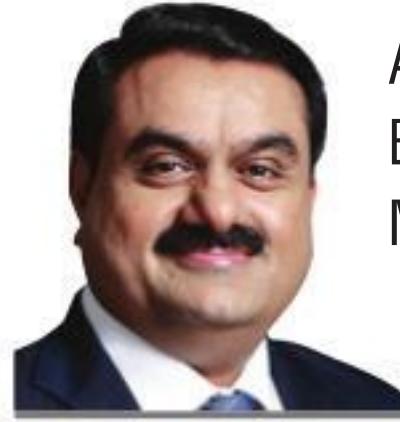




PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION



ADANI IN TALKS TO
BUY OUT GVK IN
MUMBAI AIRPORT



'HOPE OTHER ARAB
STATES FORGE TIES
WITH ISRAEL'



'VITALLY IMPORTANT
TO GET CHILDREN
BACK TO SCHOOL'



P8

P9

P10

P12

WEATHER

Generally cloudy sky with very light rain/thundershowers. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 34 and 26 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: 0.00.1 mm

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 89% Min: 68%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 32.7°C (-1) Min: 26.2°C (0)
SUN RISES 05:56 hrs MOON RISES 13:28 hrs

SUN SETS 18:50 hrs

MOON SETS 23:26 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Devotees take part in the immersion of an idol of Lord Ganesh in Laxmi Nagar. In the Capital on Monday.

DEEPAK

PM Modi misses 'good friend' Jaitley: The BJP paid rich tributes to party stalwart Arun Jaitley on his first death anniversary on Monday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying that he misses his friend a lot and that his late Cabinet colleague diligently served India. The PM tweeted, "On this day, last year, we lost Shri Arun Jaitley Ji. I miss my friend a lot. His wit, intellect, legal acumen and warm personality were legendary." Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also paid their respects.

Haryana CM, Assembly Speaker Covid positive: Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Assembly Speaker Gian Chand Gupta and two BJP MLAs tested positive for Covid-19 on Monday, two days before the Monsoon Session of the Assembly is set to begin in Chandigarh. Khattar's test report came positive on Monday, six days after he had attended a meeting with Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhwat, who was later found infected.

P3

Usain Bolt tests positive: Usain Bolt has tested positive for coronavirus days after partying with guests, including English footballer Raheem Sterling, for his 34th birthday in Jamaica, according to media reports. As per a Daily Mail report, a radio station in Jamaica, 'Nationwide90fm', said that Bolt has contracted the disease and will self-isolate at home as a result.

P12

Weekly markets reopen in Delhi: After a gap of 5 months, weekly markets reopened in Delhi Monday with the authorities seeking to ensure protective measures against Covid there.

P2

USA allows emergency use of blood plasma to treat coronavirus patients

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 24 AUGUST

The US health watchdog has given emergency authorisation for the use of blood plasma to treat coronavirus patients in the country, saying the benefits of the treatment outweighed any potential risks.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said on Sunday that over 70,000 patients in the country had been treated with convalescent plasma, which is made using the blood of people who have recovered from coronavirus

to the coronavirus that causes Covid-19.

"Today's action will dramatically increase access to this treatment," he said, a day after he accused the FDA of impeding the rollout of vaccines and therapeutics for political reasons.

"Obviously, they are hoping to delay the answer until after [the US presidential election]," he said.

The FDA said in a news release it had issued an emergency use authorisation (EUA) for investigational convalescent plasma for the treatment of hospitalised patients as part of the agency's ongoing efforts to fight Covid-19.

Based on scientific evidence available, the FDA concluded that this product may be effective in treating Covid-19 and that the "known and potential benefits of the product outweigh the known and potential risks of the product."

More than 1,76,000 people have died from coronavirus since the start of the outbreak in the US, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

Nearly 5.7 million cases have also been confirmed nationwide, making America the worst-hit country in the world after the disease emerged in China last year.

Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar said, "Our work on convalescent plasma has delivered broader access to the product than is available in any other country and reached more than 70,000 patients so far. We are deeply grateful to Americans who have already donated and encourage individuals who have recovered to consider donating convalescent plasma."

India's Covid-19 tally breaches 31-lakh mark

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

A single-day spike of 61,408 Covid-19 cases took India's virus caseload past the 31-lakh mark on Monday, a day after it crossed 30 lakh, while recoveries surged to 23,38,035 pushing the recovery rate to over 75 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

India's Covid-19 caseload mounted to 31,06,348, while the death toll climbed to 57,542 with 836 fatalities being reported in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

The Covid-19 case fatality rate has declined to 1.85 per cent, while the recovery rate has risen to 75.27 per cent.

There are 7,10,771 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 22.88 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on 7 August.

According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 3,59,02,137 samples have been tested up to 23 August with 6,09,917 samples being tested on Sunday.

Of the 836 fresh deaths, Maharashtra has reported the maximum at 22,253 followed by 6,517 in Tamil Nadu, 4,683



Tamil Nadu, 93 from Andhra Pradesh, 68 from Karnataka, 59 from Uttar Pradesh, 57 from West Bengal, 50 from Punjab, 23 from Madhya Pradesh, 14 from Gujarat, 11 from Rajasthan and 10 from Odisha.

Nine fatalities have been reported from Jammu and Kashmir, eight each from Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Puducherry, six each from Haryana and Telangana, five each from Kerala and Uttarakhand, four each from Chandigarh, Jharkhand and Goa, two from Ladakh, while Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Meghalaya and Tripura have registered one fatality each.

Of the total 57,542 deaths, Maharashtra has reported the maximum at 22,253 followed by 6,517 in Tamil Nadu, 4,683 in Karnataka, 3,282 in Andhra Pradesh, 2,895 in Gujarat, 2,926 in Uttar Pradesh, 2,794 in West Bengal and 1,229 in Madhya Pradesh.

So far, 1,086 people have died of Covid-19 in Punjab, 955 in Rajasthan, 761 in Telangana, 617 in Jammu and Kashmir, 603 in Haryana, 511 in Bihar, 409 in Odisha, 312 in Jharkhand, 242 in Assam, 223 in Kerala and 200 in Uttarakhand.

Chhattisgarh has registered

197 deaths, Puducherry 159,

Goa 144, Tripura 73, Chandigarh 37, Andaman and Nicobar Islands 33, Himachal Pradesh 29, Ladakh 23, Manipur 22, Nagaland nine, Meghalaya eight, Arunachal Pradesh five, Sikkim three and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu two.

The health ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said, adding that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

Therefore I expressed myself in good faith, not to malign the Supreme Court or any particular Chief Justice, but to offer constructive criticism so that the court can arrest any drift away from its long-standing role as a guardian of the Constitution and custodian of people's rights, he said.

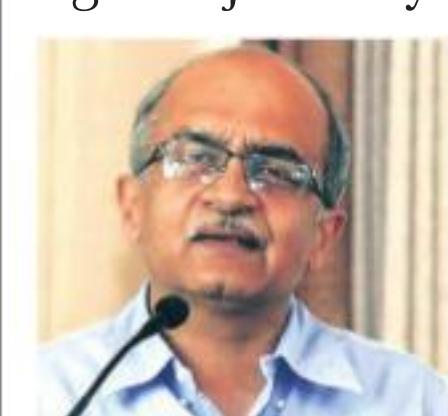
He faces imprisonment of up to six months or with a fine of up to ₹2,000 or both as punishment.

PTI

FACT FILE
TOTAL CASES 31,06,348
ACTIVE CASES 7,10,771
NEW CASES 61,408
NEW RECOVERIES 57,469
TOTAL DEATHS 57,542

UNION HEALTH MINISTRY FIGURES AS OF 8.00 A.M., MONDAY 24 AUGUST 2020

Bhushan refuses to apologise in SC for his tweets against judiciary



NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

Activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan refused to offer an apology to the Supreme Court on Monday for his two tweets against the judiciary saying he expressed represented his bona fide belief which he continued to hold.

An insincere apology would amount to the contempt of my conscience and of an institution, Bhushan said in his supplementary statement filed in the suo motu contempt case against him by the top court, taking note of advocate Anuj Saxena's complaint.

An apology for expression of beliefs, conditional or unconditional, would be insincere, he said.

On 20 August, the top court had granted time till 24 August to Bhushan to reconsider his defiant statement refusing to apologise and tender unconditional apology for contemptuous tweets against the judiciary and rejected his submission that quantum of punishment be decided by another bench.

Bhushan said as an officer of court he believes as a duty to speak up when he believes there is a deviation from its sterling record.

Therefore I expressed myself in good faith, not to malign the Supreme Court or any particular Chief Justice, but to offer constructive criticism so that the court can arrest any drift away from its long-standing role as a guardian of the Constitution and custodian of people's rights, he said.

He faces imprisonment of up to six months or with a fine of up to ₹2,000 or both as punishment.

PTI

paper . thestatesman . com



In our last video conference with PM, I had been vocal against the UGC guidelines mandating completion of terminal examinations in universities and colleges by the end of September 2020

MAMATA BANERJEE
WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

Delhi Assembly panel to meet over FB hate row today

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

The Delhi Assembly's Committee on Peace and Harmony will hold its meeting today at the Delhi Vidhan Sabha to initiate proceedings and examine witnesses in connection with multiple complaints addressed to its Chairman, Raghav Chadha, against officials of Facebook, a social media platform.

The complaints have been made against the Facebook officials for their alleged inaction in handling hateful content in India for "vested reasons", according to a statement issued by the committee.

The statement said summonses had been sent to certain expert witnesses, specifically Paranjay Guha Thakurta and Nikhil Pahwa, for participating in the proceedings.

The committee, headed by Aam Aadmi Party leader Raghav Chadha, decided to launch its proceedings in this regard after careful deliberation of the complaints made against Facebook officials. It



has been pointed out in the complaints that Facebook, despite its comprehensive policies and regulations on curbing unabated dissemination of hateful and offensive content, has been turning a blind eye to mass manufacturing and propagation of vile, hateful communal content", which are not only bad in taste but also have the potential to cause violence and a riot-like situation".

The complaints refer to an article carried by Wall Street Journal of the US in which a specific mention has been made about alleged resistance posed by Ankhi Das, Facebook's top Public Policy Director, for applying its hate speech rules to some politicians who are affiliated to the ruling dispensation as well as others.

Covid pandemic: Weekly markets reopen in Capital after 5 months

These markets have been allowed to reopen in the city by DDMA on a trial basis till 30 August subject to strict implementation of anti-Covid measures such as face masks and social distancing

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

Weekly markets reopened in Delhi today after a gap of over five months amid a number of protective measures against the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) such as vendors wearing face masks at all times, space between stalls, sanitiser dispensers and police patrolling against crowding.

The authorities allowed these markets to reopen on a trial basis till 30 August.

"Hawkers were instructed not to cause crowding and maintain proper social distance. They were also asked to use mask and sanitiser were provided to them," said Rajkumar Kataria, general secretary of Pushp Vihar weekly market near the Saket court.

Brijesh Goel, chairman of the Chamber of Trade and Industry, said there are around 2,700 weekly markets in the national capital and their opening will boost the economy of the city.

Goel, who is also convenor of the ruling AAP's traders wing, said that the representatives of weekly markets will meet chief minister Arvind Kejriwal tomorrow for a discussion on how to put on track their businesses hit by the Covid pandemic.

At the weekly market in Acharya Niketan in Mayur Vihar, hawkers and vendors wore face covers while policemen maintained vigil to ensure social distancing.

According to the North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) officials, the weekly market in Ranjeet Nagar reopened on Monday and Covid protocols were followed by buyers and sellers.

"Social distancing between vendors has been ensured. The customers are also being monitored. Sanitisers have also been kept at all stalls," a senior official said.

The Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) last week allowed weekly markets to open on a trial basis from 24 to 30 August and directed authorities to ensure strict implementation of anti-Covid measures, including social distancing and mandatory use of face masks.

According to an order issued by chief secretary Vijay Dev, weekly markets will not be allowed in Covid containment zones in the national capital.

As per norms, weekly markets will be permitted to open from 4 pm to 10 pm and not more than two buyers will be allowed to be at any stall at a time.



A throng of buyers and sellers at a weekly market at Nehru Bapa Nagar in Delhi's Karol Bagh as such markets reopened in the city after 5 months on Monday.

DEEPAK

Classified



I, LAKSHA, s/o Shri Sudarshan, r/o T-148 A, Indira Colony, Lampur Road, Narela, New Delhi-110040, have changed my name from Laksha to Kanishka for all purpose in future.

NAVEEN SAXENA, s/o Shri Yogesh Narayan Saxena, r/o D-34, Gali No. 5, Syncretic Enclave, Dabirpur, Delhi-110045, have changed my son's name from Pratham Saxena to Akarsu Saxena for all purpose in future.

I, UNUS Mondal, do hereby declare that my name is wrongly written in my passport (No.-S115605) record as Mohammad Younus Ali. I shall henceforth be known as Unus Mondal, vide affidavit sworn in the Court of Executive Magistrate (1st Class) at Barasat Court dated 25.06.2020. Both are same and identical person.

NOTICE
BY VIRTUE of affidavit Ex-Magistrate Dasgupta, Army No. JC732142X presented to me, I declare that my mother's name & DOB wrongly recorded "S. Behra & 23.04.1958" and correct is "Sarojini Behera & 02.06.1960", vide Aff. No. 92 dated 28.02.2020 and father's name & DOB wrongly recorded "PC Behra & 24.04.1948" and correct is "Purna Chandra Behera & 01.02.1950", vide Aff. No. 93 dt. 28.02.2020.

LEGAL NOTICES
DISTRICT CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL COMMISSION
1st Floor Building of Civil Surgeon Office, First Floor, Mota Singh Nagar, S.B.S. Nagar-144514 No. 667.

CC. No. 33/2020 Fixed for 23-09-2020 PUBLIC NOTICE UNDER ORDER 5 RULE 20 CPC Saroj Rani, w/o Sh. Jaspal Singh, r/o Ward No. 2, Bhagat Singh Colony, Balachaur, Tehsil Balachaur, District S.B.S. Nagar

— Complainant 1. Kim Infrastructure & Development Services Ltd., Regd. & Corp. Office-1311-A, Hemkunt House-6, Rajendra Place, New Delhi-110008 through its Manager Director. Kim Infrastructure & Development Services Limited, & Kim Future Vision Services Ltd., Branch Office Hoshikarpur, Distt. Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar Showroom, Nawanshahr, District SBS Nagar through its Branch Manager (Op. No. 2) cannot be served in the ordinary way of service. Hence this proclamation under Order 5 Rule 20 CPC is hereby issued against him and should appear personally or through their counsel on 23-09-2020 at 10-30 a.m.

Take notice that, in default of his appearance on the day before mentioned, the above-said case will be heard and determined in his absence.

Given under my hand and Seal of the Forum this 19th August, 2020.

Kuljit Singh President District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum, Sahid Bhagat Singh Nagar, Seal of the Forum



I, RAJBIR Singh, s/o Ratan Singh, r/o Village Kiranji, Tehsil & District Nuh, Dehradoon, have declared that my son Gaurav is out of my control. I disown him from my all movable immovable properties. Anybody deals with him at their own risk. We & our family are not responsible for any kind of act done by him.

WE, VISHAMBHAR, s/o Roshan & Sheela, w/o Vishambhar both r/o H. No.139 Gali no. 3, Maharanvi Enclave Uttam Nagar West Delhi-59. Declare that our son Manoj is out of our control. We disown him from our all movable immovable properties. Anybody deals with him at their own risk. We & our family are not responsible for any kind of act done by him.

TENDER
e-TENDER NOTICE
e-Tender Notice No. PR / S / HF / SpareParts / 2015 / 167 Dt.: 09.2020

which date no claim will be entertained.

Avishek Guha Advocate High Court, Calcutta 130/A, Sagar Manna Road Parnasree, Kolkata-700060 Enrolment No. F/2226/2010

OUR CLIENTS Mahua Saha and Mounta Kundu, owners of land measuring 01 cattah 11 chittacks and 23 sq.ft. with two-storyed building, C.S. Dag No. 596 and 597, C.S. Khatian No. 18, R.S. Khatian Nos. 20 and 154/1, Mouza: Arjunpur, Municipal Holding No. AC/45 Dakshin Arjunpur, Desbandhu Nagar, Baguiati, Kol-59, P.S.: Baguiati, Ward 10 BMC have lost / misplaced its original Deed of Sale dated 06 March, 1990, ADSR, Bidhan Nagar (Salt Lake City) in Book-I, Vol. 33, Pages 381-392, being No. 01558/1990.

The loss/misplacement of the said Deed was recorded as GDE No. 1238 in the General Diary on 22.08.2020 with Baguiati Police Station. Anybody having any claim, right, title and/or interest in the aforesaid properties / deed should lodge a claim with us within 7 days from this date failing which no such claim shall be entertained.

M/s. Supriyo Basu & Associates Advocates 'Temple Chambers' Room No. 48, Ground Floor 6, Old Post Office Street Kolkata-700001 Ph.: 033 4601 4849 E-mail: sbsauadv@gmail.com Date: 24.08.2020

WEB AUCTION SALE - NO.1 / WEB / AUC / 2020-21

Under Instructions from CESL Ltd., Kolkata

CESC Ltd. is organizing Sale of various Ferrous & Non-Ferrous Scrap, Copper & Aluminium cables, 7.5 MVA 33/6 KV power transformer, Scrap copper mixed with sundry items, Scrap Battery, Scrap E-waste, Scrap LT Cable cut pieces and joints, 6 way & 4 way MS pillar box, Scrap 36-panel of 33 KV double bus double breaker switch gear board etc. "As is where condition" thru e-Auction on 08.09.2020 (Tuesday). Inspection date: 26.08.20 to 09.09.20. For further details contact: MatexNet Pvt. Ltd. (e-Auctioneer), Ph.: 9831448506, 7305081263, visit: www.matexnet.com E-mail: kolkata@matexnet.com

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We need to oversee if the guidelines issued in the wake of ongoing Covid pandemic are being followed or not.

We will take strict action against those found to be violating social distancing.

We are working in coordination with civic staffers," said a senior police officer from

the DDMA.

Police officials maintained vigil at the markets and those without masks were fined.

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Now one doesn't know if the Congress is the B team of the BJP or vice-versa. Everyone knows that they are hand in glove and the BJP state president is spreading canards against the government.

PINARAYI VIJAYAN
KERALA CHIEF MINISTER

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2020

03

Covid: Pb govt allows 'home isolation' for asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic patients

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 24 AUGUST

Asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic Covid-19 positive patients in Punjab will now be allowed home isolation.

According to the Capt Amarinder Singh-led Punjab government's new guidelines regarding medical fitness for home isolation of asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic patients and those patients aged more than 60 or with co-morbidities and pregnant women will be offered the opportunity to give undertaking at the time of sampling regarding availability of the home isolation facility at their houses in case they turn out to be positive for Covid-19.

Giving further details, Punjab health minister Balbir Singh Sidhu on Monday said



that instructions have been issued to all the deputy commissioners and civil surgeons in this regard.

He said that the doctor available at the time of sampling would assess all such persons for clinical fitness for

ed they remain asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic.

Sidhu added that it is mandatory that they will procure a kit which should contain at least a thermometer, pulse oximeter, Tab Vitamin C and Tab Zinc and that they will regularly monitor themselves for any symptoms and will report immediately to the health department if the symptoms appear or worsen.

The follow-up of home isolated patients will be done by the district administration's "Covid Patient Tracking" teams.

These teams will also ensure the follow-up of these patients on phone and with at least three visits during the duration of home isolation.

"If the contrary is found during follow-up visits regarding undertaking given by patients about the availability of facilities for home iso-

lation as per protocol, such patients will be shifted to isolation facility," the minister said.

Referring to the private healthcare centres, the minister said that the private institutions have also been directed to follow the same protocols.

Sidhu said home isolation of asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic Covid-19 positive patients aged more than 60 and or with co-morbidity may be allowed if certified by a personal medical specialist or hospital that he or she is fit for home isolation.

For pregnant women, asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic Covid-19 positive pregnant women with non-high-risk pregnancy and likely not to deliver in the next three weeks may be allowed home isolation if certified by a gynecologist that she is fit for home isolation.

Haryana CM Khattar tests positive for Covid-19

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 24 AUGUST

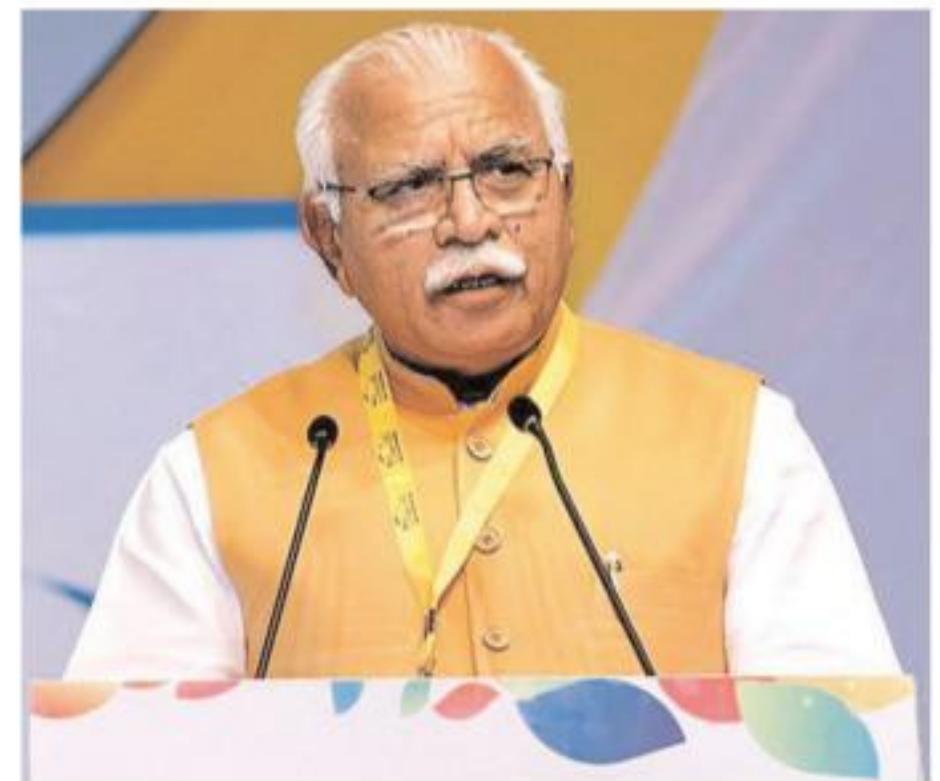
Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Monday tested positive for the novel coronavirus.

The Haryana CM disclosed the news on Twitter.

His announcement came days after Union Jal Shakti minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat tested positive for Covid-19. The Haryana CM had last Thursday decided to self-isolate himself after attending a meeting with Shekhawat.

Taking to Twitter, Khattar said: "I was tested for Novel Corona Virus today. My test report has returned positive. I appeal to all colleagues and associates who came in my contact over the last week to get themselves tested. I request my close contacts to move into strict quarantine immediately".

The CM underwent Covid-19 test just before the Haryana Assembly's monsoon session which begins on 2 August. The tests have been made



mandatory by the Assembly speaker for anyone entering the complex.

Though Khattar had undergone a Covid-19 test on 19 August which was negative but he was undergoing home quarantine for the next three days as a precautionary measure.

"On 18 August, Haryana CM Khattar and Shekhawat had

a meeting on the Sutlej-Yamuna Link. On the same day, Shekhawat informed via a tweet that he had tested positive for COVID-19.

"I am hospitalised on the advice of doctors. I request that those who have come in contact with me in the last few days, isolate themselves and get themselves examined," he had written.

U'khand BJP revokes expulsion of controversial MLA Champion



A still image from the 2019 viral video featuring Uttarakhand BJP MLA Kunwar Pranab Singh Champion. SNS

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 24 AUGUST

Uttarakhand MLA Kunwar Pranab Singh Champion, who was expelled from the BJP for his controversial behaviour last year, returned to the BJP in style in Dehradun on Monday. Though Champion was expelled for six years, but the Uttarakhand BJP decided to cut short his expulsion period and reinducted him into the party.

The Uttarakhand BJP became soft on Champion after the legislator launched

a massive PR exercise by meeting senior BJP leaders in Uttarakhand and New Delhi. Last year, the Khanpur legislator was expelled from the BJP for six years after a video — in which he was seen ranting against the hill people — became viral on social media and due to his rift with Jhabarda MLA Deshraj Karanwal. The video that showed him dancing while brandishing guns and using foul language against the hill people created an embarrassing situation for the saftron party.

The Khanpur legislator, during his interaction with the media, said, "One of my videos turned viral on social media and I seek apology from the people of Uttarakhand for my words. My grandmother Rani Saraswati Devi hails from Dwarkhal and Uttarakhand is my motherland. If I have made any mistake, just forgive me considering me a child."

Many political experts link the return of Champion to the BJP with the forthcoming Panchayat polls in Haridwar. The 13-month exile of Kunwar Pranab ended on Monday, but he is known to indulge in controversies regularly.

MAROONED



After heavy rain, a biker struggles to negotiate a waterlogged stretch under a bridge at Mouli Jagran in Chandigarh on Monday. PARDEEP SAINI

HP Cabinet approves implementation of National Education Policy in the state

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 24 AUGUST

The Himachal Pradesh government on Monday gave nod to implement the National Education Policy-2020 in the state to prepare students for the 21st century where critical thinking will determine the future of the nation.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting held here today under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur.

A state government official said the Cabinet thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for bringing New Education Policy-2020 which aims to make job creators not job seekers, and will motivate the students to move away from rote learning to critical thinking.

The policy also envisages new curricular structures to inculcate scientific temper and mathematical thinking in the students, besides increasing public investment on education from 4.43 percent to 6 percent of GDP.

The Cabinet decided to constitute a task force under the chairmanship of State Education Minister Govind Singh Thakur with 27 other members and State Project Director (SS) as its Member Secretary for implementation of this Policy in the state," he added.

He said the Cabinet gave its approval to do away with



Plan and Non Plan classification of budget in the State which is in existence presently, from the financial year 2021-22. It will be now classified into Capital and Revenue expenditure only. The Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP), Tribal Area Sub Plan (TASP), Backward Area Sub Plan (BASP) and Regional and Decentralized Development Programmes respectively.

He further stated that the implementation arrangements for Scheduled Caste Development Programme, Scheduled Caste Development Pro-

gramme, Aspirational Blocks Development Programme and Regional and Decentralized Development Programmes (VKVNY, VMJS, SDP and MMGY) will remain the same as they exist today for implementation of the SCSP, TASP, BASP, SDP, VKVNY, VMJS and MMGY, respectively.

The allocation of budget for the next financial year will be in proportion of 9 percent under Tribal Area Development Programme, Scheduled Caste Development Pro-

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HC asks police to respond to plea on officials leaking info to media

PTI
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

The Delhi High Court Monday sought response of the Delhi Police on a plea by a Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) university student, who was arrested in a case related to communal violence in north-east Delhi during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act in February, seeking inquiry against officials for leaking information to the media during the investigation.

The spokesperson said the Cabinet also gave its nod to provide one time relaxation in the guidelines under National Food Security Act, 2013 for identification of beneficiaries under BPL/Priority Households by authorizing Gram Panchayats to select additional BPL/Priority Households without holding Gram Sabhas and reducing the period of filing appeal to 7 days instead of 15 days.

Further, the completion of selection process by the Gram Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies has been reduced to 15 days from one month.

"To develop and upgrade skills for rural entrepreneurs belonging to General, ST categories and OBC categories in Rural Engineering/Economy Based Industries for employment in local occupations, approval was given to start State Rural Engineering Based Training Programme.

Further, approval was given to amend Mukhya Mantri Swavalamban Yojna 2019 to make it more attractive to promote self employment opportunities and also to provide livelihood to local youth by encouraging local entrepreneurship. This would benefit lakhs of youth of the state in the age group of 18 to 45 years," he added.

The high court said it will pass necessary orders after hearing all the parties.

I agree it is not an acceptable behaviour of some officer has done this and advocate Rajat Nair (representing Delhi Police) will agree with it, the judge remarked.

The high court was hearing the plea by JMI student Asif Iqbal Tanha alleging misconduct by police officials in leaking his disclosure

statement, recorded by the probe agency during the investigation, to the media.

Advocate Siddharth Aggarwal, appearing for Tanha, argued that his bail plea was being considered by the trial court and the timing of publication of articles in the media was such that it was not only prejudicing the public mind but also the trained mind which was hearing the bail application.

Special Public Prosecutor Rajat Nair, representing the Delhi government and Delhi Police, sought time to seek instructions on the issue.

The petition said Tanha was aggrieved by various publications reporting that he has confessed to orchestrating the Delhi riots and alleged that he was coerced to sign certain papers in the effective custody of police.

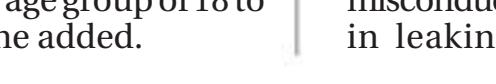
It said this information does not have any evidentiary value and alleged that the Delhi Police officials, with malafide intention, leaked the statements to the media to prejudice his case.

The high court was informed that the charge sheet has not yet been filed in the case.

Tanha, who was arrested in May, is currently lodged in judicial custody in the Delhi riots case.

Tanha, a third-year student of BA in Persian language, was earlier arrested in connection with the violence in the Jamia area during a protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in December last year.

He said the Cabinet gave its approval to do away with



THUMBNAILS



Health workers wearing PPE walk through a narrow lane of the Dharavi slum during a door-to-door Covid-19 screening in Mumbai on Monday.

MV wins RS seat from Kerala: MV Shreyas Kumar, state president of the Loktantrik Janata Dal on Monday won the Rajya Sabha seat in the bypoll held for one seat from Kerala, defeating his rival Lal Varghese Kalpathavady from Congress by 37 votes. LJD is a constituent in the ruling LDF in Kerala.

SNS

Vijayan on trust-vote: Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday said the Congress-led Opposition UDF in the state has brought no-confidence motion against his government, since they have lost confidence in themselves. He said the people of Kerala trust the state government.

SNS

Sero survey: 97 pc Covid patients asymptomatic

Sero survey was conducted in Krishna, East Godavari, Anantapur & Nellore dists

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 24 AUGUST



The first sero survey in Andhra Pradesh across four of its districts has revealed that majority of the Covid-19 patients, which is nearly 97 per cent are asymptomatic.

The state which has seen the spread of the virus by leaps and bounds in the past few weeks has conducted sero survey in four districts including Krishna, East Godavari, Anantapur and Nellore between 10-12 per cent.

Moreover, it is only the district among the four where the prevalence of the virus among women (24.8 percent) is more than the male population (19.1). In Krishna district, 35.2 per cent of the urban population has been exposed to the virus while in case of rural population it is about 14.8 per cent.

A population-based sero survey helps to understand the proportion of population exposed to SAR-CoV-2 virus including asymptomatic individuals. It can be an useful tool to guide policy makers and appropriate public health interventions.

The district also ticks other wrong boxes with 22 per cent

advised states to conduct sero-survey to determine Covid-19 exposure in the population. However, not everybody agrees with its effectiveness at this juncture.

"Sero survey of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies when the infection is surging may have little utility, especially when resources are scarce. These resources should be deployed for patient management and pandemic control," observed Dr PV Ramesh, a retired IAS officer who had been at the forefront of AP's preparation against Covid-19.

Meanwhile, in Telangana, the school education department has permitted online classes on various digital/TV/T-SAT platforms from 1 September.

Teachers are required to attend schools regularly from 27 August and prepare e-content and lesson plans and the state government will follow the Centre's guidelines on physical re-opening of schools.

The private schools in the state however, have been carrying on online lessons from June and it was only after being nudged by the High Court that the state government started gearing up to prepare a policy.

Revanth seeks CBI probe into Srisailam hydro electric plant fire incident

HYDERABAD, 24 AUGUST

Telangana Congress leader A Revanth Reddy has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah demanding CBI inquiry into the incident of fire at hydro electric plant at Srisailam which claimed the lives of nine employees even as state CID has started its inquiry.

The Congress leader who was arrested on his way to Srisailam by the police wrote two identical letters to the Prime Minister and union home minister.

He alleged that multiple red flags had been raised in the past about poor maintenance and safety of the dam itself. "The failure of the government caused these 9 deaths and also the huge damage to the state property," wrote the MP. Mr Reddy demanded CBI inquiry into the fire and urged the Prime Minister to direct the state government to pay Rs 1 crore as ex-gratia.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

in existence since 4 June 2020, deliberating on this issue. In the panel discussion, these civil society members said the announcement may cause damage to the society, citing various national data on early marriage, health, education, labour and the law. Amending the law by fiat will not further gender equality, women's rights or empowerment of girls, and will do little to improve the health of mothers and infants.

They said child marriage has already given way to late adolescent marriage.

As per the National Family Health Survey-4, only 6.6 percent were married below 15 years (young adolescents), while as many as 20.2 percent were married between 15 and 17 years (late adolescence).

In other words, less than 27 percent (of women in the 20-24 age group) were married before the current legal age of 18 years. This marks a improvement from last decade.

The members highlighted that early marriage is the consequence, not the cause of girls dropping out of school. Poverty, not early marriage, is the main cause of ill health of mothers and their children. Therefore, raising the age of marriage will only criminalise – not prevent – early marriages.

SC no to plea on compensation policy for Covid victims' kin

NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

The Supreme Court on Monday rejected a plea for directions to the Centre and state governments on the formulation of a national policy to provide uniform ex gratia compensation to families of coronavirus victims.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan noted that each state had a different policy on such compensation as per its financial condition.

It was pointed out that while the Delhi government gave Rs 1 crore to frontline staff fighting coronavirus, others offered merely Rs 1 lakh.

The petitioner pointed out that a majority of the country's population falls in financially weak category, wherein the entire family was dependent on only one earning member.

"The state of the world is akin to an emergency, being war-like in nature; therefore, it is imperative to provide ex gratia compensation as a mode of relief measure and financial assistance to those families who have lost their loved ones to Covid-19," the petitioner pleaded.

The bench said it was not inclined to hear the plea and would dismiss it.

SNS

SC 'no' to set up NEET exam centres abroad

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

The Supreme Court on Monday declined a plea for directions to the Centre and the National Testing Agency (NTA) for setting up NEET exam centres abroad for the benefit of students in foreign countries in the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic.

A bench of Justices L Nageswara Rao, Hemant Gupta, and S Ravindra Bhat asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to discuss with ministries concerned whether students who wish to visit India to sit in the NEET exam could be accommodated on the Vande Bharat Mission flights. The court also asked Mehta to explore the possibility that aspirants based out of the Middle East countries were permitted to board such flights. The bench also noted that the incoming students are permitted to approach the state govt-

SC: DLF flat buyers entitled to compensation

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

Supreme Court held the dismissal of flat buyers' complaint by National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) 'erroneous' and ordered DLF builders to compensate flat purchasers of a housing project in Bengaluru.

The SC was hearing appeals against an order of the NCDRC bench of Justice Deepa Sharma & Shri C Viswanath.

It said the flat buyers are entitled to compensation for delayed handing over of possession and for the failure of the developer to fulfill the representations made to flat buyers in regard to the provision of amenities.

PUBLIC DEMAND



CITU activists take part in a silent demonstration urging the municipal corporation to issue a monthly compensation for jobless construction labourers and free testing for Covid-19 in Bengaluru on Monday.

Lockdown violations fetch TN crores of rupees

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 24 AUGUST

While Tamil Nadu's daily tally of Covid-19 cases continue to hover around 6,000 with no end in sight in the near future, the state police is filling up state exchequer with crores of rupees – a stark irony of the pandemic situation!

The Tamil Police has collected Rs 21.26 crore as fine for violating lockdown regulations in the state as of Sunday. According to police 6.88 lakh vehicles have been seized so far since March 2020 after their owners were found violating the rules.

The rampant violation of Covid-19 guidelines by public is evident from these statistics, giving authorities sleep-

less nights. Like the main contributor of new cases daily, Chennai also contributes to the violations and fine collected by law enforcement agency.

Tamil Nadu today registered 5,967 new cases, taking the total number of persons testing positive in the state so far to 3,85,352.

According to the daily health bulletin, capital city of Chennai registered 1,278 cases in the past 24 hours.

With this, the total number of persons affected by the virus in the metropolis has reached 1,26,677.

A week ago the city seemed to be on a recovery path with daily case loads dipping below 1,000 marks, but relaxation of lockdown rules triggered another round of spike in the

cases.

As far as Chennai's neighbouring districts are concerned, Chengalpattu today registered 306 new cases, Kanchipuram saw 226 infections in the past 24 hours, and Thiruvallur reported 320 positive cases.

The districts of Cuddalore and Coimbatore today witnessed 370 and 387 new cases, respectively. As many as 97 Covid-19 patients died today, taking the total number of fatalities in the state due to the pandemic to 6,614.

According to the bulletin 6,129 patients were discharged from various hospitals in Tamil Nadu today. With this, the total number of recoveries in the state has touched 3,25,456.

Narada scam: ED issues fresh notices to five TMC leaders

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, 24 AUGUST



From left: Saugata Roy, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, Afrin Aparupa Poddar, Subhendu Adhikari, Ratna Chatterjee

Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, Afrin Aparupa Poddar, Subhendu Adhikari and Ratna Chatterjee wife of former mayor Sovan Chatterjee, a BJP turncoat.

The only IPS officer to have been served notice is former Burdwan police chief SMH Mirza, who had been arrested by the CBI earlier in

connection with the scam. ED sources said that out of the 12, against whom an FIR had been lodged by the Narada CEO Mathew Samuel, the five had been identified, were yet to furnish details required by the agency despite notices to that effect seeking their 'compliance' had been sent in July earlier.

Both Adhikari and MP Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar when contacted claimed that they had already mailed details of what the agency had required of them to comply with. Ratna Chatterjee, however, claimed not to have received such notice so far but if that be so, she would comply with.

Bengal Assembly session in Sept with Covid norms in place

SNS&PTI
KOLKATA, 24 AUGUST

A session of the West Bengal Assembly will be held next month with all Covid-19 safety norms in place, official as well as Assembly sources said on Monday.

The state government has sent a proposal for resuming the Assembly either from the first or the second week of September, a senior government official said, adding due precautionary measures will be ensured for conduct of the session keeping in mind spread of coronavirus in the state.

Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee confirmed it and said plans are being chalked out for convening the House.

"The session will start either in the first or the second week of the next month. We are working on how to have the session by maintaining Covid-19 protocols," he said.

This will be a short session, a source in the assembly said. He said organising the session in open instead of in the legislative building is also under consideration.

He, however, said for this "we have to keep in mind that it's rainy season."

Rushing the issue of "crisis of leadership" raised by some senior leaders to be "manufactured truth," Chowdhury alleged that it had been raised at the behest of some "some interested parties."

Asked if it would be monsoon session of the House, he said, "We will not be able to call it a monsoon session since it will not be possible to hold a long session like what we usually have during this time."

West Bengal has 295-mem-

ber assembly, including one nominated member from the Anglo-Indian community.

The chamber of the House of the legislative building measuring 4,300 sq ft is round shaped with a capacity to accommodate 300 members.

The session will be important since the state is scheduled to go to polls early 2021.

TMC has overwhelming majority in the House.

BJP, which has emerged as the main opposition in Bengal leaving CPM and Congress behind, is vying for power in the state after its stupendous performance in the 2019 general elections when it won 18 out of total 42 seats in the state, only four less than TMC which came out victorious in 22 seats.

"We have to plan the session keeping in mind that an MLA has succumbed to Covid-19 and there are other members who are down with the contagion. We have so many members and cannot afford taking any risk," he said.

Talking further about the arrangements, the source said that presence of media during the session will also be regulated keeping in mind the ongoing pandemic.

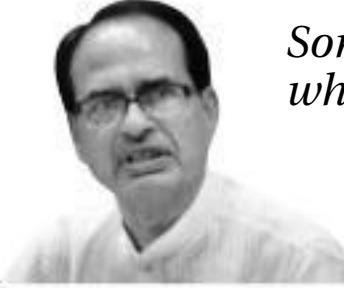
"We are planning how to include media during the session. We will seek cooperation from press persons.

"There is a need to regulate their presence since huge presence of people cannot be allowed amid pandemic," the source said.

HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Sealed item rates tender is hereby invited on Form No. IPH 6 & 8 by the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Dharamshala on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible contractors / firms enlisted in the appropriate class with HP IPH Department for the following work through offline tendering process, so as to reach in the office of the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Dharamshala on or before 8.9.2020 up to 11.00 A.M. The tender will be opened on the same day at 11.30 A.M. In the presence of intending contractors/ firms or their authorized representatives, who may wish to be present at the time of opening of the tenders. The application(s) for issue of tender(s) form(s) shall be received on or before 7.9.2020 up to 3:00 P.M. and form/ forms shall be issued on 7.9.2020 from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. against cash payment (Non refundable). The rates in tender form(s) will be filled in words and figures, otherwise, the tender will be rejected. The earnest money in the shape of FDR/ National Saving Certificate duly pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Dharamshala. Conditional tender or tender(s) received without earnest money will be similarly rejected. The Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Dharamshala reserves right to reject the tender(s) without assigning any reason. The option of the tender will be kept opened for 120 days.

S.N.O.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Time Limit	Cost of Tender Form	Remarks
1	Renovation and Augmentation of LWSS Salig, Jurther, Khanaria&Kaned (under Jal Jeevan Mission) in Tehsil Dharamshala Distt. Kangra (HP)/SH:-Providing 100 Nos house hold service Tap connection in various ward (WSS Khanaria Dari Sidhbari)	437790/-	8755/-	Three months	250/-	
2	Renovation and Augmentation of LWSS Salig, Jurther, Khanaria&Kaned (under Jal Jeevan Mission) in Tehsil Dharamshala Distt. Kangra (HP)/SH:-Providing 100 Nos house hold service Tap connection in various ward (WSS Khanaria Dari Sidhbari)	438500/-	8770/-	Three months	250/-	
3	Renovation and Augmentation of LWSS Salig, Jurther, Khanaria&Kaned (under Jal Jeevan Mission) in Tehsil Dharamshala Distt. Kangra (HP)/SH:-Providing 110Nos house hold service Tap connection in various ward (W					



Sonia Gandhi-led party will not be able to save itself now as whosoever raises voice against the family will be shown the door.

MADHYA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUDHARI
ATTACKING THE CONGRESS OVER BICKERING ON LEADERSHIP ISSUE

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2020

05

THUMBNAILS



A devotee carries an idol of Lord Ganesha for immersion in a river on the outskirts of Amritsar on Monday. AFP

Sushant case probe: CBI officials probing Sushant Singh Rajput's death case on Monday visited a Mumbai-based resort where the actor is said to have spent a couple of months, and also continued the questioning of the actor's friend and cook and accountant at the DRDO guest house in Mumbai. PTI

Guwahati airport: The Opposition Congress on Monday staged a protest at the Guwahati airport against the Centre's decision to privatise it by leasing out to Adani Enterprises for 50 years. Besides, the Airport Authority Employees Union has been agitating every day since 19 August when the Centre decided to privatise the Guwahati, Jaipur and Thiruvananthapuram airports. PTI

New party in Assam: The political party that the All Assam Students Union and AJYCP have proposed to launch before the Assembly elections due next year will be in the 'tight grip' of the students body, which does not want another 'uncontrollable' AGP-like organisation to emerge in Assam, a top AASU leader said on Monday. PTI

Trouble in NDA: LJP stakes claim for 42 seats

Paswan's LJP is one of three constituents of NDA, other two being BJP and JD-U.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
PATNA, 24 AUGUST

A day after BJP president JP Nadda said everything is well in the NDA, the LJP today staked claim for 42 seats. The LJP led by Chirag Paswan is one of the three constituents of the NDA, the other two being the BJP and the JD-U.

PM CARES trust to fund two 500-bed Covid hospitals in Bihar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

The PM CARES Fund Trust will finance two 500-bed Covid-19 makeshift hospitals in Bihar, the Prime Minister's office said on Monday, asserting that this will go a long way in improving the Covid care in the state.

Announcing the decision, the PMO tweeted "PM-CARES Fund Trust has decided to allocate funds for fight against Covid-19 by way of establishment of 500-bed Covid-19 makeshift hospitals in Bihar, the Prime Minister's office said on Monday, asserting that this will go a long way in improving the Covid care in the state.

These hospitals have 125 ICU beds with ventilators and 375 normal beds each, it said, adding that each bed also has oxygen supply.

Doctors and paramedical staff for the hospitals will be provided by the Armed Forces Medical Services, it added.

In a review meeting on 11 August, the prime minister had noted that 10 states, including Bihar, account for over 80 percent of country's active Covid-19 cases, and asserted if the virus is defeated in these states, then the country will emerge victorious in its fight against the pandemic.

seat sharing is no problem for the NDA, the situation on the ground remains entirely different.

While Nadda talks about only three parties in the NDA, the fact is that the fourth one, the Hindustani Awam Morcha

(HAM) headed by former chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi, is soon to join the NDA.

If that happens, the seats would have to be distributed among four partners since the Manjhi party has stoutly denied the merger of HAM with the JD-U. In that case, the number of seats to LJP's share will obviously go sharply down.

The problem is that while the LJP wants a maximum number of seats to expand its party base and keep the key of government formation with itself, the JD-U wants lion's share of seats to ensure it doesn't remain too dependent on its allies to run the government.

This has caused bitterness in the NDA. The situation has come to such a level that the JD-U has announced it doesn't have any alliance with the LJP.

The LJP on the other hand, says the JD-U is not their natural ally as it returned to the NDA only after it had won the 2014 LS polls.

The LJP president Chirag Paswan has already gone on constantly attacking the chief minister Nitish Kumar for his failure to tackle both Corona and floods.

India, China to hold another round of military talks on disengagement

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

Amid the ongoing tensions between the two nations over the military stand-off at eastern Ladakh, India and China are discussing dates for the next round of Lt-Gen level talks to take forward the process of disengagement at the Line of Actual Control (LAC), sources said today.

This would be the 6th round of talks at the level of senior military commanders between the two countries since the face-off began in early May.

The upcoming talks have assumed greater significance against the backdrop of the fact that People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops have refused to retreat from Pangong Tso, Galwan Valley and Depsang Plains despite agreeing to do so from time to time.

"The Chinese make promises at the meetings with Indian officials to give an impression that they are serious about disengagement and de-escalation. However, they have repeatedly gone back on their commitments," sources added.

India has not ruled out 'military options' if the talks don't yield results.

Chief of Defence Staff,



Gen. Bipin Rawat also stated this in as many words in an interview while emphasising that diplomatic and military parleys were the first option.

Last week, the two countries held the 18th meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) on India-China Border Affairs at which the Indian side sought Beijing's cooperation in expeditiously completing the disengagement process in accordance with the agreements reached between the two foreign ministers and the Special Representatives (SRs) on the boundary dispute.

At all the meetings, India has insisted that the Chinese troops withdraw to their positions and restore the status quo ante that existed in early May.

DRDO lists 108 systems to boost 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' mission

NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

Responding to the clarion call given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', the DRDO has taken several initiatives to strengthen the indigenous defence ecosystem.

DRDO delegation today met defence minister Rajnath Singh to apprise him about 108 systems and sub-systems which have been identified for designing and development by the Indian Industry only.

The initiative will pave the way for Indian Defence industry to develop many technologies towards building an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', the Defence ministry said in a press release.

The DRDO will also provide support to industries for design, development and testing of these systems on requirement basis.

All the requirements of these systems by R&D establishments, armed forces, and other security agencies can be met through development contracts or production orders placed on a suitable Indian industry.

This will allow the DRDO to focus on design and development of critical and advanced technologies and systems.

SNS

FUN TIME



Children play on the banks of the Ganges as the water level of the Ganges and Yamuna rivers rises, in Allahabad on Monday. AFP

Guwahati airport: The Opposition Congress on Monday staged a protest at the Guwahati airport against the Centre's decision to privatise it by leasing out to Adani Enterprises for 50 years. Besides, the Airport Authority Employees Union has been agitating every day since 19 August when the Centre decided to privatise the Guwahati, Jaipur and Thiruvananthapuram airports. PTI

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Congress : 5 chiefs from Nehru-Gandhi family, 13 from outside since Independence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

As a leadership crisis grips the Congress, experts having chronicled the country's oldest politi-

cal party said on Monday that it may be theoretically possible for the party to have a president outside the Nehru-Gandhi family, but not practically.

The party's history shows that

it has had at least 13 presidents from outside the Nehru-Gandhi clan since independence against five from its first family.

However, the family mem-

bers have been at the helm for a much longer period of time as against the others.

Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi have

headed the party for the majority of the period since independence.

Sonia Gandhi, who has been its longest-serving president, offered to quit at a stormy CWC

meeting on Monday after a letter from more than 20 party leaders sought organisational reforms and a collective leadership, but she was urged to stay on as the interim chief till a full-time

president is appointed.

Among the leaders outside the Nehru-Gandhi family, J B Kripalani, B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Purushottam Das Tandon, U N Dhebar, N Sanjiva

Reddy, K Kamaraj, S. Nijalingappa, Jagjivan Ram, Shankar Dayal Sharma, D.K. Barooah, K B Reddy, PV Narasimha Rao and Sitaram Kesri have headed the party.

SC disposes of plea against merger of 6 BSP MLAs with Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

The Supreme Court on Monday disposed of a "frustruous" BJP MLA's plea seeking stay on Rajasthan Speaker's decision, which allowed six BSP MLAs to merge with the Congress, in view of the High Court order.

A bench of Justices Arun Mishra, Vineet Saran and M R Shah was informed by senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Speaker, that earlier in the day that the Rajasthan High Court has passed an order on the plea filed by BJP MLA Madan Dilawar.

He said the high court has asked the Speaker to decide on merit, the plea against the merger of six BSP MLAs with the ruling Congress.

Sibal said the high court had also asked the speaker to decide on the matter within three months.

The bench said the plea before it was against an interim order of the high court, and has now become infructuous. On 17 August, the top court had deferred the hearing on Dilawar's plea after it was informed that the Chief Justice of the High Court has reportedly tested positive for Covid-19 and the functioning was postponed till 19 August.

Earlier, the top court had

India to take part in Russian defence expo in big way

NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

India is participating in a big way at the International Military and Technical Forum Army-2020, a defence exhibition being hosted by Russia near Moscow.

This is the first major defence expo being held anywhere in the world since the outbreak of coronavirus. The exhibition, which got underway yesterday, will be on until 29 August. The India Pavilion was inaugurated yesterday by Raj Kumar, Secretary (Defence Production) and D B Venkatesh Varma, Indian Ambassador to Russia, the Indian Embassy in Moscow tweeted. On the margins of the mega event, the Indian officials held talks with senior Russian officials on defence cooperation between the two countries. Cooperation in different fields, including defence, will be high on the agenda when Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Russian President Vladimir Putin later this year for the annual summit between their two countries. Delegations from nearly 50 nations are participating in the high-profile event while some have backed out at the last minute due to Covid-19 and the risks associated with the pandemic. Officials in New Delhi said India's participation in the exhibition reflects the strong defence relationship between the two countries. Russia still remains India's most dependable and trusted arms supplier even as India is making efforts to diversify its defence imports and promote indigenisation of defence equipment.

Bishiyara

Sector 37C, Gurugram

LICENCE NO. : 15 of 2018 dated 13.02.2018

HARERA REG. NO.: RC/REP/HARERA/GGM/2018/26 dated 28.11.2018

DRAW OF FLATS : AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT AASHIYARA (GURUGRAM)

This is to inform you that the draw of 122 Application against 189 units in the existing Affordable Group Housing Colony, AASHIYARA in Sector 37C, Gurugram, Haryana, License No. 15 of 2018 Dated 13.02.2018 to be developed by M/s. Renuka Traders Private Limited will be held on Friday, 28 August 2020 from 04.00 P.M. onwards in Corus Banquet Hall, 339/2, Mehrauli Road, Opp. SBI Bank, Gurugram-122007 in the presence of Govt. Officials, Vide Memo No. STP(G)/2020/3031 Dated 24.08.2020

In keeping with the current pandemic and to protect against COVID-19, the guidelines of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt of India and State of Haryana will be complied with.

As per guidelines issued by MHA & DGTCI Haryana Chandigarh/Deputy Commissioner, Gurugram, the draw will be held in the presence of a maximum of 50 people at the designated site including staff, draw committee and applicants. Admission for applicants is limited and strictly on first come first served basis. Applicants are requested to watch its live telecast by logging in the You Tube link given below on 28 August 2020 from 04.00 P.M. onwards.

YOUTUBE LINK : <https://www.youtube.com/user/ImperiaStructures>

Further if any applicant wants to check his/her name in the draw list, he/she may contact STP office, Gurugram as well as our Corporate Office situated at A-25, Mohan Cooperative Industrial Estate, New Delhi-110044 before draw of lots.

Note:- All the applicants are requested to carry acknowledgement slip, Voter ID Card and PAN Card. Applicants having valid acknowledgement slips are only permitted to attend the draw.

Renuka Traders Pvt. Ltd. CIN. U74899DL1983PTC014992
Regd. Off. B-2/3,S/F Kh No-8/8, Chhatarpur Extn, Nanda Hospital New Delhi 110074
Corp. Off. A-25, Mohan Co-operative Industrial Estate, New Delhi-110044
care@aashiyara.com | call : 011-46469999



SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED
General public is hereby informed that one boy namely **IRFAAN S/o Yunus** R/o H.No. 182, Gali No. 9, A Block (Raju Ka Makan) Kharjuri Khas, Delhi has been missing/kidnapped from the area of P.S. Kharjuri Khas, Delhi since 29.12.2015. In this regard, a case vide FIR No. 1398/15 dated 29.12.2015, u/s 363 IPC, has been registered at P.S. Kharjuri Khas, Delhi. The description of the missing boy is as under.
Age: About 4 Years, **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Height:** 2' 6", **Face:** Round, **Built:** Normal, **Wearing:** White colour T-shirt, firozi colour Pant and red colour plastic chappal in feet. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out him but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing boy then please inform P.S. Kharjuri Khas, Delhi at following Tel No. / e-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Website : <http://cbi.nic.in> E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in Fax: 011-24368639 Ph. No.: 011-24368638 P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi Ph.: 011-23968730, 8750870123 DP/451/N/2020

SHO

SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED
General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Preeti, D/o Sh. Ashish, R/o Village Gopalganj, Thabi Railway Station, Bihar, Age: 12 years (now 20 years), Complexion: Black, Face: Round, Built: Thin, wearing at the time Black Frock and Black Pajami, has been missing/kidnapped from Kilkari Rainbow Home, Kashmere Gate, Delhi since 11.01.2014. In this regard a FIR No. 15/14, U/S 363 IPC, dated 12.01.2014 has been registered at P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform undersigned. Website : <http://cbi.nic.in> E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in Fax: 011-24368639 Ph. No.: 011-24368638 P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi Ph.: 011-23968730, 8750870123 DP/451/N/2020**

Despair and triumph

In the first few months of the global coronavirus epidemic, a few countries and territories were credited with having done better than others in tackling the disease. Indeed, researchers found much to applaud in the containment models followed by South Korea, New Zealand and, in India, the southern state of Kerala. As an immediate consequence, and to the envy of those who had fared worse, as well as the applause of epidemiologists, these territories took the lead in lifting some of the crippling restrictions placed by the disease on the conduct of lives and livelihoods. But now, with new outbreaks being reported in each of these areas, restrictions are back. Two weeks ago, New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, imposed a strict lockdown on the country's largest city, Auckland, forcing businesses and schools to shut after a fresh outbreak of the disease. Now, she has announced an extension of the lockdown that was due to end this Wednesday. South Korea, whose initial success with extensive testing and contract tracing was acclaimed globally, is confronting a fresh surge in cases ~ with triple digit additions for each of the past 10 days ~ with fresh restrictions that include closures of beaches, churches, night clubs, karaoke bars and computer gaming cafes. In addition, the size of gatherings has been severely curtailed and spectator presence at sporting events banned. Closer home, Kerala has seen a resurgence of the disease with nearly 2,000 fresh infections being detected daily. Of course, the state, which had reported India's first case and has nearly 60,000 cases now, has fared substantially better than other southern Indian states, with Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka becoming causes for worry. But the increase in cases will certainly worry the state's Health Minister, who was lauded by the United Nations just two months ago for her stellar efforts in containing the epidemic and "flattening the curve". Clearly, a jump from 12,000 cases (and 43 deaths) on 20 July to a month later when both the case load as well as number of deaths have jumped five-fold suggests the success story is coming apart at the seams.

Alone in the world, it is China that shows continued improvement in the situation. When Chinese cities, including Beijing, decided last week they had acquired such a grip on the epidemic as to make the wearing of masks optional, they sent out a powerful message, one that was confirmed by decisions to reopen tourist venues, movie theatres and gyms.

While the United States faces a recession, Europe sees fresh resurgence in cases and India gallops past the 3 million-mark, China which crossed a tally of 80,000 in early March still has only about 84,000 cases, five months later. Indeed, more than an investigation into the origins of the virus in Wuhan, the world and its primary health organisation would do well to investigate how China achieved this eye-popping miracle without doing much that is different in terms of containment or testing from many countries around the world.

Tathagata returns

While the election in West Bengal is still some time away, and other state battles will be in focus before the term of the assembly expires in 2021, the Bhartiya Janata Party will hope its bid to unseat the government of Ms Mamata Banerjee gets a boost from the return to active politics of former Governor Tathagata Roy. While the saffron party had achieved remarkable success in its Lok Sabha essay in 2019, its aspirations to rule the state have been hamstrung by the absence of a leader to take on the mercurial Ms Banerjee, who remains immensely popular with many sections of the electorate. While it is open to question whether Mr Roy is that leader, considering his less than spectacular record in fighting elections in the state, his erudition, scholastic record and professional background as an engineer of some repute, will definitely make him a contender. Certainly, it is no secret that the other options available to the BJP do not inspire confidence as potential Chief Ministerial candidates.

While the party's state unit chief, Dilip Ghosh, is credited with the successful essay in 2019, even he would admit the 18 seats the party won were more because of a nationwide surge in support for his party ~ and Ms Banerjee's attempt to pitch her focus on the Prime Minister instead of dwelling on her own accomplishments ~ than his own considerable exertions. Imports from the Trinamool Congress such as Mr Mukul Roy are largely seen as opportunists and the BJP must realise that the Tripura model of parachuting in a leader with roots in the state and accomplishments elsewhere will not quite work in Bengal. All these factors may have propelled Mr Roy to take the plunge. But will it work?

Mr Roy is no spring chicken; he will be 75 going on 76 when the election comes around. He has been away from active politics for the past five years, having occupied Raj Bhawans in Agartala and Shillong. His stint as head of the state unit of the party was nearly 15 years ago. Additionally, he is no stranger to controversy and some of his statements while serving as Governor, including a call to boycott Kashmir and another to wrap bodies of terrorists in pigskin (which was later deleted), were found inedible by many.

Certainly, his presence and his utterances ~ unless he has mellowed significantly ~ will polarise an already polarised electorate further and might well lead to a bloody election. The BJP has not announced a specific role for Mr Roy in the lead-up to 2021 and may wait a little before it does so. But Bengal's election pot has begun to simmer with his return and could well come to a boil in the next few months.

Women and suffrage

In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson lent his support for a federal women's suffrage amendment and addressed the Senate about granting women suffrage at the end of World War I. In 1919, the Senate passed the 19th Amendment setting in motion the ratification process and finally on 26 August 1920 ~ 100 years ago ~ with three quarters of state legislatures ratifying the amendment, American women secured full voting rights

Despite the American Revolution preparing the grounds for women's participation in the government, the 1787 US Constitution and the subsequent first ten amendments including the Bill of Rights in 1789 were ambivalent about women's rights. Judith Sargent Murray (1751-1820) and Abigail Adams (1744-1818), wife of John Adams, the second President of the US played a crucial role in analysing the women's question in the 1790s. Abigail, through her letters to her husband and other leaders between 1775 and 1776, titled '*Remember the Ladies*' pointed out that the laws of the new nation ought to protect women from the arbitrary and unrestrained powers of men. However, the right to vote was not on their agenda.

The Constitution framers had left the decision to the people of each state to decide the eligibility of who would vote for the lower house of their state legislatures. By 1821, most states except two, gave all white males the right to vote. As in Britain, even in the US, constitutional liberalism was restrictive, and it took over 100 years for these to become liberal democracies.

The Abolitionist movement from the 1820s gave rise to women's struggle for rights including suffrage. Women actively participated in Abolitionism enabling them to acquire skills in petitioning, public speaking, writing editorials, campaigning and the like. For the first time, they stepped outside their homes. A parallel between their subjugation and that of the enslavement of blacks became evident. The men who opposed Abolitionism also opposed women's rights.

"The two movements", according to Stansell "remained strong throughout the antebellum period". Other than the right to vote, the women's rights movement in the early years focussed on equal access to education and employment, equality within marriage and a married woman's right to her own property and wages, custody over her children in case of separation or divorce and control over her own body.

On being barred from attending the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840, Lucy Mott (1793-1880), Mary M'Clintock (1800-84), Martha Coffin Wright (1806-75), Jane Hunt (1812-89) and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902) decided to hold a Women's Convention in the US. Except for Stanton, the other four were seasoned veterans of the Female Anti-Slavery Society activism.

The first Women's Right Convention was held in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848. Its *Declaration of Sentiments* paraphrasing the *American Declaration of Independence* stated, "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal". It enumerated 18 grievances against men's rule over women: denial of franchise, lack of property rights to married women and lack of legal personality for women.



was never about just the vote; nor was it a single movement" according to Susan R. Wagner.

Women's rights activists changed their stance during the debate that arose at the end of the Civil War over the 14th (1868) and 15th (1870) Amendments which granted citizenship and suffrage to African American men. Stanton, Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) and many others campaigned against any suffrage amendment that excluded women while Lucy Stone (1818-93), Antionette Brown Blackwell (1825-1921), Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910) and Frederick Douglass (1818-95) argued that this was "the Negro's hour" and that women's suffrage could wait.

In response, Stanton and Anthony split the American Equal Rights Association (AERA) which was established in 1866 to fight for equality for all African Americans and women and founded the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) in 1869 consisting of only women. They warned against African-American men securing the right to vote as they feared postponement of women's suffrage. Besides the demand for suffrage, the NWSA pressed for easy divorce and to end discrimination in employment and pay. It refused to work for the ratification of the 15th Amendment and began to advocate for a 16th Amendment that would grant universal suffrage.

In 1872, Victoria Woodhull (1838-1927) was the first woman to run for the presidency on behalf of the Equal Rights Party. In the same year, Anthony was arrested for voting in violation of laws permitting only men to do so. 'Aunt Susan' as she was referred to drew widespread applause for her defiant act and became an inspiration for many younger women. She is being pardoned by President Trump as part of the centennial celebrations this year. Along with Matilda Joslyn Gage (1828-98), Anthony also disrupted the official Centennial programme in 1876 at the Independence Hall in Philadelphia and presented *A Declaration of Rights for Women*.

In 1890, NWSA and AWSA

merged to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) to present a united front to secure women's suffrage at the state level. Stanton was the first president, but the NAWSA distanced itself from her following the publication of her *The Woman's Bible* (1895-98) as it was radical and hence potentially damaging to the suffrage campaign.

In 1913, NAWSA suffragists organized a parade down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington DC, the first of its kind. In 1915, 40,000 women marched in a NYC suffrage parade. In 1916, the National Women's Party was established, patterning itself after Britain's Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). In 1916, Jennette Rankin (1880-1973) of Montana became the first woman to be elected to the House of Representatives.

In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson lent his support for a federal women's suffrage amendment and addressed the Senate about granting women suffrage at the end of World War I. In 1919, the Senate passed the 19th Amendment setting in motion the ratification process and finally on 26 August 1920 ~ 100 years ago ~ with three quarters of state legislatures ratifying the amendment, American women secured full voting rights

and abolitionists were Margarette Forten (1806-75), Harriet Forten Purvis (1810-75) and Mary Ann Shadd Cary (1823-93). "Racism" according to Wagner "was a way to maintain white, native-born supremacy since white women outnumbered African Americans and immigrants".

Mott, Stanton and Anthony. She wrote for the Abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator*.

Stewart pleaded in 1831 for the cessation of prejudices and animosities among women. Sojourner Truth (1797-1883) delivered her memorable speech *Ain't I a Woman* at the second National Women's Rights convention in 1851 by focusing on intersectionality between gender and race. Frances Harper (1825-1911) explained the double burden of racism and sexism faced by African American women. She remarked in 1866 that she spoke of wrongs while the White women spoke of rights and did not prioritize racial equality in the fight for suffrage when the suffrage movement split over the 15th Amendment. She and Anna Julia Cooper (1858-1964) campaigned against the prevailing racism in the movement. As women's cause was universal, she emphasized on the experiences of African American women as being different from their male counterparts.

Ida B. Wells Bennett (1862-1931), organizer of the Alpha Suffrage Club and her contingent were told to march separately at the end in the 1913 suffrage parade in Washington DC. Mary Church Terrell (1863-1954), professor and principal at Wilberforce University, the first African American woman appointed to the District of Columbia Board of Education in 1895 co-founded the National Association of Colored Women with a motto "Lifting as we climb". She persuaded the men from her community to support their cause after Alice Paul's (1885-1977) attempt to marginalize them. She observed "The same arguments used to prove that the ballot be withheld from women are advanced to prove that coloured men should not be allowed to vote. Other African American suffragists and abolitionists were Margarette Forten (1806-75), Harriet Forten Purvis (1810-75) and Mary Ann Shadd Cary (1823-93). "Racism" according to Wagner "was a way to maintain white, native-born supremacy since white women outnumbered African Americans and immigrants".

It is often argued that the success of the American Revolution was primarily because its ambit was restricted to the political alone. Eighteenth century liberalism despite imbibing the spirit of the Enlightenment was essentially White male-centric denying women their rightful place as equal and free individuals. It took over a century to rectify this incompleteness with the 19th Amendment that granted one person one vote.

Despite this, the male-centred nature of US politics continues. Women still have not made it to the top elected office though there was a presidential candidate in 2016 and a vice-president one now. Men continue to have a disproportionate share in the political process putting the US far behind not only the Scandinavian countries but also some of the developing countries of South Asia and Africa.

A MEMBER OF THE



Public servants from hell

Why Sri Lanka's efforts to eliminate the drug menace have not yielded the desired results, all these years, is clear. Some corrupt drug busters have been operating hand in glove with narcotic dealers and acted as suppliers of hell dust. Several Police Narcotic Bureau (PNB) sleuths have been remanded for their alleged involvement in drug dealing. Prisons have become a gated underworld of sorts with wealthy drug czars running their drug operations from their cells via mobile phones. Two Government Analysts' Department (GAD) employees who doubled as drug peddlers have been arrested. They are believed to have removed part of the drug samples sent to the department for testing. This shows how compromised those tasked with battling the scourge of narcotics are. It is popularly said in this country that you have no one to turn to when 'the fence and the ridge destroy your rice plants'.

Last month, following the arrest of the aforesaid rogue PNB officers, a large amount of drugs in the warehouses of the police and courts was taken to the GAD for further investigations. One can only hope that nobody was able to help himself to part of those consignments of drugs. The GAD is among the four most corrupt state institutions, the newly appointed Justice Minister Ali Sabry

The Island

has said, the other three being the police, the Prisons Department and the court registries. (Did he forget Parliament?) The country is dependent on these institutions to wage its war on drugs and why it has failed to achieve its goal is obvious. There have been instances where drugs sent to the GAD for testing mysteriously turned into kurakkan flour. Unless narcotic samples are properly analysed and results reported to courts urgently, it is not possible to prosecute drug offenders successfully. A special probe is called for to trace the corrupt elements in the GAD and bring them to justice. Ridding this vital institution, which however is not short of clean officials, of rogues is a prerequisite for fighting the drug Mafia effectively.

Worryingly, the stocks of drugs taken into custody have to be kept in warehouses for a long time pending court cases. The government should give serious thought to setting up special courts to hear drug related cases expeditiously so that the consignments of narcotics can be destroyed fast. Justice Minister Sabry has said something to this effect, after assuming duties, and he should walk the walk. If new laws are needed, let them be made. If more judges are needed, let them be appointed. Drug dealers are behind various rackets such as the refuse tea trade, which successive governments have failed to eliminate. It has now been revealed that drug dealer Angoda Lokka was engaged in extracting and transporting soil and sand. Besides, the drug Mafia has spread its tentacles over various businesses to launder their black money. Some of them have invested in real estate, especially luxury apartments in Colombo. We pointed out in a previous comment that two foreign drug dealers, arrested in December 2018, had bought apartments in Colombo. Worse, some drug dealers currently being kept in the Boosa Prison are reported to have threatened their guards and boasted that their hit squads are capable of striking anywhere at will and nobody is safe. This is not mere rhetoric. They have private armies, enough funds and links to international crime syndicates.

Renewable energy targets missed

SIR, The article, 'King coal's reign comes to an end' by Merlin Elizabeth Joseph and Armin Rosenzweig (*The Statesman*, 23 August 2020) prompts me to quote what The Economic Survey 2018-2019 said: "While there has been a tremendous increase in renewable energy capacity, fossil fuels, especially coal, would continue to remain an important source of energy." According to B P Energy Outlook 2019, coal's share in India's primary energy consumption will decline from 56 per cent in 2017 to 48 per cent in 2040. Even the NITI Aayog in a 2017 report estimated the share of coal in the energy mix in 2040 to be at least 44 per cent.

The NDA-II government mandated an ambitious goal for the power sector in 2015 ~ installation of 175 GW of renewable energy by 2022. Much of this growth was expected to be led by solar (100 GW) and wind (60 GW). After missing its targets for two consecutive years 2016-17 and 2017-18,



the Centre, it appears, is fast losing interest in meeting its ambitious target of installing 175 GW of renewable by 2022.

Indeed, our major problem is that even though we think big, we are either getting bogged down in petty details, or getting ourselves trapped in big and longwinded talk of policy, promises, and in political games.

Yours, etc., Jaydev Jana,

Kolkata, August 24.

VESTED INTERESTS

SIR, This refers to the news report 'Don't be misled by false narra-

tives: BIP' (*The Statesman*, 23 August). BIP spokesperson, Brigadier Anil Gupta (Retd) has cautioned people not to get misled by the narrative of vested interests that the situation in Kashmir has worsened after the abrogation of Article 370. What he said is justified.

There has been a lot of change in the overall situation of Kashmir. Though stray incidents of militancy are still happening, the overall situation is almost normal. Ordinary people now realise the situation before and after abrogation of Article 370. Incidents of militancy and stone-pelting on soldiers have reduced. Not only that, young people are enthusiastically joining the military and police forces.

Normal trade and business of the people is going on smoothly. Militants are regularly gunned down with the help of local information of their hideouts. Actually Articles 370 and 35A had made J&K a terrorist hub. Only five to six

DISCONCERTING

SIR, We look askance at the new law against freedom of opinion enacted by Beijing in Hong Kong. Back home, historian Ramachandra Guha and later journalist Vinod Dua, are charged with anti-nationalism. The verdict rests on lofty institutions of law, as interpreters of dissent. Strange that now our Apex Court itself should be the plaintiff and jury in proceeding against Prashant Bhushan.

Right to the freedom of expression and the right of the State to secure its citizens have all suffered or thrived depending on how they are interpreted. In 1644, at the height of the English Civil War, poet John Milton called on the parliament to bring to an end the state licensing of newspapers. Free speech, meaning free argument, is at the heart of a self-governing society and cannot be a partisan issue. But, dissent being a product of application of sane human intellect to an issue at hand, the government brazenly chooses to brand intellectualism as anti-national.

But then, there is a price to pay for sponsoring and pursuing freedom of speech and sadly, few are prepared to pay for the sake that nurtures the spirit of men, societies and nations. That the top judiciary should appear to step down from its lofty bench to the prosecution's chair and should now be seen trying to manoeuvre an apology from Mr Bhushan is disconcerting.

Yours, etc., R Narayanan, Navi Mumbai, 24 August.

leaders ruled the state. After abrogation of Article 370, Kashmir has become a real part of India.

Brigadier Gupta has correctly said that some media houses are spreading false narratives about the situation in J & K. Their only aim is to malign the Modi government at any cost for political purposes.

Yours, etc., Mihir Kanungo, Kolkata, August 23.

HARSHA KAKAR

After the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on Indo-China border Affairs (WMCC) meeting last Thursday, both sides issued vague and guarded statements. The Indian statement made no mention of 'progress' nor 'early and complete disengagement.' It read, "The two sides had a candid and in-depth exchange of views on the existing situation in the India-China border areas. They agreed to resolve the outstanding issues in an expeditious manner and in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols."

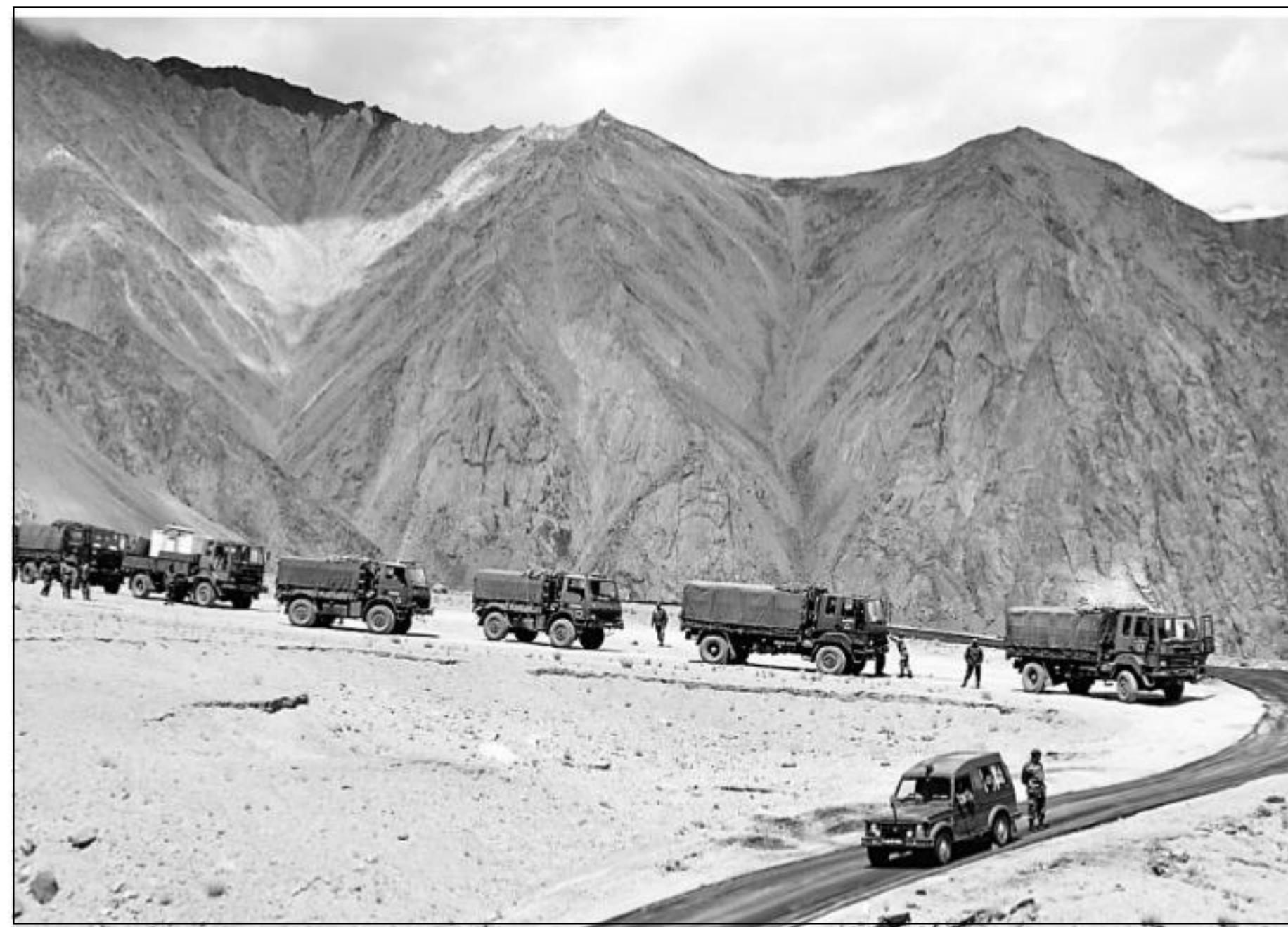
Beijing commented that the meeting, "positively evaluated the process made in the disengagement of front-line forces of the two countries and agreed to conscientiously implement the consensus reached between the two sides." The Chinese ambassador commented on similar lines. Evidently, a stalemate has been reached, with China sticking to its claim lines and placing unreasonable demands for withdrawal.

A day after the talks, inputs flowed that China displayed a willingness to pull back but sought to place conditions the details of which remain unavailable. These could possibly be linked to patrolling of claim lines, equal distance withdrawal or construction of infrastructure. India had earlier refused the Chinese offer of equal pull back and would reject other demands too.

China gained by accepting partial disengagement, after the Galwan incident. It cannot accept losses as they occurred at Galwan. This would be detrimental to its force's morale. By accepting disengagement, China ensured that distance between forces would prevent further clashes. It was compelled to pull back the demoralized PLA unit which suffered heavily at the hands of Indian soldiers in Galwan. Its blaming India for Galwan is only to safeguard itself from a similar incident where losses may be beyond concealment.

By initial disengagement and subsequently placing unacceptable demands, China is presently in locations that it holds without having fired a bullet or having conducted any offensive action. It is bargaining from a position of advantage and expecting India would succumb to pressure. Propaganda actions continue from the Chinese side, in the hope of maintaining pressure on India to resolve the standoff as per its demands. India is

Does India need a strategic rethink?



unwilling to succumb to any pressure.

India has announced that it would maintain its forces in the region till disengagement is complete. To that end it has begun constructing accommodation for additional forces deployed in the region. It is unwilling to accept any change to the existing alignment to the LAC. The current scenario remains stable with equal force levels maintained at a distance to prevent recurrence of any clashes. Forces maintained are below the levels needed for full scale conflict.

Simultaneously, there have been reports of Chinese troop presence in other regions of the LAC, the latest being Lipulekh, close to the Indo-Nepal border. Chinese construction activities have been reported across the LAC in the middle sector opposite

Himachal. It is only a matter of time before reports begin flowing from other sectors of enhanced Chinese troop presence, including Arunachal.

With its current deployment in Ladakh, China has already raised the costs for India by tying down additional army formations in the sector. The economic impact on India is high as it is compelled to allocate funds for defence procurements as also stocking and clothing its forces through winters, despite funds being needed for boosting the economy and medical support in view of the spreading pandemic.

The Indian strategy of handling Chinese incursions has not changed since they commenced decades ago. It is basically to prevent China from expanding by deploying similar force

levels while holding talks to resolve the situation. Each time the demand has been the same - the side which entered first must pull back first.

Recently, this was adopted in Dopsang in 2013, Chumar in 2014 and Doklam in 2017. In each case India succeeded in compelling China to withdraw, as the incursions were minor, and China was testing the Indian resolve. China is now attempting the strategy it adopted in the Sumdorong Chu standoff, where it sought equal withdrawal by both forces, with India withdrawing within its own territory. India has refused to comply with this demand.

This oft-adopted strategy is currently not working, though Indian strategists believe it will at some stage. India had earlier never adopted any

other action to increase costs to China. This time, in retaliation, it is seeking to raise the cost by activating multiple measures, mainly economic and diplomatic. In its most recent actions, India placed visa restrictions on Chinese citizens connected with business, think tanks and advocacy groups.

Basically, Delhi is conveying to Beijing that it cannot be business as usual if China does not back down and end the standoff. Indian decisions, mainly economic, have impacted China as it seeks to delink economic actions from military standoffs. India continues to stand firm. These measures however may not be enough to add to costs for China.

India may have to consider further options to compel China to withdraw. As a first step, India must cancel all levels of talks. These have failed to provide the desired outcome. More important, if India has decided to continue with its deployment in the region, unless China withdraws then talks at any level have no meaning unless China displays seriousness in intent. If it needs to convey a message to Beijing, it should be done by summoning their ambassador in Delhi.

Secondly, even in regions where there is no Chinese presence as of now, India must enhance troop presence, compelling China to deploy its forces as a counter measure. It should aim to place China in doubt of Indian offensive intentions. Thirdly, Indian forces in Ladakh must be redeployed for possible offensive eviction actions. Fourthly, India should reconsider its One-China policy. Finally, India must push for a trade embargo on China.

Simplistically, India must enhance costs on China employing all elements of power. China must know that it could lose in multiple arenas if it continues to remain inside Indian-perceived LAC. It must be conveyed to China that India will not bow and is a strong neighbour that can challenge it and is willing to risk escalation, defending its territory.

The writer is a retired Major-General of the Indian Army.

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

The provision of a uniform and simplified script for all the languages of India, hitherto a dream, has been reduced to a practical proposition by a gift of pound 100, which a friend of missions has placed at the disposal of the Editor of the Harvest Field, to enable a test to be carried out in a scientific way. Three prizes of Rs 100, Rs 75, and Rs 50 each are offered for the three best alphabets based on the Sanskrit. They must be phonetic, easy to write, print or read, and easily learnt by the illiterate. Any existing character may be utilised, or an entirely new one may be invented. The alphabet which, in the opinion of a small committee, promises to be most easily learnt and applied to reading and writing will earn the first prize. The next step will be to test the alphabets in a practical way, by preparing some printed literature with their aid, and then the crucial part of the experiment will be to find how long it takes selected illiterate persons to learn to read it, and to compare the results with those which are obtained when the existing alphabets are used. A considerable time must elapse before definite results can be announced. One suggestion recently made is that the "primary" letters of the Asoka alphabet, together with the Braille system used for the blind, with the substitution of straight lines for dots, might very well serve as a basis for the new alphabet.

NEWS ITEMS
BOMBAY TRAGEDY

Bombay, Aug 24
A tragedy occurred at Victoria Gardens today. A Hindu who was seated on the terrace of lions' cage in some unexplained manner fell into the cage. Immediately a piercing cry was heard and horrible spectacle of two lions sitting on the breast of the unfortunate man was witnessed. A mill-hand who was seated on a bench near by raised an alarm and the keeper and other attendants hurried to the scene. The unfortunate man had been reduced to a mangled corpse before any attempt could be made to rescue him. When attendants could drive the lions into the inner cage the animals had so mauled the body that life was extinct. The body was immediately removed by the police to the morgue.

THE MURDER OF CAPTAIN CRUMP

In connection with the murder of Captain Crump of Myinmu, Sagaing district, the C.I.D. have received an official report from the Myinmu police which states that at about 6.30 P.M. on August 15th Captain Crump's servant on going to make tea for his master noticed the two back doors of the house were open and on going upstairs saw bloodstains on the verandah. On entering Captain Crump's room he found Captain Crump lying dead in a pool of blood, with a big wound in his neck and wounds on his face and hands. He made a report to the headman, who referred servant to the police. Later it was ascertained that a gang of dacoits were responsible for the murder and looting of the house. Five men are arrested.

TAMLUK FLOODS

A fresh batch of ten volunteers of the City College came recently and relieved those of the same College who returned to Calcutta yesterday. Six of them are working in the Ram Krishna Mission and the rest in the Tamluk town centre. Ten volunteers of the Scottish Churches College also arrived on Saturday. They are working at the Boinchbede centre assisting the non-official committee. Mr. C.L. Mustafi, District Agricultural Official of Midnapore, reached Tamluk for the distribution of seedlings in consultation with the Sub-divisional Magistrate. A special officer has been directed to make necessary arrangements at Jadupur and Gokulnagar, in the Chetua circuit embankment. Ashutosh Sinha and a Bramhachary of the Garbeta Ram Krishna Mission launched boats for relief and distributed rice, salt, vegetables in several villages in the flooded area.

HOWRAH BRIDGE

The question of the reconstruction of the bridge between Calcutta and Howrah has been under discussion for some years past. Certain designs for a new floating structure which were submitted by well-known bridge-builders were examined by a committee of engineers in 1912-13. This committee drew up a specification for a bridge which would, they considered, meet the requirements of both river and road traffic. But the Government of Bengal decided to supplement this specification by further expert advice and other engineers were accordingly consulted. No definite step forward appears to have been taken. The reconstruction of the bridge is, in the opinion of the Committee, a matter of great urgency, and they trust that it will be pushed on with all possible speed.

Nepal's flawed Covid-19 strategy

ANURAG ACHARYA

What started as a health emergency has now turned into a governance crisis that is testing all three tiers of Nepal's government. When the federal government imposed a nationwide lockdown to prevent the spread of Covid-19, it failed to gauge basic human behaviour—that families seek each other out for support during times of stress.

The reverse migration of hundreds of thousands of people, travelling for several days on foot from various cities and towns to get back to their homes, could hardly be prevented by policing highway checkpoints. A mechanism for safe travel, coordinated with the respective provinces and municipalities, could have prevented the tragic scenes that made international headlines. The limitations of policing citizens into following directives should have been quite clear to the government by then.

But what followed showed that the federal government learnt no lessons. Thousands of people returning home from across the border in India were prevented from entering the country by security forces at the checkpoints on both sides. Some of them died due to exhaustion and lack of medical care along the way, but others found their way in through the porous border. When the returnee migrants eventually managed to reach their villages and towns, the provincial and municipal governments were overwhelmed. The over-crowded, understaffed and ill-equipped quarantine facilities quickly turned into a hotbed for infection.

Instead, the federal government's controversial decision to allow it to mobilise provincial and municipal bureaucrats could further jeopardise their relations. The fact that the federal Home Ministry continues to delegate more executive powers to the District Administration Offices run by non-elected technocrats rather than strengthening collaboration with the provincial and municipal governments exposes how the new federal system is being undermined by the very institutions of power that are entrusted with the task of nurturing and empowering it.

The blanket approach of shutting down the country to contain the infections, without actually assessing



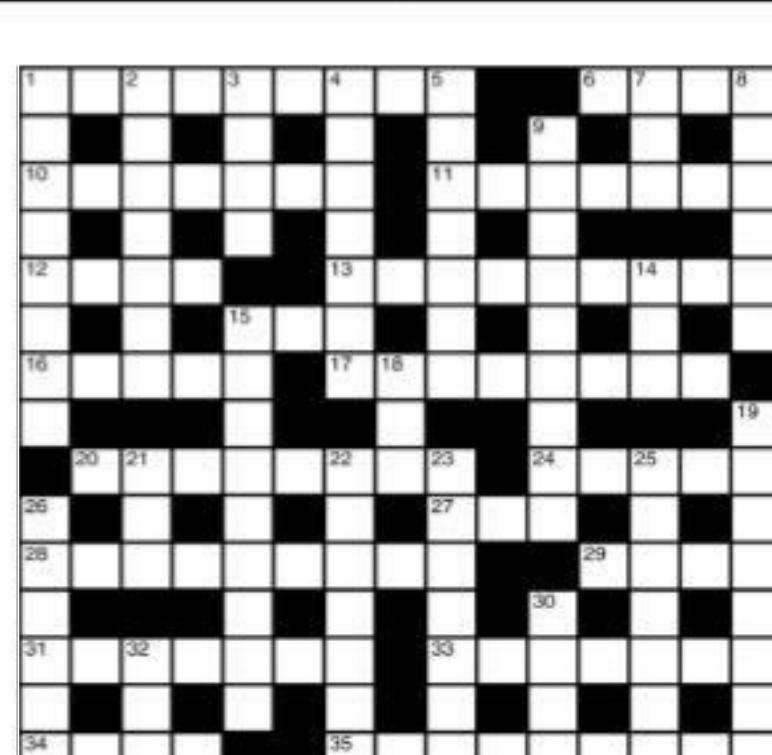
the sectoral weaknesses and the risks posed by the pandemic, will only make problems go from bad to worse. Already, there is frustration among frontline service providers like health workers, local businesses, bankers and shopkeepers who are providing essential supplies and services. Bankers are warning of halting their services due to obstructions in their movement, while groceries and other supplies are running low due to travel obstructions. Farmers are worried about poor yield due to lack of fertiliser while health workers are struggling to cope amid the lack of infrastructure and equipment. Many are

complaining that they have not even received the allowances promised by the government as an incentive.

Nepal adopted a decentralised federal system of governance because the government in Singh Durbar was too far and detached from the everyday problems faced by the people at the community level. Provincial and municipal governments were elected so that they could see the problems up close and address them, in consultation and participation with those that are affected by them. Some local governments are already doing a commendable job that can be replicated elsewhere.

The Kathmandu Post/ANN

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

S	T	D	F	V	D	I
B	E	E	A	M	E	L
R	A	W	L	E	E	C
O	P	T	O	W	P	A
I	N	K	R	A	T	H
F	E	S	R	O	S	H
I	E	P	C	I	S	T
T	E	P	C	I	S	T
F	E	E	C	A	I	L
N	E	E	C	A	I	L
L	E	D	H	O	S	E
V	O	T	I	L	A	M
D	A	E	E	O	Y	N
L	R	E	E	U	T	X
C	L	A	S	D	S	M
Y	O	T	D	Y	T	S

ACROSS

- 2000 guards like going round Black Sea spa seeking morbid type of pleasure (9)
- Large numbers returned in aircraft (4)
- See the author loading two containers (7)
- Leader of Israel contributed to President Bush's ultimate victory (7)
- What's in Paris? Eiffel Tower (4)
- Unexpected reactions to drug (9)
- Newspaper guy (3)
- Partner of Bonnie Scotland's runner (5)
- Spelling expert corrected errors checking compliance with English (8)
- Working at fair wearing skimpy skirt, or something even skimpier (8)
- Dance beat at grand ball (5)
- Move to the right alternatives for
- 2000 guards like going round Black Sea spa seeking morbid type of pleasure (9)
- Some of the upper crust is backing a Liberal (4)
- Old character in love with a married postgraduate (7)
- High-fliers succeeded at business (7)
- Korean explorer (4)
- Old forward is back in style, showing adroitness (9)
- Michael nurses a very stunted stray animal (8)
- Please speak without shaking fist (7)
- Company accountant leaves (4)
- Getting off to a late start spoils cricket session (7)
- More adult game about to be curbed by Etonian's mum (7)
- 7/8 US singer-songwriter

DOWN

- energy, in hindsight (3)
- Various opinions on government killing? (9)
- Some of the upper crust is backing a Liberal (4)
- Old character in love with a married postgraduate (7)
- High-fliers succeeded at business (7)
- Korean explorer (4)
- Old forward is back in style, showing adroitness (9)
- Michael nurses a very stunted stray animal (8)
- Please speak without shaking fist (7)
- Company accountant leaves (4)
- Getting off to a late start spoils cricket session (7)
- More adult game about to be curbed by Etonian's mum (7)
- 7/8 US singer-songwriter

Formulated limits for Lasker-Noether theorem (3,6)

- I petter out after performing revolutionary dance? (9)
- Cashier blowing top in fury (3)
- Tramp fills lots of paper bottles (9)
- About to screen Oliver Stone film about President Grant (3)
- Blend of Irish drinks bottled by Catholic church (8)
- Agreement in parts of Louisiana (3)
- On going in the footsteps of Italian visiting India and China (7)
- Current Republican Party entertains torture for US punk singer (4,3)
- A robin flies around island capital (7)
- Rose also, having gone for gym instruction, moved faster (4,2)
- Seaweed extract found in a 32 (4)
- Fish 15A hauled up (3)

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

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2020

07



Overall credit growth is likely to be at around 4-6 per cent in the current financial year

S S MALLIKARJUNA RAO
MANAGING DIRECTOR, PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK

THUMBNAILS

FDI for LLPs: The government is considering a proposal to permit foreign direct investment (FDI) in limited liability partnership (LLP) firms engaged in construction development with a view to attracting overseas fund inflows, sources said. At present, FDI is permitted under the automatic route in LLPs that are operating in sectors where 100 per cent foreign direct investment is allowed through the automatic route and there are no FDI-linked performance conditions. In the construction development, 100 per cent foreign direct investment is permitted under automatic route but with certain conditions.

'Harit Path' app launched: Nitin Gadkari, Minister of RT&H and MSME, recently launched 'Harit Path', a mobile app which will provide digital address to every tree planted along the national highways.

Addverb tech wins award: Addverb Technologies won the 'Outstanding Technology Implementation in a Warehouse' Award at the 17th Inflection Warehouse Innovation, Web Conference & Award 2020.

SNS

Adani Group in talks to buy out GVK in Mumbai airport

The company in discussions to buy 50.5% of GVK and 23.5% of minority partners' stake in the airport

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

Billionaire Gautam Adani's Adani Group is in talks to buy out GVK and some of its partners in the Mumbai airport as it aims to become the country's biggest private airport operator.

Adani Group is in talks to acquire a 50.5 per cent stake held by GVK Group in Mumbai International Airport (MIAL) and another 23.5 per cent of minority partners, Airports Company South Africa (ACSA), and Bidvest Group, two sources with knowledge of the matter said.

The spokesperson of both Adani and GVK refused to comment.

Adani Group had in March 2019 agreed to acquire 13.5 per cent stake of South African company Bidvest for Rs 1,248 crore. However, GVK Group blocked the deal claiming the right of first refusal. But GVK couldn't bring money to the table to buy Bid Services Division Mauritius' (Bidvest) stake and the matter went to court.

SHAREHOLDING PATTERN

► Hyderabadi-based GVK Group owns 50.5 per cent stake in Mumbai International Airport Limited (MIAL).

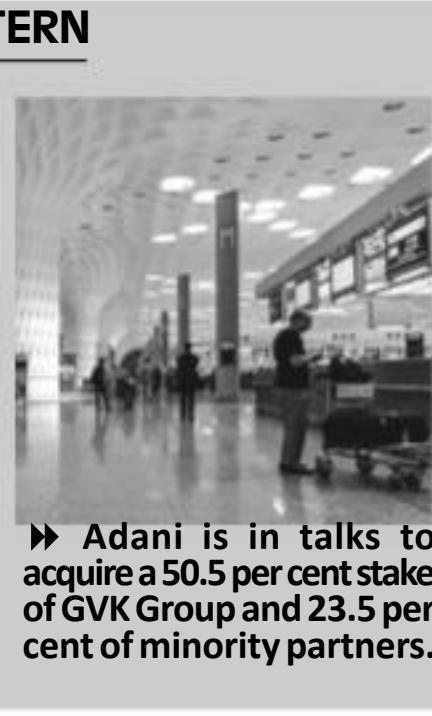
► Minority partners ~ Airports Company South Africa (10 per cent) and Bidvest Group (13.5 per cent) ~ together own 23.5 per cent stake in MIAL.

► The balance 26 per cent stake is held by the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

With GVK Group's finances under strain, it has now come around to the idea of selling the stake to Adani Group, they said.

After seaports, Adani Group is betting big on the airports sector and has won the bids to run six Airport Authority-built non-metro airports in Lucknow, Jaipur, Guwahati, Ahmedabad, Thiruvananthapuram and Mangalore.

It now wants to enter the country's second busiest air-



► Adani is in talks to acquire a 50.5 per cent stake of GVK Group and 23.5 per cent of minority partners.

port by buying out Bidvest from MIAL, which was stalled after GVK chose to exercise its first right of refusal, and matched the offer that the Adanis made to Bidvest.

Sources said preliminary discussions have taken place between Adani and GVK which may lead to the Hyderabad-based group exiting the prestigious Mumbai airport venture.

ACSA owns 10 per cent in MIAL and the balance 26 per

cent stake is held by the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

In October, debt-laden GVK Group entered into an agreement to sell 79 per cent of its stake in GVK Airport Holdings for Rs 7,614 crore to the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA), Canada's Public Sector Pension (PSP) Investments, and state-owned National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIF).

Proceeds from this transaction were to be used by GVK to primarily retire the debt obligations of its holding companies. It is not known if GVK got all the funds from the deal.

Sources said the investor consortium of NIF, ADIA, and PSP Investments has agreed to give a 'carve-out' to the promoters of GVK, the Reddy family, so as to allow them to sell stake in MIAL.

Multiple teams are working on the Adani-GVK transaction, one of the sources said, adding a preliminary announcement could come within weeks.

The development comes after the Central Bureau of

Investigation (CBI) last week charged GVK Group with siphoning off funds totalling Rs 705 crore. It is charged with causing a loss of Rs 310 crore to the exchequer by entering into fake work contracts on the land given by the government to MIAL.

With the six non-metro airports and MIAL, Adani Group will become the largest operator of airports other than state-run AAI, which runs most of the airports.

Adani Enterprises in its annual report unveiled its ambition to be the largest private airport developer in the country by developing world-class infrastructure at airports, both at airside and landside, enhancing the passenger experience, creating entertainment destinations (airport village, hotels, and malls).

"In this regard, we would like to inform you that following recent developments, Axis Bank now proposes to acquire 17.002 per cent of the equity share capital of Max Life, resulting in total ownership of 18 per cent post the transaction. The parties have executed the definitive agreements," the bank said in a regulatory filing.

Axis Bank and Max Life will shortly approach the respective regulatory authorities with revised applications for their approval, it said.

The transaction is subject to regulatory approvals from the Irdai, the RBI and the Competition Commission.

Some changes were made to the deal last month following correspondence from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) received by the company.

MFS holds 72.5 per cent stake in Max Life and Japan-based Mitsubishi Sumitomo Insurance (MSI) owns 25.5 per cent stake. Post completion of the series of transactions, MaxLife will become an 82:18 joint venture between MFS and Axis Bank.

Meanwhile, Axis Bank has announced the launch of "GIG-A Opportunities", a new platform for alternate work models to attract the finest talent, with a promise of growth with flexibility, diversity and inclusivity. The bank targets up to 15 per cent of incremental hiring in alternate work models over the next three years, it said.

Tax non-virginia tobacco to earn ₹40K cr revenue: NGO writes to Centre

PTI
GUWAHATI, 24 AUGUST

An NGO on Monday appealed to the Centre to regulate the smokeless tobacco sector and said imposing "suitable" tax on such products will fetch an additional revenue to the tune of Rs 40,000 crore annually.

The NGO Shram has already written to the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on the issue urging to control the sector keeping in mind public health.

It requested both the Union ministers to "regulate the unorganised manufacturing, distribution and sale of smokeless and other non-virginia tobacco in India curtail its widespread consumption, protecting the health of citizens and bring it under a taxation structure," Shram said in a statement. The smokeless or non-virginia tobacco is used in the manufacture of chewing varieties of tobacco, hookah,

gutka, kiumar, gudaku, zarda, pan masala variants and bidis that are dangerous in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic as they need to be spat out after consumption, Shram said.

"The need of the hour lies in putting in place the government taking into account this crisis and introduce policies and laws to regulate and ensure legally taxed trading of smokeless tobacco and its products," suitable taxation on non-virginia tobacco can bring in revenue to the government in the range of Rs 35,000 crore to Rs 40,000 crore approximately," said Dr Pranashmita Kalita of Shram, an NGO of doctors and professionals.

The smokeless tobacco industry in India is majorly an unorganised sector that sees producers, manufacturers and distributors taking advantage of it being outside the ambit of any regulatory or taxation structure, leading to exploitation of the labour, she added.

Sensex up 364 points, rupee jumps by 52 paise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 24 AUGUST

Equity benchmarks the Sensex and the Nifty closed near six-month highs today as investors scooped up banking and financial stocks amid supportive global cues.

The BSE Sensex opened in the green and gained further momentum as the session progressed. It finally closed at 38,799.08 points, up 364.36 points or 0.95 per cent.

Similarly, the NSE Nifty jumped 94.85 points or 0.83 per cent to finish at 11,466.45 points.

This is the highest closing for both the benchmarks since late February this year.

Kotak Bank was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, spurring 3.53 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finance, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finserv, SBI, Maruti and HDFC.

On the other hand, PowerGrid, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tech Mahindra, Titan, NTPC, Bajaj Auto, HUL and UltraTech Cement were among the laggards, dropping up to 2.06 per cent.

Global equities advanced on hopes for a coronavirus treatment after the USFDA allowed use of blood plasma from recovered patients for treating Covid-19 cases.

Reports also said the Trump administration is mulling relaxation of certain norms to allow an experimental Covid-19 vaccine from the UK to be used in the US ahead of the presidential elections in November.

"Key indices rallied as financials led the charge, ably supported by select pivots across the BFSI space. The broader market depicted strength as smart investors were seen buying select small and mid-cap stocks across sectors which lent considerable steam to the rally today," said S Ranganathan, head of research at LKP Securities.

BSEbankex, finance, telecom, basic materials, energy and industrials indices surged as much as 2.45 per cent, while realty, utilities, metal and IT closed with losses.

Broader BSE mid-cap and small-cap indices rallied up to 1.57 per cent. In rest of Asia, bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul ended with significant gains.

Stock exchanges in Europe too opened on a strong note.

Meanwhile, global oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.71 per cent higher at \$45.25 per barrel.

As single-day spike of 61,408 Covid-19 cases took India's virus case load past the 31-lakh mark today, a day after it crossed 30 lakh, while recoveries surged to 23,38,035, according to the Union health ministry data.

India's Covid-19 case load mounted to 31,06,348, while the death toll climbed to 57,542, the data showed.

In a separate development, the rupee soared by 52 paise to close at more than five-month high of 74.32 against the US dollar today in line with upbeat domestic equities and sustained foreign fund inflows.

No need to approach govt for capital support, says PNB MD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

The country's second largest state-owned lender Punjab National Bank today said it does not envisage approaching the government for capital support rather it intends to raise funds from the market, which seems to have appetite for the public sector banking space.

The bank has shareholders' approval for raising Rs 14,000 crore, comprising Rs 7,000 crore of the equity alone, from the market to meet Covid-related impact and finance growth, Punjab National Bank (PNB) managing director S S Mallikarjuna Rao said in a virtual interaction with reporters. "As on today, it does not appear (approach) government for capital. If you look at market appetite also there is intent to contribute to public sector space in general," he said.

This is evident from the recent issuance of Tier II bonds of Bank of Baroda and

PNB as coupon rates were reasonable, he said.

"There is an appetite in the market. So, unless we test in the market, it would not be appropriate for us to think of government for contribution... We are confident of going to the market with respect to Tier II and Tier I bonds during Q2 and Q3 while we are looking at the end of Q3 or during Q4 for QIP (qualified institutional placement)," he said.

Asked about the subdued share price of the bank, he said the government has 85.5 per cent stake in the bank leaving less than 15 per cent for the market to trade.

Shares of the bank were hovering around Rs 65 level during the last week of August 2019 as compared to Rs 35.30 on Monday on the BSE.

The government shareholding still remains at 85.5 per cent. In spite of showing better performance, the kind of stock available in the market is very less, the possibility of price moving up aggressively is not expected unless the stake in the market increases," he said. Price to book value is roughly about 59-60 per cent currently.

PUBLIC SECTOR ROUNDUP

NFL COMMISSIONS 2ND SEED PROCESSING UNIT AT PANIPAT



V N Datt, C&MD, NFL along with directors and senior officials on the occasion of inauguration of 2nd Seed Processing Unit at Panipat on 18 August.

Covid: PNB commences Phase-2 of nationwide campaign

India's second-largest public sector bank, Punjab National Bank (PNB) commenced Phase-2 of its nationwide campaign to provide Covid-19 prevention materials through its 662 district offices.

The Phase-2 of the campaign began with PNB employees distributing masks and sanitizers regions across the country including Amritsar, Lucknow North, Hyderabad in South, Guwahati in North East, Ahmedabad in West, Raipur and Bhopal in Central India.

employees.

The Bank has also joined hands with Humsafar Trust, India's first community-based organization (CBO), and will distribute face masks and sanitizers to the LGBT members across nation. The formal event took place at PNB's Mumbai circle office.

The Executive Directors of the PNB bank Rajesh Kumar Yadavanshi, Sanjay Kumar, and Vijay Dube, also distributed prevention materials to the facility management staff at the headquarters of the Bank

in Dwarka, New Delhi.

Commenting on PNB's CSR effort, Rajesh Kumar Yadavanshi, Executive Director of Punjab National Bank, said "We have always been inclusive in our approach to serve the society in a better way. PNB has been proactively supporting communities to safeguard them from this unprecedented crisis. We shall continue such endeavours advocating the government's extensive efforts to contain challenges and risks posed by the pandemic."

'India at an advanced stage of negotiation with Uzbekistan for export & import of agri products'

on 21 August, Prabhat added that India is at an advanced stage of negotiation with Uzbekistan for export & import of agricultural products.

Prabhat Kumar, Indian Ambassador to Kazakhstan, said that Central Asian countries are in the position to support air traffic from India. He further laid emphasis on the potential of markets between India and Kazakhstan.

Piyush Goyal reviews progress of DFCCIL

Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry reviews the progress of Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited (DFCCIL).

Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFC) is one of the largest rail infrastructure projects spanning a total length of 3,360 route km) undertaken by the Government of India. The overall cost is pegged at Rs. 81,459 crores. Eastern DFC & Western DFC (excluding the Sonnara-

gar – Dankuni PPP section) is expected to be completed by December 2021.

During the meeting on Monday, the senior officials informed the current status of the project. It is expected

that Western Corridor connecting Dadri in Uttar Pradesh to Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNP) in Mumbai and Eastern Corridor starting from Sahnewal near Ludhiana (Punjab) to terminate at Dankuni in West Bengal shall be completed by December 2021.

Goyal directed the DFCCIL management team to necessary steps to speed up the project to compensate the loss of time due to lockdown during COVID.

SBI inaugurates 10 new branches

State Bank of India, the country's largest Bank, on Monday inaugurated its ten new branches at ~ • Sector-37, Faridabad • Omicron, Greater Noida • Sector-120, NOIDA • Karpuram, Delhi • Kirti Nagar (I & II) • Block J, Delhi • All India Institute of Ayurvedic Sciences, Delhi • Kathgarhia, Haldwani • Commercial Agri. Branch and • Sector-34, Gurugram.

SCOPE, ILO to undertake a joint study on women empowerment

Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE), apex body of Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) and International Labour Organisation (ILO), a tripartite U.N. agency signed an understanding for a joint study on "Women Empowerment - Adoption of Work from Home Model".

Atul Sotgi, Director General, SCOPE and Dagmar Walter, Director, ILO Decent Work Team for South Asia and country office for India signed the understanding virtually.

The key objective of the study is to analyse and train women in Public Sector in order to empower them and motivate them to aspire to positions of leadership and management by addressing challenges faced by them at work.

RSDC JOINS HANDS WITH BRIDGESTONE





We have invited the Afghan Taliban delegation to visit Pakistan to discuss the way forward in the Afghan peace process.

PAKISTAN FOREIGN OFFICE SPOKESPERSON ZAHID HAFEEZ CHAUDHRI

Speaking on the Afghan peace process with the Pakistani leadership

The Statesman

NEW DELHI TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2020

Philippines: Bomb attacks kill 14

At least 75 soldiers, police and civilians were wounded in the midday bombings in Jolo town in southern Sulu province

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, 24 AUGUST

Muslim militants allied with the Islamic State group set off a powerful motorcycle explosive followed by a suicide bombing that together killed 14 people on Monday, many of them soldiers, in the worst extremist attack in the Philippines this year, military officials said.

At least 75 soldiers, police and civilians were wounded in the midday bombings in Jolo town in southern Sulu province, regional military commander Lt. Gen. Corleto Vinluan said. The bombings were staged as the government grapples with the highest number of coronavirus infections in Southeast Asia.

Vinluan said most of the victims, including children, were killed and wounded in the first attack, when a bomb attached to a motorcycle exploded near two parked



Soldiers stretcher away a comrade after an improvised bomb exploded next to a military vehicle in the town of Jolo on Sulu island on Monday. ■ AFP

army trucks in front of a grocery store and computer shop in Jolo.

It was a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device which exploded while our soldiers were on a marketing run, Vinluan told reporters.

A second blast, apparently from a female attacker, occurred about an hour later and killed the bomber, a soldier, a police commando and wounded several others. It

said the suspected bomber walked out of a snack shop, approached soldiers who were securing a Roman Catholic cathedral and suddenly blew herself up. Snipers were deployed in the area to guard against more bombers as the victims were carried to an ambulance. A third unexploded bomb was reportedly found in a public market. Jolo was immediately placed in a security lockdown by troops and police. Presidential spokesman Harry Roque condemned the bombings in the

strongest possible terms. Initial pictures seen by The Associated Press showed soldiers carrying a man from the scene of the explosion near an army truck while another victim lay on the road. The wreckage of a motorcycle and body parts were seen on the road.

The first bombing was carried out near a town plaza and the cathedral in the predominantly Muslim and poverty-stricken province. The country's southern region is home to minority Muslims in the largely Roman Catholic nation

and has been the scene of decades of Muslim separatist unrest, particularly in remote island provinces such as Jolo.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks, but the military blamed Abu Sayyaf militant commander, Mundu Sawadjaan, who has been linked to suicide bombings in recent years in Sulu. Military officials said last week that Sawadjaan had plotted bombings in Sulu using two female suicide attackers.

Army troops were carrying out a covert operation to locate and capture Sawadjaan and the suicide bombers in June when four army personnel were stopped at a Jolo police checkpoint and later shot to death by a group of policemen. The army angrily described the killings as a rub out and demanded murder charges be filed immediately against nine policemen. Police officials, however, say it may have been a mistaken encounter between the army and police forces. The military has been waging a

years-long offensive against the Abu Sayyaf, a small but violent group listed by the United States and the Philippines as a terrorist group for past bombings, ransom kidnappings and beheadings. Its armed fighters have dwindled in number to a few hundred in recent years due to battle setbacks and surrenders, including a key commander, Abduljilah Susukan, who gave up to authorities two weeks ago after being wounded in battle.

Susukan has been blamed for kidnappings and beheadings of hostages, including foreign tourists. He reportedly surrendered through a Muslim rebel chief who has signed a peace deal and was cooperating with the government.

Military officials said they were not discounting the possibility that Monday's bombings were staged partly in retaliation for the detention of Susukan, who is now in police custody and faces multiple murder and kidnapping charges.

Pompeo hopeful other Arab states to forge ties with Israel

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM, 24 AUGUST

and Defense Minister Benny Gantz, as well as Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi.

After his Israel stop Pompeo was also slated to visit Sudan, the UAE and Bahrain, with additional stops in the Gulf possible, the State Department had said. In Sudan, the secretary of state said he would push for deepening the Sudan-Israel relationship.

Ahead of Pompeo's arrival, the Israeli military said it struck militant targets in the Gaza Strip early on Monday, in response to incendiary balloons launched into Israel the day before. It was the latest exchange as tensions between the two sides intensified in recent weeks.

The army said it bombed military posts and an underground infrastructure belonging to Hamas, the Palestinian militant group that rules Gaza. There were no immediate reports of any casualties.

Militants affiliated with Hamas have launched scores of incendiary balloons into southern Israel in recent weeks in a bid to pressure Israel to ease the blockade imposed since Hamas took control of the territory in 2007.

On Friday, Palestinian militants launched 12 rockets at Israel, nine of which were intercepted, in the largest outbreak of violence in recent months.

Israel has responded to the balloons and sporadic rocket fire with airstrikes targeting militant positions.

Israel and Hamas have fought three wars and numerous smaller skirmishes in the past 13 years. Last week Egyptian mediators tried to ease tensions and bolster the informal truce between Israel and Hamas that has largely held since the 2014 war in Gaza.

Iran sets 18 June as date for next presidential polls

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEHRAN, 24 AUGUST

Iran's constitutional watchdog on Monday set June 18 as date for the country's next presidential election, a vote that will choose the successor to President Hassan Rouhani who has served two four-year terms in office.

The watch dog, the Guardian Council, approved the date, Iranian election headquarters chief Jamal Orf told the official IRNA news agency. Candidates hoping to run in the balloting are to apply in early April for approval; the final list is to be announced in early June.

Under Iranian law, an incumbent president cannot run for a third term if he has already served two consecutive terms in office. Rouhani was first elected in 2013 and reelected four years later.

Rouhani has been under increasing pressure from the US sanctions since President Donald Trump two years ago pulled America out of the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers. The deal curbed Iran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.

Trump also imposed severe sanctions on Iran, sending its economy into a downward spiral.

NO BACKING OFF



Law enforcement officers detain a man during a rally of opposition supporters to protest against disputed presidential election results in Minsk on Monday. ■ AFP

Massive Northern California wildfires rage on; 1 man dead

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SCOTT VALLEY (US), 24 AUGUST

Three massive wildfires chewed through parched Northern California landscape Sunday as firefighters raced to dig breaks and make other preparations ahead of a frightening weather system packing high winds and more of the lightning that sparked the huge blazes and scores of other fires around the state, putting nearly a quarter-million people under evacuation orders and warnings.

At the CZU Lightning Complex fire in the Santa Cruz Mountains, south of San Fran-

cisco, authorities announced the discovery of the body of a 70-year-old man in a remote area called Last Chance.

The man had been reported missing and police had to use a helicopter to reach the area, which is a string of about 40 off-the-grid homes at the end of a windy, steep dirt road north of the city of Santa Cruz.

The area was under an evacuation order and Santa Cruz Sheriff's Department Chief Deputy Chris Clark said it was a stark reminder of the need for residents to leave the area. This is one of the darkest periods we've been in

with this fire, he said.

The fatality was the first for the CZU fire and seventh fire victim in the state in the last week that has seen 650 wildfires across California, many of them sparked by the more than 12,000 lightning strikes recorded since Aug. 15. There are 14,000 firefighters, 2,400 engines and 95 aircraft battling the fires.

The Santa Cruz fire is one of three complexes, or groups of fires, burning on all sides of the San Francisco Bay Area. All were started by lightning.

Fire crews made progress during the weekend, which saw a welcome break in the unse-

asonably warm weather and little wind, that allowed firefighters to increase what had been precious little containment.

But the forecast late Sunday was ominous the National Weather Service issued a red flag warning through Monday afternoon for the drought-stricken area, meaning extreme fire conditions including high temperatures, low humidity, lightning and wind gusts up to 65 mph (105 kph) that may result in dangerous and unpredictable fire behavior.

Mark Brunton, a battalion chief for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire), said while he's confident fire-fighters did the most with the time they had to prepare, he's not sure what to expect.

There's a lot of potential for things to really go crazy out there, he said.

The LNU Lightning Complex fire in wine country north of San Francisco and SCU Lightning Complex southeast of the city have within a week grown to be two of the three largest fires in state history, with both burning more than 500 square miles (1,295 square kilometers). The LNU fire has been the most deadly and destructive blaze,

accounting for five deaths and 845 destroyed homes and other buildings. Three of the victims were in a home that was under an evacuation order.

Officials surveying maps at command centers are astonished by the sheer size of the fires, Cal Fire spokesman Brice Bennett said. You could overlay half of one of these fires and it covers the entire city of San Francisco, Bennett said Sunday.

In Southern California, an 11-day-old blaze held steady at just under 50 square miles (106 square kilometers) near Lake Hughes in northern Los Angeles County mountains.

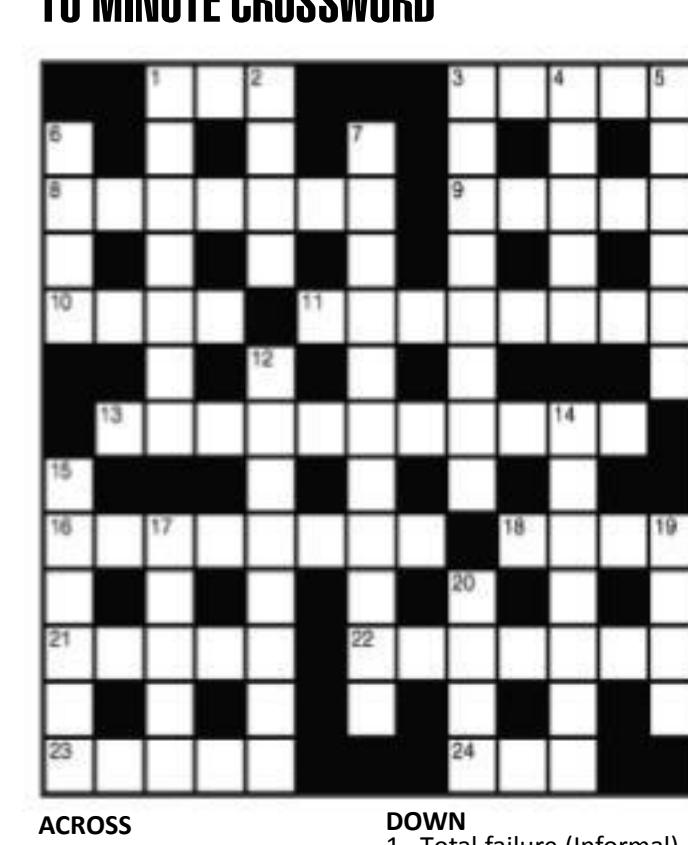
Rough terrain, hot weather and the potential for thunderstorms with lightning strikes challenged firefighters on Sunday.

Authorities said their firefighting effort in Santa Cruz was hindered by people who refused to evacuate and those who were using the chaos to steal. Santa Cruz County Sheriff Jim Hart said 100 officers were patrolling and anyone not authorized to be in an evacuation zone would be arrested.

What we're hearing from the community is that there's a lot of looting going on, Hart said.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Was victorious (3)
- 3 Absence of war (5)
- 4 Oriental (7)
- 5 Artless (5)
- 10 Swag (4)
- 11 Carty on (8)
- 13 Community celebration (6,5)
- 16 Evident (8)
- 18 Fairly (1,3)
- 21 No longer fresh (5)
- 22 Boring (7)
- 23 Leg joint (5)
- 24 Boy (3)

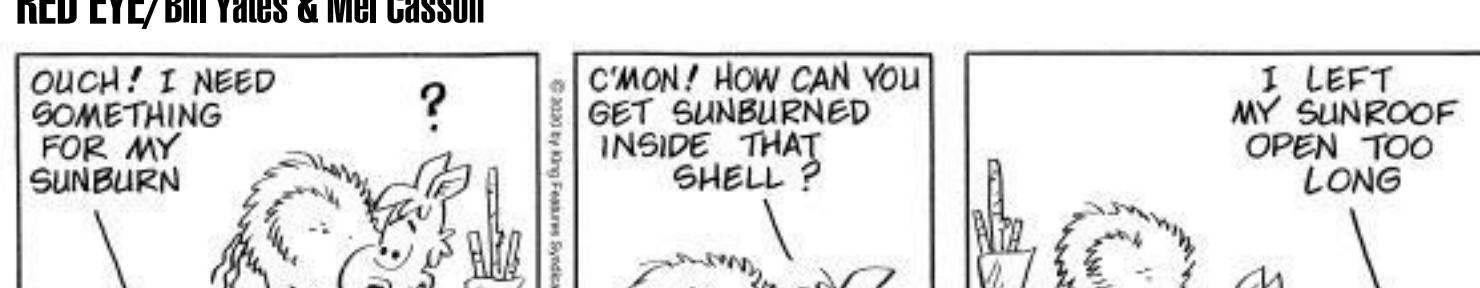
DODGE

- 1 Doodle, 13 Answer, 14 Face, 15 Territory, 16 Actor, 17 Digs, 18 Guide, 19 Odd

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



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, 23253250

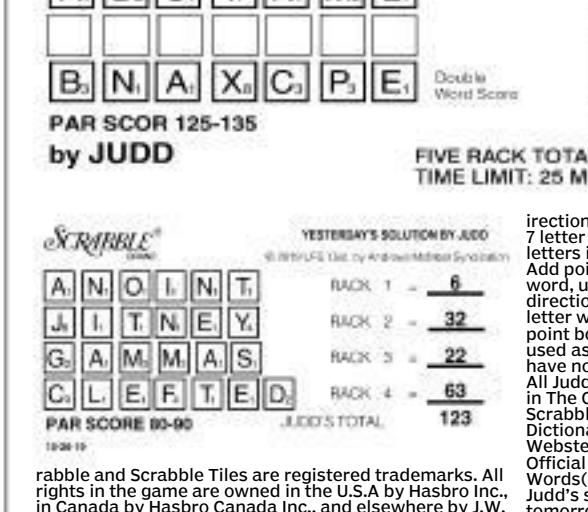
RAILWAY INQUIRY

- General Inquiry 139
- Toll Free Nos. 1800125151
- SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 5676747

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

- AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 18001801407
- INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi City Office 43513185, Call Center 09910383838, 18001803838, Reservation 43513186; Indigo Airlines 23717473, 23253250
- AIR CANADA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 41528181
- AIR FRANCE Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23466262 (City) 25652294 (Airport)
- KUWAIT AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23354373

SCRABBLE® BRAND



SUDOKU Conceptis Sudoku



The past four years have allowed me blessings beyond compare as a part of history on Election Night 2016 and as Senior Counselor to the President.

KELLYANNE CONWAY

WEATHER

CITY	MAX (°C)	MIN (°C)	
SINGAPORE	29	27	H
HONG KONG	33	28	H
TOKYO	32	25	CL
LONDON	20	14	R
DUBAI	39	32	H
SAN FRANCISCO	21	14	R
NEW YORK	33	20	R
MOSCOW	25	16	H

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

THUMBNAILS



A protest banner demanding US President Trump stop denying the science behind the COVID pandemic on Monday. ■ AFP

Japan's PM sets mark:
Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Monday became Japan's longest-serving leader in terms of consecutive days in office. Abe marked his 2,799th consecutive day in office since bouncing back to leadership in late 2012 for a second term, surpassing the previous record set by Eisaku Sato, his great-uncle, who served 2,798 straight days from 1964 to 1972. ■ AP

German hosp:
Poisoning signs found in Russian dissident

BERLIN, 24 AUGUST

Tests conducted on Russian dissident Alexei Navalny at a German hospital indicate that he was poisoned, but doctors said Monday they do not believe his life is at risk.

The Charit hospital said in a statement that the team of doctors who have been examining Navalny since he was flown from Siberia and admitted Saturday have found the presence of cholinesterase inhibitors in his system.

Cholinesterase inhibitors are a broad range of substances that are found in several drugs, but also pesticides and nerve agents. However, doctors at Charite said at the moment the specific substance to which Navalny was exposed is not yet known.

The patient is in an ICU and is still in an induced coma. His health is serious but there is currently no acute danger to his life, the hospital said in a statement. Navalny remained in critical but stable condition at the Berlin hospital, with special protection details on hand to ensure his safety, German officials said.

Berlin police and federal agents were posted at the downtown Charit hospital where the 44-year-old is undergoing treatment following his arrival in Germany after Chancellor Angela Merkel personally offered the country's assistance.

It was obvious that after his arrival, protective precautions had to be taken, Merkel's spokesman, Steffen Seibert, told reporters. After all, this is a patient who, with a certain degree of probability, was poisoned. He wouldn't comment on Navalny's condition, but earlier in the day, Dirk Wiese, the German government's coordinator for Eastern European affairs, told public broadcaster ZDF he was currently critical, but stable. He is now receiving the best possible treatment, Wiese said.

Navalny's supporters believe that tea he drank was laced with poison and that the Kremlin is behind both his illness and a delay in transferring him to Germany. Russian doctors have said, however, that tests have shown no traces of poison in his system. The Kremlin hasn't yet commented on the allegation.

Navalny's team last week submitted a request in Russia to launch a criminal probe, but as of Monday, Russia's Investigative Committee still has not opened a case, Navalny's spokeswoman Kira Yarmish said. ■ AP

Trump to focus on American people: WH Chief

74-year old Trump would be formally nominated as the party's presidential candidate at the convention beginning on Monday

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 24 AUGUST

President Donald Trump will focus on the American people during the four-day Republican National Convention where he would be formally nominated as the party's presidential candidate, according to the White House Chief of Staff.

The convention, beginning on Monday, will conclude with 74-year-old Trump delivering his acceptance speech from the South Lawn of the White House on Thursday.

Vice President Mike Pence, 61, is also set to be re-nominated as Trump's running mate by the Republican Party at its convention from August 24 to 27.

The event would be mostly in virtual mode like that of the Democratic National Convention, held from August 17 to 20, during which former vice president Joe Biden was nominated as the party's presidential candidate along with Indian-origin Senator Kamala Harris as his running mate.

"This president (Trump) will focus on the American people this week (at RNC)," White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows told Fox News on Sunday. He said that Biden, who is challenging Trump in the November 3 presidential elections, lacks actions and it was reflected in his convention speech.

"When we look at it... lis-

Indian-American Nikki Haley among star speakers at Republican convention

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 24 AUGUST

Nikki Haley, popular Indian-American Republican politician and former US envoy to the UN, will be among the star speakers on the first day of the Republican National Convention which begins on Monday, according to a list released by the Trump campaign.

The four-day RNC will formally nominate 74-year-old incumbent President Donald Trump as the party's candidate for the November 3 US presidential election.

Haley, 48, the two-term Governor of South Carolina, she is the only Indian-American leader to be featured in the list of RNC speakers released by the Trump campaign on Sunday.

She is considered as one of the potential presidential candidates of the Republican Party post the Trump era. Haley, who served as US ambassador to the United Nations during the first two years of the Trump administration, is close to the

ten to that speech that Joe Biden gave, (it) was very much like a speech that he had given in 2008. But this is not



Trump family and plans to campaign aggressively in his re-election bid over the next several weeks.

Born as Nirmala Randhawa in South Carolina, she is the daughter of Indian immigrants from Punjab. Her parents Ajit Singh Randhawa and Raj Kaur Randhawa emigrated from Amritsar in Punjab, India.

The Trump campaign said: "Over four nights, President Trump's 2020 Convention will honour the great American story, the American people that have written it, and how President Donald J Trump's 'Make

about speeches... Biden has been in office for over 40 years. Politicians give speeches.

"What we're looking for is action. This president (Trump) has shown action each and every day. Joe Biden has bare-

ly passed two bills, one of which is trying to run away because of the left," Meadows said.

Trump, he said, has accomplished more in his first 100 days in office than Biden did in the last 40 years. "It's about action. This president is willing to do that."

"You'll see a real difference this week when we start focusing on people that the president's policy has actually affected," the chief of staff said. Responding to a question, Meadows said that Trump is the one who is standing between achieving the American dream and anarchy.

We don't have to look any further than the streets across the country to see what's happening, you know, supposedly peaceful protests that are now being classified as riots. And this president is the only thing standing between that and anarchy.

But here's what it is. It's about defending the police. It's about making sure that we fund them properly, not defund them. "It's about making sure that they have the tools to restore law and order and keep safe communities. This is all about safeties, whether it's in the cities or the suburbs, we need to make sure that we support it," Meadows added.

Trump campaign adviser Jason Miller said that he would be "speaking at various parts through each of the nights." The presidential election is scheduled for November 3.

Top Trump advisor Conway resigns; to leave White House by month end

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 24 AUGUST

US President Donald Trump's top advisor Kellyanne Conway has resigned abruptly and will leave the White House this month to focus on her children, giving them "less drama, more mama."

Conway, 53, is among the key speakers on day three of the Republican National Convention (RNC) which begins on Monday, according to a list released by the Trump campaign. Now it is unclear if she will still speak at the convention, which will formally nominate Trump as the party's presidential candidate in the November 3 election, the US media reports said.

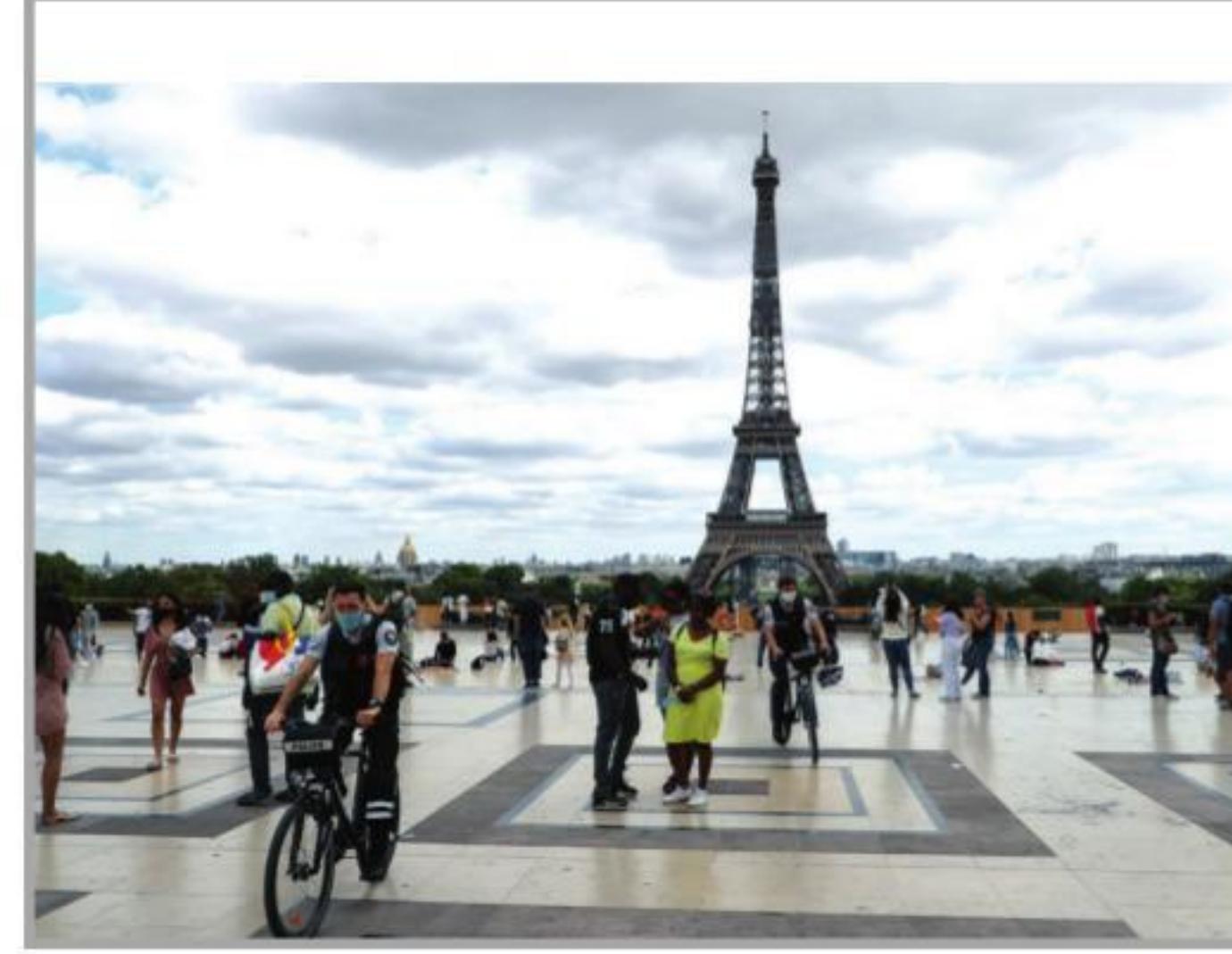
Conway said, "I will be transitioning from the White House at the end of this month." George (her husband) is also making changes. Her husband George Conway, a vocal critic of President Trump, also made a similar statement on Twitter. "I'm withdrawing from Project Lincoln to devote more time to family. And I'll be taking a Twitter hiatus. Needless to say, I continue to support the Project and its mission. Passionately." George is a co-founder of the project, a Repub-

lican political action committee working to prevent the re-election of President Trump in 2020.

Conway said, "We disagree about plenty, but we are united on what matters most: the kids. Our four children are academics in middle school and high school, remote from home for at least a few months." As millions of parents nationwide know, kids "doing school from home" requires a level of attention and vigilance that is as unusual as these times. Conway, who joined the Trump team even when he was running for the presidency and became his campaign head in 2016, has been a strong defender of the Trump administration. "I'm leaving the White House. Gratefully & Humbly," she said in a tweet.

"This is completely my choice and my voice. In time, I will announce future plans. For now, and for my beloved children, it will be less drama, more mama," she said in her statement. She added that the past four years have allowed her blessings beyond compare as a part of history on Election Night 2016 and as Senior Counselor to the President."

MASKED COPS



Bicycle police wearing face masks patrol on the Trocadero esplanade, near the Eiffel Tower, on Monday, in Paris. ■ AFP

Vital to get children back to school: UK PM to parents

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON, 24 AUGUST



Johnson said the risk posed to children from the deadly virus is very small and being kept away from classrooms any longer would be far more damaging than the deadly virus.

As the chief medical officer has said, the risk of contracting Covid-19 in school is very small and it is far more damaging for a child's development and their health and well-being to be away from school any longer, Johnson said in a statement from Downing Street.

Reiterating a joint statement issued by England's Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and his counterparts from different parts of the United Kingdom over the weekend,

This is why it's vitally important that we get our children back into the classroom to learn and to be with their friends. Nothing will have a greater effect on the life chances of our children than returning to school, Johnson, a Covid-19 survivor, said.

"I have previously spoken about the moral duty to reopen schools to all pupils safely, and I would like to thank the school staff who have spent the summer months making classrooms Covid-secure in preparation for a full return in September.

"We have always been guided by our scientific and medical experts, and we now know far more about coronavirus than we did earlier this year," he said. Johnson has previously said that schools will be the last places to close in the event of a dreaded second wave of the pandemic or

localised lockdowns due to spikes in coronavirus infections, which has claimed over 41,400 lives in the UK.

The UK prime minister's intervention follows top medical chiefs calling for the reopening of schools because there was an exceptionally small risk of children of primary or secondary school age dying from Covid-19 but a greater risk to their overall development by staying away from classrooms.

Very few, if any, children or teenagers will come to long-term harm from Covid-19 due solely to attending school. This has to be set against a certainty of long-term harm to many children and young people from not attending school, noted Professor Chris Whitty, the CMO of England, in a consensus statement co-signed by a dozen medical experts.

bio-terrorism and smuggling contraband. The scam was first detected two years ago in Massachusetts, USA. CBS reported a couple Michael and Kelly Gallivan being deluged with packages from Amazon that they did not order.

They received the packages once or twice a week regularly for five months and called Amazon to return the unsolicited merchandise. Amazon asked them for an order number which they did not have since they did not order it. "Brushing" scammers are said to operate mostly from China, as online sellers "purchase

were killed in the attacks. You thought you can break us. You failed miserably.

The gunman, 29-year-old Australian Brenton Harrison Tarrant, pleaded guilty in March to 51 counts of murder, 40 counts of attempted murder and one count of terrorism, the first terrorism conviction in New Zealand's history. He could become the first person in the country to be sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

Tarrant was brought into the courtroom shackled and wearing a gray prison outfit. In the dock, unshackled and surrounded by five officers, he showed little emotion throughout the hearing. He occasionally looked around the room, tapped his fingers, and watched the survivors as they spoke. The courtroom was

only half full due to social distancing requirements, while many others watched from adjacent courtrooms where the hearing was streamed. Survivors and family members occasionally wept and comforted each other. The hearing began with prosecutors outlining the attacks in a 26-page summary of facts.

Crown prosecutor Barnaby Hawes said that two months before the attacks, Tarrant flew a drone directly over the Al Noor mosque, recording an aerial view of the grounds and buildings and taking note of the entry and exit doors. Hawes said the gunman planned his attacks for when the maximum number of worshippers were present, and that 190 people were in the Al Noor mosque for Friday prayers on the day of the attacks.

Given the bloating e-commerce stakes through multi-billion dollar behemoths, it appears only a question of time before people in India randomly get unordered packages.

That is if they have not already received "brushing" packages and gleefully pocketed them without a fuss and with obeisance to the saying, "never look a gift horse in the mouth".

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Protests break out in Wisconsin city after black man shot by police; curfew imposed

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, 24 AUGUST

Protests erupted in the US city of Kenosha, Wisconsin, following a police shooting there of a reportedly unarmed black man, prompting officials to impose a curfew.

The victim, identified by Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers as Jacob Blake, was hospitalised in a serious condition on Sunday evening

incident, according to various US media reports.

Social media posts showed large crowds marching down streets and throwing Molotov cocktails and bricks at the police, with one officer reportedly injured. The police responded by imposing a citywide curfew until 7am.

The shooting happened at around 5pm local time in Kenosha as officers were responding to a "domestic incident". The victim was immediately taken to a hospital by the police, according to a statement issued by the

state's Division of Criminal Investigation.

"We stand with all those who have and continue to demand justice, equity and accountability for black lives in our country," Mr Evers said, mentioning Mr Floyd and other victims of brutal law enforcement.

"We're tired of it... We're tired of it," Mr Clyde McLemore, who local Kenosha TV identified as part of a nearby chapter of the Black Lives Matter movement, said at the scene.

Governor Evers, in a tweet, said Mr Blake had been "shot

in the back multiple times in broad daylight", adding, "We stand against excessive use of force and against escalation when engaging with black Wisconsines."

He said that while full details of the incident had yet to emerge, Mr Blake was among black people to have been injured or "mercilessly killed" by police in the United States.

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ANANT GOYAL

The entire world is caught in a frantic and frightening rigmarole that's usually the stuff of best-selling sci-fi novels. In a matter of months, the coronavirus contagion which germinated from China has effectively spread across continents, devastating lives, businesses and institutions. With a lockdown imposed in every affected nation to curtail the further mass diffusion of the virus, people are gradually coming to terms with what it means to live in a post-pandemic world. As the social and physical distancing is the key protocol mandated by health authorities, not just government and private offices but also all schools, colleges, libraries, universities, coaching centers etc too, have been shut down in the wake of Covid-19.

The problem

This has hampered the effectual flow of the students' learning methodologies and academic process across the country. With all centers of knowledge dissemination abruptly disbanded due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students and teachers alike are resorting to unconventional pedagogical pathways. There has been a massive shift from the hitherto offline and physical mediums that traditionally dispensed education to online remote learning modes as a result of the edtech revolution. A student can now avail the same lessons from the security of his/her home through an abundance of

edutech platforms that are available today. It's true that due to the lockdown, students can no longer go to their school classrooms but that doesn't necessarily imply that the classrooms cannot come to them.

The problem-solvers

Such a sudden and swift transition from the conventional brick and mortar process of school education to home-based remote online learning via edutech channels is visibly enough, reimagining and redefining the extant lackluster pedagogy in India. In the event of a country-wide closure, where public gatherings of all types are restricted, students are possibly amongst the worst affected section of society. Without access to school-education and the guidance of their teachers, they would have been left to fend for themselves, if not for the emerging edutech industry. By using a combination of advanced state-of-the-art tech-innovations such as AI, ML and Deep Learning, these promising new-age online learning platforms are revolutionising the hitherto conformist pedagogical structures of the country.

Serving where it's needed most

These online learning portals are proving invaluable in maintaining the learning continuum for students especially those from the weaker and marginalised sections of society. Imagine the hardships faced by students who belong to the underprivileged and remote sectors in the event of the

corona lockdown, a single teacher for over 200 students, and a shoddy, decrepit building functioning as a school. Now as even that is out of the picture, these students have no option but to rely on edtech platforms to supplement their educational needs.

They simply do not have the luxury of resources that are on the beck and call of their privileged counterparts. Thus, it is the duty of the government to ensure that the students residing in these obscured and impoverished regions of the country should have access to the minimum required facility, i.e. a computer system and an internet connection to make online learning a possibility.

Immense potential

Through an amalgamation of exquisite audio-video mediums and confetti of text, sound, images and film, online learning platforms are also reinventing the modes of disseminating knowledge. Through a mélange of quirky yet interesting, fun yet informative elements, these edtech channels are igniting a never-before-seen interest in the minds of young learners. Whereas the earlier didactic system of conventional classroom teaching revolved around largely disinterested students who would simply learn by rote and study only to fulfill the objective of clearing the examinations, this budding online approach attempts to captivate the students by presenting the lessons in a unique and learner-friendly format.

Education boards of almost every state in India are collaborating with several edtech players to continue the process of pedagogical transmission during lockdown

Sensible and sensitive

This helps in creating a natural inclination and proclivity on the student's part towards learning new concepts and enhancing one's critical and imaginative faculties. Keeping in mind the diverse cultural sensibilities and differential socio-linguistic features of the country these edtech platforms are also proffering online lessons in vernacular languages, besides the usual Hindi and English.

Silencing the critics

Such an irrefutable slew of factors that depict the rising popularity and acceptance of online learning platforms have managed to win over its share of critics and skeptics as well. With the newly developed, well-improved and affordably-priced learning formats that are in strict adherence to the curriculum and course-guidelines as established by the state education boards being provided by these edtech channels, even those parties who were hitherto dismissive of these conventional online learning platforms for their so-called superfluity of content and expensive nature, are beginning to embrace the wide-

spread applications of online learning.

Edtech to the rescue

These ready-to-adapt online learning platforms have not only won over the hearts of students and teachers alike with their comprehensive educational offerings and an ever-widening scope, but also have managed to impress the state education authorities. And suddenly with the discontinuation of all offline learning institutions, the onus is on these edtech platforms to capitalise on this opportunity and become a veritable learning partner, enabling the education process of about 260 million school students in India.

Thus the education boards of almost every state in the country are collaborating with several edtech players to continue the process of pedagogical transmission and forwarding the academic trajectory of the countless students in the country who on account of the lockdown find themselves bereft of schooling and tutorage.

The writer is director and founder, Brighttutee

RANA SINGH

The healthcare sector across the globe is growing at an exponential rate and the rate of growth of the pharmaceutical sector is concomitant to the rate of growth of the healthcare sector. The whole world has witnessed the disastrous catastrophe of the global pandemic of Covid-19.

The preventive and curative measures play a very important role in ensuring the good health of the citizens of the economy. Pharmaceutical drugs play an important role in curing the patients from the various diseases. Pharmaceutical sector is growing at a consistent rate in India and abroad and is offering great career opportunities to thousands of students. The students can pursue diploma programme, bachelor's degree programme, master degree programme and doctoral level programme in the domain of pharmaceutical sciences.

Pharmacy Council of India is the regulatory body in India which grants approval to the universities and colleges in India to run the various programmes in the domain of pharmacy. The council has well defined norms, standards and guidelines to be followed by the entities seeking approval from Pharmacy Council of India.

The students who intend to pursue a career in pharmacy are required to have passed the intermediate /+2 examination with physics, chemistry or mathematics / biology.

The admission process for the pharmacy programmes includes written test. The national level entrance test for admission to the Masters level pharmacy programmes is GPAT i.e. Graduate Pharmacy Aptitude Test. This test is organised by National Testing Agency (NTA) every year for admission in M Pharma Programs.

The major areas of study in the Bachelor of Pharmacy programme are human anatomy and physiology, pharmaceutical analysis, pharmacetics, pharmaceutical inorganic chemistry, communication skills, biochem-



OFFERING AN ENRICHING SCOPE

Opportunities in the pharmaceutical sector are not only quite high but also growing at an exponential rate

istry, pathophysiology, computer applications in pharmacy, environmental science, pharmaceutical organic chemistry, physical pharmaceutics etc.

Career opportunities in the pharmaceutical sector are very high and are growing at an exponential rate. The students who pursue the programmes in pharmacy make their career as drug control administrator, hospital manager, trainer, assistant professor, food and drug administrator, health centre manager, drug dispenser, pharmaceu-

tical marketing representative, research manager, health inspector, chemical analyst, drug technician, drug therapist, customs officer, pharma data analyst, drug inspector, hospital drug administrator, medical transcriptionist, insurance coder, regulatory manager etc.

The pharma students can utilise their leisure period by practicing the question papers of the yesteryears and the mock tests (computer based) of three hours each comprising 125 questions carrying 500 marks. The

students are required to lay more emphasis on both physical and organic chemistry, pharmacology, biotechnology etc. The students should attempt questions only which they are very sure as the exam entails negative marking.

In post Covid-19 scenario, the role of pharmaceutical professionals is likely to increase as the patients are staying in hospital for a prolonged period in quarantine. The role and importance of pharmaceutical professionals will increase as they are

well aware of pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics which means how the pharmaceutical drug is impacting the body and how the body is responding to the drug.

To summarise, pharmaceutical sector is likely to offer promising and enriching careers in pharmaceutical and healthcare sector at the global level with lucrative salary packages in the post pandemic scenario.

The writer is vice chancellor, Sanskriti University

PLUS POINTS

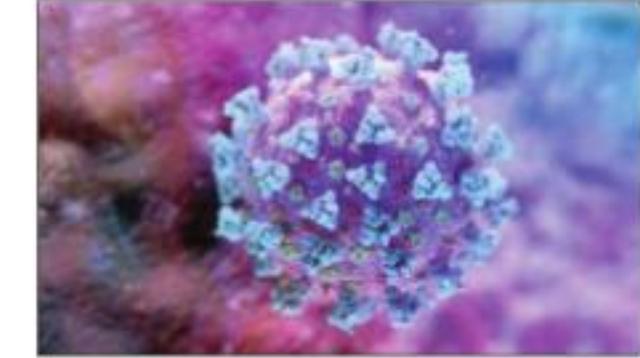
Aiding learners



Xebia Academy Global organised a company visit for UPES students pursuing BTech in computer science recently. It was a two-day learning event for the final year students, who are undergoing specialised courses on DevOps and Big data offered to them by Xebia. The visit gave students real-time industry exposure and a peep into the transition from classroom lectures to building practical solutions. The learning session included a broad range of topics focused on both technical and behavioural aspects including current and emerging technology trends and people management skills.

UPES alumni who are currently associated with Xebia shared their experience and journey. The collaboration between Xebia and UPES is a great step in bridging the industry-academia gap and such industry exposure will foster students with next-generation skills and make them future-ready.

Needful invention



AIIMS-IIT alumni duo Shashi Ranjan and Debayan Saha invented novel technology to kill the Corona virus with just water recently. Their invented technology has been tested and certified by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) lab, to kill the Covid-19 virus successfully.

The duo believes that Corona virus has exposed our vulnerability to biohazards, bioterrorism, the evolution of new viruses, and possibilities of the Corona virus itself evolving into newer strains, in which case the much-anticipated vaccines may be rendered ineffective. Hence to ensure the safety of citizens, scientists will have to develop mechanisms and innovative technologies.

The team of scientists and engineers behind this technology made at PerSapien Innovations Private Limited are in talks with national and international organisations and government bodies to collaborate for manufacturing and large scale deployment of it.

Inspirational webinar



Kolkata Centre for Creativity and Kolkata Partition Museum organised an engaging webinar recently, which took the attendees through a series of artworks and portrayal of the struggles of the people of India during the Partition of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and its devastating aftermath effects. Eminent artists and speakers took one through a series of emotions and thoughts which described the pain and struggle of the immigrants who survived partition.

The webinar proceeded with a presentation of artworks and the research behind them by each artisan, who also talked about the stories and inspirations behind their theme and art. At the end few questions from the attendees regarding the textile and materials used in the creation of art were answered.

Soumi Mandal

Spreading awareness



KIIT World School Gurgaon conducted an online painting competition for classes 6 to 8 and essay writing competition for classes IX and X recently. The theme of the competition was "Gandagi Mukt Mera Gaon" in which students showcased their imagination through paintings and essays. The motto of it was to make students understand the importance of cleanliness around us.

All the students participated and expressed themselves through their imaginations. They tried to carry forward this drive to spread awareness, in the wake of Covid-19 with a greater goal of cleanliness, personnel hygiene and a healthy lifestyle in villages.



STAYING ON

Antonio Conte (in photo, left) has said he has no intention of quitting Inter Milan following his side's 3-2 defeat by Sevilla in the Europa League final. The head coach's occasional angry outbursts have seen him clash with Inter's senior executives since taking over the reins in 2019.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Paris clash: Dozens of disgruntled Paris Saint-Germain fans clashed with French riot police on the Champs-Elysées after their team lost to Bayern Munich in the Champions League final in Lisbon. Hundreds of other supporters trudged away from the Paris avenue.

Format tweak: Uefa chief Aleksander Ceferin will hold talks about retaining the single-game eliminator format that has been used to complete the pandemic-disrupted Champions League and Europa League seasons, although it could only be used for semi-finals.

'Not guilty': Manchester United have confirmed Harry Maguire has pleaded not guilty to charges following an alleged altercation with police while on holiday in Mykonos. The United captain has been released from police custody pending a hearing on Tuesday.

Tokyo stadium: Japan's top athletes put the new Tokyo Olympic stadium through its paces at a track meet on Sunday, a year ahead of the Games postponed owing to the novel coronavirus pandemic. The televised competition was held behind closed doors.

'Fit & ready': Head coach Justin Langer said his Australia squad were super-fit and ready to hit the ground running as they departed on Sunday for their white-ball tour of England, their first cricket activity since March. The squad gathered in Perth before taking a direct flight.

New role: James Sutherland was on Monday appointed head of Gulf Australia, two years after stepping down as the country's cricket chief in the wake of a damaging ball-tampering scandal. The 55-year-old will administrator take over from Stephen Pitt on 1 October.

Pogba status: Paul Pogba's agent said on Sunday the France midfielder was "at the heart" of Manchester United's plans, adding that he was currently discussing a contract extension with the Premier League club. Mino Raiola said Pogba "is still at the heart" of the action.

Positive test: Barcelona were reported to have announced that midfielder Miralem Pjanic had tested positive for the coronavirus. Pjanic joined the La Liga club from Juventus in Serie A at the end of the season in a swap deal with Brazil international Arthur.

Akhil starts season: India's Akhil Rabindra, the only Asian to seal an Aston Martin Racing Driver Academy spot this year, kicked off his 2020 season with a top-ten finish at the Circuit Paul Armagnac de Nogaro in the French FFSA GT Championship. Akhil and his partner Gilles Vannelet, representing ACS Events Racing Team, clocked 01:00:49.314 hrs after 37 laps in the race 3 despite tricky conditions on the French circuit which is the largest GT4 grid in Europe.

Usain Bolt tests positive for coronavirus, says report: Legendary sprinter Usain Bolt has tested positive for coronavirus days after partaking with guests, including English footballer Raheem Sterling, for his 34th birthday in Jamaica, according to media reports. As per a Daily Mail report, a radio station in Jamaica, said that Bolt has contracted the disease and will spend time in self-isolation as a result. The publication further stated that the 34-year-old underwent a Covid-19 test a few days back and discovered on Sunday that he had tested positive for the deadly infection.

Bayern Munich win Champions League

Coman hit home a second-half header to seal the Germans' sixth European crown

PSG 0
Bayern Munich 1AGENCIES
LISBON, 24 AUGUST

This strangest of Champions League seasons finishes with the most traditionalist of winners, and a classic final storyline. Old money beats new money thanks to an old boy, showing his former club why they were wrong. Kingsley Coman (*in photo, left*), who left Paris Saint-Germain after growing frustrated with the chances amid so much expenditure, wins the 65th Champions League final for Bayern Munich with a goal on the hour.

Modern football is rather complicated in that regard, but the game itself still has some beautiful simplicities. And that's where some moral may lie.

Bayern were rewarded for their bravery. They didn't adapt for PSG. Fully confident in their attacking abilities, they persisted with that high line. It led to a lot of moments of high tension. It isn't just that the PSG attack are fast, after all. It's that their attack suddenly exploding may currently be one of the most awesome sights in football.

Given the political nature of the PSG project, it would be easy to draw some kind of moral parallel from this, and the right team winning.

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