in the world to climate change. The availability of climate change impact trends for 50 to 100 years will help decide how much of the coast should be developed in cities located along the sea and what adaptation measures need to be put in place and at which locations.

Climate proofing also requires retrofitting of existing infrastructure. A good starting point for this is the transport sector, especially roads which are the circulatory system of a city. The flooding of roads has become a more frequent and more intense phenomenon in cities, leading to loss of life and property. This trend seems to be here to stay. The planning of roads in urban settings thus needs to take place along with creating strategically located wetlands that can act as buffer zones for accommodating excess water. However, land-use/land cover changes indicate that many existing urban wetlands are disappearing at a rapid pace in India. The destruction of these urban wetlands is counter-productive to climate proofing and is only an invitation to the kind of devastating floods we are witnessing this year.

Cities are not only vulnerable to climate change but are also key contributors to global warming. It is estimated that over 75 per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions are from cities, mainly from the transport and the construction sectors. Decarbonizing the economy is an important climate proofing and mitigation strategy. Cities can play a pivotal role in this by committing to carbon neutrality and shifting toward clean sources of energy. Urban resilience is the need of the hour and climate proofing is the way to go. It is either this or helplessly witnessing the undoing of our development and economic achievements. The decision is entirely ours.

The writers are, respectively, Professor and Associate Professor at Jindal School of Environment & Sustainability, O.P. Jindal Global University, Haryana, India.

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

Probably most people in India who are interested in the prospects of Homeward passages were painfully aware of the expected congestion in passenger traffic next year to which Messrs. Mackinnon, Mackenzie, & Co. have drawn attention. They have been warned already that the difficulty of meeting demands for berths is likely to be as bad next year as this year, or worse. The gleam of hope which Messrs. Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co. hold out is that they may be able to get passages in the "off" season. Congestion in the westward traffic may be expected, of course, at its worst, from February to May, and the usual Homeward rush at this season will no doubt be increased next year to some extent notwithstanding the warnings issued to tourists as to the difficulty of getting return passages. Intending passengers who have one year's leave or more to put in at Home are strongly advised by Messrs. Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co., to travel in the "off" season, say from August to January, during which period it is intimated that there is likely to be a number of berths available. In these days people have to be thankful for any chance of a passage at any time and on any terms. It comes really as a pleasant surprise to find that there is any time of the year when it is anticipated that berths may be available.

NEWS ITEMS

BENGAL COUNCIL

The Bengal Legislative Council met in the Council Chamber of Government House yesterday, His Excellency the Governor presiding. The members sat from 11 A.M. until 5-30 P.M., and dealt with the thirty-one items which appeared on the agenda. Sixteen resolutions were moved by the Hon. Mr. Akhil Chandra Dutta, two of which were carried and one withdrawn. The Hon. Sir Charles Stevenson-Moore in presenting the report of the select committee on the Bengal Agricultural and Sanitary Improvement Bill, 1920, described it as a really effective and popular agency for the betterment of agricultural and sanitary conditions throughout Bengal. The Hon. Sir Charles Stevenson-Moore moved for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Calcutta Pilot's Act, 1859. He explained that the old Act provided for the trial and punishment, by loss of rank or pay.

THE LATE MR. W.C. MADGE

The late Mr. W.C. Madge, C.I.E., news of whose sudden death at Edinburgh, has just reached India, was born in Calcutta in 1841, and sent in early boyhood to Edinburgh, where he was educated at the High School. Returning to India in 1858, he entered Government service and served in various capacities - as Assistant in the office of the Board of Revenue, the Bengal Secretariat, and Assistant Superintendent in the Bengal Police. His public life began with his entry into the ranks of journalism as principal leader writes in the Indian Daily News, where he worked from 1871 to 1878. In 1912 Mr. Madge received a Companionship of the Indian Empire for his political service and received it from King George's own hands in Calcutta.

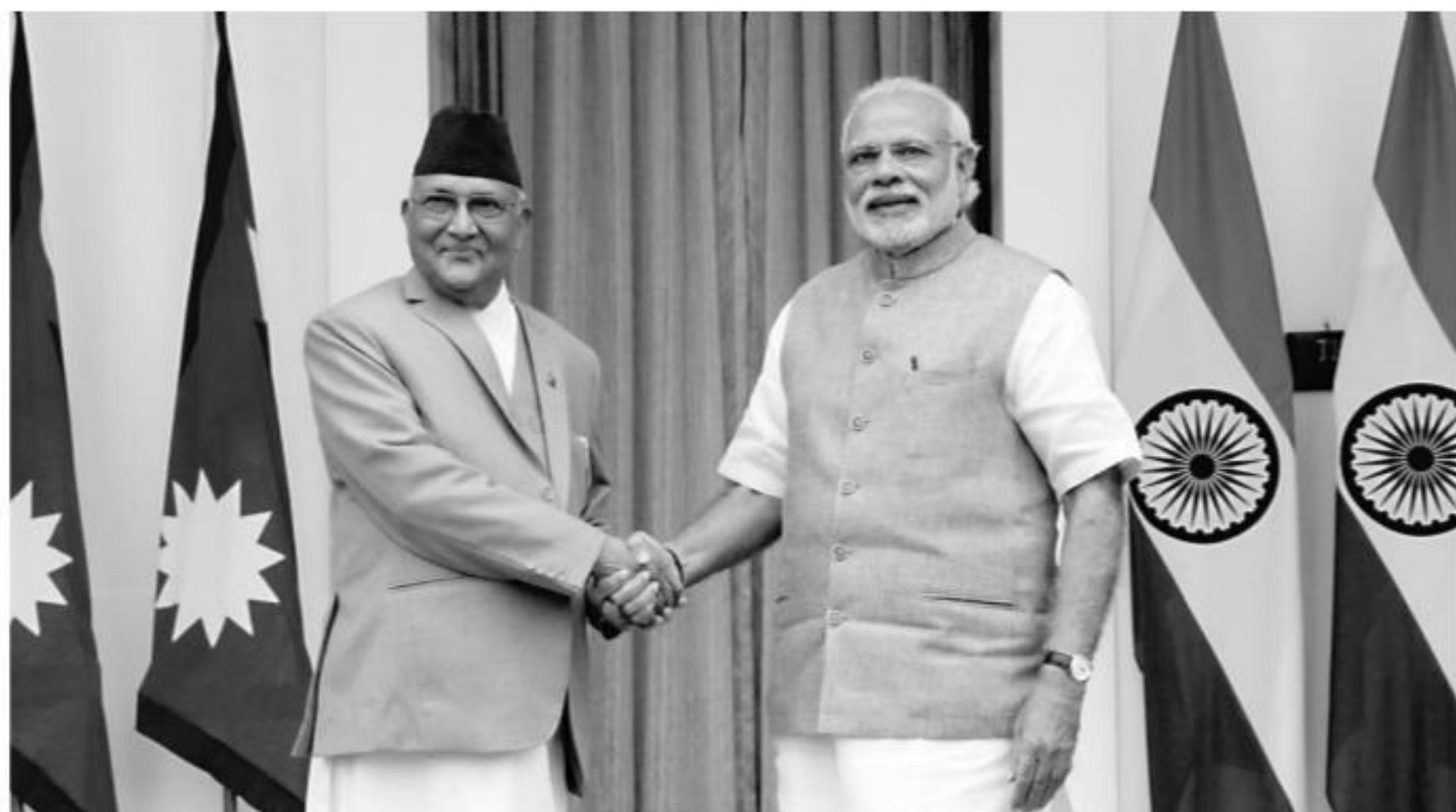
OPIUM BY PARCEL POST

Rai Bahadur K.B. Das-Gupta, Second Presidency Magistrate, Jorabagan Court, passed orders in the case in which Excise Inspector B.N. Deb charged Debi Ram and four others with being in possession of a parcel containing 17 seers of opium without license or pass. The case for the prosecution was that the parcel arrived by post at the Burra Bazar Post Office in the name of K.D. Bannerjee, which was a fictitious name. The Excise department on receipt of information kept watch at the Post Office and on the parcel being delivered, they shadowed the carrier, who entered Harrison Road, where the five accused were present and received it. The Excise officers raided the house and seized the parcel and arrested the accused. The Magistrate sentenced the accused to four months' rigorous imprisonment.

LORD RONALDSHAY AT HOOGHLY

On the occasion of his visit to Hooghly last Monday, His Excellency the Governor was received at the sunder gate by the Persian Consul-General, Nawab Nasir-ul-Mamalek Mirza Shujaat Ali Khan Bahadur (president), Prince Mirza Mohamed Muquim, Aga Mirza Mohamed Ispahani, and Aga Syed Ali Kazmaini, the Mutwalli. He was then conducted by the president through the courtyard of the Imambara to the Marble Hall where the priests and officers were standing to welcome His Excellency. The Head Rowzakhana then paced forward and touching the arms of His Excellency with his fingers offered prayers and expressed the deep gratitude of all concerned in the Imambara for His Excellency's visit to the historic institution of Haji Mohamed Mohsin of revered memory. Rose-water was presented by the president before His Excellency left.

The course of India-Nepal ties



BINOJ BASNYAT

At this particular juncture, when Indo-Nepal relations are faced with unprecedented realities, it is important to factor in certain determinants in our analysis of the bilateral relations. These determinants can set the course of action that steer the future of our political and people-to-people links.

The China-United States power rivalry and China-India competition has and will continue to invite major political events in the Himalayan region. This rivalry and competition will also continue to invite strategic compulsions for nations in the region like Nepal that is at the centre of the Himalayan arc. Freshwater reservoirs, one of the largest in the world, will also be a factor for continued global interest in the region. Political actions and border disputes that appear will

only lead to a trust deficit and reluctance and suspicion for cooperation between nations in the region including Indo-Nepal cooperation.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo remarked that the free world must change China or China will change the free world, indicating an open call for alignment against China's expansionism. Speaking at a meeting of the US-India Business Council, Pompeo also reiterated the importance of India in the region.

With this discourse in one corner, China's growing interest in Nepal, the Belt and Road Initiative and other engagements appear equally appealing to the general eye, and more so to competitive national politics in Nepal. With 20 deals and over \$500 million pledged in aid during President Xi's

visit to Nepal in 2019, China is fulfilling the right political needs in Nepal. The website of Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs shows that China is the largest source of foreign direct investment in Nepal. Chinese investors committed to spend over \$8.3 billion in Nepal during the Nepal Investment Summit concluded in Kathmandu in March 2017. China's economic potent has and will continue to sway policy deliberation in countries including Nepal. The ongoing parliamentary discussion on the Millennium Challenge Corporation projects is an example of many geostrategic compulsions Nepal's political powers may adhere to.

Indo-Nepal agreements will likely be referenced to the necessity of peace and stability in Nepal and shared equity of trans-boundary resources. A handful of treaties and agreements guide and shape the Indo-Nepal special political relationship. The 1816 Sugauli Treaty between Nepal and the East India Company recognised the degree of sovereignty and integrity of Nepal. Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana's goodwill to the East India Company during the 1857 Mutiny was gesticated by returning today's Banke, Bardia, Kailali and Kanchanpur districts in the far western Tarai to Nepal.

The 1923 Nepal-Britain Treaty is also believed to be crucial in the history of Nepal for acknowledgement of Nepal's independence and the right to conduct foreign policy. The 1947 British-India-Nepal Tripartite Agreement involving the three governments is a defence treaty allowing rights and continuation of Nepali citizens in both the British and Indian armies. This continues till today though equal benefits continue to be a contested argument.

India's independence and the fear of the spread of communism south of the Himalaya after China's annexation of Tibet and the threat to the Rana regime created an environment

for the signing of the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship. The 1950 treaty was the initiation of a new era and backbone of Indo-Nepal relations. After the promulgation of Nepal's new constitution in 2015, the Eminent Persons' Group on Nepal-India relations was formed in January 2016 with a mandate to review various aspects of bilateral relations including the 1950 Nepal-India Friendship Treaty in light of the changing regional and global context.

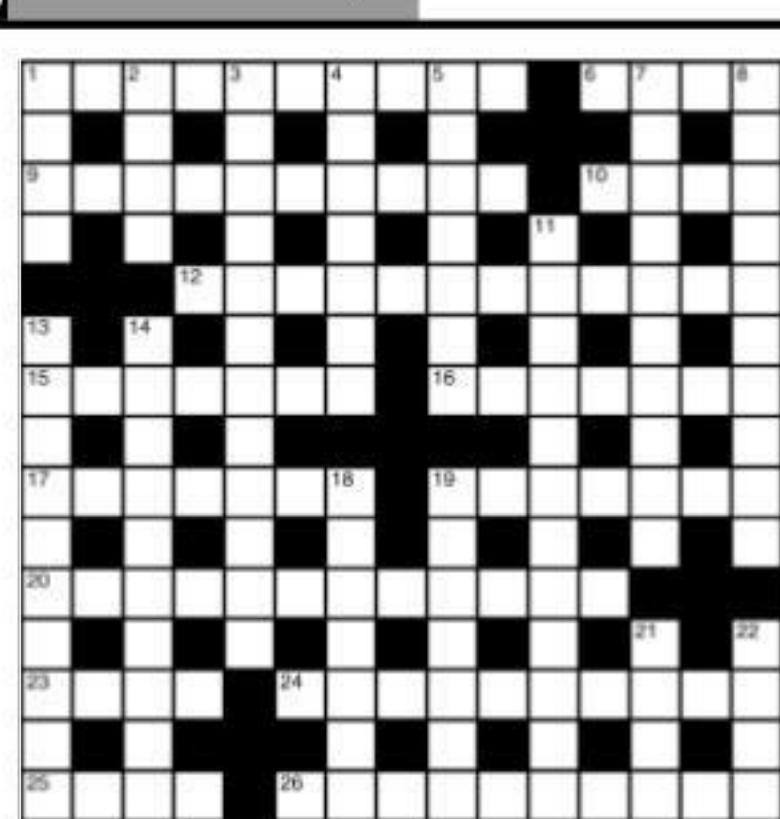
In the middle of 2020, members of the Eminent Persons' Group stated that the group had completed its report in 2018, but still, it couldn't be submitted to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi as no time has been given as yet. It is reported widely that observers find it surprising that the group hasn't been given time to submit its report even though the current prime ministers of Nepal and India — KP Oli and Narendra Modi respectively — had agreed to form it.

Moving forward, two principles will most likely be the guideline reference in Indo-Nepal relations. First, given the buffer zone characteristic of Nepal, the importance of peace and stability in Nepal for the reduced threat to neighbours cannot be ignored. Instability in Nepal may trigger a threat to peace and stability in the region and for Nepal's neighbours. And second, trans-boundary resource benefits and costs should be equally shared between our two nations.

At this juncture, it is important to acknowledge cooperation, coexistence, and competition as guidelines to determine Indo-Nepal relations, and their geostrategic significance in the global order. A possible foreign policy and international relations catastrophe, which will continue to loom, must be met with proper analysis-determinants in order to achieve the right outcomes.

The Kathmandu Post/ANN

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS

- 1 Frantic preparation of stimulant drug (4-6)
- 6 Fishing bait left next to river (4)
- 9 Titillate Republican with depraved habit in China? (3,7)
- 10 Earth surrounded by manure forms natural fuel (4)
- 12 Record individual study about Baltic, oddly (12)
- 15 By autumn, Fawkes was one? (4,3)
- 16 Chance to cover masts with sails in warship (7)
- 17 Competitive runner from Australia mostly terrible (7)
- 19 Celebratory number contains beat but no bass (7)
- 20 At home, consider it inappropriate to show boob (12)

DOWN

- 23 Everybody's got the back of lovely colleague (4)
- 24 They list places iconic scene from Italia '90 may be heard? (10)
- 25 Comfort stop about to be dropped (4)
- 26 Presses tropical islands to protect butterfly, perhaps (10)
- 28 Delayed break, losing 6-0 (4)
- 29 Crazy military commander leaves African island in trauma (4)
- 30 Enemies ought to work in place of worship (7,5)
- 31 Month with evangelical Tory on vacation? That's different! (7)
- 32 At home, consider it inappropriate to show boob (12)

- 7 Stress free? Chin up, mate, could be very different (10)
- 8 Basic flat under guard when roof is blown off (5-5)
- 11 Amateur enthusiast coaches snooker player (12)
- 13 Letter by female artist at end of guide camp (10)
- 14 Iris filled us with extremely reasonable worries (5-2-3)
- 18 Superficial and loveless bad-tempered expression (7)
- 19 Health tracker's introduction welcomed by Polish, but not English (7)
- 21 Go in search of follower of religion, we hear (4)
- 22 Questions coronavirus protection measures, moving metre away (4)

NO 28061

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)



There is a chance of a mini trade deal between US and India even before presidential election

STEPHEN BIEGUN
US DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE

THUMBNAILS

LIC turns 64: Life Insurance Corporation of India has entered 65th year of its existence on 1 September 2020. In its 64 years of existence, LIC has spread its wings from being the leading life insurance company into an internationally recognised financial conglomerate with the presence in fourteen countries. Starting with an initial capital of Rs 5 crore in 1956, today LIC has an asset base of Rs 31,96,144.81 crore, with life fund to the tune of Rs 31,14,496.05 crore, according to a Press release from the insurer.

PTI

Sebi disclosures: To further enhance transparency, the Sebi on Tuesday revised disclosure requirements pertaining to debt and money market securities transactions for mutual funds. The new framework will come into effect from 1 October, the Securities and Exchange Board of India said in circular.

PTI

RIL-Brookfield deal: The government has approved the Rs 25,215-crore deal between a subsidiary of Reliance Industries and Canadian firm Brookfield Infrastructure Partners LP, involving sale of over 1.35 lakh mobile towers, according to a regulatory filing.

PTI

Samsung ACs: Samsung has launched its new range of Wind-Free™ ACs, air-conditioners with PM 1.0 filtration capability. The new line-up of indoor units are designed to provide clean and pure air to homes as well as hospitals, hotels, malls, restaurants and retail outlets among other establishments, said a Press release.

SNS

Colgate campaign: Colgate-Palmolive has launched a new communication under its "Smile karo aur shuru ho jao" campaign. The new film inspires people to use the lockdown as a moment for reassessment and start challenging journeys with optimism, said a Press release.

SNS

Real GDP likely to shrink by 10.9% in FY21: Report

Country's economy contracted by a record 23.9 percent in April-June quarter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 1 SEPTEMBER

After the country's economy contracted by a record 23.9 per cent in April-June quarter, real GDP for financial year 2020-21 is expected to shrink by 10.9 per cent, according to State Bank of India's research report ~Ecowrap. It had earlier estimated real gross domestic product (GDP) at (-) 6.8 per cent for the current fiscal.

The first quarter GDP contraction compares with 3.1 per cent growth in the preceding January-March quarter and 5.2 per cent expansion in the same period a year back.

Our preliminary estimate indicates that all the four quarters of FY21 will exhibit negative real GDP growth, and decline of full-year growth will likely be in double digits (around 10.9 per cent), the research report stated.

GROWTH ESTIMATES

► Our preliminary estimate indicates that all the four quarters of FY21 will exhibit negative real GDP growth, and decline of full-year growth will likely be in double digits (around 10.9 per cent), the research report stated.

► It estimates Q2 real GDP decline in the range of (-) 12 per cent to (-) 15 per cent, while Q3 GDP is seen between (-) 5 per cent and (-) 10 per cent.

Q4 is expected to be in (-) 2 per cent to (-) 5 per cent range.

The report said the country's GDP fell by 23.9 per cent in Q1 FY21 due to the nationwide lockdown imposed on 25 March 2020, in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and is much worse than market and its estimates.

As anticipated private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) growth collapsed as Covid-19 containment measures reduced consumption to mostly essential items, it said.



With investment demand not seeing recovery due to unutilised capacity, the share of private consumption expenditure will remain on the higher side in overall GDP estimate, it noted.

Assuming that it remains at 57 per cent of GDP in nominal terms, we will see at least around 14 per cent decline in PFCE growth in FY21, as against an average of 12 per cent growth for the nine-year period ended FY20, the report said.

This indicates an average swing of 26 per cent in cur-

rent fiscal indicating a consumption washout, it added.

The pandemic has significantly impacted expenditure patterns under individual consumption expenditure components like health and education, the report stated.

It, however, sees two positives amidst all these numbers.

First, RBI sector-wise credit data for the month of July indicates that except industry, credit has increased in all other major sectors in July. There has been a significant increase in credit to MSE (micro and small enterprises), agri and allied and personal loans, the report said.

Second, some of the sectors where new projects announcements were seen during the first quarter include roadways, basic chemicals, electricity, community services such as hospitals, water sewage pipelines, it said.

According to the research report, there is a need to revive sectors such as construction, trade and hotels, aviation.

GST mop-up at ₹86,449 cr in August

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

The gross GST collection in August stood at ₹86,449 crore, down from ₹87,422 crore collected in July, informed the finance ministry today. The ministry also said that the revenue for August is 88 per cent of the GST collected in the same month last year. In August 2019, GST collection stood at ₹89,202 crore.

"The gross GST revenue collected in the month of August 2020 is ₹86,449 crore of which CGST (Central Goods and Services Tax) is ₹15,906 crore, SGST (State Goods and Services Tax) is ₹21,064 crore, IGST (Integrated Goods and Services Tax) is ₹42,264 crore (including ₹19,179 crore collected on import of goods) and Cess is ₹7,215 crore (including ₹6,731 crore collected on import of goods)," said the Press release issued by the finance ministry.

The government also informed that it has settled ₹18,216 crore to CGST and ₹14,650 crore to SGST from IGST as regular settlement. The total revenue earned by the Central and state governments after regular settlement in August 2020 is ₹34,122 crore for CGST and ₹35,714 crore for the SGST.

Auto companies see green shoots

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

The top two car makers in India ~ Maruti Suzuki and Hyundai ~ led the recovery in the auto market in August with 20.2 per cent and 19.9 per cent increase in their respective domestic sales of passenger vehicles during the month.

Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) also saw its domestic passenger vehicle sales grow by 1 per cent last month, while Toyota Kirloskar Motor witnessed a decline in its passenger vehicle sales, although there was improvement over the preceding months since the gradual reopening of the economy.

The country's largest car maker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) said its domestic sales increased by 20.2 per cent to 1,16,704 units last month, as against 97,061 units in August 2019. The company's total sales grew by 17.1 per cent to 1,24,624 units in August as compared to 1,06,413 units in August last year.

Second-biggest car maker Hyundai Motor India posted a 19.9 per cent increase in domestic sales at 45,809 units as against 38,205 units in August 2019. Its total sales were, however, down by 6.06 per cent to 52,609 units last month as against 56,005 units in August 2019.

"The company continues humbly to contribute to the recovery of Indian automobile industry by registering domestic sales volume of 45,809 units in August with positive growth of 19.9 per cent on a comparative low base of last year," HMIL director (sales, marketing and service) Tarun Garg said.

M&M's passenger vehicles sales, including utility vehicles (UVs), cars and vans, in the domestic market stood at 13,651 units in August this year, against 13,507 units in the same month last year, up by 1 per cent.



at 13,651 units in August this year, against 13,507 units in the same month last year, up by 1 per cent.

"At Mahindra, we continue to see good recovery in demand both for SUVs and pick-ups in the small commercial vehicles segment," M&M automotive division chief executive officer Veejay Nakra said.

On the other hand, Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) said its sales declined by 48 per cent to 5,555 units in August. It had sold a total of 10,701 units in August 2019. The company, however, said its sales in August this year exceeded

manufacturing sector, signalling moves towards a recovery from the second quarter downturn. The pickup in demand from domestic markets gave rise to upturns in production and input buying," Shreeya Patel, economist at IHS Markit, said. Despite an expansion in new orders, job shedding continued in the Indian manufacturing sector. The relocation of employees following Covid-19 pandemic was often linked to the reduction in staffing numbers.

"However, not all was positive in August, delivery times lengthened to another marked rate amid ongoing Covid-19 disruption. Meanwhile, employment continued to fall despite signs of capacity pressures, as firms struggled to find suitable workers," Patel said.

The survey noted that the decline in foreign exports weighed slightly on overall new orders as firms cited subdued demand conditions from abroad. However, new business received by Indian manufacturers expanded at the fastest pace since February.

volumes in July 2020, when it had sold 5,386 units.

New entrant MG Motor India reported a 41.2 per cent increase in retail sales at 2,851 units in August as compared to 2,018 units in the same month last year.

The country's largest two-wheeler maker Hero MotoCorp reported an 8.52 per cent increase in domestic sales at 5,68,674 units as against 5,24,003 units in August 2019. Its total sales were up by 7.55 per cent last month at 5,84,456 units as compared to 5,43,406 units earlier.

Royal Enfield reported a 2 per cent decline in domestic sales at 47,571 units in August as compared to 48,752 units earlier. Suzuki Motorcycle India Pvt Ltd said its domestic sales last month stood at 53,142 units as compared to 62,785 units sold in August 2019, a decline of 15.35 per cent.

ICAI to issue forensic accounting standards

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

Chartered accountants' apex body ICAI plans to come out with a detailed set of forensic accounting and investigation standards by the end of December this year as it seeks to codify the best practices in the domains of forensics and investigations.

The decision of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) also comes against the backdrop of rising number of accounting, financial and loan irregularities. In such instances, mostly forensic accounting and investigation are carried out to ascertain facts.

Addressing a virtual Press conference today, ICAI president Atul Kumar Gupta said there will be 30 standards under six groups.

There was no standardised process for forensic account-

ing and investigation and the institute will be developing the first-ever standards in this regard. These standards are expected to be ready by the end of December this year, Gupta said.

The objective of the FAIS (Forensic Accounting and Investigation Standards) is to codify best practices in the twin domains of forensics and investigations, and set basic quality benchmarks for conducting assignments in these areas, the institute said.

"The FAIS is proposed to be principle-based and, therefore, will stipulate certain basic (but mandatory) requirements to be fulfilled by members who undertake such assignments. The FAIS will also provide recommendations on the procedures which may be followed in completing such assignments," it added.

He added that the state-

Rupee breaches 73-mark, Sensex jumps 273 points

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 1 SEPTEMBER

The rupee rallied 73 paise to breach the 73-mark against the US dollar today, supported by liquidity-boosting measures announced by the RBI. It finished at 72.87.

At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened at 73.18 against the US dollar and shuttled between 72.75 and 73.19. It finally finished at 72.87, up 73 paise from its previous close of 73.60.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.25 per cent lower at 91.91.

The Reserve Bank on Monday announced a host of steps, including term repo operations totalling Rs 1 lakh

crore in mid-September, to ease pressure on liquidity and maintain congenial financial conditions with a view to ensuring sustainable recovery of economic growth.

It also said the rupee's recent appreciation has helped contain imported inflationary pressures, which many saw as a signal that the central bank may go slow on dollar purchases.

"Rupee rose following fund inflows in Indian equities and weakness in the dollar against its major crosses," said Gaurang Somaiya, forex and bullion analyst, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

According to Sriram Iyer, senior research analyst, Reliance Securities, "The US dollar continued to extend losses this Tuesday as investors continued to exit the greenback on the back of a dovish Fed."

Moreover, the local unit also gained amid speculation

that the RBI could be more unrestricted towards rupee appreciation after it said a strong rupee is helping contain imported inflationary pressures, Iyer said.

Meanwhile, equity indices returned to winning ways today after a day's pause, propelled by Bharti Airtel,

HUL and Reliance Industries amid a positive trend in global markets.

After a choppy session, the BSE Sensex settled 272.51 points or 0.71 per cent higher at 38,900.80 points. It hit an intra-day high of 39,226.82 points and a low of 38,542.11 points.

Meanwhile, equity indices returned to winning ways today after a day's pause, propelled by Bharti Airtel,

Similarly, the NSE Nifty advanced 82.75 points or 0.73 per cent to settle at 11,470.25 points. It touched a high of 11,553.55 points and a low of 11,366.90 points during the day.

Bharti Airtel was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rallying 6.38 per cent, after the Supreme Court granted 10 years to telecom firms for paying the adjusted gross revenue (AGR)-related dues to the government with certain conditions.

Bajaj Finance, Asian Paints, Tata Steel, NTPC and SBI were among the other gainers.

On the other hand, ONGC, Axis Bank, Tech Mahindra, Infosys and ICICI Bank were among the laggards, dropping up to 3.29 per cent.

"Indian markets exhibited heightened volatility today following publishing of GDP data and SC ruling in the AGR case for telecom com-

panies. Global cues were positive following Chinese factory data which indicated demand increasing. Liquidity, driven by high FII inflows in August, has provided good support for the markets, in spite of a general concern regarding high valuations in some sectors and stocks.

"The market is expecting a slow uptick in economic activity which has resulted in stock specific moves, where there is earnings visibility. Investors need to be prepared to handle volatility in the near term," said Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services.

BSE telecom, metal, power, healthcare, basic materials, capital goods, utilities and FMCG indices surged up to 3.81 per cent, while IT, oil and gas and tech indices ended in the red.

Broad BSE mid-cap and small-cap indices rose as much as 1.16 per cent.

SpiceJet strategy to deal with aviation crisis

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, 1 SEPTEMBER

Following a re-invent, diversify strategy to deal with the unprecedented aviation industry crisis, SpiceJet airline has expanded its global cargo services and entered the Covid-19 market with indigenously-made ventilators.

SpiceJet on Monday announced the launch of SpiceOxy ~ an India-made, non-invasive ventilation device ~ becoming possibly the world's first international airline to make and sell medical equipment.

During the pandemic turmoil, SpiceJet said it had

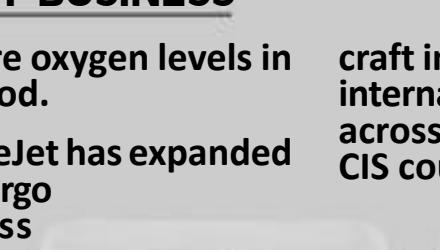
ENTERS MEDICAL EQUIPMENT BUSINESS

► SpiceJet has announced the launch of SpiceOxy ~ an India-made, non-invasive ventilation device ~ becoming possibly the world's first international airline to make and sell medical equipment.

► The airline has also launched the "fingertip pulse oximeter" device to measure oxygen levels in the blood.

► SpiceJet has expanded its air cargo business in the past five months, using non-linered air-

craft in cargo flights to 43 international destinations across Europe, Africa and CIS countries.



operated more than 6,061 cargo flights and transported over 33,297 tons of cargo since 25 March. "Amidst the greatest crisis ever to hit global aviation, SpiceJet has emerged as India's No. 1 cargo company," the airline stated in a media release.

SpiceJet's cargo load of usually medicines, medical equipment, fruits



US SECRETARY OF STATE MIKE POMPEO

EXPRESSING HIS DEEPEST CONDOLENCE ON THE DEMISE OF INDIA'S VETERAN POLITICIAN

WEATHER

CITY	MAX(°C)	MIN(°C)
SINGAPORE	29	26 R
HONG KONG	33	29 H
TOKYO	31	24 R
LONDON	21	16 H
DUBAI	42	30 S
SAN FRANCISCO	19	14 H
NEW YORK	28	23 R
MOSCOW	21	12 H

S=sunny, CL=clear, H=hazy, R=rainy...

THUMBNAILS



Anti-Brexit activist Steve Bray poses with a placard in central London on Tuesday. AFP

Earthquake strikes off the coast of Chile: A strong earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6.8 struck off the coast of northern Chile in the first minutes of Tuesday, the US Geological Survey said. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage and the Chilean navy said there was no possibility of a tsunami. AP

Prisoners granted presidential pardon: Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has pardoned over 400 prisoners held for minor offences to minimise congestion in local jails, officials said on Tuesday. According to the president's office, Rajapaksa has ordered the release of 444 prisoners, including 18 female inmates. PTI

Trump goes mostly dark in TV advertising fight

Ceding the airwaves to Democratic rival Joe Biden, who is currently outspending him by more than 10-to-1

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 1 SEPTEMBER

President Donald Trump has pulled most of his advertising from TV over the past week, ceding the airwaves to Democratic rival Joe Biden, who is currently outspending him by more than 10-to-1, advertising data shows.

Though Trump has an outsized ability to command national attention, it is unusual for a White House contender to go mostly dark on TV the week after their presidential convention. The election is just over two months away and early voting will begin in September in some states.

The move comes as Trump's campaign has burned through

money almost as fast as it has taken it in.

And after Biden drastically narrowed what was once an overwhelming cash advantage enjoyed by the president, campaign officials have acknowledged they were trying to conserve money.

That's allowed Biden an opportunity to communicate an unfiltered message to voters without competing advertising.

During the month of August, Biden doubled what Trump spent, dropping about \$80 million in states that included key battlegrounds such as Wisconsin, Florida, Pennsylvania and Michigan, according to data from the ad tracking firm Kantar/CMAG.

Trump's limited spending



targeted some of those states, but it was also directed to places like Iowa and Montana, which he won handily in 2016.

This week he is spending about \$1.6 million to Biden's \$18.3 million. Most of Trump's ads are placed on Fox News



Channel and CNN, as well as as mattering that will run in New Mexico and Washington, D.C., the data shows.

Trump spokesman Jason Miller said Monday that the campaign will be going back up on the air this week. Yet data from

Kantar/CMAG shows it does not have an increase in advertising booked until Sept. 8.

We have over \$200 million worth of TV ads that are reserved (from) Labor Day until Election Day, Miller said.

"We're speaking with voters in states as they're starting to come online. The lack of advertising to drive home his message comes as Trump has sought to shift the focus of the race from his handling of the coronavirus and the resulting economic collapse to the need for law and order after recent unrest in some cities, including Portland, Oregon, and Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Nationwide, protests against police brutality have largely been peaceful, though there has been some violence, looting and

property destruction, particularly in Portland.

A man affiliated with the right-wing group Patriot Prayer died in that city after he was shot Saturday amid skirmishes between Trump backers who led a car caravan through the city and Black Lives Matter protesters who had gathered for another night of demonstrations.

In Kenosha, a 17-year-old Illinois teen is accused of shooting three people, killing two, during recent protests after a white officer shot Jacob Blake, a Black man, multiple times.

Trump will travel to Kenosha on Tuesday to address the unrest. While the data shows his campaign is not currently running TV ads there, ones it has placed on Facebook that target

the state have focused on the protests.

A handful of those ads seek to tie Democrats to activists who have called for defunding the police in response to law enforcement brutality.

One ad, titled "Democrats have lost their minds," urges Trump supporters to come together to send a united message that we demand law and order.

Biden has said he is against defunding the police and in a speech Monday decried the violence while blaming Trump for stoking division.

He doesn't want to shed light, he wants to generate heat, and he's stoking violence in our cities," Biden said. "He can't stop the violence because for years he's fomented it."

Ex-adviser to first lady: Working for Trump was a 'mistake'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 1 SEPTEMBER

met in 2003 in the hallways of Vogue magazine, where Woloff worked.

Stephanie Grisham, a spokesperson for Mrs. Trump, blasted the book in an emailed statement as full of mistruths and paranoia based on an imagined need for revenge.

Woloff also writes about frostiness in the relationship between the first lady and the president's eldest daughter, Ivanka Trump. She said she and the first lady both once bellied over with laughter after Mrs. Trump referred to Ivanka Trump long seen as her father's favorite child as "Princess." Woloff also detailed how they launched Operation Block Ivanka to keep her from being too prominently featured in inauguration day photographs of her father being sworn in to office.

Ivanka Trump declined comment Monday. A person close to Ivanka Trump said it's traditional for a president's children to join in such a historic occasion. Woloff devotes two



of the book's 11 chapters to planning for the January 2017 inauguration, describing the committee responsible for raising money to pay for several days of events as beset with organizational and communications issues that complicated her work.

She says she repeatedly raised questions about spending but she eventually came to be viewed as the problem. Trump's Presidential Inaugural Committee raised nearly \$107 million for the lavish event, an unprecedented inaugural price tag nearly twice that of President Barack Obama's inauguration in 2009.

Like a broken record, I kept expressing my concerns about budgets, Woloff wrote. Also like a broken record, I became everyone's problem. Some of those involved in or aware of the committee's work told

The Associated Press in September 2017 that the orchestration of the inauguration was marred by last-minute decisions, staffing turnover and little financial oversight.

Woloff told ABC News in an interview broadcast Monday that she continues to cooperate with multiple criminal investigations into the committee's operations.

In the book, Woloff portrays herself in a positive light and says she agreed to stay on and work in the White House for long hours, without pay and away from her husband and three children in New York because she wanted to help the first lady set up her operation and avoid being marginalised.

She also sheds light on Mrs. Trump's desire for privacy, recounting numerous occasions where the first lady had told Woloff she would do what was right for her, or her now 14-year-old son, Barron, and did not care what the public thought about her.

She continued to live in New York after the inauguration so Barron wouldn't have to change schools in the middle of the year. They moved to the White House in June 2017.

Woloff says Mrs. Trump delayed her arrival in Washington for another reason: She was waiting for renovations and redecorating in the White House residence to be completed, starting with a new shower and toilet in her bedroom.

Woloff also offered an explanation for widely viewed Inauguration Day footage of Mrs. Trump smiling then sharply frowning after Donald Trump turned around to smile at her on the platform. The footage led to the #FreeMelania hashtag and speculation that she was unhappy in her new role.

Detentions resume in Belarus as students take to the streets

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MOSCOW, 1 SEPTEMBER

Belarusian authorities on Tuesday resumed detaining protesters in the capital, Minsk, where students took to the streets demanding the resignation of the country's authoritarian leader after an election the opposition denounced as rigged.

Several dozen students on Tuesday held pickets outside their universities and marched through the city center on the fourth week of mass protests rocking the country.

Belarusian media reported that at least 18 students were detained as police moved to break up the crowd.

President Alexander Lukashenko has dismissed the protesters as Western puppets and bristled at the demands for him to step down after 26 years in power or start a dialogue with the opposition.

After a ferocious crackdown on demonstrators in the first days after the August 9 vote that caused international outrage, his government has avoided large-scale violence against demonstrators and sought to end the protests with threats and the selective jailing of activists.

Several organisers of strikes

at top industrial plants have

been detained. On Tuesday,

people started gathering near

several large plants in support

of the striking workers.

Belarusian prosecutors have opened a criminal probe against the opposition Coordination Council, accusing its members of undermining the country's security. Last week, the country's courts handed 10-day jail sentences to two council members and summoned several others for questioning, including Svetlana Alexievich, the 2015 Nobel literature laureate.

Another council member, Lilia Vaslova, was detained on Monday.

The U.S. and the European Union have criticized the Aug. 9 election that extended Lukashenko's rule as neither free nor fair and urged Belarusian authorities to engage in a dialogue with the opposition.

Following a fierce dispersal of peaceful demonstrators in the days after the vote that left nearly 7,000 people

detained, hundreds injured by police rubber bullets, stun grenades and beatings and at least three protesters dead, police stopped interfering for the following two weeks, but last week again cracked up the pressure on demonstrators and began breaking up rallies.

The Belarusian government also cracked down hard on the news media, deporting some foreign journalists from the country and revoking the accreditation of many Belarusian journalists.

Two Moscow-based Associated Press journalists who were covering the recent protests in Belarus were deported to Russia on Saturday.

In addition, the AP's Belarusian journalists were told by the government that their press credentials had been revoked. The Belarusian Association of Journalists said over the weekend that accreditation rights were also taken away from 17 Belarusians working for several other media, including Germany's ARD television, the BBC, Reuters and AFP, and U.S.-funded radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty said five of its journalists lost their accreditation.

The U.S. and the EU officials have strongly condemned the media crackdown. The detention of hundreds of demonstrators didn't deter the opposition from mounting another massive rally on Sunday, which saw an estimated 100,000 flood the streets of the Belarusian capital amid a heavy police presence.

Schools, colleges reopen after months of lockdown in England

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON, 1 SEPTEMBER

Wearing masks, hundreds of thousands of children and young people across England returned to their classes at schools and colleges on Tuesday after over five months of lockdown imposed to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

Students were seen queuing up outside their schools ahead of their classes, as new rules are in place to stop the spread of Covid-19.

The Department for Education earlier said pupils will return to school environments with a system of controls in place to keep all students, teachers and staff safe by minimising direct contacts and maintaining social distancing wherever possible.

Face coverings are mandatory in communal areas and corridors at schools and colleges within areas of the country deemed at high risk of Covid-19 infections.

For many, today marks the first day of a new school year, with thousands of children set to walk through their school gates again as schools across the country begin to reopen for full-time education for more than five months, since a nationwide lockdown was imposed on March 23.

said earlier. I do not underestimate how challenging the last few months have been but I do know how important it is for children to be back in school, not only for their education but for their development and wellbeing too, the minister said.

It is down to the sheer hard work of so many teachers and school staff that from today pupils will be able to learn in their classrooms together again. It has not been easy for parents nor schools, but we could not have got to this point without your support and I cannot say thank you enough for this, he said.

The DfE emphasised that the new school term follows the backing for a full return from the chief medical officers across the four nations of the UK in their recent consensus statement, highlighting that the health risk posed by Covid-19 to children is extremely low and noting the significant risk to young people's wellbeing if they are not back in school.

Most children have been out of full-time education for more than five months, since a nationwide lockdown was imposed on March 23.

CLIMATE ACTIVISTS



Performance activists with climate protest group Extinction Rebellion perform at a demonstration in St. Peter's Square, Manchester, north-west England on Tuesday. AFP

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PARIS, 1 SEPTEMBER

The French satirical paper whose staff was decimated in a violent attack by Islamic extremists in 2015 is reprinting caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed cited by the killers, declaring "history cannot be rewritten nor erased."

The announcement on Tuesday came on the eve of the first trial for the January 2015 attacks against Charlie Hebdo and, two days later, a kosher supermarket.

The killings touched off a wave of violence claimed by the Islamic State group across Europe. Seventeen people died 12 of them at the editorial offices along with all three attackers.

Thirteen men and a woman accused of providing the

acquaintance of theirs stormed a kosher supermarket on the eve of the Jewish Sabbath, killing four hostages and claiming allegiance to the Islamic State group. The Kouachi brothers had by then held up in a printing office with another hostage. All three attackers died in near-simultaneous police raids.

The supermarket attacker, Amedy Coulibaly, also killed a young policewoman. The caricatures re-published this week were first printed in 2006 by the Danish newspaper Jyllands Posten, setting off sometimes violent protests by Muslims who believe depicting Mohammed is blasphemy.

Charlie Hebdo, which was then little-known outside France and regularly caricatures religious leaders from various

faiths, republished them soon afterwards.

The paper's Paris offices were firebombed in 2011 and its editorial leadership placed under police protection, which remains in place to this day.

Laurent Sourisseau, the paper's director and one of the few staff to have survived the attack, named each of the victims in a foreword to this week's edition.

Rare are those who, five years later, dare oppose the demands that are still so pressing from religions in general, and some in particular, wrote Sourisseau, who is also known as Riss.

Three of the accused, including the wife of one of the attackers, will not be at the trial because they are abroad and it's not known if they're alive or dead.

We want to know what really happened even if the terrorists won't be there. I hope that those who worked with them, helped them financially will be punished for

what they did. That's the only thing we expect, Bathily said.

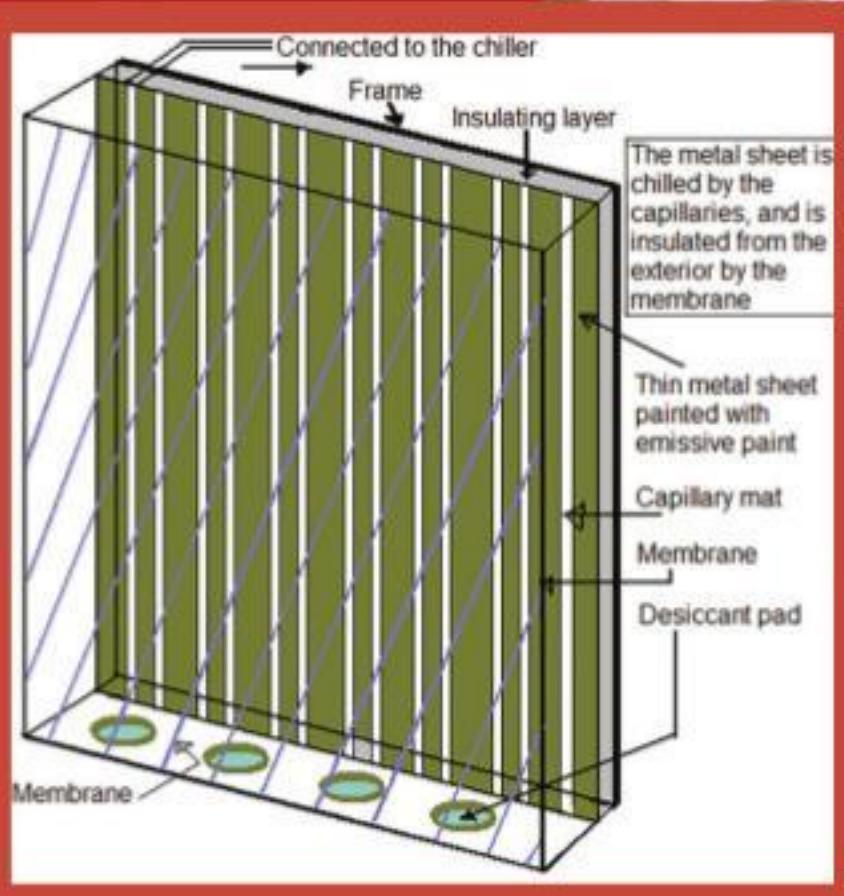
We want to know the truth because we don't know anything, we've heard nothing for the past five years.

The world rallied behind France in the days after the killings.

Leaders from around the world joined millions of people who poured into Paris' enormous Republique plaza and other gathering spots in France bearing defiant signs that read I am Charlie.

Who needs an AC for cooling?

It is people, and not the surroundings, that feel the heat



S ANANTHANARAYANAN

In our approach to beating the heat by creating bubbles of coolness, we expend resources in cooling things that do not appreciate the effort. The heat capacity of things in a room that air conditioners cool is many times more than the cooling people need.

Eric Teitelbaum, Kian Wee Chen, Dorit Aviv Kipp, Bradford, Lea Ruefenacht, Denon Sheppard, Megan Teitelbaum, Forrest Meggers, Jovan Pantelic and Adam Rysanek, from the Singapore campuses of ETH, Zurich and Berkley Education Alliance, Princeton University and the universities of Pennsylvania, British Columbia and California, report in the journal, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, an experiment with "radiative cooling" – a method to allow the body to throw out heat, but without spending energy in cooling the surroundings.

Just as we can throw coloured light on an object, but we cannot "shine darkness" on it,

only warm bodies radiate heat – cool things do not "radiate coolness". But cool things absorb more heat than they emit, and their presence helps warm things lose their heat and cool down – the question is only of limiting the cooling that needs to be cooled.

The common method we use to help people stay cool in warm weather is air conditioning, which is to blow refrigerated air into the spaces that people occupy. To help them stay warm in the winter, we do use "radiators", or warm objects that warm the air in the room, but people can also directly sense the warmth of radiators. For cooling, however, the only practical way is to chill air by passing it through a refrigerator, and then blow it into the room (apart from just blowing air, which causes a little cooling by evaporation of moisture on human bodies). And the cool air blown into the room needs to chill the walls, furniture and floor, before people begin to be comfortable.

The human body stays at an almost constant temperature of 37°C or 98.6°F. As the surroundings are usually cooler, there is a balance of heat production within the body and heat loss to the surroundings. The heat loss is mainly by radiation, where a warm body loses more heat than the radiation that it absorbs from its surroundings. And there is some heat lost to the

surrounding air, by contact, but this is not much, as the air has little heat capacity. The problem, however, starts when the surroundings get warm, as on a summer day, and the body does not lose enough heat. The body needs to sweat, to lose heat by evaporation, but if it is humid, this is not effective and discomfort increases.

The method the PNAS group have used is to position in the room a specially fashioned, substantial "cool" surface, which would absorb heat radiated by human bodies but not return much radiant heat to the surroundings – a kind of one-way window, through which radiation can escape. The reason why just any cold surface in the room cannot do the same thing is that an ordinary surface would rapidly warm by the heat from the surrounding air, which would blow over it in convection currents. And then, the moisture in the air would condense on the cool surface. Condensation releases a great deal of heat. In the case of air conditioning, in fact, the power used in drying the air that is circulated is greater than the energy needed for cooling it. The arrangement that the PNAS group has created takes care of these two effects and allows the cool surface to receive heat only by radiation that falls on it.

The arrangement, which was tried out in an outdoor pavilion in Singapore, where the temperature was almost 30°C, was a wall, with a metal surface that was kept cool, at 17°C, by cir-

culating refrigerated water. Normally, currents of air would have warmed the sheet. But this was prevented by an insulating, low density, polyethylene film, a membrane that was placed before the metal sheet. "...we eliminate this unwanted convection as a mechanism of heat transfer," the paper says. The film, however, was transparent to thermal radiation, and the heat from warm human bodies in the pavilion could pass through, to be absorbed by the cool surface.

As for condensation – the insulating film kept the surface exposed to air from getting much cooler. Trials showed that even with 66.5 per cent humidity, and a "dew point", or the temperature at which condensation starts, of 23.7°C, there was no condensation on the wall surface. The chilled water circulating inside the wall could go down to 12.7°C below the dew point, the paper says, before condensation set in.

And for human comfort? There was a study of how 55 persons, who participated in a trial, perceived cooling, during the days between 8 and 27 January, the summer in Singapore. Of the 55 persons, 37 entered the pavilion when the cooling system was on and the remaining when the system was switched off. The group which entered when the system was on, reported a "satisfactory" ambient temperature in the pavilion 79 per cent of the time, in those hot days, the study says. It was seen that warm objects in the area lost heat to the absorber wall, and the humans, the warmest objects, were the main losers. The air temperature, however, was hardly affected, falling from 31°C to just 30°C. This last observation shows that very little energy is being spent in cooling the air – which is the sole vehicle of low temperatures in conventional cooling systems.

The technology reported is thus an effective stand-in for air conditioning. The reduction of energy consumption can be 50 per cent, using only what it takes for chilled water to circulate in the heat absorber walls, an author of the paper says. This is significant, as air conditioning forms a major part of the world's energy budget, and by the end of this year, the demand is projected to surpass the demand for heating.

Another advantage of the new system is that the cooled spaces can be well ventilated. In air conditioning, economy demands that much of the cooled air be recirculated. One person with a cold (or worse) in an enclosed office is hence sure to give it to all the others.

The technology of radiant cooling works because the heat from human bodies is not absorbed by the surrounding air, to be radiated back, but can reach the cool surface. At the scale of the Earth, however, the atmosphere does not allow heat to escape, which is why the Earth does not cool deep below freezing at night (and why changes in the atmosphere are causing global warming).

There is, however, a narrow band of wavelengths, eight to 13 micrometres, to which the atmosphere is transparent. Emission of heat in this wavelength window goes straight out into space. This has been made use of by covering objects with films that convert heat into the required wavelength range. The result is that the objects can cool, through "radiative cooling", four to five °C below the ambient, while they are out in the sun. A useful thing, for "green" cold stores, and solar energy panels, which become less efficient when they get warmer.

The writer can be contacted at response@simplescience.in

PLUS POINTS

Measuring brainwaves

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras have shown that electroencephalogram can be used to measure brainwaves in workers, to assess their mental sharpness, especially during times of crisis.

EEG involves placing sensors on the scalp of the subject and measuring brain wave activity. Such measurements will help in assessing the capability of the worker to respond to an emergency in real-time, which, in turn, could prevent accidents and mishaps on a factory floor.



The IIT-Madras team has shown the potential of EEG, a technique that measures brain activity, to assess the cognitive workload of human operators in a chemical plant control room. The cognitive workload is the level of measurable mental effort that is expended by an individual to perform a task. High cognitive workload state of workers makes them prone to commit errors that can lead to accidents.

The research was undertaken by a team led by Rajagopalan Srinivasan, department of chemical engineering, IIT-Madras. The results have been published recently in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Computers and Computer Engineering* in a paper co-authored by Srinivasan, Mohd Umair Iqbal and Babji Srinivasan.

Elaborating about the need for this research, Rajagopalan Srinivasan said, "Human errors are the cause of nearly 70 per cent of industrial accidents, the world over. Human errors, whether at the planning or execution stage, depend not only on the skill of the worker but also on his/her mental state and sharpness at that time. Anybody's performance will become error-prone if there is a mismatch between the demands of the task which the person is responsible for and their ability at that moment to handle it. Such a mismatch leads to high cognitive workload in human operators, often a precursor to poor performance."

All our thoughts and activities are driven by electrical signals between the cells in our brain called brainwaves, which occur at different frequencies and are called alpha, beta, gamma, theta and delta. The relative magnitudes of these waves along with their variation are a signature of our thought process and current mental state."

The research team affixed sensors to the heads of six participants and had them perform eight tasks each. The nature of the tasks was to monitor a typical industrial section for any disturbances, which if not controlled by the participant in a given time frame, can lead to accidents. Thus, the nature of the job required them to understand the plant (industrial section) behaviour, take appropriate decisions and actions if any disturbance occurred. The disturbance increased their cognitive workload, and



only if the correct decision was made, did the cognitive workload reduce.

Their results showed that the amount of theta waves could identify any mismatch between the worker's mental model of the process and the actual plant behaviour during abnormal situations. This makes sense because the "theta band" of brainwaves has been thought to be responsible for the control process of working memory functions.

The determination of the varying cognitive workload, in turn, influences human performance, and indeed, the IIT-Madras researchers found that the power spectral density in the theta band, correlated well with participants' successes and failures during the task. "We intend to study the potential of these EEG methods to improve human performance in various high-risk industries, thus opening a new paradigm to industrial safety and its relation to the real-time mental state of the worker," Rajagopalan Srinivasan said.

The EEG-based approach can provide information about the cognitive workload of operators during training, which in turn can be used to fine-tune the training process itself. It can also provide targeted cues during learning, to improve the overall effectiveness of training.

INITIATION OF TRANSLATION

Here is the process by which ribosomes synthesise proteins in the cell's nucleus

TAPAN KUMAR MAITRA

The initiation of translation in prokaryotes reveals that initiation can be subdivided into three distinct steps. In step (1), three initiation factors – called IF1, IF2, and IF3 – bind to the small (30S) ribosomal subunit, with GTP attaching to IF2.

In step (2) mRNA and the tRNA carrying the first amino acid bind to the 30S ribosomal subunit. The mRNA is bound to the 30S subunit in its proper orientation by means of a special nucleotide sequence called the mRNA's *ribosome-binding site* (also known as the Shine-Dalgarno sequence, after its discoverers). This sequence consists of a stretch of three to nine purine nucleotides located slightly upstream of the initiation codon. These purines in the mRNA form complementary base pairs with a pyrimidine-rich sequence at the 3' end of 16S rRNA, which forms the ribosome's mRNA-binding site

The importance of the mRNA-binding site has been shown by studies involving colicins, which are proteins produced by certain strains of *Escherichia coli* that can kill other types of bacteria. One such protein, colicin E3, kills bacteria by destroying their ability to synthesize proteins. Upon entrance into the cytoplasm of susceptible bacteria, colicin E3 catalyses the removal of a 49-nucleotide fragment from the 3' end of 16S rRNA, destroying the mRNA-binding site and thereby creating ribosomes that can no longer initiate polypeptide synthesis.

The binding of mRNA to the mRNA-binding site of the small ribosomal subunit places the mRNA's AUG start codon at the ribosome's P site, where it can then bind to the anticodon of the appropriate tRNA. The first clue that a special kind of tRNA is involved in this step emerged when it was discovered that roughly half the proteins in *E. coli* contain methionine at their N-terminal ends. This was surprising because methionine is a relatively uncommon amino acid, accounting for no more than a few percent of the amino acids in bacterial proteins.

The explanation for such a pattern became apparent when it was discovered that bacterial cells contain two different methionine-specific tRNAs. One, designated tRNA_{Met}, carries a nor-

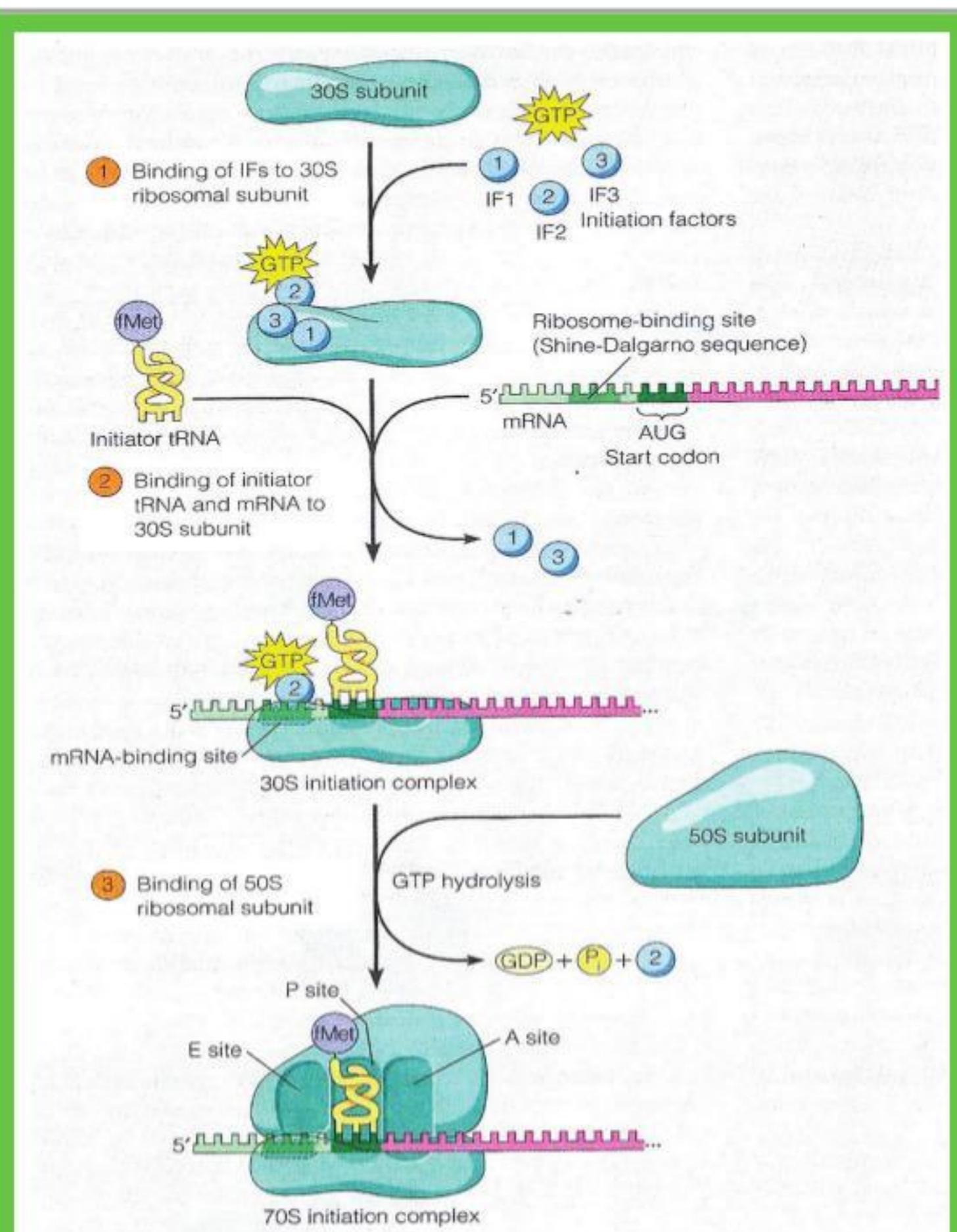
mal methionine destined for insertion into the internal regions of polypeptide chains. The other, called tRNA_{fMet}, carries a methionine that is converted to the derivative N-formylmethionine, the amino group of methionine is blocked by the addition of a formyl group and so cannot form a peptide bond with another amino acid; only the carboxyl group is available for bonding to another amino acid. Hence N-formylmethionine can be situated only at the N-terminal end of a polypeptide chain, suggesting that tRNA_{fMet} functions as an initiator tRNA that starts the process of translation.

The idea was soon confirmed by the discovery that bacterial polypeptide chains in the early stages of synthesis always contain N-formylmethionine at their N-terminus. Following completion of the polypeptide chain (and in some cases while it is still being synthesized), the formyl group, and often the methionine itself, is enzymatically removed.

During initiation, the initiator tRNA with its attached N-formylmethionine is bound to the P site of the 30S ribosomal subunit by the action of initiation factor IF2 (bound to GTP), which can distinguish initiator tRNA_{fMet} from other kinds of tRNA. This attribute of IF2 helps to explain why AUG start codons bind to the initiator tRNA_{fMet}, whereas AUG codons located elsewhere in mRNA bind to the non-initiating tRNA_{Met}. Once tRNA_{fMet} enters the P site, its anticodon base-pairs with the AUG start codon in the mRNA, and IF1 and IF3 are released. At this point, the 30S subunit with its associated IF2-GTP, mRNA, and N-formylmethionyl tRNA_{fMet} is referred to as the 30S initiation complex.

Finally, in step (3), the 30S initiation complex is joined by a free 50S ribosomal subunit, generating the 70S initiation complex. Binding of the 50S subunit is driven by hydrolysis of the GTP associated with IF2, which occurs as IF2 leaves the ribosome. At this stage, all three initiation factors have been released.

The initiation process in eukaryotes involves a different set of initiation factors (called eIFs), a somewhat different pathway for assembling the initiation complex, and a special initiator tRNA_{Met} that – like the normal

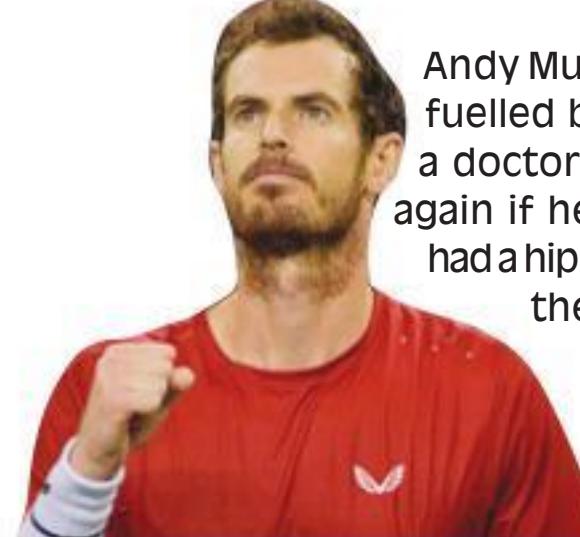


tRNA for methionine but unlike the initiator tRNA of prokaryotes – carries methionine that does not become formylated. The initiation factor eIF2, with GTP already attached, binds to the initiator methionyl tRNA_{Met} before the tRNA then binds to the small ribosomal subunit along with other initiation factors. The resulting complex next binds to the 5' end of an mRNA, recognizing the 5' cap (in some situations the complex may instead bind to an internal ribosome entry sequence or IRES, which lies directly upstream of the start codon of certain types of mRNA, including viral mRNAs).

After binding to an mRNA, the small ribosomal subunit, with the initiator tRNA in tow, scans along the mRNA and usually begins translation at the first AUG triplet it encounters. The nucleotides on either side of the eukaryotic start codon seem to be involved in its recognition; ACCAUGG (also called a Kozak sequence) is a common start sequence, where the underlined triplet is the actual start codon. When the initiator tRNA_{Met} base-pairs with the start codon, the large ribosomal subunit joins the complex.

The writer is associate professor and head, department of botany, Ananda Mohan College, Kolkata

TOUGH GUY



Andy Murray (in photo, left) is in the US Open fuelled by a determination to prove wrong a doctor who had said he would never play again if he underwent major hip surgery. He had a hip "resurfacing" operation last year against the doctor's advice.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Pandemic privilege: Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli understands "the privilege" of being able to play cricket in the middle of a raging pandemic and he wants all Indian Premier League participants to respect the tournament's bio-secure protocols.

'Right move': Sunrisers Hyderabad bowler Bhuvnesh Kumar believes the next edition of the Indian Premier League is the right tournament to kick-start cricket in India which has been shut down since March following the global outbreak of the novel coronavirus.

Enter Zampa: Royal Challengers Bangalore have brought in Australian leg-spinner Adam Zampa as the replacement for Kane Richardson, who has pulled out of the forthcoming edition of the Indian Premier League as he is expecting the birth of his first child.

Oz belief: Josh Hazlewood believes England have impressive white-ball depth but the Australia fast bowler is undaunted ahead of limited-overs matches between the teams. England are without several first-team players in their Twenty20 series against Pakistan.

Football secrets: Fugitive US intelligence-leaker Edward Snowden will be one of 45 witnesses testifying in Portugal in defence of Rui Pinto, whose trove of 70 million documents exposed the dealings of European soccer clubs, his lawyer said on Monday.

Positive tests: Two Paris Saint-Germain players have tested positive for Covid-19 and gone into quarantine, the club announced on Monday. French media said Angel Di Maria and Leandro Paredes had cut short their holidays after contracting the virus.

One-man show: Lewis Hamilton won easily at Sunday's Belgian Grand Prix – and then admitted he would have been sent to sleep through boredom by his own dominant display. The champion and his all-conquering Mercedes machine are in a class of one this season.

'Drunk Brit': A policeman involved in the arrest of Manchester United captain Harry Maguire in Mykonos has claimed Greek police treated the defender the same as they would any other drunk Briton. Maguire said he feared he was being abducted when he was arrested.

Cycling Summit: The Cycling Federation of India (CFI) on Tuesday announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with marketing exploration firm Contarctica to introduce the first ever Cycling Summit in India. The CFI said in a release that the summit would be hosted in Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore and was "expected to be a unique confluence of cycling enthusiasts, renowned athletes and businesses from all over the country".

Gower praises Kohli: In a conversation on SportsTiger's show "Off-the-Field" English cricket legend David Gower said, "Virat Kohli as the leading player of the world calling test cricket as the toughest and most important form is great PR for the format." He also said, "If I have to pick a Captain for the team it will surely be Virat Kohli, what I like about Virat apart from his talent is his passion and absolute drive. Gower discussed his illustrious cricketing career, test-cricket, the Ashes, IPL's impact, Virat Kohli and how the game has changed over the years."

Players in contact with Covid-positive Paire remain in US Open

AGENCIES
NEW YORK, 1 SEPTEMBER

USOpen players believed to have come in contact with Benoit Paire - who tested positive for Covid-19 - will remain in the Grand Slam, organisers said yesterday.

The Frenchman was removed from the men's draw made, and we're continuing on to have those individuals in the competition based on the medical science and all of those facts," she told *Tennis Channel*, without naming any of the players involved. "They will be in the competition starting this morning."

A US Tennis Association spokesman confirmed that players suspected of having come into contact with Paire, according to French sports publication *L'Equipe*. The report led to doubts

about their participation at Flushing Meadows, but tournament director Stacey Allaster told *Tennis.com* that no player linked to Paire had been thrown out.

"Contact-tracing has been executed, decisions have been made, and we're continuing on to have those individuals in the competition based on the medical science and all of those facts," she told *Tennis Channel*, without naming any of the players involved. "They will be in the competition starting this morning."

The New York Times reported that players were required to sign a revised agreement to allow them to remain in the tournament.

As well as daily testing, the Times reported that the tighter protocols meant the players would only be allowed to leave

undergo daily testing.

"Together with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the USTA has built an enhanced protocol plan for those players who might have been potentially exposed to the infected player," a spokesman said. "As part of these enhanced protocols, all potentially exposed players will now be tested on a daily basis, rather than every four days."

The New York Times reported that players were required to sign a revised agreement to allow them to remain in the tournament.

As well as daily testing, the Times reported that the tighter protocols meant the players would only be allowed to leave

their hotel rooms to travel to the US National Tennis Center.

They have also been barred from entering locker rooms and dining areas at the tournamentsite, the ***Times*** said, and are required to use separate fitness, training and warming up areas and only by appointment.

The arrangements have led to these players expressing frustration after they were moved into a so-called "bubble within a bubble."

Mannarino, who defeated Italy's Lorenzo Sonego 6-1, 6-4, 2-6, 6-3 on Monday, said the ATP had contacted him on Saturday night to say he needed to stay in his room as a player had tested positive for Covid-

19. On Sunday evening, he was told he would be allowed to compete but under a stricter protocol.

"I'm wondering at the moment if I might have the virus or not," he told reporters. "I've been tested every day since we had the news and I'm going to be tested every day."

He said the experience had caused him sleepless nights and left him mentally exhausted. Mannarino added that he was relieved his close friend Paire was not experiencing any severe symptoms.

Paire, 31, had arrived in New York to play the Western & Southern Open last week, a tune-up for the US Open, but he did not complete his first-

round match against Croatia's Borna Coric. He had appeared unwell during the match and asked for a doctor in the opening set before retiring in the second while trailing 6-0, 1-0.

"We're not 100 per cent (sure) that (Paire) got the virus here but that's a big probability because he's been here for a while now, he'd tested negative many times," Mannarino said.

He said they had played cards together during their time on site and estimated Paire had contact with "probably half of the draw".

The incident echoes challenges leagues across North America have faced bringing

sports back in the Covid-19 era, amid an outbreak that has killed more than 180,000 people in the United States.

Mladenovic complained that she now felt like she was stuck inside a "bubble within a bubble". The Frenchwoman, who beat American Hailey Baptiste 7-5, 6-2, said the enhanced protocols made it "very tough" to compete.

"I'm allowed to play my match, literally allowed to do nothing else. I don't know how we'll keep going," she said. "It's mentally very tough, I still have to find a way and discuss with the USTA and organise things in order for me to beat least competitive and have equipment to keep working."

US Open: Djokovic rolls into second round

AGENCIES
NEW YORK, 1 SEPTEMBER

Novak Djokovic (in photo) got his campaign to win a fourth U.S. Open, and 18th Grand Slam title overall, off to a flying start on Monday by beating Damar Dzumur 6-1 6-4 6-1 to advance to the second round.

Djokovic broke Dzumur's serve for a seventh time to seal the win in the first night match on Arthur Ashe Stadium court, which, due to COVID-19, was missing the thousands of rowdy New York tennis fans that usually flock to Queens every year.

After a dominant start, Djokovic struggled in the second set and lost his tempereven after closing it out.

"I thought I started very well, aset and a break (up) then things got complicated," a masked Djokovic said in courtside interview.

"I lost my focus, he started missing less and he put some good variety in the game...he came up with some good shots and it was anybody's game midway through the second set."

In the end Dzumur, who hails from Bosnia and Herzegovina, had no answer to the world number one's blistering serve and stout defence in a match that lasted just under two hours.

The 28-year-old did not make it easy on himself, committing 41 unforced errors and eight double faults to fall to 0-3 lifetime against Djokovic.

With the win the Serbian, who won his fourth title of the year at the Western & Southern Open on Saturday, improved to 24-0 on the season.

Djokovic's health had been a question coming into Monday's match after he needed treatment on his neck at the Western & Southern Open but he said he had recovered.



"I feel fine, to be honest I did struggle a bit in the semis and final back-to-back but I had 48 hours to recover," said Djokovic, who resigned as head of the ATP's Player Council at the weekend and announced the formation of the Professional Tennis Players Association.

Next up is a second-round meeting with Briton Kyle Edmund, who defeated Alexander Bublik earlier in the day. Djokovic holds a 5-1 advantage in their head-to-head meetings.

With the two other members of the sport's Big Three - Roger Federer and Rafa Nadal - absent from the tournament, Djokovic is a heavy favourite to hoist the trophy and pull with in one Grand Slam title of Nadal (19) and two of Federer (20).

Pliskova advances

Top-seeded Karolina Pliskova has advanced in straight sets at the U.S. Open.

Pliskova surged ahead of

Anhelina Kalinina 4-1 in the opening set, lost three games in a row, then took the last eight for a 6-4, 6-0 victory. She had a 26-7 edge in winners.

Pliskova is ranked third in the world but has the top seed in New York.

& Southern Open final against Victoria Azarenka and the fourth seed said on Monday she was managing the pain, though her movement did not seem to be affected against Doi.

"Physically I feel like I could be better. But I can't complain because I won the match," Osaka told reporters.

"The leg feels relatively good."

"It was still a little bit sore ... But then during the match, it slowly got a little bit worse. For the most part I'm managing." The past week saw Osaka, 22, emerge as tennis' torchbearer in protests against racial injustice and she walked out to the court wearing a mask featuring the name of Breonna Taylor, a Black woman killed by police officers who burst into her apartment in March.

"Actually, so I have seven (masks)," said Osaka.

"It's quite sad that seven masks aren't enough for all the names. Hopefully I'll get to the final so you can see all of them."

Franchises see glass half-full despite financial hit from Covid-19

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, 1 SEPTEMBER

(financial) hit for the BCCI, along with making arrangements for bio-secure bubble which will be an additional cost burden on the board," Santosh N, an external advisor at financial consultancy firm Duff & Phelps, said.

The league shares 50 percent of the title sponsorship money with the eight franchises, who will also miss out on gate receipts and in-stadium revenue this year while existing sponsors demand discounts in the absence of fan initiatives.

The switch has seen Delhi Capitals lose shirt sponsor Daikin, with the air-conditioning equipment-makers saying the new dates did not work for them.

"The reason being the business scenario and the timing, which earlier, being the summer, would call for advertising efforts to create awareness and recall for the AC category," a Daikin spokesman said.

Capitals chairman Parth Jindal said the BCCI should look at compensating the franchises. "If the BCCI doesn't compensate, there will be a significant loss to each franchise, about a 30 percent drop in rev-

enues," Jindal told Mintnews paper earlier this month.

But with the BCCI at risk of a \$547 million drop in revenue had the entire season been cancelled, treasurer Arun Singh Dhumal preferred to look on the bright side.

"When you encounter such challenging times and so many impediments, you are bound to lose on certain revenues," Dhumal said.

"Looking at the overall picture, everybody should be happy that at least we've been able to organise it."

"At such short notice, we've been unable to get a new title sponsor. It speaks volumes of IPL as a brand, and how it has grown over the years." Sponsors continue to trickle in for the franchises, which also welcomed edutech start-up Unacademy as a new sponsor on Saturday on a three-year deal, reportedly worth 1.2 billion rupees. Santosh said that as the tournament drew closer more would come onboard. "And with the IPL happening around the festive season this time around, it's an added bonus for the companies to be associated with it," he added.

The discount provided to Dream11 would be a major

Let Messi go away peacefully, say Barca high-ups

THE DAILY STAR/ANN, THE INDEPENDENT & AGENCIES
DHAKA/LONDON/BARCELONA/MADRID, 1 SEPTEMBER

appears more and more Barcelona board members now feel that Messi, who has played for the club for 20 years, should leave on good terms.

More and more Barcelona board members are now trying to persuade president Josep Maria Bartomeu to look for an amicable exit and conflict resolution for Lionel Messi (in photo).

Barcelona have so far rejected Messi's request for a meeting, saying that Bartomeu will only discuss a contract renewal with the club captain but not his exit. Barca are reportedly firm on the 700m euro exit clause which they say is still effective.

Having communicated through burofax that he wants to get out, Messi missed pre-season coronavirus tests on Sunday and the subsequent first day of training session under Ronald Koeman yesterday. If Messi had appeared for the tests, he would have implicitly indicated that his contract with Barcelona was still in force.

While no message has come yet from the club, *** Cadena Ser*** reported that the exit clause of 700m had expired at the end of the 2019-20 season and was no longer valid. It

man, himself a former Barca player, then reportedly told Luis Suarez that the striker was surplus to requirements at the Nou Camp, while Messi told the club he wished to leave.

In another development, Barcelona's Arturo Vidal has spoken out against his own club in the midst of the saga surrounding Messi's desire to leave the La Liga outfit, claiming the side only have "13 professional players."

New manager Ronald Ko-

ber, going by La Liga fixtures announced yesterday. Barca and Madrid will then face each other at the Santiago Bernabeu on 11 April, with Zinedine Zidane's side looking to defend the Spanish league title they won in July.

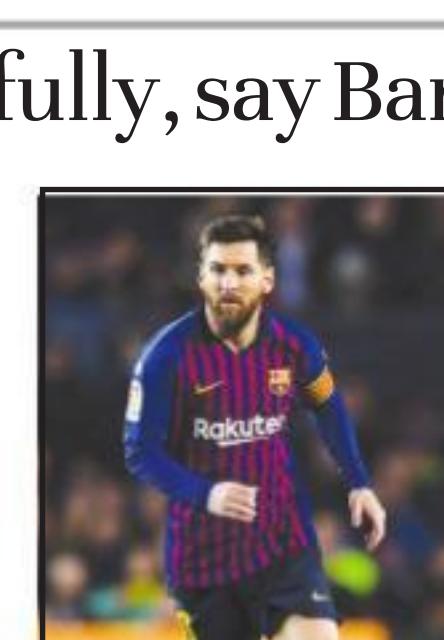
Whether Messi features in either match remains to be seen, with the Argentinian currently on strike and refusing to train as he tries to force his way out of the club this summer.

Barcelona are scheduled to start at home to Elche and Madrid at home to Getafe but both games will be rearranged to allow more rest for teams involved in last season's European competitions, which only ended in August.

Atletico Madrid's opener at home to Seville will therefore also be postponed.

Instead, Real Madrid are likely to begin at Real Sociedad on the weekend of 20 September before Barcelona are expected to start at home to Villarreal a week later.

All matches will continue to be staged behind closed doors and according to strict medical regulations aimed at reducing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.



El Clasico

Barcelona will play Real Madrid in the first Clasico of the season at Camp Nou on 25 Octo-

The Statesman Sport

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