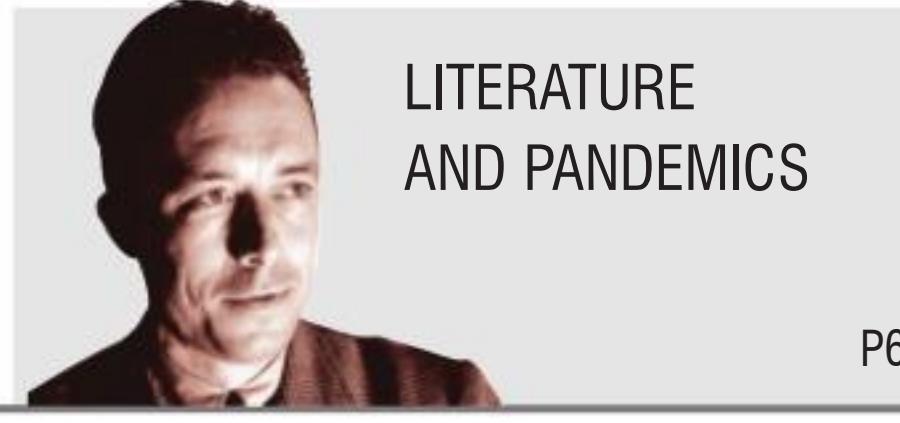




'NO STRINGS
ATTACHED TO
INDIA'S AIDS'

P5



LITERATURE
AND PANDEMICS

P6



BIG TECH CEOs
GRILLED IN
US HEARING

P10



BARTY WON'T
FLIRT WITH
VIRAL DANGER

P12

WEATHER

Generally cloudy sky. Light to moderate rain/thundershowers. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 33 and 25 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: 009.3 MM

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 91% Min: 68%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 31.5°C (-3)
SUN RISES 05:43 hrs
MOON RISES 16:36 hrs

Min: 25.8°C (-1)
SUN SETS 19:13 hrs
MOON SETS 03:08 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Goat sellers wait for customers ahead of the Eid al-Adha festival at the make-shift Ramilla Goat Market in the Capital on Thursday. SNS

Manipur ambush: Three Assam Rifles personnel were killed and six others injured in an ambush by suspected insurgents of the banned People's Liberation Army in Manipur's Chandel district, Indian Army sources said on Thursday. The suspected militants triggered an IED explosion and opened fire at the Assam Rifles personnel, when they were patrolling the Khongtal area in Chandel, near the India-Myanmar border, around 6.30 pm on Wednesday, official sources said.

Rajasthan crisis: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said Thursday that the money offered to MLAs to switch sides has increased sharply after state Governor Kalraj Mishra agreed to convene the Assembly session from 14 August, up from Rs 10 crore as the first instalment to whatever they asked. Gehlot also accused Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati of acting at the behest of the BJP, referring to her party's petition in the high court against the merger of six BSP MLAs with the Congress last year.

WBPCC chief Somen Mitra passes away

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, 30 JULY



Somen Mitra, president of the West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee (WBPCC), died in a private hospital early today. He was 78 and is survived by his wife and son.

Mitra passed away around 1.30 a.m. following cardiac arrest, sources at the hospital where he had been admitted said, adding he had tested negative for Covid-19.

Better known as Somen Mitra in political circles and "Chorda" among his followers, he was the state Congress chief, defeating Mamata Banerjee in 1992 in an organisational election for the state party chief's post. In his third tenure as the PCC chief, he has been occupying it since 2018.

A seven-term MLA from Sealdah, Mitra left the Congress in 2008 and floated the Indira Pragatishil Congress. Next year, Mitra merged his outfit with Trinamul Congress and was elected MP from Diamond Harbour the same year. He returned to the Congress in 2014 but was defeated from Kolkata (North) parliamentary constituency.

He was one of the chief architects behind the CPI (M)-led Left Front and Congress alliance during the 2016 West Bengal assembly polls.

MORE ON PAGE 4

The new National Education Policy (NEP) has evoked mixed responses from academics and experts, with many of them referring to the reforms as "long due" and "ground-breaking" while others cautioning that "the devil lies in the details" and hoping the moves get translated into action on the ground.

Teaching up to class V in mother tongue or regional language, lowering the stakes of board exams, allowing foreign universities to set up campuses in India, a single regulator for higher education, except for law and medical col-

Jaya Jaitly gets 4-year jail term in Tehelka sting case; HC gives relief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 30 JULY



A Delhi court Thursday awarded a 4-year jail term to ex-Samata Party president Jaya Jaitly and two others for corruption in a 2000-01 case related to a purported defence deal, saying they compromised the entire defence system of the country.

Special CBI judge Virender Bhat also awarded 4-year jail term to Jaitly's former party colleague Gopal Pachherwal and Major General (Rtd) SP Murgai in the case. Murgai's advocate Vikram Panwar said.

The court, in an in-camera proceeding, imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh each on all three convicts and directed them to surrender before it till 5 p.m. on Thursday itself.

Hours after the sentencing, Jaitly got relief from Delhi High Court which suspended her punishment.

MORE ON PAGE 4

ministry stated.

The number of tests for

detection of Covid-19 has crossed the 18-million

mark in the country. The

positivity rate is at 1.67

per cent while the fatality

rate is at 2.21 per cent.

According to Indian

Council of Medical Re-

search, a total of 1,81,90,382

Covid-19 samples have

been tested up to July 29

with 4,46,642 samples

tested on Wednesday.

Of the 775 deaths re-

ported, 298 are from Ma-

harashtra, 92 from Kar-

nataka, 82 from Tamil Na-

du, 65 from Andhra Pra-

adesh, 41 from West Ben-

gal, 33 from Uttar Pra-

des, 26 from

Delhi, 25 from Punjab, 24

from Gujarat, 15 from Ja-

mmes, 13 from Ma-

dhya Pradesh, 12 from Te-

langana, PTI reported.

The recovery rate from

the virus stands at 64.43

per cent," said a senior

health ministry official.

As per the records of the

ministry, in the last 24

hours, a total 32,553 peo-

ple have recovered.

The ministry stated

that in the last 24 hours,

775 people have lost their

lives which is about 32

deaths every hour.

It also said that 18,795

new active cases were

reported from across the

Trump floats
election 'delay'
amidst claims
of voting fraud



WASHINGTON, 30 JULY

US President Donald Trump is for the first time floating a delay to November's presidential election, as he makes unsubstantiated allegations that increased mail-in voting will result in fraud.

The dates of federal elections ~ the Tuesday after the first Monday in November ~ are enshrined in federal law and would require an act of Congress to change. The Constitution makes no provisions for a delay to the Jan. 20, 2021 presidential inauguration.

Trump tweeted Thursday: "With Universal Mail-In Voting (not Absentee Voting, which is good), 2020 will be the most INACCURATE & FRAUDULENT Election in history. It will be a great embarrassment to the USA. Delay the Election until people can properly, securely and safely vote???"

There is no evidence of widespread voter fraud through mail-in voting, even in states with all-mail votes.

Five states already rely exclusively on mail-in ballots, and they say they have necessary safeguards in place to ensure that a hostile foreign actor doesn't disrupt the vote. Election security experts say that all forms of voter fraud are rare, including absentee balloting.

Trump has increasingly sought to cast doubt on November's election and the expected surge in mail-in and absentee voting as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

And Trump has called remote voting options the biggest risk to his reelection. His campaign and the Republican Party have sued to combat the practice, which was once a significant advantage for the GOP. Last month, Trump told supporters in Arizona that "This will be, in my opinion, the most corrupt election in the history of our country."

AP

WEATHER

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Saddened at the death of veteran Congress leader Somen Mitra. As constitutional head was enormously benefited by his wise counsel on several occasions

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR
WEST BENGAL GOVERNOR

Diesel gets cheaper in Delhi by ₹8.36 per litre after VAT cut

CM Kejriwal says this decision by his Cabinet will give relief to people and boost Delhi's economic revival

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

Diesel will become cheaper in Delhi by Rs 8.36 per litre now as the Arvind Kejriwal government has reduced the VAT rate on it from 30 per cent to 16.75 per cent.

Diesel, which was so far sold at Rs 82 per litre in the national capital, will be now available at Rs 73.64 per litre after the reduction in the VAT rate.

Announcing this on Thursday at an online press conference, Chief Minister Kejriwal said the decision, taken at a Cabinet meeting, would bring not only a huge relief to the people of the city but will also prove to be a major step in boosting economic revival in the national capital.

Kejriwal said, "After bringing the coronavirus situation under control, there is need to focus on how we can revive Delhi's economy."

We have to accept this challenge as many people have been affected due to the shutting down of business establishments during the lockdown resorted to effectively handle the Covid-19 crisis. Many people lost their jobs and many others suffered



because of the business activity coming to a halt."

He pointed out that the diesel price in Delhi was quite high until now. Till yesterday, diesel was sold in Delhi at Rs

82 per litre. Many industries, businessmen and traders were demanding a reduction in the diesel price because it was impacting business activity in a negative way.

Kejriwal said, "In the last one week, we have taken several measures to boost the economy of Delhi."

On Monday, I announced that street vendors and hawk-

ers will now be allowed to do their business as they had been doing earlier. We also started a job portal — 'Rozgaar Bazaar' — to bridge the gap between job providers

and job seekers.

The job portal has received a big response."

Around 7,577 companies have got registered on the job portal, 2,04,785 jobs have been advertised through it and 3,22,865 job seekers have applied for employment through the portal so far.

"I was watching a TV programme when a jeans manufacturing unit owner said that he had a staff of 35 people, but now only three were working. The rest left the job. He was not finding the manpower he needed."

He posted 35 job vacancies on the Delhi government's job portal and has received more than 190 calls from those ready to work in his unit," the Delhi CM said.

Kejriwal also appealed to businessmen to open their shops and industrial units, but added that they must ensure social distancing and wearing of face masks and washing of hands with soap as preventive measures against coronavirus infection (Covid-19).

He said he would soon meet industrialists and traders through video conferencing to resolve their problems.

Riots cases: LG overturns Delhi cabinet's decision on lawyers' panel

PTI
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal has overturned the AAP government's decision rejecting the Delhi Police's panel of lawyers for arguing the cases related to the February riots in the city in the Supreme Court and the high court, an official statement said on Thursday.

The government said according to the Constitution, it is bound to implement the LG's order.

Baijal has directed the home department to grant approval

to the Delhi Police's proposed panel of lawyers, the statement said.

The LG's office, however, did not react to the statement.

The Delhi cabinet, at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday, rejected the panel of lawyers proposed by the city police, saying it would not help a 'free-and-fair' trial of the cases related to the northeast Delhi riots.

The government said Baijal has rejected the cabinet decision by exercising its special power under Article 239AA(4) of the Constitution.

Nomisappropriation of funds by construction workers welfare board: AAP govt to HC

PTI
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

The AAP government in the Delhi High Court refuted the allegations of alleged misappropriation of cess fund to the tune of Rs 3,200 crore, made against the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare (BOCW) Board in a PIL by an NGO.

In its affidavit placed before a bench of Justices Vinay Sanghi and Rajnish Bhattacharya, the Delhi government's Labour department has said that under the BOCWW Act

government additional standing counsel Sanjoy Ghose and advocate Urvi Mohan, said.

However, in its affidavit, the Labour department of the Delhi government is silent regarding the CAG report which highlighted alleged irregular expenditure of funds that were accumulated with the Board.

The court, on July 14, had directed the Delhi government to file its response to the PIL and the affidavit filed by CAG in the matter.

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), in its affidavit, had annexed various audit and inspection reports of the Board and informed the high court that till March 2018, Rs 2,636.74 crore was accumulated with the Board which should increase its efforts to provide more welfare measures to the workers.

In its affidavit, the department has also said "there is no cash disbursement of any kind and all monetary benefits are provided to eligible registered construction work-

ers by way of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) only."

The department further said that only those construction workers who are registered with the Board are entitled to avail various welfare benefits from the cess funds of the Board. It has also said that presently a detailed enquiry into the allegations and complaints against the Board is being carried out by the Anti Corruption Bureau and its report is awaited. The department also said that "to facilitate and rope in a large number of building and other construction workers under the welfare net of various welfare schemes of the Board, assistant Electrical/Civil Engineers of various government bodies like MCDs, PWD, NDMC, Delhi Jal Board, DDA, DSIDC, APMC have also been authorized as registering officers".

"This was done in order to increase the scope of registration of construction workers and also to stop registration of non-construction workers/bogus registration," it has said.

Covid-19: Delhi HC, district courts functioning restricted till 14 August

PTI
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

The Delhi High Court on Thursday decided to restrict its functioning as well as that of the district courts to urgent matters till August 14 in view of the prevalent COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier, the high court had restricted its functioning and that of the district courts till July 31.

The Administrative and General Supervision Committee of the high court, headed by Chief Justice D N Patel, decided that the restriction would be in place till August 14, an office order issued by Registrar General Manoj Jain said.

It also said all the cases listed in the high court, except those before the Registrars and Joint Registrars, from August 4 to August 14 have been adjourned to corresponding dates between September 28 to October 8, respectively.

"The courts of Registrars and Joint Registrars of this court shall take up matters listed before them through video conferencing.

"However, evidence shall be recorded only in ex parte and uncontested matters where the same is

required to be tendered by way of affidavit," the office order said.

Regarding the functioning of the subordinate courts, the office order said that they "shall henceforth take up all the cases listed before them through video conferencing".

"However, evidence shall be recorded only in ex parte and uncontested matters where the same is required to be tendered by way of affidavit."

"The judicial officers shall be permitted to come to court for holding video conference hearings from their respective chambers only when they do not have requisite technical infrastructure at their residences or where there is a breakdown of such infrastructure," it said.

The office order also said that physical hearings shall be permitted only in matters where a grave urgency is involved and hearing through video conferencing is not feasible.

"For pronouncement of judgment in a criminal case, wherever required, the judicial officer may come to court for the same. In all such instances of physical hearings, the norm of social distancing shall be scrupulously adhered to," it said.

FESTIVAL FEVER



Muslim customers, wearing face masks amid the Covid pandemic, throng a market to buy various items ahead of the Eid al-Adha festival. At Mangolpuri Market in the Capital on Thursday. SNS

Partly cloudy skies keep mercury in check

PTI
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

Partly cloudy skies kept the mercury in check in the national capital on Thursday, though rains gave the city a miss.

The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative figures for the city, recorded a maximum of 31.5 degrees Celsius, three notches less than normal, and nil

Capital

Veteran BJP legislators slam Kejriwal for riding roughshod over Oppn



APARAJIT CHAKRABORTY
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

his responsibilities as a legislator when Sushma Swaraj and Sheila Dixit were chief ministers.

The two veteran BJP MLAs appreciated former chief ministers who always used to consult and take suggestions from the Opposition leaders while handling any major crisis in Delhi.

"Despite being a legislator of Janata Dal in state Assembly, I was appointed as a member of many monitoring committees headed by then chief ministers Madan Lal Khurana and Sahib Singh Verma," recalled Bidhuri who was elected to the assembly in 1993 on a Janata Dal ticket and won the 2003 election on a National Congress Party ticket. In 2013, Bidhuri had shifted his allegiance to the BJP from the NCP.

Bidhuri, who had worked with four chief ministers, recalled that that the former chief ministers used to handle any crisis in the state with much better efficiency and their administrative skill was far better than that of Kejriwal in terms of handling any major crisis.

The two BJP legislators even appreciated erstwhile Congress CM late Sheila Dixit who, they said, used to seek suggestions from the Opposition leaders setting aside her political differences during major crises.

Bidhuri and Singh became legislators from the Delhi Assembly in 1993 and 1998 respectively. They complained they never received due respect as Opposition leaders or elected representatives from the Kejriwal government.

"We are much disappointed and humiliated because of the autocratic style of Kejriwal who never takes suggestions from the Opposition leaders and starts to blame the Opposition parties after failure of any work," lamented Bidhuri.

As MLA she used the tenures of Madan Lal Khurana, Sahib Singh Verma and Sheila Dixit as chief ministers, while Mohan Singh had discharged

the veteran BJP legislators alleged.

"Kejriwal never called us for a meeting and seek our suggestions to resolve any crisis be it Delhi riots or Corona pandemic," alleged O P Sharma, who has been a BJP legislator since 2013.

The ongoing pandemic could have been worse in Delhi if Union Home minister Amit Shah had not intervened in the matter, Bidhuri claimed.

"The Palam weather station has gauged 259.6 mm rainfall, which is 28 per cent more than the normal of 203.3 mm.

The Lodhi Road weather station has recorded 31 per cent surplus precipitation — 263 mm against the normal of 201 mm.

The Statesman

KOLKATA

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AIR-SURCHARGE: Kathmandu - Re. 2, Eastern Region - Re. 1
All other stations in India - Re. 1



If we take precautions seriously, we would be able to contain coronavirus infection. If people do not take precautions, it would become difficult

BHUPESH BAGHEL
CHHATTISGARH CHIEF MINISTER

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, FRIDAY 31 JULY 2020

03

Three new Cabinet Ministers inducted into HP Cabinet

Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur has sought to strike a regional balance through this exercise

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 30 JULY

Three new ministers were inducted into the Himachal Pradesh Cabinet today, with Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur seeking to strike a regional balance through this exercise.

The oath-taking of the three new ministers took place at a simple but impressive ceremony at Raj Bhawan here.

Three time MLAs, Sukh Ram Chaudhary (56) from Paonta Sahib in Sirmaur and Rakesh Pathania (55) from Nurpur in Kangra, and first-time MLA from Ghumarwin in Bilaspur district, Rajinder Garg (54), were administered their oaths of office as cabinet ministers by Governor Bandaru Dattatraya, with the BJP-led state government taking precautionary measures and following social distancing norms in the midst of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

The much-awaited Cabinet expansion was delayed



HP Governor Bandaru Dattatraya administering oath to Rakesh Pathania as a Cabinet Minister at Raj Bhavan in Shimla on Thursday.

inet were created around the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, when the Food and Civil Supplies minister Kishan Kapoor was elected as MP from Kangra and the Power minister from Mandi, Anil Sharma, had to resign after his son contested on the Congress ticket from Mandi Lok Sabha seat. Sharma's son had however lost to the BJP's candidate.

The third vacancy in the state Cabinet was created after then Health Minister Vipin Parmar from Kangra district resigned to become Speaker of HP Assembly in February this year.

While the induction of Rakesh Pathania, who remained Vice Chairman of the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Corporation from 1998 to 2003, was almost certain as he hails from the biggest district, Kangra, which had lost two ministers, Kapoor and Parmar. BJP sources said even otherwise, Pathania had been a potential firebrand leader from the district, with good hold on ground and

understanding of issues. He had won as an independent in 2007 when he was denied the BJP ticket.

With Pathania becoming a Minister, the Kangra district now has three Cabinet ministers, including Sarveen Chaudhary and Bikram Singh, and the HP Assembly Speaker.

Party sources said former Chief Parliamentary Secretary from Paonta Sahib, Sukh Ram Chaudhary's induction was on expected lines.

However, what has surprised everyone was the elevation of first-timer Ghumarwin MLA Rajinder Garg as minister. Sources said along with Pathania, Garg too has been inducted at the instance of national BJP president Jagat Prakash Nadda, whose home district is Bilaspur in Himachal Pradesh.

Meanwhile, the new Ministers are yet to be allocated portfolios. It is learnt that the Chief Minister may go in for reshuffle in the portfolios of his entire Cabinet.

due to the Covid crisis.

With three new ministers taking their oaths today, the Himachal Pradesh Cabinet has now reached its maximum capacity, with no vacant berth left in the ministry now.

The three BJP leaders inducted into the Thakur Cabinet are first-time ministers.

Two vacancies in the Cab-

HP Cabinet reduces sewerage charges by 20 per cent

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 30 JULY

The Himachal Pradesh Cabinet today decided to reduce sewerage charges from 50 per cent to 30 per cent of the water bills being charged by the Jal Shakti Vibhag, providing relief to the people in the state.

Chaired by Chief Minister, Jai Ram Thakur, the cabinet also gave nod to enhance the financial assistance for education upto two children of the registered beneficiaries of Himachal Pradesh Buildings and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board.

The HP Cabinet also gave nod to enhance the financial assistance for education upto two children of the registered beneficiaries of Himachal Pradesh Buildings and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board.

instead of Rs 10,000. Similarly, for post graduation and diploma courses of one year to three years duration, the girls would get Rs. 21,000 instead of Rs. 20,000 and boys would receive Rs 17,000 instead of Rs. 15,000. For professional courses/ degrees and Ph. D, Research Courses, the girls would get Rs 36,000 in place of Rs. 35,000 and boys would get financial assistance of Rs 27,000 per annum in place of Rs. 25,000.

The spokesman said the cabinet also decided to enhance the financial assistance from Rs 35,000 to Rs. 51,000 for marriage of workers and upto Rs. 51,000 each for the marriage of two chil-

dren only. It also decided to disburse third instalment of financial assistance of Rs. 2,000 to the registered beneficiaries of Himachal Pradesh Buildings and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board.

The Cabinet gave its approval to implement Mahila Shakti Kendra Scheme in Kullu, Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti districts and to create and fill up one post each of Women Welfare Officer and two posts each of District Coordinator in each district on outsource basis.

The spokesman said the cabinet gave its approval for constitution of State Food Commission for effective monitoring and review of implementation of National Food Security Act, 2013 in the State.

The Cabinet decided to simplify policy for providing 'Compassionate Employment' and delegation of powers to departments for disposal of cases of compassionate employment. Now instead of Clerks, the cases will be considered to the post of Junior Office Assistant (IT).

He said for graduation the girls would get Rs 16,000 instead of Rs 15,000 and boys would receive financial assistance of Rs. 8,000 instead of Rs. 6,000, an official spokesman here said.

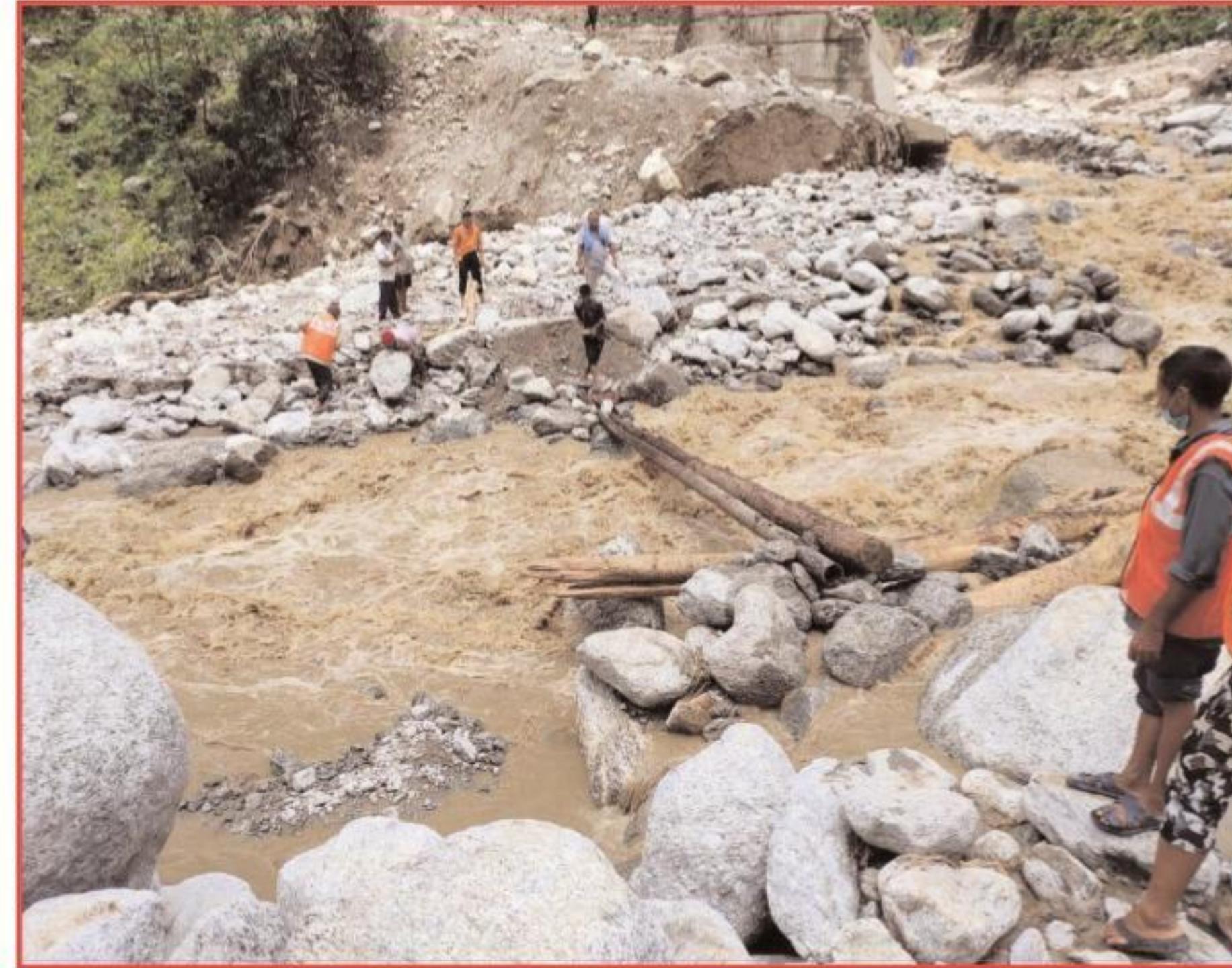
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"In the present context, the soci-

MONSOON WOES



Workers are engaged in setting up a temporary wood bridge in the monsoon disaster-hit area of Pithoragarh district in Uttarakhand on Thursday.

20 docs fired in U'khand for absenteeism

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 30 JULY

The services of 20 doctors have been terminated in Uttarakhand for remaining absent from their duties.

The doctors were appointed in April last year, but they failed to join their duties.

The Director General of Health and Family Welfare Department issued marching orders to the doctors on Thursday. The doctors were appointed in April last year, but they failed to join their duties.

After waiting for over one year, the Uttarakhand government finally terminated the absentee doctors.

Even the doctors, who were provided posting in plain area districts like Dehradun and Udhampur, showed no interest in joining their duties.

SJVN to honour sanitation workers of Shimla Corp

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 30 JULY

To recognise the services of sanitation workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, Satyujal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) will honour these employees of Shimla Municipal Corporation.

SJVN chairman and managing director Nand Lal Sharma said SJVN has always been responsive to the various issues being faced by society from time to time.

"In the present context, the soci-

ety is engulfed with the widespread of COVID-19 pandemic and as always SJVN is on the forefront in the fight against it.

In these challenging times the role of health and hygiene is of prime significance and as a responsible corporate entity, SJVN recognises the good work carried out by sanitation workers of Shimla MC," he added.

He said all the SJVN employees appreciating the work carried out by these Corona warriors, are voluntarily

donating their one-day salary to

around 1250 sanitation workers of Shimla MC.

"These Corona warriors will receive an amount of Rs 5,000 each and these include employees of MC Shimla and sanitation workers engaged by MC, Shimla through SEHB Society," he added.

Sharma added the sanitation workers are the pillars on which Shimla City is standing right now and these workers remain on their toes day in day out to keep the city clean

and beautiful.

"SJVN employees had already contributed one day salary to the PM CARES fund and one day salary to HP CM Relief Fund to combat the Corona challenge.

In addition, financial support of more than Rs 2 Crore has been provided to the state government for procurement of ventilators, other medical equipment, Personal Protection Equipment (PPEs) kits, masks, sanitizers and gloves for hospitals," he added.

DU's responsibility to provide writers to visually impaired students for online exams: Delhi HC

PTI
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

The Delhi High Court Thursday made it clear that it is the responsibility of Delhi University to make available writers for visually impaired students or else the process of online Open Book Examinations (OBE) for final year undergraduate courses would be a mockery for them.

A bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Subramoniu Prasad directed Delhi University (DU) to clarify the position on arrangement of scribes at CSE Centres and elsewhere for students in visually impaired (VH) category by the next date of hearing on August 5, to enable them to participate in the online OBE.

While the varsity maintained that scribes will be made available to visually impaired students by the CSE Centres, which have been set up to provide services to students who do not have infrastructure to give OBE, the CEO of CSE Academy clarified that it was not their duty to arrange for scribes and they do not have such writers at the centres.

There is complete mismatch of statements made by the two sides. There is complete contradiction. Why are you (DU) giving wrong hope to students that everything is available at CSE centres. Why are you misrepresenting them, said the bench, which was conducting the proceedings through video conferencing.

The bench added Quite clearly, it is the responsibility



of the Delhi University to make scribes available for the VH students. Otherwise, the whole process of conducting the OBE online examinations for them would be reduced to a mockery.

Senior advocate Sachin Dutta, representing DU, said it was not mandatory for the students to appear in online OBE and they can give the physical exams later in September.

It is only in the interest of stu-

dents that the online exams are being conducted, he added.

To this, the bench said the university was closing the right of students on persons with disabilities (PwD) category to appear through the online mode by not providing them proper facilities including scribes.

The high court was hearing pleas by law student Praetisha Sharma and National Federation of Blind seeking to set up effective mechanisms for visually impaired and specially abled 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.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Sharma, said the university was playing with the lives of students. He said even in some parts of urban areas, e-mails do not work and in remote areas there is no electricity. During the hearing, Dutta said that out of 2,43,823 students who have submitted their examination forms, 1,82,237 students have registered on the portal of the University during the first phase of the Mock test.

Out of 1,82,237, only 74,180 students have logged in and 39,159 students have attempted the question papers, he said.

The court said these figures reveal that 8 percent of the total number of students who had registered on the portal of the university have participated in the first phase of the mock test.

The court said the data relating to students in the PwD category and the visually handicapped (VH) category are equally dismal.

Look at their discomfort. They are uncomfortable with the set up and they do not know about scribes, it said, adding that it is the duty of the varsity to see that students are not left high and dry at any stage.

It asked the varsity to submit, on August 5, the data of both phases of the mock tests in tabulated form. While the first mock test was to conclude on July 29, the second phase will be conducted from August 1 to 4.

Haryana to deploy drones for anti-locust operations

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 30 JULY

To control swarms of locusts and prevent losses due to crops damage by them, the Haryana agriculture and farmers' welfare department will deploy two drones in Hisar and Mahendragarh on Thursday evening.

These drones can be deployed in other affected areas as well, if required, the additional chief secretary, agriculture and farmers' welfare department, Sanjeev Kaushal, said adding that the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had given clearance for deploying the drones.

He said that tender had also been issued for engaging five more drones with minimum payload capacity of 10 litres and flight operation capacity of at least four hours every day and for undertaking aerial spray operation in affected



FILE PHOTO

ed areas.

These drones could be deployed for spraying in fields, community land, sand dunes, tree tops, acacia plantation, or any other affected area, as required by the department.

Haryana is the third state

after Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan to have engaged drone-based anti-locust operations. There are two methods of spraying the pesticide--one by flying above the swarm of locusts and spraying on them and the other is to spray the

pesticide beforehand on the areas where the locusts are expected to land.

Kaushal said the Department was putting in place several measures to control the swarms, including stocking additional quantities of pes-

ticide Lamda Cyhalothrin 5 EC, deploying tractor-mounted spray pumps, and acquiring fogging machines. The preparatory measures have so far prevented significant losses in most areas during locust attacks in districts Jhajjar, Charkhi Dadri, Palwal, Sirsa, Nuh, Rewari, Bhiwani and Narnaul since 26 June, he said. Kaushal said the Department was closely monitoring the situation, and urged farmers in the affected districts to stay alert and inform the officials if they found locusts anywhere.

At least six districts including Hisar, Sirsa, Bhiwani, Mahendragarh, Rewari, and Jhajjar are on alert over swarms of locusts entering the state from Rajasthan. Swarms of locusts recently entered five Haryana districts - Mahendragarh, Rewari, Jhajjar, Sirsa, Charkhi Dadri and Bhiwani, causing about 15 percent damage to crops, primarily pearl millet (bajra).

The bench added Quite clearly, it is the responsibility

Gujrat to relax night curfew

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

AHMEDABAD, 30 JULY

The Gujarat government has decided on relaxation of Covid-19 induced restrictions in the state as per its plans for 'Unlock 3', even though the daily Covid-19 tally in Gujarat attained an all-time high of 1,144 cases.

A high-level meeting presided over by CM Vijay Rupani on Thursday discussed the guidelines for 'Unlock 3' issued by the Centre. As per the decisions taken in the

As per the decisions taken in the meeting, night curfew in the state would be withdrawn from 1 August.

meeting, night curfew in the state would be withdrawn from 1 August.

While shops will have to close by 8.00 p.m., hotels and restaurants can remain open till 10 p.m. Gyms and Yoga centres will reopen from 5 August.

TENDER

Corrigendum Notice

Subject: Tender No. OP2/15/2020-21 - RFP for Appointment of Consultant as Project Development and Management Agency (PDMA) for Smart Grid Project for whole city Chandigarh.

The subject cited tender due to be opened on dated i.e. 30.07.2020 at 16.00 Hrs is hereby extended upto 07.08.2020 at 14.00 Hrs. for uploading and opening date i.e. 07.08.2020 at 16.00 Hrs. due to some administrative reason.

DA/-
Executive Engineer
Electricity (OP) Division No. 2
Chandigarh, U.T.



(A) निविदा सूचना

राजस्थानी दिल्ली के राजस्थानी जयपुर में 2.4 माह तक अवधि होल्ड मुख्यमंद में 36 मह के लिए ग्रन्ती की लेख काउटर (बालाटी सेस टारगेट काउटर) के आधार पर निम्न राजस्थानी हस्तकिय उत्पादों को विक्री होने वाला निविदा निविदा से है। निविदा अमरित की जाती है।

(A)

UBN is: RS12021SLOB00002

राजस्थानी प्रबन्धन - राजस्थानी की लेख काउटर (बालाटी सेस टारगेट काउटर) (समस्त हस्तकिय राजस्थानी दिल्ली)

प्रिन्टिंग मीटिंग की तिथि 06.08.2020 को मालान 3.00 बजे यास्मिन के बैठक कम में अधिकारियों की जाती है। अधिकारियों की अधिकारियों की अधिकारियों की तिथि 17.08.2020 को मालान 3.00 बजे। पूरी जातियों एवं निविदा के निम्न एवं गति हुए विवरां <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> एवं <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in> पर।

Raj. Samwad/C/2840/2020-21

अध्यक्ष एवं प्रबन्धन निदेशक

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer, B&R Division, HPPWD Nahan, District Sirmour, H.P. on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh invites the item rates bids, in electronic tendering system from the eligible class of Contractors registered with HPPWD for the works detailed in the table.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)
1	C/o 30.00 meter Span Bridge over PatharlaKataKhala and KharikalaHala on Khajuna-Bikram-Bukti-Kala Amb Road at RD 2/975	1,86,47,00/- only	19,70,00/- only
2	Improvement of Banop-Kheri Road 0/0 to 39/500 (SH- P/F W-Beam Crash Barrier at RD 31/0/0, 31/105 to 31/135, 31/165 to 31/250, 31/260 to 31/325, 31/335 to 31/495, 31/50 to 31/580 and RW at RD 31/275 to 31/290 and 31/300 to 31/310)	15,75,494/- only	31,500/- only
3	Restoration of Rain Damages Main to Burma Pappi Road Km 0/0 to 9/0 (Sh- C/o Retaining Wall at RD 3/750 to 3/793)	14,06,328/- only	28,500/- only
4	C/o Portion Stadium Building at Nahan, District Sirmour (HP) (Sh- C/o Spiral Stair Case, Poarch, Drain and Steel Works etc.)	6,51,477/- only	13,500/- only

Starting Date for Downloading Bid:- 10.08.2020
Deadline for Submission of Bid:- 22.08.2020 up to 10:00 AM
The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website www.hptenders.gov.in.

Executive Engineer
HPPWD (B&R) Division Nahan
Toll/Fax: 01702-222260
E-mail: ee-nah@hpnic.in
On behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh

1963/2020-2021 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPAK

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

The Dy. Chief Engineer/Constr. N. Ry. S.E. Road, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender under Single Packet System for the under noted work:-

1 Name of work and location	Out sourcing of maintenance activities to provide habitable condition in CAOIC office complex N. Ry. at Kashmere gate Delhi in the section of SSE/CU under XEN/C/IHQ, Kashmere gate, Delhi.
2 Completion period of the work	24 (Twenty four) months
3 Approx Cost of work	Rs. 54.51 lakh
4 Earnest Money amount (to be deposited Online)	Rs. 1,09,030/-
5 Date & Time for Submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tenders may be uploaded up to 11.30 hrs. on 20.08.2020 on IREPS website i.e. www.reps.gov.in . The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the tender will be opened at 11.30 hrs. on 20.08.2020.
Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document	The detailed e-tender notice is available on Northern Railway website i.e. www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in and tender document is available on www.reps.gov.in . Above tenders document will be available for submission of tender on IREPS website i.e. www.reps.gov.in from 04.08.2020 to 20.08.2020. The bidders who desire to participate against e-tenders, are advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which, they would require, to obtain class III digital certificate (if already not obtained) issued by CCA under IT Act-2000.
No.: 50-G/C/K. gate/DLI Dated: 30.07.2020 Serving Customers with a Smile	All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

1666/2020
Serving Customers with a Smile

NORTHERN RAILWAY (Open E-Tender Notice)

The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager / Coaching, Northern Railway, Delhi Division, New Delhi invites online e-tender through website <http://reps.gov.in>, for the parking contract for the period of 3 (Three) years, bid to be opened on 21.08.2020 at 15:00 hrs, at the following stations/locations (Ready Sites) :-

SN	Name of work with its location/ Railway Station	Advertise value/Reserve Price of one year in (Rs.)	Cost of Tender document & 18%GST (in Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (in Rs.)	Website particulars where complete details of tender document can be seen
1	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at New Delhi Railway Station (NDRS) Ajmeri Gate Side "A-1" Category Station, with measuring area of 926.68 sq. metres	Rs. 47,95,094/-	Rs. 5,900/-	Rs. 2,87,800/-	https://reps.gov.in/ tender no: Parking64-2020 1674/2020

* Applicable GST and TCS has to be paid by licensee extra, over and above the Advertise value/Reserve Price/
License fee.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Yediyurappa will be CM for remaining three years... let there be no doubt about it

KARNATAKA BJP PRESIDENT NALIN KUMAR KATEEL
RULING OUT LEADERSHIP CHANGE

India

WB survey checks maternal, child health during pandemic

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SILIGURI, 30 JULY

duar, Cooch Behar, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Kalimpong," an office bearer of CINI said.

Two organisations have collected information on maternal and child health through an online CTO-Application survey in several areas of North Bengal.

The objectives of the survey, conducted by the White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) West Bengal Secretariat, in collaboration with the Child in Need Institute (CINI), were mainly to analyse the situation of maternal and child health, understand mental health of mothers and identify whether mothers are adopting precautionary measures during the Covid-19 pandemic in rural and urban areas. "A total of 625 surveys were conducted between 5 and 16 June across five districts of North Bengal, namely Alipur-

"Since many women are turning away from institutional delivery, preferring to give birth at home during this pandemic, the documentaries send across a message to pregnant women to give birth at hospitals for the safety and protection of mothers as well as newborns. The videos also encourage women to avail of government schemes provided during and after pregnancy," the office bearer said.

TN lockdown extended

Complete shutdown will be enforced on all Sundays till 31 August

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 30 JULY

The Tamil Nadu government extended the Covid-19 induced lockdown in the state till 31 August, but with some more relaxation this time.

As per government data, the Tamil Nadu witnessed a drastic reduction in Covid-19 cases today as the state recorded 5,864 cases on Thursday which is less compared to Covid which took the total number of deaths due to coronavirus to 3,838.

According to the official statement from chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami, a complete lockdown will be enforced on all the Sundays in the month of August. The announcement was made after Palaniswami held a meeting with the medical expert team this morning.

The chief minister further added that the course of

treatment, though the total number of people who tested positive for Covid so far touched 98,765 today.

At the same time, Tamil Nadu today witnessed a maximum of 97 deaths due to Covid which took the total number of deaths due to coronavirus to 3,838.

The statement further added, "Companies except those in containment zones can operate with 75 per cent employees. 50 per cent customers can sit and eat at tea shops and restaurants from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Restaurants can give parcels till 9 p.m."

The statement further said that Section 144 will continue to be in effect and more than five persons should not gather in any place.

"Status quo will continue in the operation of trains, flights and buses. The e-pass procedure will also continue.

Provisional shops and vegetable shops can be opened from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.," it said.

He said that the coronavirus infection in Chennai and other districts has reduced due to the precautionary measures taken by the government. The Independence Day celebrations on 15 August will be held across the state as per Central government guidelines on precautions like social distancing and use of masks, the CM said.

Palaniswami discussed about Covid situation with district collectors on Wednesday through video conferencing and took their views on extension of lockdown.

West Bengal sees 2,434 fresh cases, 46 deaths

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 30 JULY

West Bengal today recorded 2,434 fresh cases and 46 deaths, which is the highest till now, with Kolkata alone recording 750 fresh cases and 16 deaths.

Till now, 67,692 people have been detected Covid positive in the state and the death toll has risen to 1,536. Currently, there are 19,900 active cases.

A total of 46,256 patients have recovered till now with 2,140 patients being discharged from hospitals in a single day. The discharge rate has improved to 68.33 percent. The occupancy rate in Covid beds stood at 40.15 percent and 1,474 people are staying in 106 safe homes.

The state government today notified the seven days in August - 5th (Wednesday), 8th (Saturday), 16th (Sunday), 17th (Monday), 23rd (Sunday), 24th (Monday) and 31st (Monday) - for the bi-weekly statewide complete lockdown.

All government and private offices, commercial establishments, public and private transport including train and flight movements will be shut down completely, said the notification issued by state chief secretary Rajaiva Sinha.

The sectors that have been excluded from the purview of the lockdown included health services, including movement of health personnel/patients by public transport; medicine and pharmacies; law and order, courts, correctional services, fire and emergency services; electricity, water and conservancy services; continuous process industries and industries with in-house workers; agriculture operations; tea garden operations in field; intrastate and interstate movement of goods; e-commerce, Capital and debt market services as notified by RBI; print,

electronic media and social media and home delivery of cooked food.

The restrictions in the containment zones would continue till 31 August.

Educational institutions; cinemas, swimming pools, entertainment parks, theatres, bars, auditoriums and assembly halls; social, political, sports, entertainment, academic, cultural, religious functions and other large congregations will continue to remain closed or prohibited.

Yoga institutes and gyms outside the containment zones will be allowed to function from 5 August.

The restrictions in the containment zones would continue till 31 August.

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India, China can achieve peace by common Buddhist culture

TIBETAN SPIRITUAL LEADER THE DALAI LAMA

WHILE INTERACTING WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, FRIDAY 31 JULY 2020

05



Motorists make their way through a flooded street after a heavy monsoon rainfall in Amritsar on Thursday.

AFP

PLA attack: Three security personnel, including a non-commissioned officer belonging to the 4th Assam Rifles, were shot dead and five others were injured in what is believed to be an attack launched by pro-scribed People's Liberation Army of Manipur.

SNS

Jamatis released: Nine Indonesian residents, members of Tablighi Jamat, were released from temporary jail in Meerut on Wednesday on completion of their punishment term for violating foreigners Act. They were arrested from Sardhana town.

SNS

Mitra set for Trinamul return

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BALURGHAT, 30 JULY

sources said.

Biplob Mitra was replaced as the TMC president by Mrs Ghosh after the party put up a poor show in the parliamentary elections.

A few months later, Mr Mitra joined the BJP with a maximum number of Zilla Parishad members, and he had back then declared that the TMC would be wiped out of South Dinajpur within 90 days.

Mrs Ghosh, however, managed to bring back the Zilla Parishad members and some followers of Mr Mitra back in the TMC fold. On the other hand, a group of councillors of the Gangarampuri Municipality voted against the then chairman, Prashanta Mitra, who was ousted from his post.

"Dada will change the situation of the party in the district. We were waiting for him. Without Biplob Mitra, no one can save the party. We were against the decision to appoint a district president from outside the district. We will give our leader a grand welcome," said one follower, Bappaditya Mandal.

'No strings attached to India's devp aid'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

The organisers of ground breaking ceremony 'Bhoomi Puja' for the construction of a 'majestic' Ramjanmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya are making efforts to project Lord Ram as a global icon not the revered deity of Hindus alone in the country.

Amid hectic preparations to welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Ayodhya on 5 August to take part in the 'Bhoomi Puja' it is learnt that Modi is likely to issue two postal stamps to commemorate the occasion.

One of the stamps is likely to depict images of Ram from other countries. Another stamp is expected to depict the model of Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Ayodhya Research Institute has printed big posters and cutouts of images of Rama from different countries to showcase the cultural presence of Ram across the world. These cutouts will be put up on the entire 4.5 km route of PM's cavalcade from Saket Degree College to the site of temple.

The walls and pillars of the city are being painted with images of Lord Ram and scenes from *Ramayana*. Non-stop recitation of Ram Charita Manas will be organised at the 25 spots along the PM's route.

SNS

others in their own development needs.

His remarks are being considered as an indirect comparison between India's model of assistance and that of China which has given aid to many countries but with a lot of strings attached. Beijing's controversial Belt and Road Initiative is also aimed at making developing and poor nations virtually dependent on China.

Speaking after jointly inaugurating the new Supreme Court building of Mauritius with its Mauritian counterpart Pravind Jugnauth via video conferencing, he said, "India's approach to development is mainly human-centric. We want to work for the welfare of humanity. History has taught us that in the name of development partnerships, nations were forced into dependence partnerships. It gave rise to colonial and imperial rule. And, humanity suffered."

For India the sharing of development lessons was its only motivation. Therefore, India's development cooperation did not come with any conditions and it was not influenced by political or commercial considerations, he said.

Modi said India was making development partnerships that were marked by respect, diversity, care for the future and sustainable development. India, he said, wanted to develop and help

the Mauritian leader deeply appreciated India's support for the project as reflective of the close ties of friendship between the two countries. He noted that the construction of the building with Indian assistance was a new milestone in the modernisation of infrastructure in Mauritius.

The building is the first India assisted infrastructure project within the capital city of Port Louis to be inaugurated after the pandemic. The landmark project has been completed with a grant assistance of \$28.12 million from Indian government.

In line with India's vision of 'SAGAR - Security and Growth for All in the Region', the new building demonstrates India's role as a reliable partner of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean region as also India's steadfast commitment to strengthen the future-oriented partnership between the two countries.

SNS

Herd immunity in India may generate only in pockets, can be short-lived: Scientists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

Herd immunity against Covid in India is likely to be achieved only in pockets given the many socio-economic groups in the country and may be short-lived rather than long-lasting, say scientists as sero-surveillance data from New Delhi and Mumbai raise hopes of community protection from the disease.

Herd immunity occurs when a large number of people, usually 70 to 90 per cent, become immune to a contagious disease after being infected to it.

But there are many grey areas clouding the issue as far as the novel coronavirus is concerned with no consensus on when herd immunity sets in. There are no clear numbers to say at what percentage of the population we will achieve herd immunity. Many epidemiologists believe that for SARS-CoV-2 it would be at around 60 per cent, said Shahid Jameel, virologist and



Health workers and civic staff wait for students at the Children Aid Society premises during a medical screening for Covid, in Mumbai on Thursday.

AFP

CEO of the Wellcome Trust/DBT India Alliance, a public charity that invests in building biomedical sciences and health research frameworks. He said different parts of the country will get closer to herd immunity at different times.

A recent study published in the journal *Science* also found that herd immunity against Covid could be achieved with fewer people being infected than previously estimated.

Herd immunity is deter-

mined primarily by how many individuals in a population are immune to a particular infection. This results in indirect immunity to others in the population who never got exposed or infected, explained virologist Upasana Ray.

In India, with its multitude of socio-economic groupings, herd immunity may be generated in pockets rather than uniformly across the country, and may be short-lived, Rath, from New Delhi's National Institute of Immunology, said.

Sero-surveillance provides estimates of antibody levels against infectious diseases and is considered the gold standard for measuring population immunity due to past infection or vaccination.

SANKHA GHOSH
SILIGURI, 30 JULY

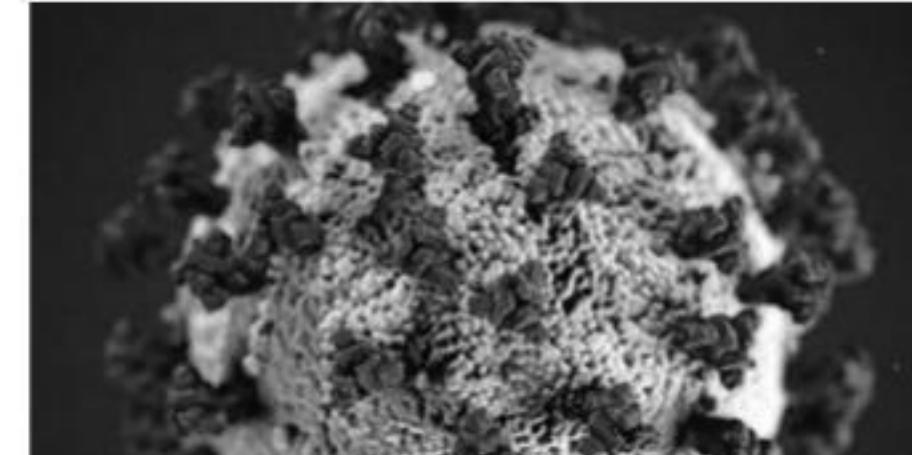
Rapid antigen test, which is approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) as one more type of test to diagnose Covid-19, has begun in Darjeeling district.

The tests are being conducted at the North Bengal Medical College and Hospital (NBMCH), Siliguri District Hospital, Darjeeling District Hospital and Kurseong Sub-Divisional Hospital.

A rapid antigen test is done by using the nasal swab of a person, while the results are out within 30-45 minutes, experts have said.

Health department officials said it will scale up testing and will also be useful for emergency cases. Health experts believe that the actual number of Covid-19 cases is much higher than what is being detected. They also said more cases would come to light if people suspected of Covid or those who die are tested too.

"The nasopharyngeal swab is examined for the rapid antigen test. If a sample tests positive, it will be considered as final. The negative reports for



asymptomatic persons will be treated final, but those who test negative, but show symptoms or have mild symptoms will undergo the conventional RT-PCR test," said a senior health official.

Darjeeling district chief medical officer of health Dr Pralay Acharya said the development will expand the ambit of testing.

"The advantage of the test is that it yields faster results, and it can be had in less than an hour. Given this, more tests can be carried out. The testing facilities have been decentralised. We have received the antigen test kits," Dr Acharya said.

Sources said two samples were tested positive through

this method yesterday.

The ICMR had on 15 June announced that it validated the antigen tests. Some health experts suggested that it could be effective to fast-track testing and tracing of positive cases.

Blood banks dry up

The Covid-19 situation has hit blood banks in north Bengal. Blood bank authorities said they were now left with almost 'nil' stock. They attributed this to the lack of blood donation camps out of fear of Covid-19.

"We are in such a situation that we cannot describe it as a crisis because we almost have no stock of blood. The situation has aggravated since the beginning of this month. The

situation of other government-run blood banks are the same," said the director of the Regional Blood Transfusion Centre (RBTC) at the North Bengal Medical College and Hospital, Dr Mridumay Das.

Dr Das said they have issued appeals for people and organisations to donate blood. "But so far we have not got any positive response," he added.

There are 17 government blood banks in north Bengal under the RBTC, and officials said the situation there too was more or less the same. It is learnt that around 80 units of blood are supplied from the RBTC to the different health facilities, and the daily requirement of the NBMCH alone is around 60-70 units.

Sources at the RBTC said around 500 units of stock with at least 25 units of each positive group is an ideal stock. Voluntary organisations and frontal wings of political parties usually hold donation camps.

Some representatives of voluntary organisations said many were not willing to donate blood given the Covid-19 situation.

'Disengagement process not over'

India claims Chinese troops are reluctant to leave friction points

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

India today confirmed that the disengagement process with China at eastern Ladakh has not yet been completed and expressed the hope that Beijing would sincerely work with New Delhi for complete disengagement and de-escalation and full restoration of peace and tranquility in border areas at the earliest as agreed to by Special Representatives of the two countries on the boundary dispute.

Addressing a media briefing here, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said senior military commanders of the two countries would be meeting in the near future to work out steps to complete the disengagement process.

His comments came in the wake of reports that Chinese troops were reluctant to leave some of the friction points like Pangong Tso.

The spokesperson said the 17th meeting of the India-China Working Mechanism for Coordination and Consultations (WMCC) had last

week reviewed the situation in the border areas along the LAC. The WMCC had agreed that an early and complete disengagement of the troops along the LAC and de-escalation from the border areas in accordance with bilateral agreement and protocols and full restoration of peace and tranquility was essential for smooth overall development of bilateral relations. This was also the agreement reached between the two Special Representatives, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, in their conversation on 5 July, he noted.

"It is the invisible coronavirus rather than China which is the threat. It is short-sighted and harmful to deny long history of peaceful co-existence between China and India and portray a friendly neighbour for thousands of years as an opponent and a strategic threat due to temporary differences and difficulties," Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong said at a webinar on India-China relations organised by the institute of Chinese Studies. Sun said India and China should be partners

China claims that it was not a strategic threat to India

rather than rivals, they should work for peace rather than confrontation and trust rather than suspect each other. "We should work for a win-win situation rather than a zero sum game," he added.

The Chinese envoy again blamed the Indian side for the 15 June Galwan Valley clash with PLA troops in which 20 Indian soldiers lost their lives. "The rights and wrongs of the Galwan Valley incident are very clear. Indian troops keep making roads and infrastructure along the Galwan Valley which also leads to representations from the Chinese side," he added.

He claimed that on 15 June also, India troops crossed the LAC and broke the consensus reached between military commanders of the two countries. This led to a violent clash, leading to casualties. "We find that we have a lot of interpretations on why China has not announced the casualties. These interpretations are not helpful, especially in border areas," he added.

NATURE'S BOUNTY



Antelopes run through a field at Kanjari village in Ahmedabad on Thursday.

AFP

Residents demand restoration of 4G in J&K

JAMMU, 30 JULY

Demand for restoration of the high speed internet (4G) is growing louder here as completion of the first year of suspension of the service on the eve of abrogation of the Article 370. The internet service and mobile telephony were completely suspended on the mid-night of 5 August to prevent any trouble by mischief-mongers in protest against abrogation of the constitutional provision.

However, 2G internet and SMS services were thereafter gradually provided to consumers.

The issue has also become controversial as the centre has been pleading in the Supreme Court against restoration of the service to maintain order in Kashmir, but the Lt. Governor GC Murmu in his recent interview to certain media persons is reported to have taken a different stand by claiming that the J&K administration did not have any objection in restoring the 4G internet service.

Youth in particular is making noises on the social media for restoration of 4G and the issue was trending as people in Jammu were questioning that why was the peaceful area being punished by snapping the service.

Murmu is reported to have recently said that the Jammu and Kashmir administration has told the Union Home Ministry that it did not have any objection in restoring 4G internet service or how people would use it, asserting that high speed internet connection would not pose any problem.

The internet speed has been reduced to 2G in which the students were facing problems in online classes and also downloading their subject material. Murmu also had the taste of the slow net service when he had to mid-way wind up a recent online meeting of the Jammu University council as the net service was erratic. SNS

Bihar robbers target banks during Covid

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
PATNA, 30 JULY

As many as eight bank robberies have been reported in the past four months since the lockdown was first enforced in March

days later when they arrested five robbers and also recovered Rs33 lakh from their possession. What stunned the police team was how an English teacher running a coaching institute in the state capital had masterminded this robbery with help from a karate trainer.

In the current month, the robbers have targeted two banks in Buxar and Vaishali districts. In Buxar, the dacoits raided the Bank of India branch on 7 July and looted Rs4.60 lakh at gunpoint. The criminals walked out unchallenged after committing the crime.

A day later, the miscreants targeted the Fino payment bank in Vaishali district and looted Rs4 lakh after assaulting the bank cashier.

In April, the robbers looted Rs14 lakh from Bhagwanpur branch of the Bank of India in Muzaffarpur while in March, the robbers targeted three banks—two located in the same district.

In the first incident, the robbers looted over Rs2.53 lakh from the Lalu-Chapra branch of SBI while in another incident, the miscreants looted Rs20 lakh from Maithi branch of Axis bank. The robbers also raided North Bihar Gramin Bank in Vaishali district, looting Rs8.80 lakh.

Rajput's father files caveat in SC to pre-empt ex parte order on Rhea's plea: Sushant Singh Rajput's father on Thursday filed a caveat in the Supreme Court and sought hearing before any order is passed on actor Rhea Chakraborty's plea. Caveat is a type of petition filed to pre-empt any ex parte order on the plea filed by opposite side. Rhea moved the Supreme Court Wednesday seeking transfer of an FIR from Patna to Mumbai and the stay on the investigation by the Bihar police on the allegations of Sushant Singh Rajput's father that she abetted 'suicide' of his actor son. Let nothing be done in the above matter without prior notice to the undersigned" Sushant Singh Rajput's father Krishna Kishore Singh said in his caveat filed through lawyer Nitin Saluja. Senior advocate Vikas Singh, who is the family lawyer of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, Wednesday had said that bollywood actress Rhea Chakraborty's plea in the Supreme Court seeking transfer of an FIR from Patna indicates that "somebody in Mumbai police was helping her."

PTI

SNS

Herd immunity in India may generate only in pockets, can be short-lived: Scientists

And therefore, the idea of naturally generated long-lasting herd immunity may not be of much practical policy relevance for India, he added.

The debate on herd immunity intensified following sero-surveys from New Delhi and Mumbai, two of India's most populated cities where the number of cases surged before showing a declining trend.

The sero-surveillance study in Mumbai revealed that 57 per cent of its slum population and 16 per cent of its non-slum residents in three civic wards had developed antibodies, indicating many people would already be affected by Covid than the official tally suggests. These results will be valuable to learn more about herd immunity," stated Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) in a statement.

Sero-surveillance provides estimates of antibody levels against infectious diseases and is considered the gold standard for measuring population immunity due to past infection or vaccination.

Health department officials said it will scale up testing and will also be useful for emergency cases. Health experts believe that the actual number of Covid-19 cases is much higher than what is being detected. They also said more cases would come to light if people suspected of Covid or those who die are tested too.

"The nasopharyngeal swab is examined for the rapid antigen test. If

Consultation needed

The draft Environment Impact Assessment-2020 notification brought out by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, in the shadow of the coronavirus pandemic, aims at diluting the existing EIA notification of 2006 and to make clearances more corporate-friendly. The notification was released in March, shortly before the national lockdown was announced. No publicity was given to the draft, except that it was uploaded on the ministry's website. It is arguable if this was the right time to make amendments to the EIA which affects people. The Ministry agreed to translate the draft of the controversial notification in 22 local languages on orders of the Delhi High Court for wider consultation among people across the country, but made an about turn in the Karnataka High Court saying it was not legally required to translate the draft into 22 languages. This means that millions of Indians who cannot read Hindi or English may remain in the dark about a far-reaching legislation that will significantly impact India's natural heritage and the health and well-being of the citizens. The Karnataka High Court has warned the Environment Ministry that it will consider staying the draft notification till consultations in local languages by the Union government and its various organisations are completed.

Activists argue that by giving a go-by to the precautionary principle on environment by trying to shut down public response to the draft, the notification allows projects that have already violated environmental laws to get clearance by simply paying a fine. The proposed changes display a mindset opposed to environmental regulations and consider them as an unnecessary burden on corporate entities. A Supreme Court Bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Ajay Rastogi said recently that giving environmental clearance retrospectively to projects that were already underway without seeking such clearance would amount to condoning the operation of industrial activities without EC. In the absence of an EC, there would be no conditions that would safeguard the environment. Moreover, if the EC were to be ultimately refused, irreparable harm would have been caused to the environment. Linear projects such as roads and pipelines in border areas will not require any public hearing. A 'border area' is defined as "area falling within 100 km aerial distance from the Line of Actual Control with bordering countries of India." That would cover much of the Northeast. Further all inland waterways projects and expansion of national highways will be exempt from prior clearance. This includes roads that cut through forests and dredging of major rivers that are part of the ecosystem. The notification paves the way for implementing projects without concurrence of people or approval of environmental agencies. Besides diluting the existing 2006 EIA notification, the new law would nullify the Environment Protection Act of 1986 which was enacted in the aftermath of the Bhopal gas tragedy of 1984, based on the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution that declared protecting and developing the environment as a fundamental duty. The 42nd Amendment itself was necessitated by the outcome of the 1972 Stockholm Conference of the United Nations. The Government would do well to have broad-based consultations before embarking on a step many consider retrograde.

A dream shattered

The worst misgivings of activists in Hong Kong, and of observers around the world, have come true with the arrests on Wednesday of four student activists ~ aged between 16 and 21 ~ involved with a now-disbanded pro-Independence group under the new security law controversially introduced by Beijing in the island territory. The latest arrests, which take the total of those arrested under the new law to 15, were made on suspicion of organising and inciting secession. An officer of the Hong Kong police told reporters, "Our sources and investigation show that the group recently announced on social media to set up an organisation that advocates Hong Kong independence." He added that computers, cell phones and documents were seized. While the police did not identify those arrested, and only confirmed they were all students, a member of Student Localism, the disbanded group, said its 19-year-old former president, Tony Chung, was among those arrested. In the wake of the new security law, Student Localism had announced last month that it was disbanding itself and had dismissed all its members, saying that only overseas chapters would continue to operate. China, of course, has warned that even overseas activities supporting independence for Hong Kong are proscribed and will invite action.

The arrests are likely to harden positions against Beijing in many Western countries, although how meaningful their responses will be remains to be seen. Already, Human Rights Watch has condemned the latest arrests and called for targeted sanctions against Hong Kong and Chinese officials responsible for the law. While the new law allows China's security agencies to operate in the island territory, Wednesday's arrests were made by the local police. Criticism against the law, which was passed bypassing Hong Kong's legislature, has stemmed from the fact that it trashes the "One country, two models" scheme accepted by Beijing at the time of the handover of Hong Kong in 1997. The law has provisions similar to those in force in China and it bears recall that it is these powers that Beijing routinely uses to crush dissent. While its enactment in Hong Kong may push much of the opposition to China's iron fist underground, it is unlikely to entirely stifle dissent, if the anger of the young activists who battled the authorities for several months last year is any indication. Dissent though seldom bothers Beijing, and it is unlikely to do so now. But the Hong Kong dream lies shattered.

Literature and Pandemics

What makes pandemics similar across geographic locations and time is not the presence of germs and viruses but that the human response follows the same pattern. All three literary works inform us that the initial human response to the outbreak is typically one of denial. Furthermore, our response to a pandemic tends to be slow and the authorities often provide false numbers about the infected cases and deaths



As we are confined within the four walls of our homes under lockdown in the wake of Covid-19, literature helps break the barriers, connecting us across different historical periods and time zones with others who have experienced similar tragedies. More importantly, literature shows us that we have a lot in common with others who are from distant lands and different times, encouraging us to appreciate the fact that we are not the only ones who are dealing with the worldwide devastation wrought by the pandemic. Throughout history, there have been people who have dealt with crises that caused untold suffering.

In this op-ed, I will briefly examine three highly influential literary works on pandemics: Daniel Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year*, Alessandro Manzoni's *The Betrothed*, and Albert Camus' *The Plague* to show the striking similarities between the current Covid-19 pandemic and the historical outbreaks of plagues across time. What makes pandemics similar across geographic locations and time is not the presence of germs and viruses but that the human response follows the same pattern regardless of culture and time. All three literary works inform us that the initial human response to the outbreak is typically one of denial. Furthermore, our response to a pandemic tends to be slow and the authorities often provide false numbers about the infected cases and deaths in order to either deny the existence of the pandemic or to minimize its impact.

In 1722, Daniel Defoe wrote *A Journal of the Plague Year*, which is still regarded as one of most authoritative and illuminating works of literature on contagion and human behavior. In this book, Defoe describes the bubonic plague of 1665, which wreaked havoc on London in what became known as the Great Plague of London. According to Defoe, the local authorities in some London neighborhoods tried hard to show the number of plague deaths much lower than the actual numbers by inventing diseases as the recorded cause of death. According to Defoe, the authorities' figures were always low when the facts on the ground showed something very different: "The next Bill was from the 23rd

of May to the 30th, when the Number of The Plague was 17: But the Burials in St Giles's were 53, a frightful Number! Of whom they set down but 9 of the Plague." Later it was discovered at least 20 more "were really dead of the plague," but had been "set down of the Spotted-Feaver or other Distempers, besides others concealed."

Defoe tells us Londoners were subjected to the most aggressive measure taken by the city of London in 1665 by forcing all infected individuals to be locked in their homes with their families even if their family members were not sick. The lockdown "had very great inconveniences in it, and some that were very tragic," Defoe acknowledges, "but it was authorised by a law, it had the public good in view as the end chiefly aimed at, and all the private injuries that were done by the putting it in execution must be put to the account of the public benefit."

Defoe's book emphasizes that the most prevalent way the contagion spread was via asymptomatic individuals who carried it. "It was very sad to reflect how such a person as this," he writes, "had been a walking destroyer perhaps for a week or fortnight before that; how he had turned those that he would have hazarded his life to save, and had been breathing death upon them, even perhaps in his tender kissing and embracings of his own children."

The relationship between Defoe's novel and what we are experiencing now is so startlingly clear that it feels indeed strange to remember that Defoe was describing a pandemic that happened 355 years ago. In the 1827 novel, *The Betrothed*, an enormously popular work about the outbreak of the bubonic plague in 1630 that killed roughly half of the population of Milan, Verona, and Vénice, the Italian writer, Alessandro Manzoni, describes the people of Milan's anger at the official response to the plague. Despite all the medical evidence, the authorities in Milan ignored the threat posed by the disease and even refused to cancel a local prince's birthday celebration.

Manzoni shows how the plague spread rapidly because the restrictions were insufficient, the enforcement was lax, and the local people didn't bother to heed them.

Manzoni shares with us how the general public, medical doctors and even the Tribunal of Health in Milan chose to either ignore or made light of the threat that the plague posed. According to Manzoni, local people "heard with a smile of incredulity and contempt any who hazarded a word on the danger, or who even mentioned the plague." A few Italian doctors who had warned of the impending disaster in the form of plague were met with derision or apathy. He writes, "most of the physicians joined with the people in laughing at the unhappy presages and threatening opinions of the smaller number of their brethren." He reports on how the corrupt government health officials at Milan's Tribunal of Health chose to actively conceal evidence of

the number of cases of the plague by blaming the numbers on other grounds. The medical reports were falsified and concealed by the health officers who were charged with inspecting the dead bodies. Manzoni wrote that wild conspiracy theories were doing the rounds as the scale of infection became impossible to control. The local people of Milan started blaming if not foreign soldiers, then witches, or shadowy "poisoners."

The strength of *The Betrothed* lies in educating us about the psychological stages in a pandemic beginning with denial and scapegoating to displacement and, finally, belated recognition of the risks and the panic driven reactions of the public to the pandemic. With the outbreak of Covid-19 worldwide, Albert Camus' *The Plague* has become a best seller again after its first publication in 1947. My purpose here is not to write a criticism of the book nor discuss its philosophical aspects. My focus is entirely on some of the major insights from the book as they relate to the Covid-19 pandemic we are facing right now.

In *The Plague*, Camus shows us how, in the 1940s, in the French Algerian town of Oran failed to prepare for a threat from a plague because most of them simply could not believe that it could happen to them. "It's impossible it should be the plague, everyone knows it has vanished from the West," a character says. "Yes, everyone knew that," Camus adds, "except the dead." *The Plague* helps us understand that denial is a common reaction to any kind of epidemic or pandemic. We may anticipate mortal sickness in our lifetime. However, when it strikes us, we tend not to accept it.

For Camus, we are always living in the fear of death. At any moment, we could die. Whether there is threat of plague or not, death is inevitable. As he puts it, it's truly an inescapable "underlying condition." What Camus is trying to tell us is that if we accept the fragility of our lives, there is freedom. It can move us from feelings of angst and helplessness to a state of joy and gratitude. Camus isn't trying to scare us but he's preparing us to accept the fact that there can never be safety. There will be a plague or some other epidemic will happen again. This is why it is critically important for us to realize that it is a shared grief and shared struggle that calls for collective action.

Camus forces us to think about our responsibilities to the people around us. He draws out the conflict between our pursuit of individual happiness and moral obligation to our fellow beings. The important message in *The Plague* is that although pandemics have a way of upending our lives, they force us to live in the present moment. Nothing else really matters when our very day-to-day survival is at stake. There's just the here and now for us, and as the narrator in *The Plague*, Dr Bernard Rieux, says, "We're all involved in it." What Dr Rieux implies is that we should all see ourselves as members of a community and not as atomized individuals. This means when we are combatting Covid-19, we simply cannot think selfishly only of ourselves, but we must seriously ponder how our actions will affect others. In *The Plague*, Dr Rieux is driven by the virtues of empathy, love and solidarity in his fight against the contagion. If we learn these lessons now in our moment of crisis, we may be better off in our fight against Covid-19.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN VOICES

The solution is in the problem

The capital city's problem of the ever-increasing number of vehicles could provide the perfect solution to the thronde who had failed to implement its rules on parking. Thimphu with 57,697 vehicles as of June 30, is crying for space. The new roads or space the thronde is creating cannot keep up with the demand for space to park cars. Without parking space, our roadsides become alternate parking. But this is not fair for others, especially pedestrians. There are footpaths, but it is not accessible because vehicles block them, as in the eyes of the motorist, every inch of space is a parking space.

Implementers of the parking rule, traffic police, are penalising people who make roads their parking. We should support the police. This is not to penalise the owner of a car. Building owners are supposed to provide parking space for their tenants. This is ensured as early as the planning stage. If there is no space, the building owner is supposed to create one. On paper, it is the grand plan of turning the basement into parking.

What happens after the owner gets the building occupancy certificate is there for everyone to see. This requirement is violated, abused, raped (use whatever term you can think of) when the building is complete. We need not do any study or research. Drive a few kilometres north or south of Changlimithang stadium. The evidence is there. Violators of the building rules include policymakers, lawmakers, those implementing them or monitoring them. Don't be surprised if the list includes prime ministers, former or serving, cabinet ministers, parliamentarians, police or town planners.

Vehicle numbers will increase and increase drastically if we go by the current trend. Dealers are overwhelmed with orders to the extent that 20 to 30 new vehicles are sold on the day of the

KUENSEL
launch of a new brand. There are schemes – discounts, ways to get import quota, loans and many more. It is too good to resist the temptations. And when the public transport is not efficient or reliable, the next best thing is buying a car, even if 60 percent of the monthly salary is deducted to pay the car loan.

We take pride in our environment, the policy of Gross National Happiness and many more. When it comes to buying vehicles, all these take backstage. Those who lecture on GNH are driven by consumerism. It is a national shame for not living up to the guiding principles of our approach to development.

Tenants who are penalised for parking on roadsides should charge their building owner. The rule is clear. A tenant with a car has to be provided with a parking space. If he owns more than one, it is his or her headache. If the thronde and police can work together, we will see a solution. Those who are aware of laws are encouraging tenants to press their landlord for parking space.

We should have provisions where penalties are shifted to landlords for not providing parking space. This will ensure the architectural drawing submitted for approval will be followed.

Local municipalities had been saying that they would sever basic amenities like water and electricity to building owners who violate rules. It had not happened. It is not fair to leave it or blame the elected Thrompon. The bureaucracy should not leave it all to the Thrompon. Violations of rules affect all.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR editor@thestatesman.com

The real test begins now

SIR, This refers to your report 'Cases surge; fatality rate dips to 2.28%; tally over 14.35 L' (July 28). PM Narendra Modi's note of extreme caution in the latest edition of *Mann ki Baat* echoed concern over the nationwide surge of coronavirus cases in the past week. India added nearly two lakh cases in four days with former hotspots like Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai giving way to a more pan-India distribution of new cases. The pandemic is entering a phase where backward districts in states like Bihar, Jharkhand, UP and Bengal will start reporting more cases. It is for this scenario that time was bought through nationwide lockdowns. We now know that a vast majority recovers with no, few or mild symptoms. But governments must adequately equip district and taluk hospitals for those requiring medical care.

Emphasis must be on reducing mortality at all costs. Delhi's

story is relevant for states witnessing a surge now because a decline could follow if the outbreak is managed in orderly fashion. After several mistakes, Delhi ramped up testing, improved processes at its hospitals, and lined up thousands of beds in auxiliary care centres

WHY SO TOUCHY?

SIR, The Supreme Court has not enhanced its prestige and authority by issuing contempt of court notices, suo motu, against lawyer and activist Prashant Bhushan for his two social media tweets last month. The court must make space for criticism, including of itself. By getting offended by some social media posts, the highest court has shown itself as too touchy and sensitive. It is surprising that the court considered the matter important enough to attend to when its normal functioning has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and many important cases are waiting to be heard and decided. It would only have reinforced the status and prestige of the court if it had in its wisdom ignored the comments. No one judges the Supreme Court by the opinions of lawyers or others, but by the court's pronouncements and orders, its efficiency and the conduct of its judges.

Judges are, in fact, known for reticence and refusal to respond to criticism. The contempt of court law has been scrapped or toned down in many countries, including the UK from where it came to India. India's contempt of court provisions need to be more clearly and narrowly defined, too, if at all they should continue on the statute book.

Yours, etc., Shovonlal Chakraborty, Kolkata, 28 July.

besides reposing faith in home isolation. Citizens were therefore reassured about the government's preparedness. Improved treatment protocols have also helped. A sero survey pointing to 23 per cent of Delhites developing antibodies, an estimated 45 lakh people, adds to the body of knowledge.

The impending Unlock 3.0 needs a reality check with many

states reposing faith in lockdowns, even weekend ones. Delhi's experience with and without lockdowns has convinced the Karnataka CM to oppose lockdowns but he is the exception.

India tested 4.42 lakh samples on Saturday up from 2.15 lakh on June 25 and must keep scaling it up. Early testing helps patients stay on the radar of health officials and

facilitates hospitalisation for those whose symptoms take a serious turn. Where doctors and health facilities are in short supply, governments must go the extra mile to ramp up messaging on masks and community surveillance. A test of state capacity in India's poorest regions begins.

Yours, etc., Vandana, Chandigarh, 28 July.

A meaningful Rakhi gift

ANJALI MEHTA

The much-celebrated occasion of Raksha Bandhan is around the corner. This used to generate considerable excitement when we were young. We made rakhis with Anchor thread and brushed them with toothbrushes until the thread fibres shone. We then braided little beads onto the two side threads left long to tie them around our brothers' wrists. Brothers busied themselves selecting the most thoughtful and appropriate gifts for their sisters.

Rakhi highlights the strong and enduring bond between siblings. Sometime ago, someone asked me what the best gift was a brother could give a sister. I felt the best gift was for the brother to truly understand his sister. I thought that one of the best ways in which this could be achieved was for the brother to step into his sister's shoes for that day. To undertake the daily chores she does, visit the places she visits and so on. Today, I feel the brother can go one step further and intervene to ensure that his cheerful, sprightly sister has a bright and safe future. He can oppose his sister's child marriage with all his heart if he encounters it. If his affirmative action helps his sister to continue to enjoy her childhood, complete her education and be saved from the stress and physical danger of a teenage pregnancy, there can be no greater gift.

Child marriage is a rampant social evil that has destroyed many young childhoods that should ideally have been spent in pursuit of knowledge and in gaining confidence. Globally, in around 21 per cent of marriages, girls have been married off before the age of 18 – that is about 650 million girls. Out of these about 250 million were married even before the age of 15. One third of the child brides in the world reside in India. Though the scourge of child marriage affects both girls and boys, the proportion of boys is far lower. The median age of marriage of a girl in India is 16.8 years (much below the legal age of marriage for girls which is eighteen years), while that of boys is 22.6 years (which is higher than their legal age of marriage, twenty one years).

Though cognisant of the complex social pressures including poverty, lack of physical safety and many others that compel people especially in rural areas

to marry off their daughters early, I feel the human price of doing this is paradoxically far steeper. The deaths due to teenage pregnancy are two times higher in girls aged less than 18 years and three times higher in under 15-year-old mothers. Though our country is showing a slight dip in maternal mortality in the last decade from 130 per 100000 in 2014 to 122 in 2017, this figure is still unacceptably high.

Pregnancy-related complications are the cause of the greatest number of deaths of girls in the age group 15-19 years. Poignantly, that is the very age when young children are deciding their futures and what they dream of achieving in life. To have your childhood abruptly cut short because of a forced marriage and then to have your life cut short because of pregnancy complications seems a tragic waste of potential. Apart from outright mortality, many girls are left with permanent damage to their pelvic areas or urinary systems from the ravages of pregnancy on such a young body. This makes them have permanently morbid conditions for the long term and contributes to a lack of self-confidence.

Not only is the mother's health at risk, but the babies born to teenage mothers are more likely to be pre-term, of low birth weight, or stillborn. They also have a higher morbidity and mortality rate. It is estimated that 15 to 18 per cent of children born worldwide have low birth weight (less than 2.5 kg) representing more than 20 million births a year. India has the highest number of pre-term babies in the world – about 25 per cent of the overall share. Over 25 million babies are born annually in India and about 1.7 million have low birth weight – below 2.5 kg – and 0.4 million have very low birth weight – below 1.5 kg.

Several articles in peer-reviewed journals provide data establishing that the young age of mothers – less than 20 years and low birth weight of mothers – BMI < 18.5 per cent were both risk factors (National Family Health Surveys of India) for low birth weight babies. Low birth weight and prematurity are associated with higher rates of stunted growth, chronic illnesses like obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases in later life and neurological problems relating to cognition and neurodegeneration. Such children are also at risk of retinopathy of prematurity (ROP), a potentially blinding condition. Prematurity is a leading con-



tributor to neonatal mortality. India's own infant mortality rate is 32/1000 live births (2018). Low birth weight babies are 40 times more likely to die in the first month of life. Thus, we can see that babies born to teenage mothers start life with a huge disadvantage.

There are other social implica-

tions. Reports such as the 2006 one by International Centre for Research on Women highlighted that girls married under the age of 18 were twice as likely to be physically assaulted by their spouses and to feel that this was justified. The study of psychology tells us that children tend to internalize the

blame for events around them. If a child bride who is mentally immature decides to take upon herself the blame for being beaten by her spouse or the ill health or low IQ of her child, you can imagine the mental stresses she would be living with for a lifetime. She and her spouse would also not be in a strong position to bring up their children well, if they are young and inexperienced about life.

The UN World Health Assembly goal is to achieve a 30 per cent reduction in the number of infants born with a weight lower than 2500 g by the year 2025. Reducing the number of child marriages will be a powerful way to achieve this goal. It will also pave the way for gender equality. In 2017, a small group of social activists including myself had worked on a PIL on equal age of marriage for girls and boys (which currently stands at a differential of 18 years for the girl and 21 years for the boy respectively), since the Constitution recognizes all citizens as equal. The exact age would be the decision of medical experts and child rights activists who understand the deeper nuances. But having an equal age (whatever it may be) would shift the mindset away from child brides for older men.

Though ultimately our PIL did not come up for discussion for reasons outside our control; a ray of hope is that recently the Union government has constituted a task force to examine the issue of child marriage. It could either support the NGOs dedicatedly working in the field of child marriage for several years or else, working jointly with them, come up with an effective solution to curb child marriage. This would address a multitude of issues in one stroke – overpopulation, illiteracy, gender related disadvantages such as domestic violence and wage gap.

So, awaken brothers! If you can picture your smiling and carefree sister, whom you played with lovingly as a child, turning into a mental and physical wreck because of a forced early marriage, it should bother you greatly. This Raksha Bandhan, give your sister a gift born out of deep courage and love. Do all in your power to prevent her from getting married before the legal age of 18. Gift her your unconditional support to realize her full potential.

The writer is a Delhi-based medical practitioner.

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

The Government of India have been rather slow to recognise the fact that, in view of the great rise of prices of all necessities of life, the wages paid to the men employed in many of their services require to be substantially increased. Among those who have borne this treatment more or less patiently for a long time are the postmen and the menial staff of the Post Office. Everyone will be glad that at length their claims have been recognised. Not only are they to receive higher pay, but they have been given a scale of pay providing for an annual increment. The increase, moreover, is to have a retrospective effect from the 1st of December 1919. Finally, they have been put in a position to earn more liberal pensions on their retirement. No one will grudge the threatened increase in postal rates when it is made clear that it is intended to improve the lot of the very deserving and hardworking servants of the public who, with marvellously few errors, sort and deliver our mails day by day. Naturally, the clerical staff are in equal need of an increase and there is reason to believe that before long an announcement will be made by the Government of India on this subject which will give satisfaction both by way of increase of pay and of improved prospects.

NEWS ITEMS

MOSLEM UNIVERSITY BILL

Simla, July 30
The text of the Moslem University Bill was published today. Mr. Shafi says: The University will be of the teaching and residential type. In accordance with the recommendations of the Calcutta University Commission the University will not include intermediate classes. But the University will have power to establish and maintain intermediate colleges and schools at Aligarh. The degrees conferred will be recognised by the Government. Special features of the University will be the imparting of Muslim religious education to Muslims, and the inclusion of departments of Islamic studies. The Bill also provides for the making of Statutes and Regulations. The general terms of the Bill and Statutes have at various times been discussed with representatives of the Muslim University Association.

ALLEGED AVERTED DACOITY

The averted motor dacoity, details of which were published recently, appears after all to have been a simple affair. Further enquiries show that the arrested sepoy had been engaged in land disputes with a man, and was also concerned in an intrigue with a married woman. Two lathi fights had already occurred and complaints filed at police stations. Taking advantage of the fact that his regiment was about to proceed overseas the sepoy obtained possession of a rifle and hired a car to take himself to Khaga. The garage proprietor's suspicions having been aroused the man was arrested, in circumstances already reported, as he was about to board the car in the vicinity of his barracks. He and another man are under arrest on charges connected with the possession of the rifle.

TRANSPORT FACILITIES IN BOMBAY

Bombay, July 30
The Government of Bombay have actively undertaken the work of making the country roads passable at all times, in order to provide facilities for growing mechanical road traction. Already substantial progress has been made in building numerous vents on nullah-broken roads and an ambitious programme has been taken in hand for building low level bridges over such rivers which suffer from prolonged spells of dryness and low water. Orders have been issued to work up a scheme for unbroken roads between Bombay and Ratnagiri, and also between Bombay and Ahmedabad. If progress is maintained at the present rate, Bombay Presidency will enjoy important road transport facilities before long.

THE LEFT-HAND MOTOR DRIVER

The Minister of Transport recently instructed the special committee appointed to deal with all regulations concerning vehicles to consider the question of left-hand steering with as little delay as possible. At a meeting held in May week, therefore, the matter was taken first, and the result of their deliberations is the probability that at an early date restrictions on the use of cars so fitted will be set up. Additional evidence remains to be taken and the official decision will doubtless be reserved for a further meeting, but there seems to be no question that recommendations will be made for the restriction and ultimate suppression of a system which, in the views of the committee, forms a source of danger to the general public.

The path to self-destruction?



MAHIR ALI

Portland in Oregon was among the several American cities where the spontaneous protests sparked by the police murder of George Floyd just over two months ago never quite died out. Until a few weeks ago, though, a certain amount of imagination would have been required to identify it as a potential epicentre of any kind.

That began to change, however, when the Trump administration decided, ostensibly against the wishes of the city authorities, to inject federal forces into the city, claiming there was a threat to federal property. Mostly

borrowed from an elite border force that has previously been deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, the troops, wearing no insignia, came clad in camouflage combat gear.

They predictably proved to be rather less shy than the local police of provoking confrontations, and went to the egregious extent of randomly bundling suspected protesters into unmarked white vans — a far from uncommon occurrence in certain other countries, but something of a novelty for the United States.

One consequence of such tactics has been to swell the size of nightly gatherings in Portland from the hundreds back into the thousands, with

a protective Wall of Moms cropping up and coming under attack, while dads are chipping in by bringing their leaf-blowers and trying to redirect the tear gas back towards the perpetrators. More ominously for Donald Trump, the events in Portland ignited solidarity protests last weekend in a number of other cities, from Seattle to Los Angeles.

The president has threatened to send federal forces into several further Democrat-run cities. Of late his playbook for the Nov 3 election, now less than 100 days away, has shifted to "law and order", in an echo of Richard Nixon's 1968 strategy, after became all too clear that spinning the

state of the economy to his advantage was no longer feasible.

The overriding problem for him, of course, is his administration's appalling insouciance in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has claimed more lives in the US than in any other country. While Trump continues to contend that no nation has done better than America in combating the coronavirus, the overwhelming evidence to the contrary keeps mounting and he can no longer be confident that even his most diehard supporters accept his grotesquely distorted version of reality.

Hence he is now counting on being seen as a saviour on a very different front: as the only bulwark between the status quo and the dastardly designs of all the "far left", Antifa and anarchist radicals determined to strip the national emblem of its white and blue elements. And who are these dangerous enemies of Confederate statues (commemorating the defenders of slavery) led by? Why, none other than sleepy/sloppy Joe Biden!

It might be hard even for the blindest of Trump's backers to picture the uninspiring centrist Democratic presidential nominee in a Che Guevara beret, hence the ludicrous efforts to paint him as a pawn of Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren, and to pin on him policy platforms he (unfortunately) wouldn't approach with a bargepole, such as defunding the police.

It is broadly the case that the Democratic Party's policies have discernibly shifted leftwards to a degree, mainly in response to popular demand. It doesn't necessarily follow, though, that a Biden presidency would be even mildly radical. He is

undoubtedly a thoroughly mediocre choice of candidate of what is being described as the most significant American presidential election in a lifetime.

Biden is well ahead in most polls, and a large number of voters — perhaps a majority — are expected to mail in their ballots well before Nov 3. Trump has already been decrying voting by mail as a recipe for electoral fraud, and Republicans can safely be predicted to double down on their traditional strategy of voter suppression.

The extent to which the incumbent's efforts to shift attention away from his litany of failures might work is open to question, but hardly anyone so far is writing off the possibility of his re-election. The likelihood is dimming, though, and several commentators have lately turned their attention to an alternative scenario: what if Trump refuses to concede, especially in the event of a narrow defeat?

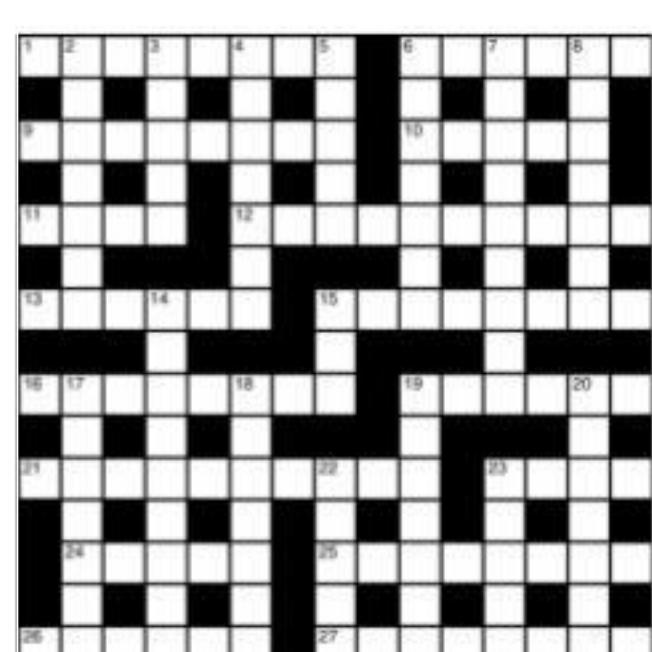
Given his demonstrated incapacity to accept defeat, alongside his refusal to spell out whether he would go quietly, there has been dire talk of military coups and martial law, and even the f-word — fascism — has been bandied about.

America's multiple maladies did not begin with Trump, nor are they likely to end with him. No one can predict precisely what kind of nightmare might turn out to be. But it's reasonably safe to conjecture it would be a dream come true for all those who have desperately longed to witness the self-destruction of this unfolding century's most dastardly superpower.

Dawn/ANN.

NO 28029

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS

- 1 Underground workers' organisation able to confound the odds (4)
- 3 Abridged English novel winning Oscar is rot (10)
- 10 Managed to bag with rifle (7)
- 11 Aristo on horse having tot (5,2)
- 12 Outline clue for aide, cryptically? (5,4)
- 13 Cut is acute cut (5)
- 14 Approach to solving problem of regressive atmosphere and country gripped by panic (5-3)

DOWN

- 18 Leisure facilities where one can get high, and very anxious? (8,5)
- 22 Giant cat biting a dog's tail (5)
- 23 Centre for cultural development where favourite food captivates Irish going over (5,4)
- 26 Serback for West African, confusing endings of verb in East African capital (7)
- 27 Crew watched cutter (7)
- 28 What might one learn from reception of Space 1999? (4,6)
- 29 Type of immunity said to be picked up (4)
- 1 Salt possibly a factor in judging bake-off? (8)
- 2 Censor second person using French language (5)
- 4 Social network left off confirmed pencil booking? (5,2)
- 5 Spooner's to check appointment's in order (7)
- 6 Diminutive fixer digs company (4,5)
- 7 E.g. hydroxychloroquine variant developed outside institute by head of lab (9)
- 8 Boffin no longer frisky? (6)
- 9 Secure base of angel on top
- 15 Morph noticing nothing, unnoticed? (9)
- 16 False duvet material for napping, perhaps? (5,4)
- 17 Avoided tablets taken orally (8)
- 19 Immersion in water corrupted bitmaps? (7)
- 20 Well known to be inept? (7)
- 21 Kid A's first chord (1,5)
- 24 Pubs getting regulars to sign in before start of session (4)
- 25 Edition of paper missing leader (5)

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



India is the largest borrower, which accounts for 25 per cent of the total lending by Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) so far

D J PANDIAN
VICE-PRESIDENT, ASIAN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT BANK

THUMBNAILS

REC arm cancels contract to Chinese firm: State-owned REC Power Distribution Corp Ltd (RECPDCL) on Thursday said it removed a Chinese firm from the smart meter project in Jammu and Kashmir soon after the government order on sourcing of equipment from "prior reference" nations. RECPDCL, an arm of Rural Electrification Corp (REC), had in September 2019 awarded a project for installation of 1,155 lakh smart meters in Jammu & Kashmir to Techno Electric & Engineering Co Ltd.

PTI

SRF plant: Chemicals firm SRF Ltd on Thursday said its board has given approval for setting up of an additional chloromethane facility at Dahej in Gujarat at a cost of Rs 315 crore. In a regulatory filing, the company also said its consolidated net profit declined 6.41 per cent to Rs 177.09 crore in the first quarter of 2020-21 as compared with Rs 189.22 crore in the year-ago quarter.

PTI

TechM-Hinduja tie-up: Tech Mahindra has announced a global strategic partnership with Hinduja Group's CyQureX, a leading provider of advanced cyber security solutions world-wide, with a view to offer world-class cyber security solutions in support of clients through successful digital transformation, a joint statement by the companies said.

SNS

Bhumika Group: One of the leading developers Bhumika Group's, retail project in Udaipur, Urban Square mall, gets a 5-star rating from a Bengaluru-based research firm. Rajasthani-based developer was rated as the best upcoming mall developer in Northern India after being assessed on various parameters such as customer satisfaction, vendor satisfaction, banking relations, after sales support & timely construction, said a Press release.

SNS

Scindia school inks MoU: The Scindia school in Gwalior and the New York Institute of Finance (NYIF), a global leader in professional training for financial services and related industries, have signed an Memorandum of understanding (MoU). As per the agreement NYIF will annually allocate two full scholarships of 100 per cent tuition fee waiver for their G2020 & young finance scholar programmes, according to a Press release.

SNS

Assocham launches 'Wisdom series': Industry body ASOCHAM hosted a thought leadership event with spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar for a dialogue at the inaugural session of the 'wisdom series' organised in association with ITC Sunfeast, on the theme of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat - vocal for local ~ moving towards self-reliant India'. Spiritual leader and industry leaders deliberated on how to promote local MSMEs and industries to achieve a self-reliant India in an engaging webinar, says a Press release.

SNS

Gold demand in April-June sinks 70% on Covid-19 woes

Jewellery demand fell by 63% during the qtr at ₹18,350 cr against ₹49,380 cr in the year-ago qtr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 30 JULY

Gold demand in India plunged 70 per cent during the April-June quarter to 63.7 tons compared with the corresponding period last year mainly due to the nationwide lockdown to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and high prices, according to a World Gold Council (WGC) report.

PTI

Overall gold demand in the country was 213.2 tons during the second quarter of 2019, WGC said in its 'Q2 Gold Demand Trends' report.

In terms of value, India's gold demand during the second quarter of this year was Rs 26,600 crore, down by 57 per cent compared to Rs 62,420 crore in the corresponding period of 2019.

The total jewellery demand in India for the second quarter of 2020 decreased by 74 per cent at 44 tons compared to 168.6 tons in the same quarter of 2019.

Jewellery demand, in value terms, fell by 63 per cent dur-

WORLD GOLD COUNCIL REPORT

» In terms of value, India's gold demand during the second quarter of this year was Rs 26,600 crore, down by 57 per cent compared to Rs 62,420 crore in the corresponding period of 2019

» Total investment demand for Q2 2020 declined by 56 per cent to 19.8 tons during the quarter under review against 44.5 tons last year

ing the April-June quarter this year at Rs 18,350 crore from Rs 49,380 crore in the corresponding period last year.

Total investment demand for Q2 2020 declined by 56 per cent to 19.8 tons during the quarter under review against 44.5 tons last year.

In value terms, gold investment demand during the second quarter witnessed a dip of 37 per cent at Rs 8,250 crore from Rs 13,040 crore.

Total gold recycled in the country also saw a decline of 64 per cent during April-June quarter at 13.8 tons from 37.9 tons in Q2 of 2019 as refineries were closed due to the

nationwide lockdown.

Similarly, total gold imports in India in Q2 2020 sank 95 per cent to 11.6 tons during the quarter compared to 247.4 tons in Q2 2019 due to no movement.

The second quarter of 2020 was defined by lockdowns and high prices, both of which acted in combination to keep India's gold demand record low at 63.7 tons, down 70 per cent, WGC managing director, India, Somasundaram PR said.

Sales trend during the window of opportunity, afforded by relaxation of lockdown in select cities, do point to healthy

latent demand that should surface once Covid-19 turbulence is behind us, he added.

He said, demand for jewellery dropped by 74 per cent to 44 tons, in an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty where weddings were postponed or just turned out to be uncharacteristically quiet and private.

Investment demand fared relatively better, with demand drop lower at 56 per cent to 19.8 tons - as gold's safe haven attributes and perhaps some price increase anticipation attracted HNIs and investors.

Naturally, online buying convenience played a significant part in consumer behaviour during lockdown, as we saw gold exchange traded funds (ETFs) grow after being dormant for many years, he noted.

Digital gold too saw significant activity, though volumes are yet negligible in the overall demand scenario, he said adding that logistical issues and poor demand crashed imports by 95 percent, to a mere 11.6 tons.

Overall, gold demand in India in H1 2020 was 165.6 tons, plummeting 56 per cent in comparison to H1 2019, despite marginal increase of gold ETF buying in keeping with global trends, he stated.

Going forward, he said, India's Covid-19 journey in H2 will chart the course and pace of economic revival of which gold demand is an integral part.

A sense of optimism is developing amongst trade, however, that, by Dhanteras, Covid-19-related disruptions may matter less as society learns to live with it, with a possible upside following some positive news on treatment.

Press Trust of India

RIL beats street with record profit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

"The severe demand destruction due to global lockdowns impacted our hydrocarbons business but the flexibility in our operations enabled us to operate at near normal levels and deliver industry-leading results"

MUKESH AMBANI
RIL CHAIRMAN

Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) today reported record net profit of Rs 13,248 crore in June quarter after one-time gain from stake sale as well as bumper telecom revenues cushioned Covid-19 hit earnings from refining, petchem and retail segments.

PTI

The net profit in April-June was 30.6 per cent higher than it was in the same period a year back, and bettered the company's previous best of Rs 11,640 crore earning in October-December 2019, the company said in a statement.

The oil-to-telecom conglomerate said it had a one-time gain of Rs 4,966 crore from sale of 49 per cent stake in fuel retailing venture to BP plc.

This together with 183 per cent jump in Reliance Jio's standalone net profit to Rs 2,520 crore covered up drop in earnings from mainstay segments.

EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation) declined by 11.8 per cent to Rs 21,585 crore "due to lower contribution from oil-to-chemical (O2C) business, which was impacted by significant demand destruction and margin pressure across transportation fuels and polyester chain".

Also, lower realisation in the export market impacted profitability.

"Closure of stores and restrictions on operations across the country due to Covid-19 contributed to a decrease in EBITDA of retail

Yes Bank takes possession of Anil Ambani's group HQ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 30 JULY

Yes Bank has taken over the headquarters of Anil Ambani's group in suburban Santacruz for failure to repay dues worth Rs 2,892 crore.

The private sector lender has also taken possession of two flats in south Mumbai for the non-payment of dues by Reliance Infrastructure, according to a notice published by Yes Bank in a newspaper on Wednesday.

The other two properties are spread over two different floors in south Mumbai's Nagin Mahal, measuring 1,717 sq ft and 4,936 sq ft.

It can be noted that exposure to ADAG firms is blamed as among the key reasons for the high amount of bad debt piled up by Yes Bank. Due to the high amount of non-performing assets, the lender had to be bailed out by a SBI-led consortium of lenders for Rs 10,000 crore.

Before the bail-out, the government and the RBI superseded the Yes Bank board in March and installed a new chief executive and board.

53,124 crore through a rights issue and sold nearly 33 per cent stake in Jio Platforms Ltd to Facebook and Google for Rs 15,265 crore.

It also sold a 49 per cent stake in the fuel retailing business to BP for Rs 7,629 crore.

"We completed the largest fund raise in Indian corporate history in this quarter," Mr Ambani said.

With coronavirus lockdown shutting down malls and markets for the most part of the quarter, Reliance Retail - which operates consumer electronic stores, fashion outlets, and grocery stores - saw revenues dip 17 per cent to Rs 31,633 crore and segment pre-tax profit fall 47.4 per cent to Rs 1,083 crore.

Petrochemical revenues declined 33 per cent due to lower price realisations with disruptions in local and regional markets due to the pandemic outbreak.

Cognizant Q2 income down 29% to \$361m

NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

IT major Cognizant has reported 29 per cent drop in June quarter net income at \$361 million (around Rs 2,701 crore), but is confident of logging strong growth in the coming quarters on the back of strong bookings and demand for digital services.

The US-based company, which posted a net income of \$509 million in June 2019 quarter said it expects its FY-2020 revenue to be in the range of \$16.4-16.7 billion.

For the June 2020 quarter, Cognizant's revenue saw 3.4 per cent decline (2.5 per cent in constant currency) at \$4 billion from \$4.14 billion in the year-ago period.

Cognizant - which has about 2 lakh employees based in India - follows January-December as financial year.

"We delivered a solid second quarter performance whilst continuing to improve our competitiveness. Against an uncertain economic backdrop, we remain steadfast in investing in our clients and our associates, and in executing our digital strategy to position Cognizant for accelerated momentum," Cognizant CEO Brian Humphries said.

The company said its revenue across business segments was negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the ransomware attack, primarily in the month of April.

Humphries said the resurgence is "broad-based" across geographies and industries and the trend is expected to continue.

"We anticipate to actually continue to make progress in all verticals in the second half of the year... A year ago our growth rates, relative to the competitors, were substantially off... I'm very confident we're regaining our moto and starting to enter the competition again," he said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

Private equity firm Advent International today said it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire a controlling stake in Hyderabad-based RA Chem Pharma Ltd from pharma firm Micro Labs.

Though Advent did not provide any financial details or the percentage of the stake to be acquired, sources in know of the matter said the deal gives RA Chem Pharma an enterprise value of around Rs 1,000 crore.

They also said the PE firm is acquiring up to 60 per cent stake in the pharmaceutical company.

"We continue to be excited about India's pharmaceutical landscape, and investing in RA Chem Pharma will further strengthen our

presence in the sector," Advent International MD and head (India) Shweta Jalan said in a statement.

The company aims to build one of the leading API (active pharmaceutical ingredient) platforms in India and will leverage its financial and operational resources globally to scale RA Chem Pharma both organically and inorganically, she added.

Advent International has significant experience in the healthcare industry globally, the statement from the PE firm said.

"We believe that this transaction will further build upon RA Chem's strengths to continue its journey to deliver high-quality, niche and specialised products to its customers globally," Micro Labs chairman and MD Dilip Surana said.

Press Trust of India

Advent to buy RA Chem Pharma

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Press Trust of India

Mother Dairy forays into bread segment, eyes ₹25K cr turnover

NEW DELHI, 30 JULY

Mother Dairy, a leading milk supplier in Delhi-NCR, today forayed into bread segment as part of its strategy to diversify business, and announced its target to more than double its revenue to Rs 25,000 crore in the next five years.

Mother Dairy has launched three types of breads - sandwich, brown, and fruit & milk - in a price range of Rs 15-40 per packet.

The breads will be initially available at 1,800 milk booths and "Safal" outlets in the National Capital Region (NCR).

The company is targeting a revenue of Rs 100 crore from bread segment over the next three years.

"We are diversifying into confectionery and bakery segment with the launch of our breads," Mother Dairy Fruit & Vegetable Pvt Ltd managing director Sangram Chaudhary told reporters in a video conference.

He said the size of the bread market in India is estimated to be Rs 5,300 crore currently and is growing at an average rate of 10 per cent for the last five years. The highest consumption is of white bread.

Chaudhary said the company has introduced around 20 new products in the market, including five types of sweets.

Asked about the company's current turnover and future outlook, he said Mother Dairy's current annual

revenue is around Rs 10,000-11,000 crore.

"We are targeting to reach Rs 25,000 crore turnover by 2025," he said, adding that growth could be slow this year because of Covid-19.



I am worried about a second wave. I think you can see a second wave starting to roll across Europe, and we've got to do everything to prevent it from reaching these shores

UK HEALTH SECRETARY MATT HANCOCK

ON RE-INTRODUCTION OF EMERGENCY MEASURES IN UK AS COVID-19 CASES SOAR IN EUROPE

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, FRIDAY 31 JULY 2020

09

HK disqualifies 12 Opp poll nominees

It marks a setback for the pro-democracy camp, which had aimed to win a majority of seats in the legislature this year

ASSOCIATED PRESS
HONG KONG, 30 JULY

At least 12 Hong Kong pro-democracy nominees including prominent activist Joshua Wong were disqualified for September legislative elections, with authorities saying Thursday they failed to uphold the city's mini-constitution and pledge allegiance to Hong Kong and Beijing.

Others who were disqualified include democracy activist Tiffany Yuen from the disbanded political organization Demosisto, as well as incumbent lawmaker Dennis Kwok and three others from the pro-democracy Civic Party.

It marks a setback for the pro-democracy camp, which had aimed to win a majority of seats in the legislature this year. Earlier this month, they held an unofficial primary, with

candidates including Wong topping the polls. Wong said he was disqualified because he had described the city's recently imposed national security law as draconian, which indicated he did not support the law and thus invalidated his candidacy.

Clearly, Beijing shows a total disregard for the will of the Hongkongers, tramples upon the city's last pillar of vanishing autonomy and attempts to keep Hong Kong's legislature under its firm grip, Wong said in a Facebook post on Thursday.

Wong and many pro-democracy nominees had been asked to clarify their political stance earlier this week as their nominations were being reviewed.

Kwok said the disqualification of pro-democracy nominees was a political decision that amounted to political screening.



Today we are seeing the results of the relentless oppression that this regime is starting ... to take away the basic fundamental rights and freedom that are once enjoyed by all Hong Kong people under the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution, Kwok said in a news conference.

They also try to drive fear and oppression into our hearts and this, we must not let them succeed, he said.

Other nominees were still being reviewed, the government said in a statement expressing support for the disqualifications.

We do not rule out the possibility that more nominations would be invalidated,

Earlier Thursday, Hong Kong pro-democracy activist Lee Cheuk-yan denounced the new national security law imposed by Beijing in response to last year's massive protests calling for greater freedoms.

it said.

Earlier Thursday, Hong Kong pro-democracy activist Lee Cheuk-yan denounced the new national security law imposed by Beijing in response to last year's massive protests calling for greater freedoms. He criticised authorities for arresting four youths under the law on suspicion of inciting secession via online posts.

Hong Kong politics keeps changing, said Lee. Now they are using the national security law against the young

people these young people are being charged just for the things they said.

The four, aged between 16 to 21, were detained Wednesday for announcing on social media that they had set up an organization for Hong Kong independence.

An organization called Studentlocalism which disbanded ahead of the national security law taking effect on June 30 said in a Facebook post that four of its former members had been arrested on secession charges.

Lee spoke ahead of a court appearance with 14 other pro-democracy activists, including former lawmaker Martin Lee and media tycoon Jimmy Lai. The group was arrested in April over anti-government protests last year and was charged with participating and inciting others to take part in an unauthorised assembly.

Thai royalists rally against pro-democracy protesters

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BANGKOK, 30 JULY

lege-age students were among the attendees as were many senior citizens. I am here today because there are many protests that have anti-monarchy sentiment, said 17-year-old student Thanapat Putipat.

Todsapol Manujaras, a representative of the organizing group, vowed to stage counter-protests to any other demonstrations by the anti-government side.

We cannot accept those who violate our monarchy, the institution that should be with us forever, Todsapol said.

The anti-government protests have not been aimed at Thailand's monarchy, which would be illegal and punishable by years in prison.

The protests have been directed at PM Prayuth Chan-ocha's government, which though elected maintains a number of holdovers from the military government that ruled Thailand after a 2014 coup that Prayuth led.

Taiwan's first democratically elected Prez Lee Teng-hui dies



TAIPEI, 30 JULY

Former Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui, dubbed "Mr Democracy" for burying autocratic rule in favour of freewheeling pluralism, has died at the age of 97, the official Central News Agency reported on Thursday.

Lee was known to have defied China's drive to absorb the island it regards as a wayward province, and worked towards making Taiwan "a country of democracy, freedom, human rights and dignity", where one does not have to be ruled by others and where everyone can say out loud "I'm Taiwanese," he told a 2012 election rally.

His greatest act of defiance was becoming Taiwan's first democratically elected president in March 1996, achieved with a landslide following eight months of intimidating war games and missile tests by China in waters around the island.

Those events brought China and Taiwan to the verge of conflict, prompting the US to send a carrier task force to the area in a warning to the Beijing government.

Lee was born on Jan 15, 1923, in a village in northern Taiwan where his family owned a small rice farm.

PRECAUTION BEFORE PRAYER



Muslim pilgrims resting and eating inside a tent in Mina near the holy city of Mecca during the annual Hajj pilgrimage amid the Covid-19 pandemic, on Thursday.

Pilgrims pray on peak day of hajj in shadow of coronavirus

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DUBAI, 30 JULY

Masked pilgrims arrived on Thursday at Mount Arafat, a desert hill near Islam's holiest site, to pray and repent on the most important day of the hajj, the annual pilgrimage in Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

The global coronavirus pandemic has cast a shadow over every aspect of this year's pilgrimage, which last year drew 2.5 million Muslims from across the world to Mount Arafat, where the Prophet Muhammad delivered his final sermon nearly 1,400 years ago.

This year, a very limited

number of pilgrims were allowed to take part in the hajj amid numerous restrictions to limit the potential spread of the coronavirus.

The Saudi government has not released a final figure on the number of hajj pilgrims this year, but has said anywhere from 1,000 to 10,000 would be taking part. All of this year's pilgrims are either residents or citizens of Saudi Arabia.

In past years, a sea of pilgrims dressed in white terry-cloth garments would start to gather at Mount Arafat, or hill of mercy as it's known, before dawn and remain there until nightfall, spending

the day in deep contemplation and worship.

It is common to see pilgrims with tears streaming down their faces, their hands raised in worship on the slopes of the rocky hill where the Prophet Muhammad called for equality and unity among Muslims.

The sliver of pilgrims performing the hajj this year arrived at Mount Arafat before noon by bus on Thursday.

They are traveling in small groups of 20, following strict guidelines around social distancing, have undergone tests for the Covid-19 disease and were in quarantine before the hajj.

Epstein's ex-gf tries late bid to seal testimony

NEW YORK, 30 JULY

A British socialite charged with recruiting three girls for Jeffrey Epstein to sexually abuse made a last-minute bid on Wednesday to stop the public release of her 2016 testimony in a civil case.

Ty Gee, a lawyer for Ghislaine Maxwell, told a Manhattan judge that the depositions by his clients should be kept sealed, because they are evidence in the criminal case brought against her on 12 July.

US District Judge Loretta A. Preska denied what she described as an "eighth-hour" request after last week ordering the public release of the documents by Thursday. AP

NASA launches Mars rover to look for signs of ancient life

ASSOCIATED PRESS
CAPE CANAVERAL, 30 JULY

February after a journey of seven months and 300 million miles.

The plutonium-powered, six-wheeled rover will drill down and collect tiny geological specimens that will be brought home in about 2031 in a sort of interplanetary relay race involving multiple spacecraft and countries. The overall cost: more than \$8 billion.

In addition to addressing the life-on-Mars question, the mission will yield lessons that could pave the way for the arrival of astronauts as early as the 2030s.

There's a reason we call the robot Perseverance. Because going to Mars is hard, NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine



said just before liftoff. It is always hard. It's never been easy. In this case, it's harder than ever before because we're doing it in the midst of a pandemic.

The US, the only country to safely put a spacecraft on Mars, is seeking its ninth successful landing on the planet, which has proved to be the Bermuda Triangle of space exploration, with more than half of the world's missions there burning up, crashing or otherwise ending in failure. China is sending both a rover and an orbiter. The UAE, a newcomer to outer space, has an orbiter en route.

It's the biggest stampede to Mars in spacefaring history. The opportunity to fly

between Earth and Mars comes around only once every 26 months when the planets are on the same side of the sun and about as close as they can get.

Launch controllers wore masks and sat spaced apart at the Cape Canaveral control centre because of the coronavirus outbreak, which kept hundreds of scientists and other team members away from Perseverance's liftoff.

There's nowhere else I'd rather be, said Alex Mather, the 13-year-old Virginia schoolboy who proposed the name Perseverance in a NASA competition and traveled to Cape Canaveral for the launch.

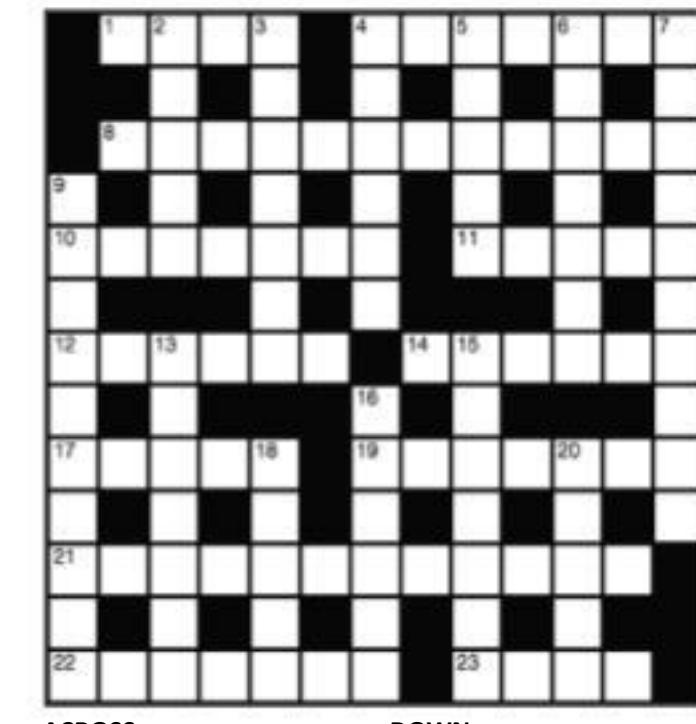
If all goes well, the rover

will descend to the Martian surface on Feb 18, 2021, in what NASA calls seven minutes of terror, in which the craft goes from 12,000 mph (19,300 kph) to a complete stop, with no human intervention whatsoever. It is carrying 25 cameras and a pair of microphones that will enable Earthlings to vicariously tag along.

Perseverance will aim for treacherous unexplored territory: Jezero Crater, a dusty expanse riddled with boulders, cliffs, dunes and possibly rocks bearing signs of microbes from what was once a lake more than 3 billion years ago. The rover will store half-ounce (15-gram) rock samples in dozens of super-sterilized titanium tubes.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



CROSS

1 Run away (4)
4 Wading bird (7)
8 Traditional Good Friday fare (3,5,4)
10 Attitude (7)
11 Farewell (5)
12 Five-cent coin (6)
14 Flaw (6)
17 Bring upon oneself (5)
19 Dramatic scene (7)
21 Food shop (12)
23 Cravings (7)
23 Abominable snowman (4)

DOWN

2 Beauty (5)
3 Rule out (7)
4 Pub (Slang) (6)
5 Unit of magnetic flux density (5)
6 Learned (7)
7 Flowering plant (10)
9 Unprejudiced (4-6)
13 Edible molluscs (7)
15 Diplomatic building (7)
16 Standing (6)
18 Happen again (5)
20 Happening (5)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

CROSS

1 Little, 12 Concor-dance, 17 Let-up, 19 Deserve, 21 Throne, 22 Alike, 23 Dreg-s, 24 Relent,

DOWN

1 Copious, 14 Cornice, 15 Elated, 16 Defeat, 18 Ting, 20 Snake.

By arrangement with The Independent
Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

- AIIMS 26588500, 26588900
- Moolchand Medcity (formerly Hospital) 42000000 & 24-hour Chemist Shop 42000447
- Vidyasagar Institute for Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences 26924300, 26924304
- Batra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280, 29958747
- Deen Dayal Upadhyay 25496320, 25494403
- Guru Tegh Bahadur 23717473, 23325320

RAILWAY INQUIRY

- General Inquiry 139
- Toll Free Nos. 1800112511
- SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 5676747

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

- ISBT (General Inquiry): 2368836, 23685181
- Haryana Roadways 23861262, 09910383838, 18001803838, Reservation 43513186; Call Centre 091528181
- Himachal Roadways 23717473, 23325320

PAR SCORE

155-165

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

SCRABBLE[®] BRAND

G R A M S I

W C D O E L N

H K W I A E S

A I E G B T

O C A A E L R

RACK 1

RACK 2

RACK 3

RACK 4

PAR SCORE 155-165

JUDD'S TOTAL 251

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION BY JUDD

A N A T O M Y

PACK 1 = 74

PACK 2 = 36



The threat the President (Trump) identified when he campaigned back in 2015 from the Chinese Communist Party is very real.

ASSERTING THAT THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION IS TAKING ALL THE 'RIGHT ACTIONS' TO REBALANCE TIES WITH BEIJING

WEATHER

CITY	MAX (°C)	MIN (°C)
SINGAPORE	30	27 H
HONG KONG	29	26 H
TOKYO	29	22 R
LONDON	34	18 S
DUBAI	44	33 S
SAN FRANCISCO	19	13 CL
NEW YORK	27	22 R
MOSCOW	19	12 R

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

THUMBNAILS



A 'City Train', with measures to attempt to shield patrons from coronavirus, carries passengers on a tour through the city centre of Leeuwarden in the Netherlands on Thursday. AFP

Japan blast: A sudden explosion from a suspected gas leak blew out walls and windows in part of a northern Japanese town on Thursday morning, killing one person and injuring 17 others. There was no sign of a fire and investigators at the suspect a gas leak may have caused the blast. Local media say a gas leak and explosion occurred at a restaurant. AP

Juarez drug cartel sued: Family members of nine women and children from an offshoot Mormon community who were killed in Mexico last year have filed a federal lawsuit accusing the Juarez drug cartel of carrying out the attack in retribution for their public criticism and protests against the cartel. Nine members of the Juarez cartel have been held. AFP

US coronavirus deaths surpass 1,50,000

Fatalities in USA more than a fifth of world's recorded deaths; US also had over 44,26,000 confirmed cases, making it world's worst-hit country

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 30 JULY



A nurse screens patients before sending them to a tent to be tested at a Covid-19 testing site at St. John's Well Child and Family Center in Los Angeles, California. AFP

The US has recorded over 1,50,000 Covid-19 deaths, another grim milestone that comes amidst warning from a top Indian-American physician that the country has failed to arrest the spread of the deadly pandemic.

America's coronavirus death toll was 1,50,676 as of Wednesday—more than a fifth of the world's recorded deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University. The US also had over 4,426,000 confirmed cases, making it the world's worst-hit country.

The first death in the US was reported on 29 February. The country reached 50,000 deaths 54 days later on 23 April, and 34 days later, on 27 May, crossed 1,00,000 deaths. It has taken 63 days to add another 50,000 to reach the 1,50,000 mark.

"I think the fact that we as a country have not been able to get our arms around this, have not prioritised preventing those deaths is all that much more maddening," Dr Ashish Jha, director of the Harvard Global Health Institute, said.

"And so, for me it's frustration, it's sadness. And a resolve to try to figure out how we prevent the next 1,50,000," Jha told CNN. "I think we can, but we're really going to have to work for it," he added.

Some states in the US are seeing their highest death tolls. California on Wednesday reported 197 Covid-related deaths in a single day, according to state Department of Public Health.

That total far outpaces the previous high of 159, recorded just last week.

Florida also reported a record 216 deaths on Wednesday. Infectious disease experts say the US is at a critical juncture, as debates about how and whether to reopen schools for in-person learning are taking place across the country.

Case rates rose as businesses reopened and distancing rules relaxed in late spring, and those wanting more normalcy soon should get more disciplined now by wearing masks, limiting outdoor dining and social gatherings.

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Meanwhile, scholars at the Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security said in a report that the US needs to restart its response with policy actions at the federal, state and local levels to get control of the pandemic.

"Unlike many countries in the world, the United States is not currently on course to get control of this epidemic."

erings, and closing bars, Dr Anthony Fauci said.

"It's not going to spontaneously come down," Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, he said in a call with several governors about the raging pandemic.

Fauci has also disputed claims in a video shared on social media by Trump about mask-wearing and the use of anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine to treat Covid.

Fauci told the BBC that it was not productive for him to judge the president's tweets or retweets but made it clear that his own view on masks was well known in the White House, adding that "it's not helpful" for conflicting guidance to be presented "when we are trying to get people to universally wear masks".

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US economy shrank by 33 per cent

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 30 JULY

The US economy shrank at a dizzying 33 percent annual rate in the April-June quarter — by far the worst quarterly plunge ever — when the viral outbreak shut down businesses, throwing tens of millions out of work and sending unemployment surging to 14.7 percent, the government said Thursday.

Business investment and residential housing also suffered sharp declines last quarter. Government spending diminished by a loss of tax revenue that forced layoffs, also fell.

The job market, the most important pillar of the economy, has been severely damaged. Tens of millions of jobs vanished in the recession. More than 1 million laid-off people have applied for unemployment benefits for 18 straight weeks.

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The contraction last quar-

ter was driven by a deep pull-back in consumer spending, which accounts for about 70% of economic activity. Spending by consumers collapsed at a 34 percent annual rate as travel all but froze and shutdown orders forced many restaurants, bars, entertainment venues and other retail establishments to close.

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the virus remains a threat to workers and customers at many service industry jobs that require frequent face-to-face contact.

So dizzying was the contraction last quarter that most analysts expect the economy to produce a sharp bounce-back in the current July-September quarter, perhaps of as much as 17 percent or higher on an annual basis.

Yet with the rate of confirmed coronavirus cases having surged in a majority of states, more businesses being forced to pull back on re-openings and the Republican Senate proposing to scale back government aid to the unemployed, the economy could worsen in the months ahead.

The Trump administration is betting against that outcome in asserting that the economy will undergo a V-shaped recovery in which last quarter's plunge would be followed by an impressive rebound in the current quarter — a hoped-for dose of good news that would be reported in late October, not long before Election Day.

Oz records deadliest day of Covid pandemic

IANS
CANBERRA, 30 JULY

Australia on Thursday recorded its deadliest day of the Covid-19 pandemic so far, with 13 new deaths and a record 744 confirmed cases.

With the new tallies, the total number of coronavirus cases in the country stood at 16,303, with 189 deaths.

Victoria recorded 723 of Thursday's positive tests, taking the total number of active cases within the worst-hit state to over 5,500, reports Xinhua news agency.

Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews said that wearing a face mask would become mandatory across the state as of midnight Sunday, expanding on rules already in place for Melbourne.

Residents are still allowed to attend bars and restaurants, with Andrews explaining that the primary focus of the new restrictions were to stem family-to-family transmissions.

Australia's most populous city, Sydney was declared a Covid-19 hotspot by Queensland state Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk, barring anyone who has visited the city in the previous two weeks.

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Restructuring the work front



TANYA KHARIJOW

With the advent of 2020, the world has been shaken like never before, with a term that barely existed in anyone's vocabulary - a global pandemic. The world economy is shaken and this is especially a hard time for the travel industry with restricted mobility of people. Businesses that revolve around travel and tourism are currently struggling to sustain and it seems that this industry may take the longest to recover worldwide.

So, now that we cannot travel ourselves, what can upcoming travel bloggers or content creators do to sustain?

Spend wisely and save indiscriminately

If your income depends on travel writing or video creation, you may feel that your upcoming projects and income are taken away from you in the blink of an eye. Nevertheless, this may be a good time to maximise your savings and spend as little as possible only on essential goods. You

Here is how upcoming new travel bloggers can sustain during the lockdown period with mobility being restricted

can delay major purchases like new equipment, phone or laptop, if any and buy needed essentials only, instead of hoarding.

Utilise as much content as possible

Blogging and content creation largely depends on an audience that may be looking for relevant information from what you can offer. With lockdown restrictions in place, the online consumption pattern of readers and viewers has increased tremendously. This is a great time to think out of the box and create content that viewers may find interesting. If you do not wish to create new content, work around existing content that you have from previous travels with a spin. Write about those places that you have been holding off, share experiences that you may have forgotten about. Feel free to experiment.

Start a YouTube channel and wait for it to monetise

If you have not already thought of this, or you do not already make videos, this might be an opportunity to finally give it a shot. Aim to start making videos on something that you can do at home - for example "100 things to do at home" or "my travel story from xyz location". Just plan the first 2-3 videos and shoot on basic equipment. YouTube channels monetise when they hit 1000 subscribers and 4000 watch hours. It may look like a farfetched goal at first, but when it does happen, it can turn into an alternate source of income with or without travel restrictions.

Use your time to work on new skills

Based on your level of expertise in the social media domain, list out all the new

skills that you would like to learn. Like a new editing software, phone filming and editing, SEO, content writing, photography, social media marketing etc. If there are relevant courses that interest you, set aside a few hours every day to invest in a new skill.

Work towards rebuilding an industry

The travel industry albeit closed right now, will need the help of future content creators to step up and create a buzz when needed. As and when travel restrictions are eased, we as a community would be required to help. There will be new opportunities to engage with different businesses or provide information to travel enthusiasts on how they can resume travels safely. There is a huge role of content creators in upcoming times to facilitate travel again. And while we are still at home, let us stay prepared to help and create better when the world is ready to get started again.

The writer is travel vlogger, solo travel enthusiast and a travel filmmaker

OFFERING NUMEROUS OPPORTUNITIES



There is immense job satisfaction and stability for aspiring mechanical engineers when it comes to government sector

SOUMYA GHOSH

One of the most diverse and versatile engineering fields is a mechanical Engineering. Today, one of the oldest branches of engineering has sprawled its wings in every sector like automotive, aerospace, biotechnology, computers, electronics, energy conversion, chemical, manufacturing, robotics and microelectromechanical systems etc. Mechanical is ready to offer you the essential skills for sustaining this society.

All aspiring engineers tend to have a biased love for the government sector. In addition, there are indeed very good reasons for it. Apart from the opportunity to work in prestigious companies, the salaries and the allowances that the government executives get are more than lucrative. Then there is the parameter of job satisfaction and stability, all of which come together to make the government sector the most sought-after career path

among all Mechanical Engineers.

PSUs require mechanical engineers

The PSU or Public Sector Undertaking Companies carry out recruitment drives almost every year to absorb a large number of mechanical engineers. Moreover, the number of PSUs that employ mechanical graduates are huge. In this context, total 30 PSUs will hire the mechanical students according to the score of GATE 2020. The basic line of work of all these PSUs involves Boilers and Turbines and other similar machines that require the expertise of Mechanical Engineers.

Indian Railways require Mechanical Engineers

Every year, Railways absorb a massive number of mechanical engineers in Assistant Loco Pilot, Junior Engineer and Section Engineer Posts. The job description involves overseeing engine prod

uction and maintenance, site supervision, putting forward tender proposals and so on.

Other upcoming Central Government sectors also absorb Mechanical Engineers

Many Central government sectors like DRDO (Defense Research Development Organization), ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization), SSC (Staff Selection Commission) (JE, SE), LIC, NIC Surveyor (Mechanical) etc. hire Mechanical Engineers (BTech/ MTech) through their own exam. The ISRO recruitment is done to fill in the vacancies at the 15 centers like Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) etc. Right from sending satellites to the Earth's orbit to planning for a Manned Moon Mission or to create bird drone in DRDO, somewhere in the hierarchy they need a solid team of mechanical engineers.

The scope in the Indian Army is the greatest for Mechanical Engineer

Mechanical Engineers work on the ground for the Indian Army. Mechanical Engineers will be taking care either of submarines or of the fighter ship in the Navy, aircraft in the Airforce or the tanks in the ground troops. Therefore, Indian Army is another sector that will soon have massive demands for mechanical graduates.

The scope in the State Government for Mechanical Engineer

Many states in India has conducted their own exam like PSC (Public Service Commission) (Assistant Engineer), MSC (Municipal Service Commission) (Assistant Engineer), WBCS, UPSC, State University Lecturer etc. for hiring mechanical engineering students.

The writer is assistant professor in Mechanical Department, Adams University

PLUS POINTS

Sensitising Indians



Danone India in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) launched the fourth edition of The Protein Week, which is celebrated annually between 24-30 July, to raise awareness about the importance of protein. During the current public health crisis, the world's attention has turned to health, wellness and immunity and The Protein Week 2020 is dedicated to educating people about maintaining good health through nutrition.

Danone India is committed to inspiring healthy eating habits through its sustained advocacy programmes with partners. Immunity is difficult to measure and to address this challenge, Danone has developed a first-of-its-kind immuno-nutrient calculator, which helps people assess the intake of relevant nutrients in their daily diet that support immunity and enables them to take necessary steps to improve their nutrient intake for building immunity.

Aiding learners



IIHMR University has opened the application for Late Shri PD Agarwal Scholarship for students enrolling for its two-year MBA in rural management course. The university is offering 21 scholarships in two categories.

The first category will cover 20 percent of the total tuition fee on a first-come-first-serve basis. This is available to the first 20 students with 50 per cent and above marks in graduation. The second category will cover 50 per cent of the total tuition fee and is only for one student with 50% and above in CAT/XAT. The amount of scholarship will be adjusted in the fee and will not be disbursed directly to the student. The course focuses on rural-urban linkages and interdependencies, water, sanitation and nutrition, child development, livelihood, skills and enterprises, and agri-business and value chains.

Digital learning



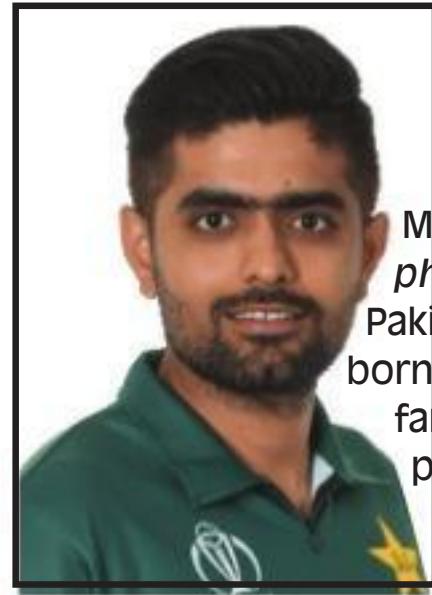
IM Calcutta announced that its upcoming academic term will operate in online mode recently. Starting in August 2020, new as well as returning students of the flagship MBA programme will attend classes digitally from the safety of their homes. It also announced that the online classes will be conducted by IIM faculty using iPearl.ai - a digital learning platform offered by TalentSprint, and students will attend the entire term in a direct-to-device mode.

Covid-19 has triggered a series of emergent digital transformation initiatives across the education sector. From reopening flagship campus-intensive programmes to launching new online-intensive programmes, digital innovation is currently a top-of-mind issue for leaders in higher education and executive education. For details: <https://ipearl.ai/>

Enhancing prowess



Fore School of Management has commenced online classes for PGDM, PGDM-IB and PGDM-FM Term 4, and PGPM Term-3. The Covid-19 pandemic has led to re-imagine the possibilities in the education space because the epidemic sparked fears of a global recession in the education industry. In the midst of this chaos, the institute shifted and adopted newer modes of learning by using technology fully. Forty sessions were conducted and attendance was between 95 to 100 per cent.



For more updates

KEY FACTOR

Mohammad Azharuddin says Babar Azam (*in photo, left*) will come to be regarded as one of Pakistan's greatest batsmen, provided the Lahore-born cricketer remains consistent. Azharuddin said fans should enjoy Babar's batting instead of comparing him with Virat Kohli.

www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Tokyo Games: The Olympic movement faces its biggest challenge for four decades in getting a streamlined Tokyo Summer Games up and running next year but top official John Coates believes it will happen surely.

Diamond League: The Memorial Van Damme in Brussels, the fourth meeting of the coronavirus-hit Diamond League athletics season, will be staged behind closed doors on 4 September, organisers have said.

Positive test: Uefa says it is confident Real Madrid's Champions League clash with Manchester City will go ahead as planned next week despite one of the Spanish side's players testing positive for Covid-19. Real confirmed on Tuesday that Mariano Diaz had tested positive, casting doubt on his participation.

Phelps story: Michael Phelps is helping to put a spotlight on mental health by appearing in a new documentary discussing his own challenges with well-being. The series will speak to high-profile Olympic athletes who have experienced both highs and lows.

Pressure lessons: England's white-ball skipper Eoin Morgan has emphasised the importance of overseas players participating in the Indian Premier League as, according to him, it helps cricketers learn to deal with the pressure of having to perform on the big stage.

Flexible man: A day after he was appointed coach, Francisco Bruto da Costa said on Thursday he would work in any capacity in East Bengal and had no apprehensions. East Bengal have not said whether or not the Goan will take over the club's senior team.

Dhoni's 'speciality': Shahid Afridi has rated MS Dhoni a better captain than Ricky Ponting. Afridi named his pick during a Q&A session with fans on his Twitter handle, saying: "I rate Dhoni a bit higher than Ponting as he developed a new team full of youngsters."

Maidan coach Ashok Mustafi dies: Veteran Maidan coach Ashok Mustafi, who also trained former India captain and BCCI president Sourav Ganguly during his formative years, died after a prolonged illness on Thursday morning. He was 86. He is survived by a daughter, based in London. "He was suffering from heart-related ailments and was admitted to a hospital in April. Early this morning he suffered a cardiac arrest and breathed his last," a family source told PTI. He was the coach of famous Dukhiram Cricket Coaching Centre which came into being under the Aryan Club galleries - once considered the nursery of Bengal cricket having produced more than a dozen of Ranji cricketers including Ganguly.

Two new sports deputy directors in Haryana: The Haryana government has appointed international wrestler Babita Phogat and Kabaddi player Kavita Devi as deputy directors in its Sports and Youth Affairs Department. In two separate orders issued on July 29 by the principal secretary of the Haryana Government's Sports and Youth Affairs Department, Babita and Kavita, who had applied to the state government for these posts, were appointed as deputy director (Sports) under the Haryana Outstanding Sportspersons (Recruitment and Conditions of Service) rules, 2018.

Sarri tempted to field U-23 team as Juve crash

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MILAN, 30 JULY

line up the Under-23 team on Saturday against Roma to recover better."

Cristiano Ronaldo (*in photo, left*) missed the chance to keep pace with Serie A's leading scorer Ciro Immobile, the Portuguese now four goals behind the Lazio forward's tally of 35 with one match remaining.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner had a goal ruled offside after 16 minutes and was denied twice by Cagliari goalkeeper Alessio Cragno as the 13th-placed Sardinians ended their eight-match winless run.

It was a worrying performance for Sarri's side, who have won just two of their last seven games, with key forwards Paulo Dybala and Douglas Costa fighting for fitness ahead of the Champions League showdown with Lyon on August 7 in Turin, when they need to overturn a 1-0 first-leg deficit.

Immobile on target

In Rome, Immobile moved to within one goal of equalising the Serie A single season scoring record as Lazio beat relegated Brescia 2-0 to stay in the race for second place.

Immobile struck eight minutes from time to close in on Gonzalo Higuain's record of 36 goals, scored for Napoli in 2015-

16. Lazio are fourth, equal on 78 points with third-placed Atalanta, who beat Parma 2-1 on Tuesday, and one adrift of Inter Milan who are second following their 2-0 win over Napoli.

Inter and Atalanta will go head-to-head this weekend with Lazio's last game at seventh-placed Napoli.

Immobile helped Joaquin Correa open the scoring after 16 minutes at the Stadio Olimpico, with Correa returning the favour late on. Behind the top four, who are assured of Champions League football next season, Roma sealed their Europa League group stage berth with a 3-2 win at Torino. Napoli have already secured their place as a result of their Italian Cup win while AC Milan, who will finish sixth, must go through the Europa League qualifying rounds despite beating Sampdoria 4-1.

Zlatan AKA 'Benjamin Button'

Stefano Pioli's side remain four points behind Roma after Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored twice and set up a third in a dominating display against Samp.

The 38-year-old got his head to an Ante Rebic cross within

four minutes in Genoa for his fastest goal in the Italian top flight before nodding the ball across for Hakan Calhanoglu to add the second six minutes after the break. Turkish winger Calhanoglu provided the cross which allowed Ibrahimovic to add his second of the night.

Lazio added a fourth in injury time as Milan extended their unbeaten run to 11 games. Ibrahimovic has scored nine league goals since rejoining Milan in January. The veteran brings his club tally to 51 goals for the club, combined with his previous stint between 2010 and 2012. He also becomes the first player to have scored 50 goals for both Milan clubs, with 57 netted during his time at city rivals Inter from 2006 to 2009.

"Like Benjamin Button, I've always been young, never old," said Ibrahimovic of the film of a man who ages in reverse.

"They tell me I'm old and tired but I'm just warming up."

Lecce's bid for survival will go down to the final day after they came from behind to beat Udinese 2-1. The southern club occupy the final relegation position but are now just one point behind 17th-placed Genoa, who were hammered 5-0 at Sassuolo.

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Criminal case opened against FIFA president Gianni Infantino

AGENCIES
GENEVA, 30 JULY

A criminal case against FIFA president Gianni Infantino (*in photo*) was opened Thursday by a Swiss special prosecutor, plunging world soccer's governing body in a new scandal.

Special prosecutor Stefan Keller has concluded there is enough evidence to take the case to court after investigating the circumstances of a meeting Infantino had with Swiss attorney general Michael Lauber, who offered his resignation last week.

Keller has uncovered elements that make up reprehensible behavior," according to a statement from the Swiss authority overseeing the federal prosecutors office.

Keller opened a criminal case against Infantino as well as Valais prosecutor Rinaldo Arnold, and has sought authorization to open a legal case against Lauber, too, according to a statement from the Swiss authority.

On the basis of general life experience, such a case of collective amnesia is an aberration, the federal court ruling said last week.

Infantino gained the FIFA presidency in the fallout from the investigations that erupted around the governing body in 2015. FIFA President Sepp Blatter, who had already announced plans to resign in the wake of arrests of dozens of soccer officials, was banned from world football. Michel Platini, the favorite to succeed Blatter and then serving as UEFA president, was also suspended, which ended his chances of leading FIFA.

In the void, Infantino, who led the UEFA administration as general secretary, saw a route to leading FIFA. The Swiss-Italian was elected in 2016, beating Asian Football Confederation president Sheikh Salman.

The Bahraini is senior vice president of FIFA so would be in line to replace Infantino temporarily if he was suspended due to the criminal case.

Hamilton eyes 'super weird' seventh Silverstone triumph

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SILVERSTONE, 30 JULY

Fresh from two dominant triumphs, Lewis Hamilton (*in photo*) will seek to complete an early-season hat-trick and extend his home wins record to seven without his usual impassioned supporters in "super weird" circumstances at this weekend's British Grand Prix.

The six-time world champion and current standings leader has always drawn energy from the big crowds that support him at Silverstone, but this year's event will be run behind closed doors in front of empty grandstands.

"The British Grand Prix is the best and that's particularly because of the fans - thousands and thousands always turn up to create a great spectacle," said the Briton.

"So, it is going to be super weird to be there without them." For Hamilton, that means no crowd-surfing celebrations and keeping his feet on the ground as he bids to add to his wins at the Styrian and Hungarian Grands Prix as the coronavirus-delayed 2020 season returns.

This Sunday's (Aug 2) race will be the 71st British Grand Prix and 54th at Silverstone and is followed one week later by a race at the same venue to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the inaugural world championship event in 1950. After his recent victories, and given his great record at Silverstone, Hamilton will start as favourite, but can expect a strong challenge from his Mercedes

team-mate Valtteri Bottas, who won the season-opener in Austria.

Already the two 'black Arrows' drivers have demonstrated the clear supremacy of their unbeaten W11 cars, dubbed "the fastest F1 cars ever" by team chief Toto Wolff this week. He said: "We will miss our fans at Silverstone - but we know that they will be rooting for us from home so we are determined to show our gratitude by putting on a great show."

"These are the fastest F1 cars ever built. They have broken the track records at both Spielberg and Budapest and it will be thrilling to see them on the iconic Silverstone circuit."

The high-speed track's demanding and fast corners are expected to suit the Mercedes cars, but Wolff said he is taking nothing for granted.

Barty pulls out of Australian Open

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SYDNEY, 30 JULY

World No. 1 Ashleigh Barty (*in photo*) pulled out of the US Open on Thursday over fears about the coronavirus pandemic in a major blow for the Grand Slam, which is scheduled to start in New York on August 31.

The Australian is the biggest name so far to withdraw from the tournament, with her decision coming as the United States marked a grim milestone when its Covid-19 deaths topped 150,000.

"My team and I have decided that we won't be travelling to the US for the Western and Southern Open and the US Open this year," she said in a statement to Australian media.

"I love both events so it was a difficult decision but there are still significant risks involved due to Covid-19 and I don't feel comfortable putting my team and I in that position."

"I wish the USTA all the best for the tournaments and look forward to being back in the US next year," she added.

Her decision came despite the New York area keeping coronavirus cases at a relatively low level since spiking in March and April while areas such as Florida, Texas and California have become hotspots.

It was not unexpected, with the 24-year-old last month expressing concerns about the US Open going ahead, and she won plenty of support Thursday on social media for her "sensible" decision to give it a miss.

Barty, who surged to the top of the rankings last year

and has stayed there since, said she would continue to monitor the situation before deciding whether to travel to Europe to prepare for a defence of her French Open crown.

"I will make my decision on the French Open and the surrounding WTA European tournaments in the coming weeks," she said, with Roland Garros due to start on September 27.

Barty was one of several leading women players not on the entry list Wednesday for the ATP and WTA Western and Southern Open, a tune-up event for the US Open from August 20-28 in a quarantine environment without spectators at Flushing Meadows.

Others missing included world No. 2 Simona Halep of Romania, the current Wimbledon champion, plus fifth-

rated Elina Svitolina of Ukraine and last year's US Open champion, Canada's sixth-ranked Bianca Andreescu.

Also on the list was Barty's fellow Australian Nick Kyrgios, who last month blasted the ATP as "selfish" for pressing ahead with plans for the US Open. In contrast, top-ranked Novak Djokovic, the reigning Wimbledon and Australian Open champion, and world No. 2 Rafael Nadal, the current US Open champion, were among the men's entries, signalling their likely intent to play the Grand Slam.

The opinionated Kyrgios has since waged a running battle on social media with some of the top names in the game who played at Djokovic's ill-fated Adria Tour tennis exhibition, blasting their "stupidity" and risky behaviour.

500 not out, Stuart Broad writes another page in his story of greatness

VITHUSHAN EHANTHARAJAH



It was quintessentially Stuart Broad (*in photo*): full, searing and straight, rapping the pad and producing the mother of jazz-hands appeals. Kraigg Brathwaite was the batsman on the other end of it. In the context of the match, his was the one to get, an occupier who has got under the skin and stayed there many times before. West Indies were 45 for three, and England seven dismissals away from a win that would see them take the series.

With that, Broad became the seventh bowler to 500 Test wickets, a milestone achieved on day five of the third Test against West Indies. Having spent the last two nights on 499, as rain washed out the entirety of day four, all he needed was 50 minutes on a chilly Manchester morning to tick over a new century.

Brathwaite was also James Anderson's 500th, a quirk that will only strengthen the bond between these two. Together with the

new ball, together for 117 Tests and counting and, now, together in the record books. For all that neatness, it is the perfect encapsulation of Broad's career that even in a moment so unequivocally his, Anderson gets a mention. That comes with the territory of playing with greatness. But at times it does obscure just how great Broad is. And moments like this, as he became the fourth seamer to make it to that mark, go some way to redressing that. He now shares space with Glenn McGrath, Courtney Walsh and, of course, his old mate at the other end.

Broad is a year younger than Anderson

was when he reached this milestone back in September 2017. Broad himself highlighted the difference in their ages just a few days ago due to the regularity in which they get conflated. Anderson will be 38 on Thursday; Broad was 34 last month.

His last 100 wickets have come in 50 innings, a run that began in March 2018 which, funnily enough, centred around the idea that Broad may be on the wane. There

was a bit of meat on that particular bone: a tough Ashes had come and gone, and the idea of taking him back to Australia in 2021 seemed far-fetched.

Thrust into the mix were doubts about an action and a wrist that were so certain until then and it was hard to shake the sense

that Anderson was the exception when it came to time's natural decline. "At 31, I've got quite a lot of cricket left in me," Broad declared before ticking off number 400 even though he might have been in the minority of those holding that view at the time.

Of course, he would say that. Those operating at Broad's level across the sporting and professional spectrum must believe they can always do more. But actually achieving more requires the perfect balance of self-awareness. Too much and your faults amplify. Too little and they fester.

So, as he became his own most vocal advocate, behind the scenes he put his life in the hands of others. He broke down his action to its parts with Chris Silverwood helping him refine that wrist as New Zealand great Richard Hadlee tweaked his run-up.

The results were clear and immediate: the pace returned and proved more productive with a fuller length that he had been reluctant to embrace in a previous iteration. Statistically, this century has come up

quicker than 300 to 400, and at an average