



SHRINGLA VISITS  
DHAKA AMID  
GROWING CHINESE  
INFLUENCE

P5



PROPOSALS WORTH  
₹12 LAKH CR FOR  
MANUFACTURING  
ELECTRONICS

P8



'TRUMP IS THE  
WRONG PRESIDENT  
FOR THE US'

P10



JOE POINTS AT  
THE ROOT OF  
THE MATTER

P12

## WEATHER

Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of moderate rain/thunderstorms. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 33 and 26 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: 23.6 mm

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 98% Min: 72%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 35.0°C (1) Min: 27.1°C (0)  
SUN RISES SUN SETS  
05:53 hrs 18:56 hrs  
MOON RISES MOON SETS  
06:55 hrs 19:28 hrs

## THUMBNAILS



Delhi Police Commissioner SN Shrivastava with Pramod Kumar Pathak, Additional Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH, flagging off Dhanvantari Rath at PHQ, in the Capital on Tuesday. SNS

**PM urges caution:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged citizens on Tuesday to take precautions during the ongoing monsoon season, noting that this is the time when tropical and vector-borne diseases spread. "This is the season of tropical and vector-borne diseases. I urge you all to take the right precautions. The government is also closely monitoring the situation and ensuring care to those affected. Stay safe, be happy," he tweeted.

**Satya Pal Malik appointed Meghalaya Cm:** Satya Pal Malik was on Tuesday transferred as Governor of Meghalaya, replacing Tagahata Roy who completed his five-year tenure on the gubernatorial post. A Rashtrapati Bhavan communique said Malik has been shifted to Meghalaya, and Governor of Maharashtra BS Koshiyari has been asked to discharge the functions of Goa governor in addition to his own duties.

**TN: Madras HC upholds closure of Sterlite Copper**

**SNS**  
CHENNAI, 18 AUGUST

The Madras High Court on Tuesday upheld the state government's decision to shut down Sterlite Copper, a unit of Vedanta Limited in Thoothukudi, which resulted in large scale protests by aggrieved people and police shootout on them killing several including a student and women.

The court dismissed the company's plea to resume operations, over two years after its closure by the state government for violating environmental norms. The plant, which has been pulled up for air and water pollution by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB), was ordered shut on 24 May 2018, two days after 13 civilians were shot dead by the police during protests against the plant in Thoothukudi.

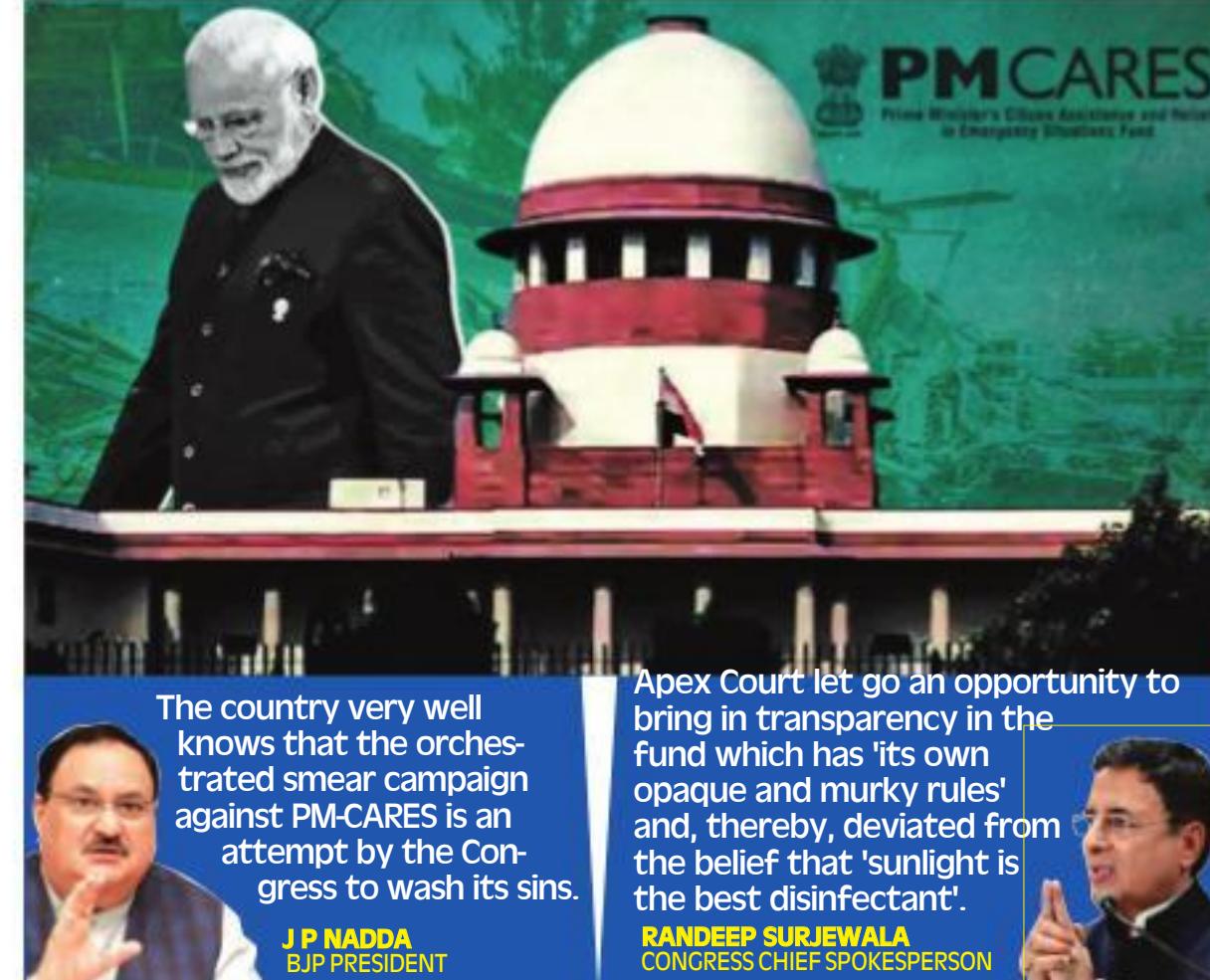
A Bench of Justices TS Sivagangam and V Bhavani Subbarao ordered that the plant cannot be allowed to reopen, and dismissed all petitions by Vedanta. The closure order will continue to stand.

Judge Sivagangam observed that the order would have been out in March itself but for the pandemic. Whatever the current status quo is, will obviously prevail, the judge added.

In 2018, residents from villages around

## PM CARES contribution need not be transferred to NDRF: SC

BJP, Congress take potshots at each other after apex court verdict on PIL by an NGO



The country very well knows that the orchestrated smear campaign against PM-CARES is an attempt by the Congress to wash its sins.  
**J P NADELLA**  
BJP PRESIDENT

Apex Court let go an opportunity to bring transparency in the fund which has 'its own opaque and murky rules' and, thereby, deviated from the belief that 'sunlight is the best disinfectant'.  
**RANDEEP SURJEWALA**  
CONGRESS CHIEF SPOKESPERSON

The judgment came on a PIL, filed by NGO Centre for Public Interest Litigation, seeking a direction that all the funds collected under the PM-CARES Fund for the Covid-19 pandemic should be transferred to the NDRF.

The PIL had also sought a direction to the government to prepare, notify and implement a national plan under the Disaster Management Act to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.

The bench, also comprising Justices RS Reddy and M R Shah, said in its verdict that a plan prepared by the government under the Disaster Management Act was sufficient for Covid-19 also.

The Centre had on 28 March set up the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) Fund with the primary objective to deal with any kind of emergency like the one currently posed by the Covid-19 outbreak and provide relief to those affected.

The prime minister is the ex-officio chairman of the fund and the ministers of defence, home and finance are its ex-officio trustees. During the hearing

ing in the top court on July 27, the Centre had defended the PM CARES Fund saying it is a public trust meant to receive "voluntary contributions" to fight COVID-19 pandemic and the budgetary allocations for NDRF and SDRF are not "being touched".

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta had told the court that the PM CARES Fund is a "voluntary fund" while funds to the NDRF and SDRF (State Disaster Response Fund) are made available through bud-

getary allocations.

Senior advocate Dushyant Dave, appearing for the petitioner NGO, had said that they are not doubting the bona fide of anyone but the creation of the PM CARES Fund is allegedly in contravention of provisions of the Disaster Management Act.

He had claimed that an audit of the NDRF is being conducted by the Comptroller and Auditor-General (CAG) but the government has said the audit of the PM CARES Fund will

be done by private auditors. Dave had also questioned the validity of the PM CARES Fund.

BJP President JP Nadda on Tuesday described the Supreme Court decision on the PM CARES Fund as a "resounding blow to the nefarious designs" of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and his "band of rent-a cause" activists.

"The country very well knows that the orchestrated smear campaign against PM CARES is an attempt by the Congress to wash its sins," he said.

Rubbishing the Congress' criticism on the issue, another BJP leader and Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told a press conference that "transparency is writ large in the PM CARES Fund".

A dejected Congress on Tuesday said the Supreme Court's judgement on the PM CARES Fund was a "body blow to transparency and accountability" of the government to the people.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said the Apex Court let go an opportunity to bring in transparency in the fund which has "its own opaque and murky rules" and, thereby, deviated from the belief that "sunlight is the best disinfectant".

He had claimed that an audit of the NDRF is being conducted by the Comptroller and Auditor-General (CAG) but the government has said the audit of the PM CARES Fund will

## 55,079 new cases; 57,937 recoveries in 24 hrs

SNS&PTI  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

A total of 3,09,41,264 tests for detection of COVID-19 have so far been conducted in India with record 8,99,864 tests done in a single day, even though the positivity rate remained low at 8.81 per cent compared to the weekly national average of 8.84 per cent, the health ministry said on Tuesday.

The total number of recoveries crossed the 19 lakh-mark with 57,937 patients having recuperated in 24 hours, the highest recorded in a day so far, it said.

A total of 8,99,864 samples have been tested on Monday, the highest in a day, taking the cumulative tests conducted so far to 3,09,41,264, the ministry said.

As a result of collaborative and focussed efforts by the Centre, state and UT governments built on effective implementation of the 'test, track and treat' strategy of the Union government, 30 states and UTs, including Chhattisgarh, Assam, Rajasthan, Andhra

according to the Union health ministry data updated at 8 am on Tuesday.

It is higher than the 55,079 confirmed cases of coronavirus added during the same period, the ministry highlighted.

With more patients recovering and being discharged from hospitals and home isolation (in case of mild and moderate cases), the total recoveries have surged to 19,77,779.

"With this, the gap between recovered patients and active cases has crossed 13 lakh as on date (13,04,613)," the ministry said.

The COVID-19 caseload stood at 27,02,742, while the death toll climbed to 51,797 with 876 people succumbing to the disease in 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

Continuous increase in average daily recoveries has led to India's COVID-19 recovery rate rising to 73.18 per cent and a low case fatality rate (CFR) of 1.92 per cent, it said.

As a result of collaborative and focussed efforts by the Centre, state and UT governments built on effective implementation of the 'test, track and treat' strategy of the Union government, 30 states and UTs, including Chhattisgarh, Assam, Rajasthan, Andhra

Pradesh, Telangana, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka, are reporting lower CFR than the national average, it stated.

"Aggressive testing leads to early identification and isolation of positive cases. This coupled with efficient clinical treatment has ensured low Fatality Rate," the ministry underlined.

The COVID-19 caseload of the country - 6,73,166 active cases of coronavirus infection -- is only 24.91 per cent of the total cases, it said.

The COVID-19 caseload stood at 27,02,742, while the death toll climbed to 51,797 with 876 people succumbing to the disease in 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

**Delhi scenario:** Delhi today recorded 1,374 fresh coronavirus cases, which pushed the city's

Covid caseload to 1,54,741, according to the latest health bulletin issued by the Delhi government.

Twelve fresh fatalities due to coronavirus infection were recorded in the

### FACT FILE

**TOTAL CASES**

**ACTIVE CASES**

**NEW CASES**

**NEW RECOVERIES**

**TOTAL DEATHS**

**UNION HEALTH MINISTRY FIGURES AS OF 8.00 A.M. TUESDAY 18 AUGUST 2020**

national capital, with the Covid death toll climbing to 4,226, the bulletin said.

The cumulative number of recovered Covid patients in the city rose to 1,39,447 today, with 1146 patients getting recovered over the last 24 hours.

The number of active coronavirus cases in Delhi was 11,068.

Besides other schemes,

## Govt jobs in MP only for locals, says Chouhan

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
Bhopal, 18 AUGUST

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced Tuesday that only the students of MP would now be eligible for government jobs in the state.

Chouhan said this while reviewing the progress of several schemes and programs being implemented by various departments of the state government.

The CM said the state government would make necessary statutory provisions for providing government jobs of the state to students of MP only. He said the resources of the state are meant for the students of the state and they should get full benefits of the state's resources.

Chouhan directed the ministers and officials of the state government to pace up implementation of schemes launched for public welfare.

The CM asked the Group of Ministers to submit their report by August 25 for the roadmap for Atmanirbhar Bharat.

In the first round of privatisations under the Narendra Modi dispensation, the airports in Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Mangalore, Thiruvananthapuram and Guwahati were cleared for operation, management and development through public-private partnership (PPP) model in February 2019.

The aviation sector has been significantly impacted due to the travel restrictions imposed in India and other countries in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

All airlines in India have taken cost-cutting measures such as pay cuts, leave-without-pay and firings of employees in order to conserve cash.

**'Further airport privatisation'**

The Ministry of Civil Aviation will place a proposal for "further" privatisation of airports before the Union Cabinet on Wednesday, Puri said.

Currently, airlines in

Chouhan laid emphasis on the proper and timely implementation of the schemes for assistance to the families of martyrs, benefits to all consumers under Food Safety Mission, ensuring employment works given under MNREGA, increasing income of farmers, empowering women self-help groups, grant of forest rights patta to Scheduled Tribes, freeing tribals from loans taken from unlicensed moneylenders in tribal dominated development blocks of the state, providing laptops to meritorious students, solar power development in the state and the development of Atal (Chambal) Progress-Way and Narmada Expressway.

Chouhan also issued instructions to complete necessary procedures in connection with the development of Global Skill Park and developing theme-based circuits for tourism promotion.

The CM issued strict directions for taking strict steps against habitual criminals, criminals engaged in drugs and chit fund and any kind of mafia.

SNS&PTI

## EC to frame guidelines for polls during pandemic

NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

The Election Commission (EC) would come up with "broad" guidelines within three days for holding elections during the COVID-19 pandemic.

An EC statement said the matter of issuing broad guidelines for elections and by-elections during "COVID-19 period" was discussed at the commission meeting on Tuesday.

The commission considered the views and suggestions given by the political parties. It also considered the suggestions and recommendations made by chief electoral officers of states and union territories. After considering all these, the commission directed to frame broad guidelines within three days," it said. ECI also directed that on the basis of these guidelines, chief electoral officers of election-going states should also prepare a comprehensive plan for state or district concerned for Covid-19 related measures.

During the meeting, the commission directed to frame broad guidelines within three days," it said. ECI also directed that on the basis of these guidelines, chief electoral officers of election-going states should also prepare a comprehensive plan for state or district concerned for Covid-19 related measures.

Adani Enterprises had won the rights to run six airports -- Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Mangalore, Thiruvananthapuram, and Guwahati -- after a competitive bidding process in February 2019.

Subsequently, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) had in September 2019 recommended the Civil Aviation Ministry to privatise airports in Amritsar, Varanasi, Bhubaneswar, Indore, Raipur and Trichy.

Puri said during a webinar on Tuesday, "We are going to the Cabinet tomorrow for further airport privatisation."

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## India negotiating with 13 countries to establish bilateral air bubble arrangements: Puri



The Modi government has been working with honesty; it has the blessings of the public. The same honesty is also reflected in the PM-CARES fund

RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD  
UNION MINISTER

# Results of new serosurvey expected this week: Jain

DDMA meeting to discuss reopening of hotels, gyms, weekly markets in Delhi deferred till today

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

**T**he results of the sero-prevalence survey conducted in Delhi in the first week of August to better assess the city's Covid situation is expected to be announced this week, Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain said today.

The exercise was undertaken from August 1-7 for comprehensive assessment of the Covid situation in Delhi and to formulate strategies based on its findings.

The sero-prevalence survey involves testing blood serum of individuals to check for prevalence of antibodies against the viral infection.

Jain said the previous survey conducted during June 27-July 10 had shown that about 24 per cent of people sampled had shown presence of antibodies, indicating that they were affected by Covid-19.

The fresh survey was undertaken to find out the situation in the city since the previous sampling so that better decisions could be made to tackle the coronavirus outbreak, he said.



"The result of the latest sero-survey is expected this week," Jain told reporters.

Over 15,000 samples were collected as part of this exercise, spanning different areas and age groups. Representative samples were taken from all 11 districts of the national capital.

The new sero-prevalence survey in Delhi excluded those who were part of the previous exercise.

All districts were to ensure that out of total number of samples, 25 per cent were of those younger than 18 years, another 50 per cent were in the age group of 18-49 years and the remaining 25 per cent of those in the age group of 50 years or more, according to the standard operating procedures (SOPs) prescribed by Delhi's Directorate General of Health Services.

Jain had announced last

month that after analysing the results of the June-July sero-survey, it was decided that more such exercises would be undertaken every month to formulate better policies for tackling the Covid situation in the city.

Asserting that the government is doing proper surveillance and screening for cases, he said, "We are monitoring the crowd at railway stations too, and if anyone is suspected to be infected, we

screen them.

All our dispensaries are carrying out tests. There are about 250 such testing centres."

Meanwhile, a crucial meeting of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) to discuss reopening of city hotels, gymnasium and yoga centres in view of the current Covid scenario in the national capital was postponed today, officials said. This meeting will now be held tomorrow, an official said, adding that the DDMA had to postpone today's meeting as some senior officials could not be available due to their prior commitments.

A decision on whether hotels, gymnasium and weekly markets in Delhi should be allowed to reopen is likely to be taken in the DDMA meeting, the official said.

In its recent proposal to the LG, the AAP-led Delhi government had said that in accordance with the "Unlock" guidelines issued by the Centre, it has the right to take a decision on allowing establishments in the city.

The Delhi government had said that although the Covid cases have been increasing

several states and the situation was deteriorating, hotels, gyms and weekly markets have been allowed to open there.

The AAP government had also sought to know from the LG as to why Delhiites were being stopped from earning their livelihood despite the point that the number of coronavirus cases has been decreasing in Delhi.

Delhi yesterday recorded 787 new novel coronavirus cases, which pushed its Covid tally to 1,53,367, according to the Delhi government's health bulletin. The city's Covid death toll rose to 4,214 with 18 fatalities recorded yesterday.

The active cases of the coronavirus disease rose to 10,852 yesterday from 10,823 the previous day in the national capital.

The city had reported 652 new coronavirus cases and eight fresh Covid deaths last Sunday.

The cumulative total of recovered Covid patients in Delhi yesterday rose to 1,38,301. The city's Covid recovery rate then climbed to 90.17 per cent.

## Delhi govt to resume campaign against dengue from 1 Sept



PTI  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

ital this year till August 15, according to a municipal report released on Monday.

Recently, the commissioner of the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) had issued an advisory on prevention and control of vector-borne diseases.

According to data shared by the SDMC, the nodal agency that tabulates data on vector-borne diseases for the entire city, 10 cases of dengue have been reported in August.

Dengue mosquito larvae breed in clear, standing water, while those of malaria thrive even in dirty water.

Cases of vector-borne diseases are usually reported between July and November, but the period may stretch till mid-December.

Designated nodal officers of these institutions must ensure that there is no artificial water collection in open grounds, roofs of buildings, flower pots etc. Also, overhead tanks should be emptied, covered and locked, the municipal advisory had said.

"Our anti-dengue campaign last year proved to be a great help in combating dengue and other vector-borne diseases.

This year too, we will reach out to the people to mobilise their support in containing cases of dengue.

So, '10Hafte 10Baje 10Din' campaign will be conducted this year too, starting September 1," Jain said.

The Delhi government had also partnered with RWAs and civil society last year to drive home the point about taking precautions at home every Sunday for 10 minutes that can help ward off dengue, malaria and chikungunya.

At least 48 cases of malaria and 41 of dengue have been reported in the national cap-

## Classified

### PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS



I, Sri Bachchu Nag (63), S/o. late Prafulla Nag, presently residing at 211/D/5, Picnic Garden, Kol-39, reside with my wife and only son. I declare that Smt. Soma Nag, who is my daughter, presently her residing address is 121, Dr. G.S. Bosu Road, Kol-39, unfortunately we have no relationship with her because she is going astray. So my request to each and everybody (known & unknown to us) kindly do not give any loan or financial help to her. If anyone gives any loan to my abovesaid daughter, in that case we are not responsible in any way and we will not be liable to repay the loan amount.

**NOTICE**  
I, Verinder Kumar Beri, s/o Lt. Ram Saran Das Beri, r/o P-1-A-207, Princeton Estate, DLF Phase V, Sector 53, Gurugram-122002, have the following children: 1. Mrs. Madhu Vadehra, w/o Anil Vadehra, r/o 27 Kingsley Avenue, Melton Park, Newcastle, Upon Tyne, NE35QN, United Kingdom II. Mr. Sunil Kumar Beri, s/o Virender Kumar Beri, r/o Flat No.11B, Pokfulam Mansions, Hong Kong, III. Mrs. Sunita Jassal, w/o Arun Jassal, r/o 21, Greystoke, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE3 2DZ, United Kingdom. I, Verinder Kumar Beri, hereby irrevocable, unconditionally and irreversibly declare and state that I DIS-OWN and DISINHERIT my children named above including their children, respective heirs, legatees, representatives, successors and assigns and no liability in respect of them shall be assigned to me or be extinguished using any of the properties belonging to me under any circumstance.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Be it known to public at large that my clientess Smt. Neelam Soni, wife of Late Shri Vinod Soni, r/o C-463, Sector-18, Rohini, Delhi-110089, has severed her relationship with her younger son Shri Ankit Soni due to bad behavior and disrespect. He has no interest, title or right of any type in family affairs, self acquired movable and immovable prop-

Kamal Kishore Kundra Advocate Enr. No. D/2140/07 C-465, Sec-18, Rohini, Delhi-80

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Be it known to public at large that my clients Shri Sandeep Soni, son of Late Shri Vinod Soni and his wife Smt. Komal Soni, wife of Shri Sandeep Soni both r/o C-463, Sector-18, Rohini, Delhi-110089, has severed their relationship with their younger brother Shri Ankit Soni due to bad behavior and disrespect. He has no interest, title or right of any type in family affairs, self acquired movable and immovable property.

Kamal Kishore Kundra Advocate Enr. No. D/2140/07 C-465, Sec-18, Rohini, Delhi-80

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to inform the general public that my clients Shri Ram Kishan, s/o Shri Leelu Ram and Smt. Babita, w/o Shri Ram Kishan, r/o E-9, Staff Quarters, Patel Chest Flats, Morris Nagar, New Delhi do hereby declare that our son Shri Akash and his wife Smt. Monika, r/o 2/469, Block 2 (4th Floor), Trilok Puri, East Delhi-110091 are living separately since Nov. 2019 having no connection with us whatsoever in any manner. Both are very disobedient. We hereby debar our son and his wife from our properties/assets. Anybody dealing with them shall be responsible themselves.

Gurcharan Singh Makhan Advocate Enr. No. D-147/1974 Mob. 981848050

**NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given that my client Sourov Roy intend to purchase All That the entire premises being Municipal Premises No. 79/9B, Acharya Jagadish Bose Road, P.O.: Entally, P.S.: Taltala, Kolkata-700014, having its Municipal Assessors No. 11-053-02-0090-5, Ward No. 53 together with party four-storied old building standing thereon from its present owner namely Amit Kumar De, son of late Anil Coomar De, of 79/9B,

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
IN THE COURT OF  
SH. RAHUL VERMA,  
CIVIL JUDGE-07TH/C/DELHI  
CS SCJ NO. 1998/19  
IN THE MATTER OF:  
MOHD. IOBAL &  
MOHD. SALEEM & ORS.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
It is inform that on 11.07.2019 this Hon'ble Court please to allow the application U/o 39 Rule 1 & 2 & accordingly the defendants are requested from creating 3rd Party interest, raising any construction/demolition in the suit property bearing No. 11212-B, First Floor, Gai Swami Wall, Idgah Road, Moti Khan, Delhi -110055 till the next date. The Plaintiff compliance order 39 Rule 3 of Civil Procedure Code. After that adverse order has been passed by the Hon'ble Court and the Interim order is still continue on the order sheet dated 17.03.2020

LAW KUMAR SHARMA(Advocate)  
Ct. No. C-89, C.L. Joseph Block,  
Tis Hazari Court, Delhi-110054  
Mob.: 9211344313

**TENDERS**  
NIT NO. 04/2020-2021, dated 17.08.2020 — WBCADC, Haringhata Project is inviting sealed tender from the bona fide experienced and reputed contractor / supplier for Construction of Goat Shed

**TENDER** No. WBTBCL / 2020-0008 — West Bengal Text Book Corporation Ltd. Invites sealed offers from genuine buyers of paper scrap for disposal of water soaked Paper reel and sheet Paper from our Unit-III at 3/1, Nadibag, Badu Road, Madhyamgram, North 24 Parganas.

Approx. quantity: 460350 Kg. Place of Inspection: 3/1, Nadibag, Badu Road, Madhyamgram, North 24 Parganas. Date of inspection: 25.08.2020 between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Rate should be quoted per Kg basis. The cost of transportation, loading etc. will be borne by buyer. GST will be extra as applicable. The bidder should submit 5% of quoted value as Earnest Money Deposit through D.D. in favour of West Bengal Text Book Corporation Ltd., payable at Kolkata. Tender should be submitted within 29th August, 2020 by 2 p.m.

**Manager**

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People walk through a road filled with potholes after monsoon rains in Mumbai on Tuesday.

**SC reserves verdict on UGC final year exam plea:** The Supreme Court on Tuesday reserved verdict on the plea whether the final year degree examinations in universities should be held before 30 September, in accordance with UGC guidelines. It will also decide whether state governments have the power to take a decision against conducting final year examinations under Disaster Management Act.

SNS

# T'gana Guv bats for more tests

Govt order to observe Ganesh puja, Muharram at home opposed

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD, 18 AUGUST

**E**n as Telangana governor Tamilsai Soundarajan pointed out the dwindling number of Covid-19 tests is not the best way to tackle the pandemic, the state unit of BJP and organising committees of Ganesh festival are up in arms against the state government's direction to observe both Muharram and Ganesh festival at home to prevent the spread of Covid-19 virus.

The governor, who has been repeatedly advising the state government to heed to WHO's advice and increase testing, today took to Twitter to highlight the need for more testing, then tracking and treating to control the virus. Although the Cabinet had decided to ramp up testing to 40,000 a day, testing came down to 8,794 on Sunday.

The state was testing around 20,000 per day last week. On 17 August 19,579 tests were

conducted, according to today's health bulletin.

"Want to re-stress views of WHO. Unless adequate testing is done our efforts to eradicate Covid-19 in Telangana will be difficult, more so amid rain and floods in this season," tweeted the governor. Soundarajan had written about 6-7 letters to the state government and according to an interview given to a TV channel, the state government had underestimated the Covid-19 situation.

However, BJP leaders and organising committees of Ganesh Utsav, which, more or less, are dominated by those who belong to the Saffron party or its various wings are against the state government's decision.

Yesterday, the city police chief had tweeted that no idol installation in public places will be allowed due to the Covid-19 situation as directed by the government.

"We care for your health and safety... Do Maatam of Muharram

ram at home. Similarly do Ganesh pujas at home," said Anjanji Kumar, city police commissioner.

The Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samithi, oldest puja organising committee, says the festival can be celebrated by adhering to social distancing, using masks and sanitisers.

Committee's general secretary Bhagwanth Rao said Ganesh mandaps can be erected in apartments, gated communities, function halls and colonies.

He asked home minister Md Mahmood Ali to inform police stations that police permission will not be required for installing idols. Local police stations can be notified about it.

Telangana BJP unit president Bandi Sanjiv Kumar said: "I warn TRS leaders that we will lay siege to their houses if the government tried to arrest any utsav committee member in the name of containment of Covid-19".

If you decide to go ahead with SYL, Punjab will burn and it will become a national problem

PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER AMARINDER SINGH  
URGING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO BE CAUTIOUS ON THE SATLUJ YAMUNA LINK CANAL ISSUE

i  
ndia

THUMBNAILS



People walk through a road filled with potholes after monsoon rains in Mumbai on Tuesday.

APF

**SC reserves verdict on UGC final year exam plea:** The Supreme Court on Tuesday reserved verdict on the plea whether the final year degree examinations in universities should be held before 30 September, in accordance with UGC guidelines. It will also decide whether state governments have the power to take a decision against conducting final year examinations under Disaster Management Act.

SNS

## Bhaichung hails Dhoni as 'greatest captain'

ASHISH PRADHAN  
SILIGURI, 18 AUGUST

As the world greeted cricket icon Mahendra Singh Dhoni's retirement from international games with much sadness and heartbroken messages, especially on social media, 'Sikkimese sniper' and former Indian football captain Bhaichung Bhutia has hailed the former Indian cricket team captain as the greatest captain India has ever seen.

Talking to select journalists on the sidelines of a Gorkha food tasting event at the Court-yard by Marriott in Siliguri yesterday, Mr Bhutia said Mr Dhoni was the best not just in cricket, but also the best among all other captains in all other sports that India plays.

"I feel Dhoni is the best sportsperson I have ever come across, as a leader as a player and as a teamperson," Mr Bhutia said.

"He always sacrificed his individual wellbeing for the sake of the team. He always played

for the team and not for his individual self or individual glory. We got to see this throughout his career," the ace striker added.

**'Sports industry will bounce back'**

He further said that the sports industry will bounce back the fastest among all other sectors when the Covid-19 situation starts to ease.

The Covid-19 pandemic that has swept across the world has left the public health system, society, and the economy of the country in tatters, while it has also upset the sports sector, with all games and seasons being either postponed or cancelled.

"It has already started getting back on its feet. Games and matches, including cricket and football, have already begun in countries outside India. Unlike other sectors, it will be easier for the industry to recover from the slump," Mr Bhutia said.

"The football sector may not have been hit financially by the pandemic so far, as it is already

an off season for the game. It is an off-field day for football players from May to the end of August or September. If the pandemic continues after the season begins in September-October, that might affect clubs' revenue, and that may eventually come down to hit individual players," he added.

According to him, most of big clubs have long-term contracts and sponsorships and fixed salaries, and that they may not be hit financially during times like these.

**'Pandemic situation hitting senior players'**

He also said that the pandemic had been taking a toll on senior sportspersons the most. "Take for example Dhoni and Leander Paes, who were on their verge of retirement. Had there been no pandemic, they would have played a little longer or a few more games before they called it quits," he said.

**Bhaichung Stadium 'ready'**

On the local front, Mr Bhutia

said that the Bhaichung (football) Stadium in Namchi in South Sikkim built in honour of the Sikkimese icon is all ready and awaiting inauguration.

"There were plans to open the same in May this year, but had to be stalled for the pandemic. Everything is complete there and it will be inaugurated as soon as the Covid-19 situation eases," he said.

**'Improving'**

On the football scenario in the country, the legendary footballer said it has definitely improved and is progressing at a slow pace, "but I think it can only get better."

"We are quite low, but the graph is on the upward trend. We have had some young and good players, but we have not yet found someone whom we can call a sensation. We have not yet seen 17-18 year olds in the football field making headlines," he said.

**Bhaichung Stadium 'ready'**

On the local front, Mr Bhutia

## Yechury opposes digital campaign plan in Bihar

In a letter Yechury said Bihar Chief Electoral Officer had made this proposal for the entire election campaign to be conducted on a virtual platform because of the pandemic.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

CPI (M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury has written to Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora

opposing the proposal of digital election campaign in the coming Bihar elections, saying it will give unfair advantage to the ruling BJD there.

In a letter yesterday, Yechury said Bihar Chief Electoral Officer had made this proposal for the entire election campaign to be conducted on a virtual platform because of the pandemic.

But this was opposed by most political parties as they said it would only allow a restricted access to voters and require massive financial resources too.

Yechury said that on the eve of the 2019 general election, then BJP president Amit Shah had publicly stated the party can, with its network of 32 lakh WhatsApp groups, make any message viral within hours.

And now on the eve of Bihar elections, the party has kicked off a virtual election campaign

by putting up 72,000 LED TV monitors for Shah's speech, Yechury said.

After holding 60 virtual rallies, the BJP has claimed that its election campaign efforts would involve 9,500 IT cell heads who will coordinate 72,000 WhatsApp groups, one for each polling booth, of which 50,000 have been formed in the last two months, the CPI (M) leader wrote.

"The amount of expenditure that would be involved to put together such manpower for a technology driven system is simply mind boggling," Yechury said. Even before the electoral bonds came, the BJP had an advantage over other parties in poll funding, he said.

The availability of anonymous corporate funds without any upper limit, will certainly be the death knell for electoral democracy, he said.

Yechury welcomed the EC's decision to put aside its earlier decision regarding the exercise of franchise through postal ballots for all voters above the age of 64 in the Bihar Assembly election.

"We expect that this meeting shall be convened at the earliest," the bench said and listed the matter for further hearing on September 8.

released yet and Rs 181 crore under the same head for the second quarter is also due.

NrDMC has said that the funding was meant for payment of salaries of "safai karamchaaris" and sanitation activities. The application has been filed in a pending writ petition by one Rahul Birla seeking directions to the Delhi government and the municipal corporations to pay the salaries with arrears of sanitation workers employed by them.

In its application, NrDMC has said that expenditure towards the salary till May 2020, sanitation services and providing PPE kits, gloves, masks, sanitizers to the workers has been incurred by the corporation from its own internal resources, in the absence of any amount being released by the Delhi government.

## FRUITS OF LABOUR



A farmer engaged in farming at West Midnapur on Tuesday.

SNS

## Cured migrant workers enrolled as 'Covid-19 warriors' in Bengal

SNS & PTI  
KOLKATA, 18 AUGUST

Migrant workers recovering from coronavirus have been inducted by the West Bengal government as members of "Covid-19 warriors club" to provide a healing touch to people undergoing treatment for infection in different hospitals in the metropolis, a senior government official said on Tuesday.

Forty-nine migrant workers cured of the deadly disease have been enrolled in the club to assist patients admitted to hospitals for the virus.

They hail from Birbhum, Cooch Behar, Purba and Paschim Medinipur besides Murshidabad, he said. They are given a monthly honorarium of Rs 15,000, he said.

The primary job of these Covid-19 warriors is to keep up the morale of the patients currently undergoing treatment in the coronavirus wards in hospitals by sharing with them their own stories of recovery.

"These men provide updates to the relatives of those being treated," he said.

Before pressing them into service, the cured migrant labourers were imparted training for at least seven days about safety measures while assisting a patient at the Covid-19 wards, the official said. "They are providing non-medical services mainly through counselling. They also play a role in raising awareness about the contagion among the patients, their relatives and others," the official said.

They have been given lessons on how to change oxygen cylinders, check blood pressure, body temperature and a few other basics of treating a patient, he said.

Currently, these 49 Covid-19 warriors are working in different hospitals in the city, including the state-run Kolkata Medical College and Hospital, the Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute at Rajarhat, M R Bangur Hospital, the official said.

The state plans to set up similar clubs in other districts too, the official added.

Roping in of Covid-19 club warriors besides boosting manpower to attend the coronavirus persons in different hospitals in the city is also aimed at de-stressing those being treated for the virus.

Lakhs of migrant workers returned to their native places in West Bengal by trains, buses while some cycled back home from different parts of the country due to pandemic and also loss of jobs. Many of them tested positive later.

PRESS NOTICE FOR e-TENDERING					
The Executive Engineer IPH Division Jubbal invites tenders on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible Contractors for the following work(s) through e-tendering:-					
<b>Work No. 1 :- Providing LWSS/GWSS to various PC Habits under GP Darkot, Tehsil Kothal Dist. Shimla HP (SH-CIO RCC Filter Sedimentation Tank = 3.00 Sqm, RCC Filter Bed 6.50 Sqm and laying, jointing and testing of G.I. Pipes 25mm dia)</b>					
Last date of filling / uploading the tender through e-tendering :- 24.08.2020 upto 5.00 PM. The tender forms and other detailed conditions can be obtained from the website. <a href="http://www.hiph.org">www.hiph.org</a> .					
Executive Engineer, JSV Division, Thiruvananthapuram					
2279/2020-2021 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPAK					

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE					
The Deputy Chief Engineer/Const./Northern Railway Shivaji Bridge, New Delhi, for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender under Single-Packet system for the following work:					
1. Name of work and location:	Housekeeping and cleaning of Officer's chambers, offices, staff rooms, store rooms, sheds, temporary accommodations, corridors, toilet blocks, road etc. in the office premises of Dy. Chief Engineer/Const., Shivaji Bridge, New Delhi.				
2. Completion period of work:	24 (Twenty four) months				
3. Approx. Cost of work:	Rs. 21.99 lakh				
4. Earnest Money to be deposited:	Rs. 44000/- only				
5. Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tenders may be uploaded upto 11.30 hrs. on 10.09.2020 on IREPS web site i.e. <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> . The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the tender will be opened at 11.30 hrs. on 10.09.2020.				
6. Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document:	The detailed e-tender notice is available on Northern Railway web site i.e. <a href="http://www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in">www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in</a> and tender document is available on <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> from 19.08.2020 to 10.09.2020. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.				

No. 477-AC5-HK-2020-CSB Dated: 17.08.2020 1794/2020  
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Ashok Lavasa resigns as EC; to join ADB as vice-president

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa, who was next in line to become the Chief Election Commissioner, on Tuesday resigned to join Philippines-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) as vice-president in September and urged to be relieved by 31 August.

Lavasa will retire in October 2022 as Chief Election Commissioner as he was senior-most EC after present CEC Sunil Arora. An IAS officer of 1980 batch,

ch Haryana Cadre, Lavasa joined as Election Commissioner on 23 January, 2018, and being senior-most on the poll panel could have become CEC in April 2021 after incumbent Sunil Arora's term ends. His exit puts his colleague Sushil Chandra next in the line of succession.

An MBA degree from Southern Cross University in Australia, and a MPhil in Defense and Strategic Studies degree from the University of Madras, Lavasa retired as Union Finance Secretary.



*It is clear that the public does not see any difference in the working style of the BJP government and the SP government...*

BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY SUPREMO MAYAWATI  
ATTACKING UP GOVERNMENT OVER LAW AND ORDER ISSUE

The Statesman

05

NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY 19 AUGUST 2020

## THUMBNAILS



A migrant worker waits to get a Rapid Antigen Test for coronavirus, in New Delhi on Tuesday. AFP

**AI pilots challenge termination of services:** Delhi HC on Tuesday sought Air India's reply on a plea by several pilots challenging the national carrier's decision to terminate their services with effect from 13 August. Those pilots had resigned earlier but had withdrawn the same. Air India had earlier terminated services of more than 40 other pilots. PTI

**Anti-Sikh Riots case:** A court directed Delhi Police on Tuesday to continue providing security for a month to controversial arms dealer Abhishek Verma, a witness in a 1984 anti-Sikh riots case against former Congress leader Jagdish Tytler. PTI

**Hottest day in Kashmir:** Kashmir is currently witnessing an unusual hot weather. On Monday it recorded the hottest day in the past 39 years with 35.7 degrees. The steep variation of temperature is bound to hit the maturing apple crop as reports of pest attack have already started pouring from across the Valley. SNS

**ED records statement of SSR's father in PMLA case:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has recorded the statement of K K Singh, father of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, in connection with a money laundering case probe linked to his son's death, officials said. They said K K Singh (74), was questioned and his statement was recorded by the central probe agency on Monday. PTI

## HP to promote regional dialects under New Education Policy

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 18 AUGUST

Himachal Pradesh Education Minister Govind Singh Thakur on Tuesday said the state government will promote regional dialects under the New Education Policy which will be implemented in the state.

After a review meeting of the Primary Education department and Samgra Shiksha Abhiyan, Thakur directed officers to work towards promotion of regional languages in the state under National Education Policy 2020.

"Under the New Education Policy, special emphasis would be laid on pre-primary and vocational training education."

At present, pre-primary classes are being provided in 3,840 schools and vocational education is being provided in 1000 schools in the state," he said, adding the students and parents will be made aware of the National Education Policy.

Thakur said that the state's literacy rate is higher than the National literacy rate and there are 10,722 primary schools and 2019 secondary schools in the state. "Drinking water facility is being provided in 99 percent primary schools, girls toilets

# US Senate condemns Chinese aggression

Resolution commended India for taking steps to secure its telecommunications infra from Chinese security threats

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
WASHINGTON, 18 AUGUST

**A**bipartisan US Senate resolution has condemned China's use of military force to change the status quo at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India and called for a diplomatic solution to the issue. Indian and Chinese troops have been locked in a bitter standoff in several areas along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh since 5 May. The situation deteriorated after the 15 June Galwan Valley clashes in which 20 Indian Army personnel were killed. The Chinese side also suffered casualties but it is yet to give out the details.

The resolution, introduced by senators John Cornyn and Mark Warner, commanded India for taking steps to secure its telecommunications infrastructure from Chinese security threats and also supported bilateral and multilateral partnerships, such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD), to promote a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. The QSD, also known as the Quad, is an informal strategic forum between the US, Japan, Australia and India. The diplomatic and military arrangement is widely viewed as a response to increased

Chinese economic and military power in the Indo-Pacific region.

Cornyn and Warner are co-chairs of the Senate Indian Caucus. The resolution tabled on the Senate floor last week has been sent to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for consideration.

Cornyn is the Republican Senate Majority Whip, while Warner is the ranking member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Condemning China's use of military aggression to change the status quo at LAC, the resolution, the text of which was released on Monday, said the US officially recognises the McMahon Line, the state of Arunachal Pradesh and encourages a diplomatic solution to remaining contested areas of the border between India and China. The McMahon Line defines a clear boundary line between India and China. The India-China border dispute covers the 3,488-km-long LAC. China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of southern Tibet while India contests it.

The resolution said in the months leading up to 15 June, China increased troop deployments, built new infrastructure in contested areas, and harassed Indian patrols along multiple sectors of the LAC, particularly around the Dapsang

Plains, Galwan Valley, Hot Springs, and Pangong Lake. The events of 15 June that resulted in the death of 20 Indian soldiers raise serious concerns regarding the intent of the Chinese government and its military, the resolution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
WASHINGTON, 18 AUGUST

President Donald Trump has "elevated and solidified" America's growing and critical partnership with India in ways not seen in any previous US administration, according to a senior White House official.

President Trump has prioritised US-India relationship and worked to expand all facets of the partnership over the last three-and-a-half years, the senior administration official from the National Security Council of the White House told on Monday.

"Given the two countries' democratic foundations and their mutual interests in rebuilding the global economy following Covid-19, diversifying global supply



chains, and ensuring the Indo-Pacific region remains free and open, President Trump will continue to build this critical partnership in the years to come," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"The Trump Administration has elevated the US relationship with India and solidified our growing partnership in ways not seen in any other US administration," the official said, noting that the president has enabled India to become the first

said, noting that the incident occurred during bilateral diplomatic negotiations between the officials of the two countries who were attempting to deescalate border tensions.

The resolution also noted that China's action of expand-

non-treaty ally to be offered an armed MQ-9 Unmanned Aerial System.

During President Trump's historic visit to India February 24-26, he and Prime Minister Narendra Modi elevated the relationship to a Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership.

Prime Minister Modi was also one of the first foreign leaders to visit the White House after President Trump took office on June 26, 2017, the senior official said.

The two leaders have also spoken side-by-side at two major events "Howdy, Modi" in September 2019 in Houston, Texas, before a crowd of over 55,000 and again at "Namaste, Trump" in February 2020 in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, to address a crowd of 110,000 people, the official noted.

Another bill "Strengthening Trade, Regional Alliances, Technology, and Economic and Geopolitical Initiatives concerning China Act" or the 'STRATEGIC ACT' tabled in the Senate by Senator James Risch. The resolution said China has capitalised on the world's focus on the Covid-19 pandemic by moving rapidly to undermine Hong Kong's autonomy, aggressively imposing its will in the East and South China Seas; and contributing to increased tensions with India. The Bill sought to enhance security partnerships with India, across Southeast Asia, and with other nations of the Indo-Pacific.

IPS officer Rakesh Asthana takes charge as new BSF DG

NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

IPS officer Rakesh Asthana on Tuesday took charge as the new Director General (DG) of the Border Security Force that guards India's fronts with Pakistan and Bangladesh.

A 1984-batch Indian Police Service officer of Gujarat cadre, Asthana (59) was handed over the baton of the about 2.65 lakh personnel-strong force by ITBP DG SS Deswal in the morning at the BSF headquarters at Lodhi Road, a force spokesperson said. The new DG was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour by a column of troops before he took charge, a spokesperson said.

Asthana is the 27th chief of the force and is expected to hold office till July next year, his scheduled date for retirement from service.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had on Monday issued orders for the appointment of Asthana, who has been serving as the DG of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) till now apart from heading the Narcotics Control Bureau in an additional capacity.

As per the ACC order, Asthana will continue to hold the NCB charge. PTI

## Shringla visits Dhaka amid growing Chinese influence

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST



issues.

Sources indicated that Shringla, a former Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, was carrying a message for Sheikh Hasina from Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The visit is significant in the wake of all out attempts by Beijing to Dhaka by making huge investments in different sectors in Bangladesh which will soon be receiving \$1 billion from China for the Teesta river project.

Lately, India has been going out of its way to appease Dhaka. As part of its 'Neighbourhood First' policy, India recently handed over ten railway locomotives to Bangladesh to improve connectivity.

www.ideacellular.com General information no. 98910 12345

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This is to notify that:

1. Subscribers taking a new Idea Prepaid connection of Vodafone Idea Limited (formerly Idea Cellular Limited), Delhi Circle, effective from 18/09/2020 shall be on tariff plan^ of 2.5p/sec for all Local & STD voice, video & VoLTE calls; 0.5p/10KB for Data (4G/3G/2G as available); SMS tariff of ₹1 for Local, ₹1.5 for National, ₹5 for International SMS and shall have to recharge with ₹46 or any applicable recharge\* to avail the benefits under this tariff plan. In case of recharge with STV/Combo Voucher, the validity of tariff plan will be extended with validity of STV/Combo Voucher. In case of non-recharge with a voucher of ₹46 or any other applicable recharge, at the end of tariff validity period, Vodafone Idea Limited reserves the right to provide the plan benefit in a curtailed manner during the grace period of up to 7 days. In case this recharge condition is not met, post the grace period, the services will be suspended.

2. Existing Idea Prepaid subscribers of Vodafone Idea Limited (formerly Idea Cellular Limited), Delhi Circle, on tariff plans for greater than 180 days, effective from 18/09/2020 shall be on tariff plan^ of 2.5p/sec for all Local & STD voice, video & VoLTE calls; 4p/10KB for Data (4G/3G/2G as available); SMS tariff of ₹1 for Local, ₹1.5 for National, ₹5 for International SMS and shall have to recharge with ₹46 or any applicable recharge\* to avail the benefits under this tariff plan. In case of recharge with STV/Combo Voucher, the validity of tariff plan will be extended with validity of STV/Combo Voucher. In case of non-recharge with a voucher of ₹46 or any other applicable recharge, at the end of tariff validity period, Vodafone Idea Limited reserves the right to provide the plan benefit in a curtailed manner during the grace period of up to 7 days. In case this recharge condition is not met, post the grace period, the services will be suspended.

3. Idea Prepaid subscribers of Vodafone Idea Limited (formerly Idea Cellular Limited), Delhi Circle, who have not completed 180 days on tariff plan, will qualify for the above condition once they complete 180 days on their plan.

\*Home tariff

\*For list of applicable recharges, visit www.ideacellular.com

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An idea can change your life

## Daily new Covid-19 cases, deaths showing declining trend: Ministry

PTI & SNS  
NEW DELHI/ MEERUT,  
18 AUGUST

The daily new cases of Covid-19 and deaths due to the disease have shown a declining trend from 13 August, the Health Ministry said Tuesday, but warned against any laxity, underlining that five days are a short span in the context of a pandemic.

Addressing a press briefing, health secretary Rajesh Bhushan said that in spite of a budget provision of Rs 4400 crore had been made for the primary education sector and a provision of Rs 15 crore for 25 schools had been made for the state under Atal Adarsh Vidyalya Yojana.

Under the Atal Nirmal Jal Yojana, 300 water purifiers and 300 water filters had been installed on pilot basis in the schools.

In addition, Shiksha Saathi app launched to inspect schools was also being implemented effectively and digitized assessment data was being provided to students in the state.

"Absolute deaths have also declined during the same period. These two parameters do give us some satisfaction

but there is no reason for us to slacken our guard," he said. He further said the number of recovered patients has reached close to 20 lakhs, which is 2.93 times of active Covid-19 cases.

"19,77,779 people have recovered from the disease so far. There are 6,73,166 active cases of coronavirus infection and they are under medical supervision," he said. Bhushan said the case fatality rate has also come down below 2 per cent.

"The daily case fatality rate has reduced to 1.92 per cent and the weekly average fatality rate is 1.94 per cent. Both are below 2 per cent," he said.

"In its interaction with state and UT governments, the Health Ministry has repeatedly underlined the fact that our aim should be to bring down the case fatality rate to one per cent or below that," Bhushan said.

Meanwhile in Meerut superintendent of police (crime) and his family including wife and three children have been tested positive of Covid 19 on Tuesday.

In Meerut so far 2880 people have been tested positive with 104 deaths.

## V-P launches ARIIA 2020

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST



The Indian Institute of Technology Madras bagged the first place in the HRD Ministry's Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) 2020 released by Vice-president M Venkaiah Naidu today.

IIT Mumbai and IIT Delhi clinched the second and third place respectively. The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bangalore stood at the fourth place, while IIT Kharagpur was at fifth in the prestigious institutes of national impor-

tantance and central universities category.

The ranking, which aims to promote innovation among

Indian educational institutions, assess colleges and universities on criteria ranging from support for entrepreneurship development to innovative learning method, intellectual property generation, technology transfer and commercialisation among other aspects.

Naidu lauded the effort and said Innovation is the key defining feature of human progress.

The new National Education Policy has a focus on this aspect, he said. HRD Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal was also present at the event.

## Centre for Brain Research

An Autonomous Centre of Indian Institute of Science Bangalore -12

### Admission for Ph.D. Program-2020

Centre for Brain Research (CBR) invites applications from eligible and highly motivated applicants for admission to full time Ph.D. Program beginning on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. CBR promotes interdisciplinary research in basic and clinical neuroscience to understand disorders of the aging brain.

CBR is a recognized research centre for Ph.D. program by Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Karnataka. The degree will be awarded by MAHE. Last date for online submission of application is 4<sup>th</sup> September 2020. For areas of research at CBR, admission process and other information, please refer the webpage [www.cbr.iisc.ac.in](http://www.cbr.iisc.ac.in). Sd/- Director

## Brakes on Google

In April, the Australian government asked the country's Competition and Consumer Commission to develop a mandatory code of conduct to address what it called "bargaining power imbalances" between the country's news media outlets and digital platforms such as Google and Facebook. The move has global ramifications and on 31 July, the Commission placed in the public domain a draft code for public consultation. It said the "code would allow news media businesses to bargain individually or collectively with Google and Facebook over payment for the inclusion of news on their services" and added it had specified a set of minimum standards for providing advance notice of changes to algorithmic ranking and presentation of news; appropriately recognising original news content; and providing information about how and when Google and Facebook make available user data collected through users' interactions with news content. The Commission noted that the imbalance had resulted in news media organisations being coerced to accept less than favourable terms for inclusion of news on digital platforms. In a detailed Q & A published with the draft, the Commission said that to be eligible, a news media business must nominate one or more of its news sources that mainly produces 'core news'. The draft code defines 'core news' as journalism about publicly significant issues; journalism that engages citizens in public debate and informs democratic decision making; and journalism relating to community and local events. It added: "Some examples are political reporting; court reporting and reporting on crime. Once a news media business is eligible to participate in the code, they would be able to negotiate with digital platforms over all news produced by their nominated news sources?not just the 'core news.' In effect, the entire gamut of operations of a news media outlet are brought within the ambit of the code, and effectively put the brakes on digital platforms that have traditionally settled, almost unilaterally, the terms of their engagement with such outlets. Google has reacted with fury to the Code, warning Australians that the way they search for information and use YouTube is at risk. The trillion-dollar American company claimed the Code would put everything from user privacy to the viability of its free services at risk, and even hinted that it was aimed at helping "big" Australian media companies, a charge that drew sharp response from the government, which said that Google with a market capitalisation of US\$1200 billion was seeking to build a false narrative about "big business" when the largest Australian media conglomerate ~ News Corporation ~ was a relative pygmy with a market cap of US \$9 billion. The Australian initiative follows a move by the European Union which, in April 2019, toughened copyright laws to force Google to pay for news snippets and Facebook to filter out protected content.

With countries around the world seeking to correct imbalances in the relationship between news media and digital giants, it is time the Government of India, especially Communications Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, followed suit. That would be the most effective counter to recent criticism that the government has an unholy nexus with some of them.

## Flipping a coin?

With one expert having termed the testing for Covid-19 being carried out in the country as being as good as "flipping a coin", questions must be raised about the strategy being followed by the Indian Council of Medical Research in exponentially raising the number of tests but mixing results of the more accurate RT-PCR tests with those yielded by rapid antigen tests. Close to a third of the tests being carried out in the country are of the latter variety and these are said to report false negatives at least half the time. In Delhi, according to one report, nearly two-thirds of the tests were reported to be of the rapid antigen variety. False negatives reported from such tests could lead to the finding that spread of the disease has been curbed when that may not actually be the case. In the Philippines, for instance, administration of rapid antigen tests led to a false narrative whereby infected people returned to communities and sparked fresh outbreaks. While experts say that the rapid antigen test has its uses, and is even considered a competent supplementary strategy, the real problem lies in India mixing up the results of the two kinds of tests to present a composite picture that may not adequately reflect the state of affairs. Experts say the two sets of results should be reported ~ and studied ~ separately to reach conclusions that would validly help the country arrive at a strategy which is both efficacious and scientifically acceptable. With the management of Covid-19 having emerged as a measure to assess political and administrative efficiency, it is not surprising that opacity in reporting data should become a major impediment to effective public health measures. To this day, there is little harmony in the strategies adopted by different state governments in India, and not even between states administered by the same political party, which suggests that the Union government may have allowed matters to slip quite substantially from its control. A study of the Covid management protocols adopted by different states ~ in the public domain and easily accessible ~ would reveal that sometimes even contiguous states have widely contrasting rules. This suggests that each state is taking such decisions as its leader deems politically expedient; these may sometimes even be unreasonably restrictive because politicians have convinced themselves that adoption of harsh measures displays decisiveness. While implementation of public health measures must be left to those on the ground, the creation of a national strategy must fall within the province of a nodal authority. If we permit the use of a cricketing analogy, this is one contest from which the Union Health Minister cannot retire hurt; nor one where he can claim that states and local bodies must provide concussion substitutes.

# David's Hurrah

Taiwan saw Azar's trip as a diplomatic coup and an opportunity to showcase its widely praised response to the virus. Beijing however saw it as another provocation from the US. When the US increases interactions with Taiwan and sells arms committed under the Taiwan Relations Act, Beijing sees it as a challenge to its sovereignty and defiance of its threat to take over the island by force



The official four-day trip of US Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar to Taiwan in August 2020 marked the highest American visit to this self-governing island since formal diplomatic relations were severed in 1979 in deference to China. This is going to be a fresh thorn in prickly US-China ties.

Besides demonstrating America's strong commitment to defend Taiwan's security, necessary protocol was maintained on the Covid-19 issue as Taiwan is one of the few countries that has successfully handled containing the spread of the virus, the others being South Korea and Vietnam. Therefore, use of face masks and other necessary safety protocols were strictly followed by all the delegation members, except in "rare circumstances". With a population of 23 million, Taiwan has reported 484 cases and seven deaths.

Azar's visit was not a normal one; it posits in the larger political and geopolitical context. It is likely to exacerbate mounting tensions between Washington and Beijing, which claims Taiwan as its own territory to be annexed by force if necessary. When President Donald Trump took umbrage over the mounting trade deficit with China, he first put pressure on Beijing to take necessary measures to address this issue. But having failed to get satisfactory responses, he started to take countermeasures through tariffs and quantitative quota restrictions. Beijing too retaliated in its own ways. In a throwback to the Cold War era, the two ordered tit-for-tat closures of consulates in Houston and Chengdu amid rhetorical sniping. Azar's visit now adds to those frictions.

Though the visit represented an acknowledgment of the deep

US-Taiwan friendship and partnership across security, economics, health care, and democratic values, Beijing was never expected to buy this justification. Even as the US and Taiwan celebrated the bond, China responded with two jets screaming towards the island before the talks began.

In a steady deterioration of bilateral ties, Washington's explicit denial of most of China's maritime claims in the strategically vital South China Sea instantly drew China's ire. China claims almost the whole of this strategic waterway and considers activities in the area by the US Navy, including by ships close to Chinese-controlled islands, as threats to regional peace and stability.

The Trump administration launched the tariff war targeting Chinese institutions and officials, besides campaigning to exclude Chinese telecom giant Huawei from the US and allied countries. China saw this as a US attempt to prevent its development as a global technology power. Trump suspects Huawei's links with the ruling Communist Party and believes these compromise personal data and the integrity of information systems in the companies in which it operates. Beijing demands proof of this.

Further, Trump escalated tensions when he signed an executive order banning dealings with the Chinese owners of consumers apps TikTok and WeChat, possibly leading to their becoming unavailable in the lucrative American market.

Adding another dimension to the US-China tensions, Azar while in Taipei alleged that Bei-

jing broke the international health treaty by failing to warn the world about Covid-19 on time. He also expressed regret over Taiwan being excluded from the World Health Assembly denying it an opportunity to share its health expertise. The US and Taiwan have developed their relationship as one based on "shared democratic values". The US sees Taiwan playing its role in a brewing ideological battle between the two even as Beijing is not shy of warning of consequences if Taiwan continues to nurture ties with Washington.

In the recent past, Beijing has used economic doles as weapons and was instrumental in wooing some of Taiwan's diplomatic allies to switch allegiance to Beijing, leaving Taiwan with only 15 diplomatic allies. Even without formal official ties with

many countries who switched allegiance to China, Taiwan's engagement economically and in cultural domains in many countries it does business with has remained robust. However, Taiwan suffers from lack of international recognition as it cannot engage officially with world organisations.

Even in the World Health Organisation, it was deprived of observer status because China blocked it, even at a time its experience in handling coronavirus could have been of some help to the world community.

No wonder Taiwan saw Azar's trip as a diplomatic coup and an opportunity to showcase its widely praised response to the virus. Beijing however saw it as another provocation from the

US. When the US increases interactions with Taiwan and sells arms committed under the Taiwan Relations Act, Beijing sees it as a challenge to its sovereignty and defiance of its threat to take over the island by force. Azar's remark that "Taiwan's response to Covid-19 has been among the most successful in the world, and that is a tribute to the open, transparent, democratic nature of Taiwan's society and culture", infuriated Beijing. Seeing an opportunity and the praise pouring in from around the world, Taiwan started promoting the island as a model of democracy and sent millions of masks labeled "Made in Taiwan" to countries in need.

Taiwan was not intimidated when Chinese J-11 and J-10 fighter jets briefly crossed the midline of the Taiwan Strait, even when Azar was on his way to Taiwan. The aircraft were tracked by land-based Taiwanese anti-aircraft missiles patrolling the area and forced to retreat.

Taiwanese President Tsai has spoken often of the need for the island to ramp up its defenses to safeguard its democracy from Beijing's "coercive actions". Such a commitment to accelerate the development of asymmetric capabilities, as explained by her during a video address to the Hudson Institute, a Washington-based think tank, is under the rubric of the island nation's defense concept. Taiwan's cabinet has proposed a more than 10 per cent increase in the island's military budget to \$15.42 billion in response to Beijing's aggression in the region.

Given China-Taiwan tensions, if a conflict erupts in the region it would be either centered on the South China Sea or on the Taiwan issue. China is best advised not to precipitate events, lest the costs be heavy for all.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**  
ASIAN VOICES

## We reap what we sow

Nepal relies heavily on food imports and agricultural inputs. Any shortage can lead to food insecurity, affect farmers and dampen economic growth.

Economists say agricultural output in the country has always declined whenever there is a shortage of chemical fertiliser, a major agricultural input that determines output and productivity.

This year, Nepal is already reeling under a short supply in the wake of the pandemic. Lockdowns and trade restrictions both in Nepal and India have disrupted supply chains, and the available stock is running out.

But across the country, half-submerged paddy plants have turned green after three weeks of transplantation and await top dressing. However, urea is not available for tens of thousands of farmers in the country.

Urea is an essential nutrient that prevents the yellowing of the leaves in paddy caused by a deficiency of nitrogen in the soil.

While plants will stunt and even die, a delay in spreading urea on fields also affects production, translating into losses and a deficit in supply with far-reaching economic and social implications.

Officials at the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development blame the pandemic for the delay in announcing tenders and subsequent delays farmers are having to brave for the first top dressing.

But for such a commonly used fertiliser, which costs Rs 14 per kg at the government subsidised rate, the administration that always hopes for a bumper paddy production should sow what it intends to reap.

That Nepal would lose production due to shortages of agricultural inputs had been long warned as the pandemic unfolded.

Both the World Food Programme and the World Bank had forecasted disruptions to domestic food supply chains and consequent shocks that could affect food production and lead to insecurity.

In 2009, Nepal and India had signed an agreement that allowed India to sell 100,000 tonnes of chemical fertiliser to Nepal annually at international parity prices to avoid a lengthy tender process, but the deal expired in December last year and has not been renewed.

The government must not leave any stone unturned to renew the government-to-government deal and explore alternatives to ensure smooth supply because there is no inkling of how the Covid-19 situation will evolve given the exponential rise of cases in the country and the deteriorating situation in India.

According to the Agriculture Inputs Company, Nepal requires 120,000 tonnes of urea and 50,000 tonnes of diammonium phosphate for paddy cultivation, but the state-owned fertiliser supplier and Salt Trading Corporation have only issued tenders to import 71,000 tonnes of urea and 25,000 tonnes of diammonium phosphate for this year.

  
**RAJARAM PANDA**  
The writer was formerly Senior Fellow at the IDSA, New Delhi

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR editor@thestatesman.com

## Agli baar Kamala sarkar?

SIR, This refers to your editorial "Biden's mate" (August 13). This week Joe Biden has added new zing to the US electoral contest, with his historic and bold choice of running mate. Senator Kamala Devi Harris's career already boasts a string of firsts and now she has become the first black woman and the first person of Asian descent to be on the ticket of a major party. If it wins, she will also be America's first woman vice-president.

There couldn't be a starker reminder that this election is as much a referendum on Trump's management of Covid as anything else. It is also against this backdrop that opinion polls have consistently been placing Biden ahead of Trump both nationally and in swing states, although much can change by November 3.

Trump has already labelled Harris as "extraordinarily nasty" in a replay of calling his then opponent Hillary Clinton "such a nasty woman". Against the fault lines exposed by the George Floyd protests, there will be race-based as also anti-immigrant trolling. At the same time her story will have im-



mense traction with people of colour and everyone who still upholds the idea of America as a great melting pot. The opportunities given to her immigrant parents, as also the extraordinary success they made of these, reinforce a narrative of hope in a climate of fear. Aged 77 to her 55, Biden has referred to himself as a "transition candidate". So a Biden-Harris win in November will open a credible path to the presidency for her four years on. Abki baar Kamala sarkar will indeed be a strong sentinel on Indian shores. But much more importantly, Harris has got the excitement going among Democrats. Celebrity endorsements

are flooding in, money is expected to follow, and grassroots activists are getting amped up. Despite the lack of customary flamboyance, excitement in upcoming US elections is rising.

Yours, etc., Vandana, Chandigarh, 13 August.

### ENERGISING CHOICE

SIR, This refers to your editorial, "Biden's mate" (13 August). In picking Kamala Harris, Senator from California of Indian descent, as his running mate, Democratic nominee Joe Biden has consolidated his position at the helm of the Democratic Party mainstream, ensuring a convergence of views with his vice-presidential nominee on race relations, policing and criminal justice reform, immigration, the health-care insurance industry and education policy.

At a time when President Donald Trump has sought to make the US insular and less welcoming to immigrants, Harris's choice offers an energising counter-narrative to a strain of populist politics that finds echoes across the world.

It is also a defining moment for Black America

pushed to the political and social wall, giving them a voice in the highest office. For the Indian immigrant community, too, after its success in technology and business, Harris's candidacy prises open spaces in politics and public affairs.

Harris, 55, was an ardent critic of Biden in her bid for nomination as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate. Now, both will have to be able to go beyond the standard campaign playbook and adroitly craft a fresh approach to take on a politically weakened President, who will nevertheless come out guns blazing. Harris's voting record shows her to be more liberal than Biden and, therefore, less aligned with the Narendra Modi government. She has been chosen as a flag-bearer of inclusivity, a living antidote to four years of President Trump. She will, unless given reasons otherwise, tend to have a skeptical view of India's rightward political turn, whatever her sentiments about her mother's homeland.

Whether the Biden-Harris ticket wins only November will tell but the Democrats seem to be on an upswing ~ remarkable for a party that was written off

### WELL DONE, SIR

SIR, On the auspicious day of 15 August, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, spoke on one of the most important issues, sanitary pads, which are still considered as taboo in our patriarchal society. He also said government has always been concerned about health of poor daughters and sisters of our nation. With the help of 6,000 Janaushadhi centres, about 5 crore women have got sanitary pads at affordable price of Rs 1. I applaud the PM Modi for speaking on such a topic and all his initiatives for women's empowerment.

Yours, etc., Sanjana Soni, Kolkata, 16 August.

barely months ago.

Yours, etc., S S Paul, Nadia, 13 August.

### CRUCIAL FLAW

SIR, Apropos today's editorial, "Biden's mate," you have hit the nail on the head by pointing out the crucial flaw in Kamala Harris's candidacy, namely her opportunistic tendencies. The way forward for Trump would be to point out the frail nature of Biden's candidacy due to his advanced age thus paving the way for Harris to become an active co-President dealing with domestic issues while he would be immersed in foreign affairs in which he has expressed greater interest. Given the uncertain and wavering nature of Kamala Harris's views on various matters, the voters would then have

before them a blank slate which would be far more dangerous than having a whimsical buffoon who nevertheless speaks his mind. In this day and age, the perception by voters of politicians pandering to their wishes is much more lethal for the candidate than a perception of sincerity even if the utterings are misguided and flawed. Thus Biden may have displayed poor judgment in picking Senator Harris among the large crowd of potential candidates he could have chosen from and may be heading for his third failed attempt at the Presidency. It is also perhaps for this reason that Barack Obama was less than enthusiastic about supporting Biden at the outset.

Yours, etc. Animesh Rai, Noida, 13 August.

## Harris and the fruits of over-assimilation

SUNIL SHARAN

In 2010, Deepak Puri and Shareen Punian, a San Francisco-based Indian-American couple organised a fundraiser for San Francisco's high profile district attorney for six years, then running for the post of California's attorney general. They had only learned recently that that district attorney was "one of their peeps," a woman whose mother was an Indian immigrant. Hence the fundraiser.

Who was that high profile district attorney who had kept her Indian heritage so hidden? She was Kamala Harris, now Joe Biden's pick for vice president of the United States.

In the US, one hears a common refrain from mainstream Americans. Oh, I love India and Indian people. Why? Oh, I adore Indian food. I love chicken tikka masala. So you love chicken tikka masala, that's why you love India and Indians? I think one can love a people's food and still not like them.

In a video with Indian-American comedian and actress Mindy Kaling posted on Harris's YouTube page during Harris's failed presidential run, the Vice-Presidential nominee says that she grew up eating Indian dishes: "Lots of rice and yogurt, potato curry, dal, lots of dal, idli."

Harris's mother, Shyamala Gopalan, was a Hindu Brahmin and a single mother. She nevertheless raised Harris as a black girl. Her house resonated with music of black American artists. Shyamala would sing along to Aretha Franklin's early gospel.

Two mainstream cultures dominate American life, the white and the black. One is mainstream American if one belongs to one of them. All those Indian-Americans who hyphenate themselves are delusional. They are seen as simply Indian in the US, even

if they were born in the country. Shyamala wanted to ensure that Harris conformed to one of the dominant cultures, the black one.

Harris went to a prominent black university, Howard. There she joined the largest black sorority in the country, AKA. She seemed to hang out mostly with black people. Then she went to UC Berkeley's law school, where she became president of the black law students chapter. Today, Harris is a proud Christian, who attends a baptist church.

Another proud Christian is Nikki Haley, born as Nirmala Randhawa to first-generation Sikh immigrants to the US. Haley recently counseled Indians in the US that the path to success in the US lay in assimilation into mainstream culture. In her case, she seemed to have assimilated into white culture because of the paleness of her skin.

But how much can a first-generation immigrant assimilate? I have been in the US thirty years. I have modified my accent, flattening the obvious Indian "sing-song" intonations, but I still clearly seem to have an Indian accent. I date American women. I force myself to like American sports, even though I have never succeeded. I am a devout Hindu, yet I pray to Jesus, if only because were I to be hitched to a Christian girl I should appear to be more palatable.

Over-assimilation into American culture seems to work better for second-generation immigrants like Harris, Haley, and Bobby Jindal (the former governor of the American state of Louisiana), all of whom speak with a pronounced American accent and all of whom have become devout Christians. Jindal was born to Hindu parents, but converted to Christianity when he was in school.

In 2007, when 359 Christian, Jew-

ish and Muslim members of the US House of Representatives passed a non-binding resolution recognising the significance of the Hindu and Sikh festival of Diwali, Jindal, then a House member, was one of only a handful of legislators who publicly abstained.

The American Constitution, like the Indian, explicitly separates church from state. In India, religious minorities have ascended to the highest offices in the land, all the while visibly demonstrating their faith. America often preaches religious freedom across the globe. Minnesota-based physician Aseem Shukla, co-founder of the Hindu American Foundation, believes the barrier of religion looms large over Indian Americans in politics. "While we may have transcended race, we haven't become truly pluralistic. Can my children dream of becoming the President of the United States as Hindu Americans? Right now, I don't think so."

Have Harris, Haley, and Jindal sold their soul and disavowed their Indian heritage to seek high political office in the US? Yes, positioning themselves as Hindu or Sikh clearly makes them obvious targets in what is still a rabidly-Christian country. It is understandable that to further themselves in American politics, they might have had to downplay their Indian heritage.

All of India is agog with Harris's climb in America. Indians in India love to claim people of Indian heritage in the US as one of their own once the latter have made it. But only if they have made it. The ones in the US who seem to have made it always seem pleasantly stunned by the wild reception that they get in a land so far away and in a land that they have apparently abjured.

Harris is now two steps away from becoming the president of the

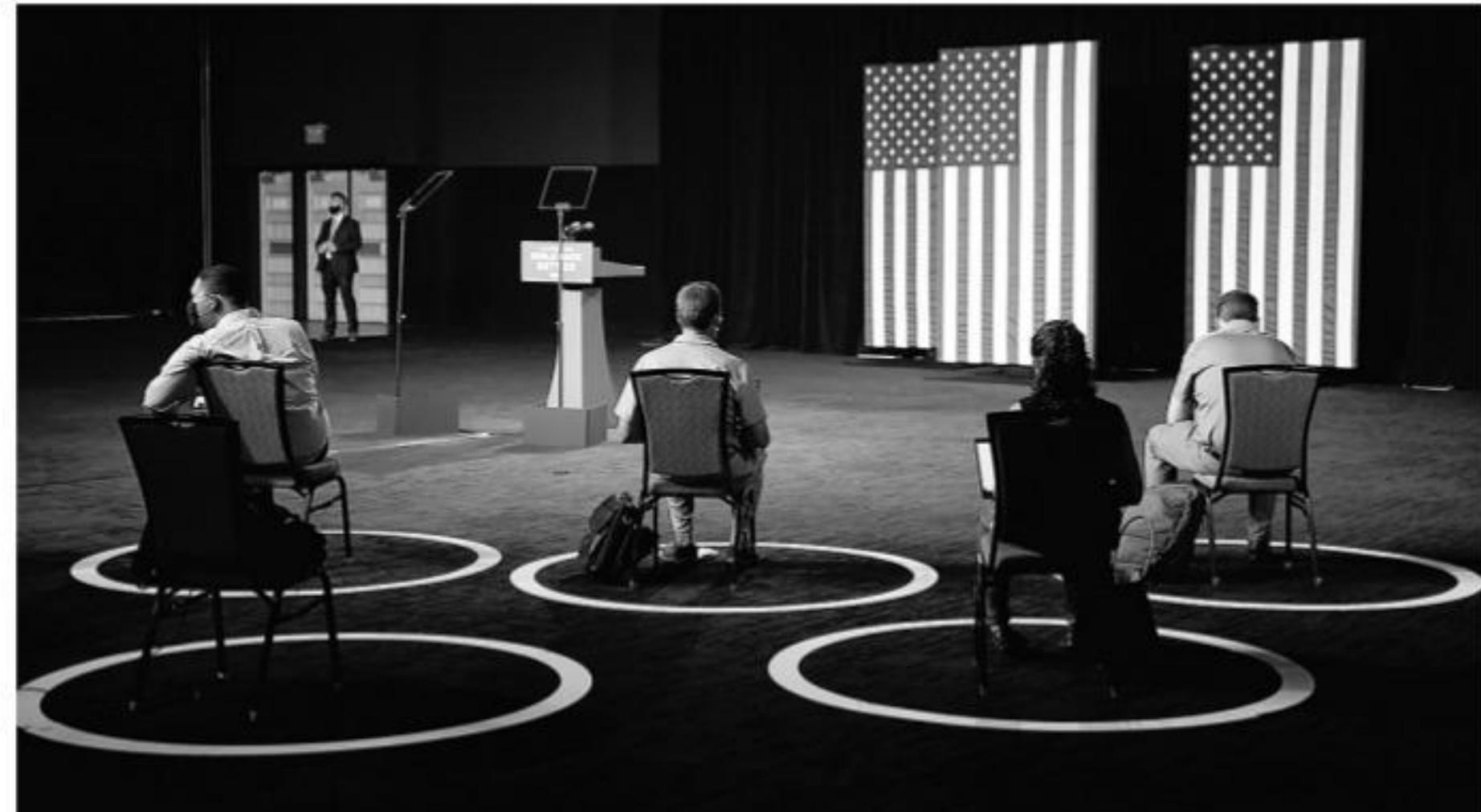
United States. If she does make it to the White House, hopefully her love for idli and sambhar would not be the only love for India and things Indian



that she will carry along with her.

The writer is an expert on energy and contributes regularly to publications in India and overseas.

## Global disconnects and reconnections



ANDREW SHENG

This is the age of disconnection. What Covid-19 has done is to show up all the flaws of global connectivity. The virus travels with human beings and forces us to have periodic lockdowns that disconnects the transmission, buying time to bring it under control. Commenting on the pandemic, US Foreign Affairs magazine laments not only the US failure to prepare, but also the failure to contain: "what is killing us is not connection, it is disconnection without cooperation." Touché!

Globalization was the great connector, created by the unipolar order which saw free trade as beneficial not just to the world, but mostly to itself. But the shift to a multi-polar order made America insecure and everyone else unsure.

A wounded Alpha is always dangerous, emotionally hurt and lashing out on perceived rivals. China as number two falls into that category. In

four separate speeches, Secretary of State Pompeo, Attorney General Barr, National Security Adviser O'Brien and FBI Director Wray laid out their case for containing China. But do the US Gang of Four's analyses of containment of China make global sense?

Beating the drums of war, decoupling trade and splintering the Internet into a "Clean Net" may sound great for domestic politics, but no one in their right mind can support a nuclear arms race in the midst of a growing global pandemic and possibly the worst economic depression since the 1930s.

The global free trade bargain is simple – free trade is win-win for all trading partners, but each country must deal with the unequal distribution of trade benefits within its own borders – all about domestic politics. Disconnecting global trade and free flow of information only increases costs for all, reducing the resources to deal with domestic inequalities.

Worse, any arms race is lose-lose for all, diverting scarce resources from fighting pandemics, climate warming and domestic injustices.

History is the best guide to understanding how we got into the mess today.

The story on US politics and economics is well told, but the China story is often under-told. Because of China's rapid growth from poverty to world number two in 40 years, most historians are still at a loss to explain what this implies for the world. NUS East Asia Institute Professor Wang Gungwu in his marvelous new book: "China Reconnects (2019)" has given us a clear and easily readable sweep of China's history and her search to reconnect with the outside world.

Professor Wang has condensed global history into three key centres of power: Mediterranean, India and China. In 1500, China and India accounted for 48.6 per cent of world population and 49.2 per cent of world

GDP (OECD). The Mediterranean powers (broadly including all Western Europe and West Asia) amounted to 17.1 per cent and 22 per cent of population and GDP respectively. But it was naval power, science and technology that enabled the Western swerve to global dominance, so by 1950, China and India together accounted for 16.3 per cent of world GDP, but 35.9 per cent of the population. Western Europe and USA plus Western offshoots accounted for 19.1 per cent of global population, but 56.8 per cent of world GDP.

This neglect of maritime power caused India to be colonized by the 18th century, and China was nearly gobbled up by the 19th. China's engagement with the world was mostly through the Silk Road, with Indian Buddhism being the major foreign cultural influence on China. The Silk Road flourished during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD), but the Mongol empire in the 13th-14th century connected China not only to Europe, but also to Mughal India.

However, the arrival of Western traders through Southeast Asia after 1500 accelerated China's trade with the West (including cross-Pacific trade with Latin America through Manila). Only in the 20th century did China begin to appreciate that the key instruments of Western power came from maritime power and ability to enforce international law.

In Chapter 2, Behind the Dream, Professor Wang skillfully weaves the story of post-dynastic China, when Chinese intellectuals struggled to understand modernity. It was the Japanese invasion that sparked Chinese nationalism, culminating in the civil war that enabled the Communists to unite the country with the founding of the People's Republic in 1949. The story of Chairman Mao, Deng Xiaoping and the policy choices of President Xi Jinping is told with verve and deep insight, without the usual Western baggage of seeing personalities in black and white.

China's admiration for the West is defined in Chinese names for the leading powers – heroic England, beautiful America, legal France and virtuous Germany. Hence, the reforms in the last 40 years were all about reconnecting to the West through trade, investment, technology and people. But as China became deeply entangled in globalization as the world's largest manufacturer and trading partner, there grew an internal awareness that continued development would have to rely on internal stability and order, as well as external security. Stability was premised on a strong Party, and as Professor Wang put it, "the country's integrity rests on the capacity to defend its borders even from the world's sole superpower."

Professor Wang goes deep into Chinese philosophy and political history to find China's roots into the new world order. The book's real contribution is in explaining China's shift from the Old World to the New Global. Here, China's interaction with the South, especially with the Association of Southeast Asian (ASEAN) countries, will play crucially in the next phase of development of the New Global. ASEAN comprises 600 million people and over \$2.5 trillion in GDP, with great cultural diversity, natural resources and a strategic zone that holds the key to global trade between the West, South Asia, China and Northeast Asia. The South China Sea cannot afford to be balkanized because it was Great Power struggles that made the Balkans an unstable region for Europe and the Near East for over a century.

As the US tries to disconnect, China Reconnects is a tour-de-force for us to understand current developments from the lens of philosophy and history. Professor Wang writes with eye-popping clarity, dosed with empathy, to guide us through the fog of uncertainty. Unfortunately, reconnection takes two to play. Whether the next US President will attempt to connect or disconnect will be the question of the century.

The writer is a former central banker and financial regulator. The views are entirely his own.

NO 28047

100 YEARS AGO

### OCCASIONAL NOTE

In India we are familiar with the term "commensalism" as indicating that certain castes or septs may eat together or partake of food which has been cooked by the same person. In biology it means a mutually beneficial external partnership between two animals of different kinds, a form of symbiosis. Professor J. Arthur Thomson gives the case of the hermit-crab and the sea-anemone as a typical example. The hermit-crab, having a very vulnerable tail, borrows the shell of some sea-snail to protect it. In many cases it puts sea-anemones on the back of the borrowed shell, coaxing the sea-anemone off its substratum, turning it upside down, and holding it in proper position on the shell until it grips. When the crab outgrows its shell and has to seek a larger one it sometimes carefully shifts the anemones from the old to the new. The presence of the anemones helps the crab to conceal its presence from its prey, and their stinging batteries are a help in battle. Then crabs float up from the crab's table to the tentacles of the anemone, and the anemone that is carried about by a hermit crab has a better chance of getting food than its sedentary companions. Commensalism illustrates Nature's approval of the League of Nations, her tendency to link one organism with another - flowers with pollinating insects, fruits with seed-distributing birds - in the web of life, for the benefit of both.

NEWS ITEMS

### LIEUT. REYNOLDS' CASE

Allahabad, Aug 18  
At the Allahabad High Court Mr. Howard applied on behalf of Lieut. Reynolds, who is being tried before the Cantonment Magistrate of Agra, for criminal breach of trust, for transfer of the case. In the affidavit filed on behalf of Lieut. Reynolds it was stated among other things that though there is a European lockup at Agra, Lieut. Reynolds was taken to the central jail and confined in the prisoners' cell. The Superintendent of Police, it was further alleged, had shown great interest in the case. The Cantonment Magistrate, it was further alleged, had made certain observations which according to Lieut. Reynolds were objectionable, and amounted to the prejudicing of the case. His lordship issued notice, and stayed proceedings in the meanwhile.

### RE-EMPLOYMENT OF OFFICERS

Simla, Aug 18  
An India Army Order as to re-employment of officers and others in civil life says the date by which applications have to be received by the Public Works Department, India Office, London, has now been extended to the 15th September, 1920. For the purposes of this Army Council Instruction, substantive promotion in India will be permissible up to the numbers laid down in Army Tables, pending the issue of Provisional Post War peace Establishments. The provisions of this India Army Order are not applicable to Indian signal units and depots wherever serving. Until further instructions issue, promotions in the Indian Signal Service to fill vacancies in the establishments now sanctioned will be paid acting rank only.

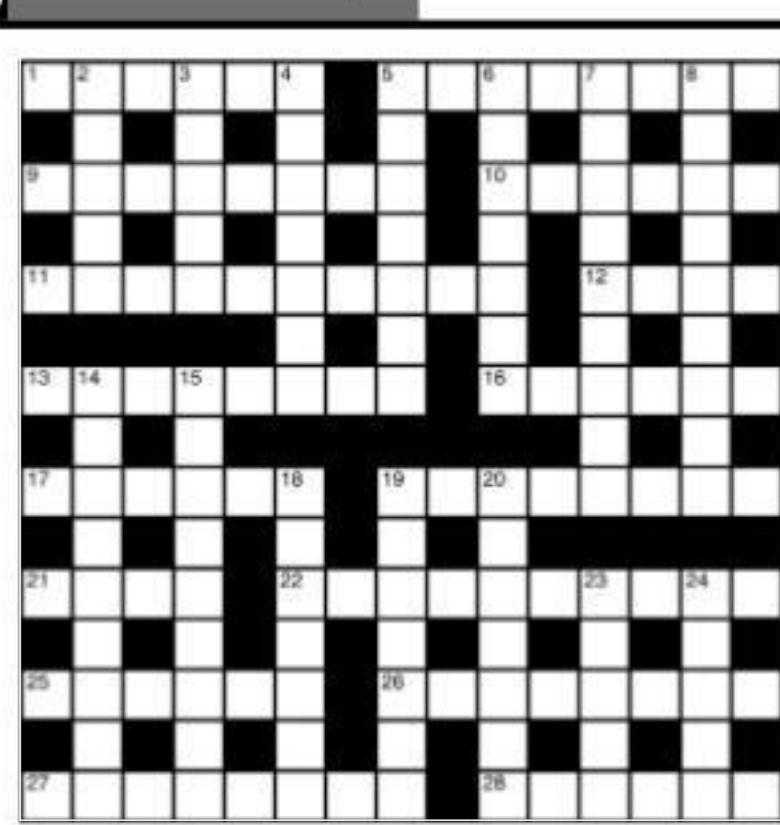
### CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN MADRAS

Madras, Aug 18  
Her Excellency Lady Willingdon visited the newly opened Children's Hospital for Madras yesterday. It is an institution started at the beginning of this month in a rented bungalow by private subscription, under unofficial management. Her Excellency, while inspecting, spoke a few words to each patient, and made enquiries concerning pupils, and on being told that all but one of ten of them were widows, gave a few words of sympathy and encouragement to them. The future development of the institution was discussed and it was agreed that a public meeting should be convened early in November under Her Excellency's presidency to enlist public support. Before leaving, Her Excellency was presented with a lovely bouquet by one of the pupils.

### THE FLOODS

The work of surveying the damage done by the floods has not yet been completed, but the Government are endeavouring to bring prompt help to the people, and sanction has just been given to the distribution of one lakh of rupees as takavi loans in the affected areas of the districts of Balasore and Cuttack. The Local Government has resolved as an experimental measure to grant financial autonomy to the municipal commissioners of certain municipalities henceforth, subject to the reservation of a minimum balance, and to a condition that Government grants are not diverted from the purposes for which they are intended. The Government or Commissioner of the Division will not interfere with the budgets framed by those municipalities.

### CROSSWORD



#### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

- ACROSS**
- Tintin's dance? (3-3)
  - I'm sorry name-drop is inappropriate (6,2)
  - Tough Dundee player downs cooking oil (8)
  - Some elements of roofing material put back after vandalism – at last (6)
  - Embellishment of Christmas speech? (10)
  - It's very easy to scratch head and part of foot (4)
  - Some fishermen had enough fish (8)
  - Started to carry large screen (6)
  - Misbehave in performance, getting excited (4,2)
  - Develops supporting structures to

- DOWN**
- Strikes back in skirmish (4)
  - Extremely low number returned drinking flask (10)
  - Occasionally throw out usable beds in a dishevelled state (6)
  - Turkey welcomed into swelling European project (8)
  - Education unfortunately not working, hampering millions in city (8)
  - Nurse about to abandon opposing figure (6)
  - Emerged from a flower (5)
  - Get 50% off wrapping material that comes with strings attached (5)
  - Scrooge endlessly drawing back (7)
  - Writer one charged to invest bit of

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



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PRASHANT KUMAR  
CEO & MD, YES BANK

## THUMBNAILS

Trai to Airtel, Voda: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has asked Airtel and Vodafone Idea to submit all pending data post their priority plan presentation on 10 August, as the regulator moves closer to finalising its views on the contentious issue, a source said. The regulator recently sent reminders to the two companies to submit the additional data to back their claims, the source said. Following this, Vodafone Idea has sent some information and sought time till 20 August to submit the rest, while Airtel's response is awaited.

PTI

**Deloitte buy:** Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP (Deloitte) on Tuesday announced the acquisition of Spatial Access, a leading specialised advertising and marketing advisory and analytics firm. The move will augment Deloitte's advisory capabilities and enable brands to make more efficient advertising and marketing decisions.

PTI

**Dollar profit up:** Garment & hosiery company Dollar Industries Limited has registered a 27.47 per cent growth in net profit at Rs 16.43 crore for the quarter ended 30 June 2020. The company's net profit stood at Rs 12.90 crore in the same period of the previous fiscal. Its revenue during the quarter, however, declined to Rs 160.17 crore compared to Rs 233.94 crore in Q1 of last fiscal, said a release.

SNS

**SriLankan Airlines:** Sri-Lankan Airlines is ready to take to the skies again with the country's health and safety situation being under control. The airline was forced to suspend scheduled services in early April as Sri Lanka took a tough stand on battling Covid-19. Tourism is expected to be one of the primary economic drivers and the airline is expected to play a pivotal role in the country's economic recovery, said a Press release.

SNS

## IDBI Bank, UCO Bank get approval to raise capital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI/KOLKATA, 18 AUGUST

IDBI Bank today said it has received shareholders' approval to raise up to Rs 11,000 crore by issuing shares through various modes.

The decision was taken at the bank's annual general meeting that took place on 17 August 2020, through audio-video means.

The AGM enabled the resolution for issue of shares aggregating up to Rs 11,000 crore (inclusive of premium amount) through various modes of issue, including QIP (qualified institutions placement), said the lender in a regulatory filing.

Among other resolutions passed at the AGM were re-appointment of Rajesh Kandwal as rotational director as a nominee of LIC, who offered

# Global economic recovery better than expected: Report

Deutsche Bank report revised upwards May forecasts for 2020 growth in many regions of the world

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, 18 AUGUST

## GROWTH FORECAST

In a much-needed dose of good news, Deutsche Bank Research analysts in their August report "World Outlook: Interim update and longer term projections" reported recovery in many countries has "progressed faster" than the team predicted in their previous report in May, "World Outlook Update: Turning Gloomier".

"Across most areas of the globe, recovery from historic economic disruptions has been progressing somewhat faster than we had anticipated in our last report," said Peter Hooper, Deutsche Bank's global head of economic research.

Hooper highlighted Asia and some parts of Europe as regions where "management of the pandemic has proceeded better than anticipated and supportive fiscal policies exceeded our expectations".

In its projections, the Frankfurt-based Deutsche Bank revised upwards the May fore-

casts for 2020 growth in many regions of the world. Analysts see global growth at -4 1/2 per cent this year, about 1 1/2 per cent stronger than what was projected three months ago.

► Deutsche Bank also forecast India's economy growing faster than the world average in 2021.

► India could recover to

casts for 2020 growth in many regions of the world. Analysts see global growth at -4 1/2 per cent this year, about 1 1/2 per cent stronger than what was projected three months ago.

Deutsche Bank, one of the world's leading financial services providers, also forecast India's economy growing faster than the world average in 2021.

India could recover to 5.6 per cent year-on-year GDP growth in 2021, from a -5.8 per cent decline during this pandemic-wrecked 2020, marginally higher than global GDP growth at 5.4 per cent for 2021.

India could have better growth prospects next year than for the Euro area (4.6), Germany (4.0), UK (3.7), USA (3.1) and Japan (1.1).

However, analysts throw in



5.6 per cent year-on-year GDP growth in 2021, from a -5.8 per cent decline during this pandemic-wrecked 2020, marginally higher than global GDP growth at 5.4 per cent for 2021.

India could have better growth prospects next year than for the Euro area (4.6), Germany (4.0), UK (3.7), USA (3.1) and Japan (1.1).

However, analysts throw in

the expected caveat of continued progress depending on how quickly an effective Covid-19 vaccine is available worldwide.

Besides the desperately awaited Covid-19 vaccine, the Deutsche Bank Research team identified two primary factors driving the near-term outlook for Asia Pacific's three largest economies of China, India and Japan: First, how quickly consumption recovers back to something near "normal" and, second, how quickly that happens in key export markets.

"Measured by when GDP returns to pre-Covid levels, Japan is expected to experience the slowest recovery among the major economies, achieving that milestone only in 2024," Deutsche Bank analysts reported.

India's story is little better, according to Deutsche Bank, saying its lockdown in March had "apparently delayed the spread of coronavirus rather than containing it".

Besides this having an "outsized negative impact on Q2 GDP", it could be followed

by a relatively weaker recovery "as the easing of social distancing restrictions doesn't actually lead to a significant change in behaviour."

The team also noted that "the Indian government has very little fiscal space to provide stimulus to the economy" and expects India's economy in Q3 to recover only about half the GDP loss in Q2.

Deutsche Bank termed environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) as being integral, not optional, for economic recovery that "will not only be long and bumpy, but also uneven across countries and regions. Inequality may widen both within and between economies."

The crisis has emphasised the interconnectedness of ESG factors in public and private sectors, the bank said.

It also called upon "embracing" the corrective principles of "Kairos" during these challenging times ~ "Kairos" for the ancient Greeks described an opportune moment to change for the better.

moves the department of telecom (DoT) for spectrum sale, the issue will be decided.

The Bench observed that there are huge AGR dues payable and it cannot let go.

We had directed payment of AGR dues within a certain period but the government is seeking 20 years' time, what will happen if companies go into insolvency by then. We are fully conscious of the scope of proceedings, we will not exceed our power, it said.

The top court said it would decide all the legal issues involved in the matter and would do it conclusively.

Salve argued that the insolvency proceedings against RCom were triggered by Ericsson, which could not be withdrawn even after the Swedish telecom equipment maker was paid its dues.

A Bench of Justices Arun Mishra, S Abdul Nazeer and M R Shah which would continue hearing in the matter on Wednesday, was told by senior advocate Harish Salve, appearing for Jio and committee of creditors (CoC) of RCom, that it would be premature to decide if spectrum can be sold or not under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

He said that only when the RCom resolution applicant

## Proposals worth ₹12 lakh crore for manufacturing electronics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUSTPRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad today said proposals worth Rs 12 lakh crore have been received under the new scheme to boost electronics manufacturing, and some manufacturing lines have moved from China to India during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The minister for IT and communications, while speaking at an industry event, also pointed out that close to Rs 90,000 crore has been transferred by way of direct benefit transfer.

"All the top mobile manufacturers and their contract manufacturers have applied in that (PLI) scheme, including five global champions and five national cham-

pions, and collectively, they have promised to make mobile phone and components worth Rs 12 lakh crore in the coming five years, out of which they're going to export Rs 7 lakh crore (worth of items) and give direct and indirect jobs to 12 lakh," Prasad said.

He added that about 8-9 manufacturing lines have also shifted from China to India.

The government notified three schemes on 1 April for the promotion of electronics. These were schemes for manufacturing of electronic components and semiconductors, modified electronics manufacturing clusters (EMC 2.0) scheme, and production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for large-scale electronics manufacturing.

These schemes jointly offer incentives of around Rs 50,000 crore over the period of next five years.

Under the PLI scheme, iPhone maker Apple's contract manufacturers (Foxconn and Wistron), firms like Samsung, Micromax, Lava and Dixon have applied.

Prasad said the government has leveraged technology in a number of areas like healthcare and education to provide support to citizens during the pandemic.

"...out of the Rs 1,70,000 crore that the Prime Minister announced for the whole Covid-19 package for the poor, close to Rs 90,000 crore has been transferred by way of direct benefit transfer to the accounts of people," he said.

## BPCL to commission bottling plant in TN soon

CHENNAI, 18 AUGUST

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd would shortly be commissioning its new state-of-the-art bottling plant in the state aimed to serve the southern districts, a company official said today.

According to a company official, BPCL has a customer base of 55.20 lakh families in Tamil Nadu and 86,000 in Puducherry.

The company has bottling plants in Chennai, Coimbatore, Tutticorin and Thanjavur. "BPCL will shortly be commissioning the state-of-the-art new bottling plant at Madurai," the official said.

The plant would have an annual capacity of 45 metric tons, around 12,000 cylinders per day.

According to the official, the total project cost would be Rs 80 crore and the facility would generate 100 jobs both direct and indirect.

The plant would serve districts like Dindigul, Madurai, Virudhunagar, Sivagangai and Ramanathapuram, he said.

Meanwhile, in a statement, the company said it has launched a campaign enhancing the digital initiatives which include booking of cylinders through social media platforms, mobile application and online booking among others.

The initiative was part of the company's mission to enhance efficiency and convenience to serve the customers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The statement said the company has 416 domestic LPG distributorships and seven in Puducherry supplying 1,22,000 cylinders daily.

The company has launched booking via WhatsApp for LPG cylinder refills.

Customers would also be able to check instant price information, LPG delivery tracking, among others.

## Dealers likely to get MSME status

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

MSME status to dealers also and they will get benefit of it," Gadkari said.

The minister also reiterated his appeal to major industries to clear the outstanding dues to MSMEs in a timely manner.

"We are also requesting the finance ministry, the industries who want to make their technology centres, training centres, research centres, from income tax point of view whether we are in a position to give some more support to them by which we can inspire and motivate them for more research and innovation," Gadkari said.

The minister for MSME and road transport and highways was addressing a virtual exhibition on "construction equipment, technology components and aggregates".

PTI

for non-performing assets, an official said today.

The capital will be raised at an appropriate time either through public offer or qualified institutional placement (QIP) or preferential issue, UCO Bank MD and CEO A K Goel said. "We need capital for both growth and provisioning. Demand for credit is slowly recovering," he said.

The bank's provision coverage ratio (PCR) is more than 86 per cent, he said, adding that the asset quality scenario will be known after the moratorium on loan repayment is over by the end of this month.

"By the third quarter, we will be able to see what extra provisioning is needed. When the time will be conducive, we will raise capital. We are monitoring the market condition," he said.

PTI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUSTPRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

An early discovery of Covid-19 vaccine will be a source of confidence but its delivery to over a billion people might take time, according to a report by accountancy firm PwC India on the revival of economic growth. Containing coronavirus is an important first step for economic revival. India, with 18 per cent of the global population has 9 per cent of Covid-19 cases and 5 per cent of global fatalities at the end of July.

"An early and decisive lockdown enabled India to ramp up its healthcare infrastructure ~ increasing the rate of testing per day 30-fold and hospital beds were increased by 50 per cent since the crisis took hold," said the report.

"In the third quarter, we will be able to see what extra provisioning is needed. When the time will be conducive, we will raise capital. We are monitoring the market condition," he said.

PTI

for Covid-19 will begin in India once scientists give their nod, and a road map is ready to ensure it reaches everyone in the country in the shortest possible time.

The Prime Minister said three vaccine candidates are in different stages of trials in the country, adding that the talent of our scientists is like that of "rishi munis".

The PwC report also noted that the health situation continues to be dynamic with the continuing spread of the virus. "This has created a direct shock to the economy resulting in a recession," it said.

On the economic impact of Covid-19, it said the exogenous supply and demand shock due to the Covid-19 pandemic is likely to cause a recession for the first time since 1979.

It has affected the country's aggregate supply due to lockdown measures, worker migration and disrupted supply chains.

It has also impacted aggregate demand due to loss in spending ability, the report said, which outlines key themes and an execution approach in nine key sectors that "can achieve significant economic uplift" over the next three years.

PwC said the report is based on interviews with business, public sector and citizen leaders, sectoral analysis, and a countrywide survey.

The global accountancy firm said nine key sectors that make up 75 per cent of pre-pandemic GDP (gross domestic product) and MSME segment were analysed in the report.

## Oakley inducts Rohit to boost India presence

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, 18 AUGUST

Leading sports eyewear brand Oakley has recruited India's white-ball cricket vice-captain Rohit Sharma to join its elite team of global athletes promoting its sunglasses. Subsidiary of the Italian giant Luxottica that owns Ray-Ban, Persol and Vogue, Oakley looks to expand its presence in India currently with more than 2,000 retail outlets.

Oakley global brand director Ben Goss said Rohit Sharma as an inspiration for the younger generation in sporting excellence makes him "an ideal fit to represent and lead the Oakley brand dialogue". A long-time Oakley user,

## Equity indices at over five-month highs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI, 18 AUGUSTPRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI, 18 AUGUST

Equity benchmarks marched higher for the second straight day today following robust buying in market heavyweights Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank amid a mixed trend in overseas bourses.

The 30-share BSE Sensex, which opened on a firm footing, gained further momentum in late afternoon trade to finish at 38,528.32 points, up 477.54 points or 1.26 per cent.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty surged 138.25 points or 1.23 per cent to end at 11,385.35 points. This is the highest closing for both the indices in over five months.

UltraTech Cement was



Most businesses, including shopping malls and dine-in restaurants, and Roman Catholic church services will be allowed to partially resume with restrictions

PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT RODRIGO DUTERTE

NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY 19 AUGUST 2020

09

# Chinese company: Covid-19 vaccine ready by end of year

SinoPharm, which has two vaccines in trial, has an annual manufacturing capacity of 220 mn doses

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING, 18 AUGUST

The head of a major state-owned Chinese pharmaceutical company said its coronavirus vaccine will be commercially available by the end of the year. Liu Jingzhen, the chairman of SinoPharm, told a Chinese Communist Party newspaper that the vaccine would cost less than \$140 and be given in two shots, 28 days apart.

Liu Jingzhen, the chairman of SinoPharm, told a Chinese Communist Party newspaper that the vaccine would cost less than \$140 and be given in two shots, 28 days apart.

He said students and workers in major cities would need to get the vaccine, but not those living in sparsely populated rural areas. Not all of the 1.4 billion people in our country

cines have raised ethical questions in some scientific circles.

Pak to conduct phase-III clinical trial of vaccine: The Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) has given a nod for phase-III clinical trial of a Covid vaccine developed in collaboration with a Chinese company, a media report said on Tuesday. According to a statement from the National Institute of Health (NIH), it has obtained "formal approval" from the DRAP for phase-III Clinical Trial of Recombinant Novel Coronavirus Vaccine Adenovirus Type 5 vector (Ad5-nCoV) developed by CanSinoBio and Beijing Institute of Biotechnology China (BIB).

The NIH said this would be the first-ever phase-III clinical trial for any vaccine in Pakistan. It is a multi-country multi-centre clinical trial which CanSinoBio is already conducting in China, Russia, Chile, Argentina and will shortly start in Saudi Arabia. The principal investigator of the multi-centre clinical trial in Pakistan is NIH executive director Maj Gen Aamer Ikrak," the statement said.

"AJM Pharma CEO Adnan Hussain signed an agreement with the NIH last month for collaborating on the phase-III clinical trial of CanSinoBio Ad5-nCoV in Pakistan," it said. According to a document signed by DRAP Clinical Stud-

ies Committee secretary Shafqat Hussain Danish, the committee recommended that the trial be held in Indus Hospital in Karachi.

The Dawn newspaper reported that after seeing the document the test will be carried out by the International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences, Karachi, in collaboration with a Chinese company already conducting trials in China. As many as 200 volunteers from Karachi, representing various ethnic groups, have been registered. The trial will be completed in 56 days during which three injections of inactivated virus will be administered to the volunteers both male and female.

## Lebanese customs chief arrested over Beirut blast

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIRUT (LEBANON), 18 AUGUST

The head of Lebanon's customs authority was formally arrested on Monday after being questioned over the massive explosion in Beirut earlier this month, the state-run National News Agency reported.

The investigation is focused on why nearly 3,000 tons of explosive ammonium nitrate was being stored at the city's port. The ignition of the stockpile caused an explosion that tore through the capital, killing at least 180 people and wounding 6,000.

Thirty people are still missing after the August 4 blast, which caused an estimated \$10 billion to \$15 billion in damage. More than 70,000 workers are believed to be unemployed due to the explosions,

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said Monday on top of 220,000 people estimated to have lost their jobs as a result of the financial crisis that began last October last year and those left jobless by the pandemic. Dujarric said some 40,000 buildings were damaged, with 3,000 residential structures severely damaged, and at least 2,000 doctors were either injured or had their clinics destroyed.

Documents that surfaced after the blast, the single most destructive in Lebanon's history, showed that officials have known for years that 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate were stored in a warehouse at the port and knew about the dangers.

Judge Fadi Sawwan questioned customs chief Badri Daher, who was detained days after the blast, for 4 1/2 hours in the presence of his two lawyers before issuing the arrest warrant, the agency said. Daher will remain in custody as the investigation continues.

NNA said that after questioning Daher, Sawwan headed to the scene of the blast to survey the damage and will later return to question Hassan Korayem, who was the top port official until the day of the blast.

Lebanese President Michel Aoun said the probe into the devastating blast is very complex and would not be finished quickly. Aoun said the probe is divided into three parts.

The first aims to determine the circumstances surrounding the cargo, the second where it came from and who shipped it, and the third to find who was responsible for handling and securing it.

## ANGRY PROTESTS



Tunisian protesters burn placards depicting a crossed out portrait of Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the word "traitor", during a protest against the leaders of the UAE after their deal with Israel to normalise relations, in front of the UAE embassy in Tunis, on Tuesday. AFP

## Sikhs, Hindus 'endangered minorities' in Af, says resolution introduced in US Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, 18 AUGUST

Describing Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan as "endangered minorities", a resolution introduced in the US Congress has sought to resettle these persecuted religious communities from the war-torn country to America.

Introduced in the House of Representatives last week by Congresswoman Jackie Speier and co-sponsored by seven others, the resolution supports refugee protection for Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan, the resolution condemns all terrorist attacks, religious persecution and discrimination against members of these communities in the war-ravaged country.

Indigenous but endangered minorities in Afghanistan, numbering approximately 700 out of a community that recently included over 8,000 members," the resolution stated.

The resolution supports resettling Sikhs and Hindus from Afghanistan in the US under the United States Refugee Admissions Programme pursuant to the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Expressing concern for the safety of Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan, the resolution condemns all terrorist attacks, religious persecution and discrimination against members of these communities in the war-ravaged country.

Noting that Islamic mili-

tants attacked a gurdwara in Kabul on March 25, killing 25 worshippers, including a four-year-old girl, the resolution said that the terrorists made further attempts on the lives of the survivors before and after the funeral ceremony held for the victims.

The resolution also mentioned the suicide bombing carried out by Islamic State-Khorasan in Jalalabad on July 1, 2018, which took the lives of 19 people, including leaders of Sikh and Hindu communities.

"These acts of violence follow a greater pattern of targeted violence against Sikhs, Hindus, and other religious minorities in Afghanistan in recent years," it said.

According to the resolution,

the Department of State and US Commission on International Religious Freedom have documented systemic discrimination against Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan, including restrictions on religious practices, illegal seizure of property, the inability to send their children to public schools due to harassment, judicial bias against religious minorities, and constitutional limitations on the political rights of religious minorities.

The former Taliban-led government routinely persecuted and discriminated against the Afghan-Sikh community, restricting their funeral rites and forcing the community to publicly identify themselves by wearing yellow armbands, it said.

## UN-backed court to deliver verdicts in Hariri assassination

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LEIDSCHENDAM (NETHERLANDS), 18 AUGUST

A UN-backed tribunal in the Netherlands is delivering verdicts Tuesday in the trial in absentia of four members of the Hezbollah militant group who are accused of involvement in the truck bomb assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

The verdicts were delayed by nearly two weeks as a mark of respect for victims of another devastating explosion the detonation of nearly 3,000 tons of ammonium nitrate stored at Beirut's port.

The 4 August blast killed around 180 people, injured more than 6,000, left a quar-

ter of a million with homes unfit to live in and plunged a nation already reeling from economic and social malaise even deeper into crisis. Guilty verdicts could compound tensions in the tiny country. Hariri was Lebanon's most prominent Sunni politician at the time of his 14 February 2005 assassination, while the Iran-backed Hezbollah is a Shiite Muslim group.

The trial centered on the alleged roles of four Hezbollah members in the suicide truck bombing that killed Hariri and 21 others.

truck bombing that killed Hariri and 21 others.

Hassan Habib Merhi.

They are charged with offenses including conspiracy to commit a terrorist act. If they are convicted, hearings will be held at a later date to determine their sentences. As the U.N.-backed court has no death sentence, the maximum sentence is life imprisonment.

None of the men is every likely to serve time as Hezbollah has vowed not to hand over any suspects. Prosecutors and defense lawyers can appeal the verdicts. When the trial opened in January 2014, a scale model of the blast scene stood on a table in the center of the courtroom and a prosecutor told judges that explosives packed into a Mitsubishi truck detonated to create a man-made hell.

## Lithuanian lawmakers vote for sanctions against Belarus

ASSOCIATED PRESS

VILNIUS, 18 AUGUST

Lithuania's parliament on Tuesday overwhelmingly voted for economic sanctions against the regime in neighboring Belarus, saying the presidential election there mustn't be internationally recognised. We are sending a strong message to the world today, Foreign Minister Linas Linkevicius said after the 120-0 vote with two abstentions. Nineteen of the Seimas assembly's 141 members were absent.

The document adopted by lawmakers also calls for the international rejection of the legitimacy

of Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko. Further details on the economic sanctions weren't immediately available.

Lukashenko won his sixth term in office with 80% of the votes, according to official results of the August 9 election. The opposition denounced the vote as rigged and hundreds of thousands of people poured into the streets across Belarus in protest. Linkevicius added that many shocking stories of torture start to emerge from Belarus. What happened there is not just a human rights abuse, but also crimes that must be investigated and those responsible punished, Linkevicius said.

## Israeli, German army jets overfly Dachau in tribute

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BERLIN, 18 AUGUST

German and Israeli Air Force jets flew over the former Nazi concentration camp Dachau on Tuesday in tribute to the Jews and others killed there in the Holocaust.

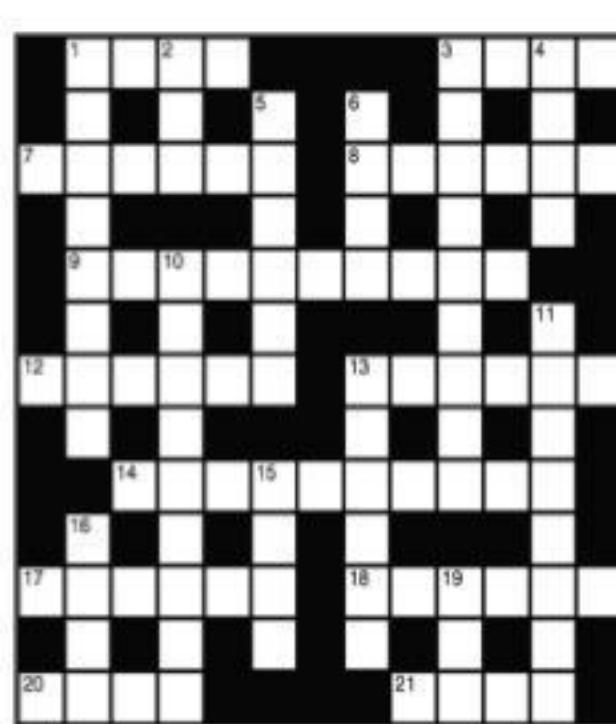
Two Israeli F-16s and two German Eurofighters escorted an Israeli Air Force Gulfstream G-550 carrying the commanders of both air forces over the camp memorial outside Munich, while a third Eurofighter filmed the formation from the sky.

Two Israeli F-16s and two German Eurofighters escorted an Israeli Air Force Gulfstream G-550 carrying the commanders of both air forces over the camp memorial outside Munich, while a third Eurofighter filmed the formation from the sky.

They pay tribute to the 11 Israeli athletes killed during the Munich massacre attack during the 1972 Olympics.

## LEISURE

### 10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski





FRENCH LABOUR MINISTER ELISABETH BORNE

FRANCE WEIGHS MASK MANDATE AT WORK AS VIRUS REAWAKENS

## WEATHER

City	Max	Min
SINGAPORE	29°C	25°C
HONG KONG	26°C	20°C
TOKYO	27°C	18°C
LONDON	23°C	19°C
DUBAI	37°C	28°C
SAN FRANCISCO	18°C	9°C
NEW YORK	10°C	7°C
MOSCOW	21°C	15°C

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

## THUMBNAILS



Pedestrians wear face masks as they walk in a congested street market in France on Tuesday. AFP

**SA allows liquor sales:** South Africa, which had one of the world's strictest anti-coronavirus lockdowns for five months, relaxed its restrictions Tuesday to permit the sales of alcohol and cigarettes and other returns to more ordinary life in response to decreasing new cases and hospitalisations for Covid. AP

**Quake in Philippines, 1 dead** A strong earthquake jolted the central Philippines on Tuesday, damaging homes, roads and bridges and killing at least one person and injuring several others. A three-story house collapsed in the coastal town of Catacaan as the ground shook. A retired police officer pinned in the debris died. AP

**Cesare Romiti dies :** Cesare Romiti (97), an industrialist and champion of Italian capitalism who steered auto-maker Fiat through years of strikes and domestic terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s, died in Rome on Tuesday. Italian President Sergio Mattarella hailed him as an important protagonist of a controversial season of industrial relations and capitalism. AP

## WHO says people in 20s to 40s increasingly driving coronavirus pandemic

## ACENCIES

MANILA, 18 AUGUST

The World Health Organisation said on Tuesday it was concerned that the novel coronavirus spread was being driven by people in their 20s, 30s and 40s, many of which were unaware they were infected, posing a danger to vulnerable groups.

WHO officials said this month the proportion of younger people among those infected had risen globally, putting at risk vulnerable sectors of the population worldwide, including the elderly and sick people in densely populated areas with weak health services. "The epidemic is changing," WHO Western Pacific regional director Takeshi Kasai told a virtual briefing.

"People in their 20s, 30s and 40s are increasingly driving the spread. Many are unaware they are infected."

"This increases the risk of spillovers to the more vulnerable," he added.

He said governments will need to have earlier targeted responses to outbreaks, continue to improve health care systems, and promote healthy new normal habits that will help prevent the spread of the virus. Approaches like this could be more effective and minimise social disruptions and impact on economies, Kasai said. "What we are observing



Italian Local Police officer patrols and checks people wear protective facemasks at the Spanish Steps square, in Rome on Tuesday as Italy declared mandatory to wear a protective facemask in all places. AFP

is not simply a resurgence. We believe it's a signal that we have entered a new phase of pandemic in the Asia-Pacific," Kasai said. He said countries

were better able to reduce disruption to lives and economies by combining early detection and response to manage infections. While

mutations had been observed, the WHO still saw the virus as "relatively stable", Kasai said.

WHO also reminded drug-makers to follow all necessary research and development steps when creating a vaccine. Socorro Escalante, its technical officer and medicines policy advisor, said the WHO was coordinating with Russia, which this month became the first country to grant regulatory approval for a Covid-vaccine. "We hope to get the response in terms of the evidence of this new vaccine," Escalante said.

**Herd immunity requires effective vaccine:** The WHO says the planet is nowhere near the amount of coronavirus immu-

nity needed to induce herd immunity, where enough of the population would have antibodies to stop the spread.

Herd immunity is typically achieved with vaccination and most scientists estimate at least 70 per cent of the population must have antibodies to prevent an outbreak. But some experts have suggested that even if half the population had immunity, there might be a protective effect.

WHO's emergencies chief Dr Michael Ryan largely dismissed that theory at a press briefing on Tuesday, saying we should not live in hope of achieving herd immunity.

As a global population, we are nowhere close to the lev-

els of immunity required to stop this disease transmitting, he said. This is not a solution and not a solution we should be looking to. Most studies conducted to date have suggested only about 10 per cent to 20 percent of people have antibodies. Dr. Bruce Aylward, a senior adviser to WHO's director-general, added that any mass immunisation campaign with a Covid vaccine would need to cover far more than 50 per cent of the world's population.

We don't want to be wrong, he said. You want to plan to get high coverage and not get lulled into a dangerously seductive suggestion that (the herd immunity threshold) could be low.

## Dems put divides aside, rally behind Biden at convention

Former 1st lady says Trump is the wrong President for our country. He cannot meet this moment

## ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK, 18 AUGUST



**M**ichelle Obama delivered a passionate condemnation of President Donald Trump during the opening night of the Democratic National Convention, declaring him "in over his head" and warning that the nation's mounting crises would only get worse if he's reelected over Joe Biden.

"Donald Trump is the wrong president for our country," she said. "He cannot meet this moment. He simply cannot be who we need him to be for us."

Trump pushed back Tuesday, taunting on Twitter that someone should explain to Obama that he wouldn't be in the "beautiful White House" today if "it weren't for the job done by her husband," President Barack Obama.

Trump ended with a sarcastic thanks to Michelle Obama for her "very kind words."

The former first lady, one of the nation's most respected women, was the headliner at the first presidential nominating convention of the coronavirus era. There was no central meeting place or cheering throng during the all-virtual affair Monday night. But it was an opportunity for Democrats — and some Republicans — to rally behind Biden, the party's presidential nominee.

Bernie Sanders, the pro-

## Trump pushes back against Michelle Obama speech

## ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, 18 AUGUST

President Donald Trump is pushing back against former first lady Michelle Obama, claiming that her husband's Oval Office performance is what catapulted him into the White House.

In her remarks on Monday night at the Democratic National Convention, Obama declared Trump was in over his head and the wrong president for our country.

In tweets Tuesday morning Trump taunted that someone should explain to her that he wouldn't be in the beautiful White House today if it weren't for the job done by her husband, President

electing," she said as she issued a call to action for the coalition of young and diverse voters who twice sent her family to the White House.

Greg Weaver, a former Amtrak conductor and a friend of Biden - who rode the train with Biden for decades - said how Biden cares about ordinary, hard-working Americans, and how he treats them with dignity and respect.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo in his remarks alleged that Trump's failure to act left America vulnerable and

## Trump criticized Obama and Biden's handling of the H1N1 swine flu in 2009

Barack Obama.

He also criticised the Obamas for making a late and unenthusiastic endorsement of Joe Biden. And in other tweets, Trump criticized Obama and Biden's handling of the H1N1 swine flu in 2009 and claimed, without evidence, that the Obama administration was the most corrupt in history.

Trump ended with a sarcastic thanks to Michelle Obama for her very kind words. US President Donald Trump's election campaign has described the

divided during a global pandemic.

"One of the last things that my father said to me was that he felt betrayed by the likes of Donald Trump. And so, when I cast my vote for Joe Biden, I will do it for my dad, Kristin Urquiza from Phoenix, Arizona said, sharing her story. Megan Rapinoe, star of the US Women's soccer team, led a conversation with a doctor, paramedic, and nurses on the frontlines of the pandemic about how their colleagues are risking their lives

Democratic National Convention as a Hollywood-produced infomercial which fails to hide the radical-leftist takeover of presumptive nominee Joe Biden.

At the four-day Democratic National Convention (DNC) which began virtually on Monday amid the ongoing pandemic, Joe Biden, 77, and his running mate Kamala Harris, 55, will be formally nominated by the Democratic Party. "Democrats can try to conceal the dangerous truth with a Hollywood-produced infomercial, but they cannot hide the fact that the radical socialist leftist takeover of Joe Biden is complete," said Hogan Gidley, Trump 2020 national press secretary.

every day in harrowing conditions.

Biden, himself made a few brief appearances during the virtual convention.

In one of those segments he engaged with and listened to social justice activist Jamie Burley, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot, Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo, NAACP president Derrick Johnson and author Gwen Carr, and discussed how Americans can embark together on the path forward toward true equality, fairness, and justice for all.

Postal Service, setting up a political showdown amid growing concerns that the Trump White House is trying to undermine the agency ahead of the election.

Pelosi cut short lawmakers' summer recess with a vote expected Saturday on legislation that would prohibit changes at the agency. The package will also include USD 25 billion to shore up the Postal Service, which faces continued financial losses.

The Postal Service is among the nation's oldest and more popular institutions, strained in recent years by declines in first-class and business mail, but now hit with new challenges during the coronavirus pandemic.

President Donald Trump flatly denied he was asking for the mail to be delayed even as he leveled fresh criticism on universal ballots and mail-in voting.

Wouldn't do that, Trump told reporters Monday at the White House.

I have encouraged everybody: Speed up the mail, not slow the mail. Embattled Postmaster General Louis DeJoy will testify next Monday before Congress, along with the chairman of the Postal Service board of governors.

Democrats and some Republicans say actions by the new postmaster general, a Trump ally and a major Republican donor, have endangered millions of Americans who rely on the post office to obtain prescription drugs and other needs, including an expected surge in mail-in voting this fall.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi is calling the House back into session over the crisis at the

Ahead of the election, DeJoy, a former supply-chain CEO who took over the Postal Service in June, has sparked nationwide outcry over delays, new prices and cutbacks just as millions of Americans will be trying to vote by mail and polling places during the COVID-19 crisis.

Trump on Monday defended DeJoy, but also criticized postal operations and claimed that universal mail-in ballots would be a disaster.

I want to make the post office great again, Trump said on Fox & Friends.

## China says US damaging global trade with Huawei sanctions

## ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING, 18 AUGUST

China accused Washington of damaging global trade with sanctions that threaten to cripple tech giant Huawei and said Tuesday it will protect Chinese companies but gave no indication of possible retaliation.

Rules confirmed Monday by the Commerce Department block suppliers from using U.S. technology to produce processor chips and other components for Huawei. The company, China's first global tech competitor, is the biggest supplier of switching equipment for phone companies and a leading smartphone brand

to Chinese authorities. The Trump administration is pressuring TikTok's owner to sell it and has ordered American companies to stop dealing with WeChat.

The United States is violating international trade rules, and undermining the global industrial chain, supply chain, and value chain, said a ministry spokesman, Zhao Lijian.

Beijing will take necessary measures to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies, Zhao said.

Chinese officials frequently use that phrase during trade disputes but it often has been followed by no official action. Huawei declined to comment on the latest U.S. action.

The president of its consumer unit, Richard Yu, said this month Huawei is running out of processor chips for its smartphones.

Huawei designs its own chips but Yu said production of the most advanced, the Kirin series, would stop Sept. 15 because the company relies

on outside manufacturers that use American technology. Huawei removed U.S.-supplied components from its main products following earlier sanctions that blocked access to American technology. This week's sanctions extends those controls to Asian and European components if their manufacturing process uses U.S. technology, which is common.

Earlier U.S. sanctions block Huawei from loading Google's popular music and other services onto its smartphones. That has hurt their ability to compete in markets outside China. Huawei passed Samsung and Apple to become the biggest-selling smartphone brand for the first time in the three months ending in June thanks to strong sales in China's populous market. Sales abroad fell 27% from a year earlier.

Huawei, founded in 1987 by a former military engineer, denies accusations it might facilitate Chinese spying.

The UK government on Tuesday confirmed the creation of a brand new "rigorous" science-led health unit to combat the pandemic and other infectious diseases.

The National Institute for Health Protection (NIHP), reports of which had emerged over the weekend, will start work immediately with a single command structure that brings together existing units such as Public Health England (PHE), National Health Service (NHS) Test and Trace and the Joint Biosecurity Centre.

"To give ourselves the best chance of beating this virus once and for all and of spotting and being ready to respond to other health threats, now and in the future, we are creating a brand new organisation to provide a new approach to public health protection and resilience," said UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock, confirming the new unit at a speech in London.

"The National Institute for Health Protection will bring together the expertise of PHE with the enormous response capabilities of NHS Test and Trace and the Joint Biosecurity Centre to put us in the best possible position for the next stage of the fight against COVID-19 and for the long-term, he said.

The government's Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) said that in order to minimise disruption to the ongoing work dealing with the coronavirus pandemic, the new organisation will be formalised and fully operational from the first half of 2021.

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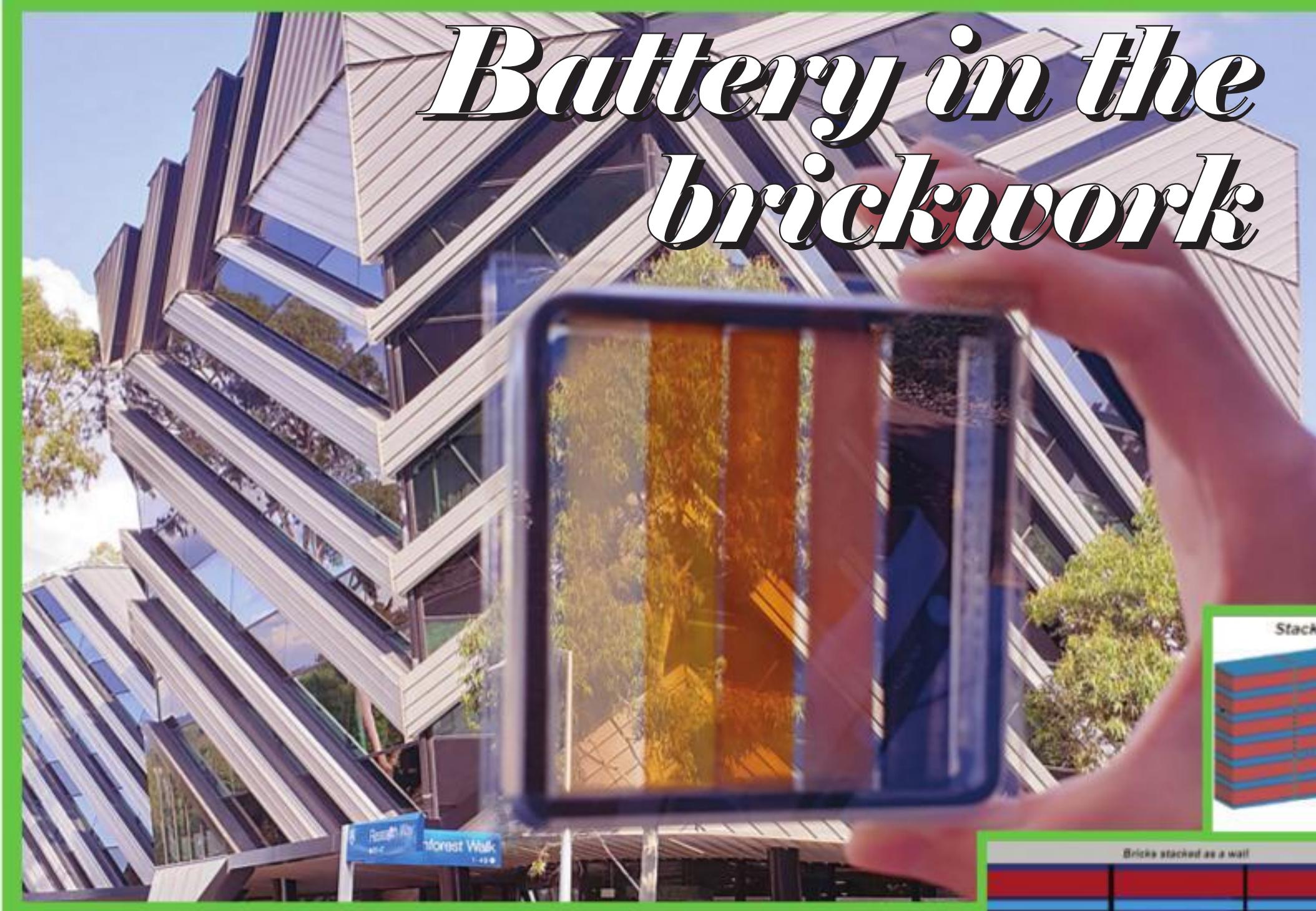
"The National Institute for Health Protection will bring together the expertise of PHE with the enormous response capabilities of NHS Test and Trace and the Joint Biosecurity Centre to put us in the best possible position for the next

ent and infrastructure with the new at-scale response capability of NHS Test and Trace

"PHE has worked incredibly well with NHS Test and Trace and with winter ahead, the life-saving work we are doing is more important than ever. The changes announced today are designed to strengthen our response, and to radically ramp up our fight against this disease, whilst also protecting PHE's essential work beyond COVID-19 that is so important for the nation's health," she said.

## TENDER

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA CORRIGENDUM		SAMVAD-Adv. No.: 13/2021/777600000/82323			
SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD CORP./AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/NET NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	HPCCL	(NET No:PTPP/PCM-331753/P-IIID) / Tender ID: 2020_HBC_131477_135Sub - Supply of Pressure Gauges for 250 MW Unit-7&8	Last date 26.08.2020 at 13:00 hrs	www.hpccl.org.in & https://tenders.hpccl.org.in	XEN/MP-3 0180-2566015 venmtcpdg1@gmail.com
2	HPCCL	(NET No:PTPP/PCM-200048) / Tender ID: 2020_HBC_131483_135Sub - Supply of Return Boiler with Assembly Ref CHM-III, PTPS_Parpat	Last date 26.08.2020 at 13:00 hrs	www.hpccl.org.in & https://tenders.hpccl.org.in	0180-2566015 xemmtcpdg1@gmail.com
3	DHBVN	NET No: 2/XEN/Civl/GGN/2020 -21 dated 22.06.2020	Date Extended upto 21.08.2020 (13:00 Hrs)	www.dhbvn.org.in	M. No. 8059922



# Battery in the brickwork

S ANANTHANARAYANAN

**A** disadvantage of green ways of generating electricity is that they are intermittent. Wind power, for instance, is there only while the wind blows and solar power is there only in the daytime.

The result is that we cannot do without coal or oil-based power plants. What is worse, these utilities need to be turned on and off, which lowers their efficiency and increases their damage to the environment. Hence arises the industry of batteries, or facilities to store electricity – so that power is available when needed, and the demand on the conventional sources stays steady.

Hongmin Wang, Yifan Diao, Yang Lu, Haoru Yang, Qingjun Zhou, Kenneth Chrulski and Julio M D'Arcy, from Washington University at St Louis, Michigan, write in the journal, *Nature Communications*, of a process of enabling the common brick, which we use to construct buildings with, to store electricity. It is not a large energy store, but individual houses can now store in their walls some electricity, generated, say by rooftop facilities, to work low-power devices. The masonry available all over the city could also serve as batteries for off-grid services.

The principle, the paper says, is that the mud and soil used for making bricks contains some eight per cent of iron oxide, as are called hematite (which, incidentally, gives bricks their red colour). Hematite, which is freely available, is the starting point for making alloys, magnets, catalysts and so on. And also in the manufacture of special purpose batteries and electrical equipment, the paper says.

The authors refer to their earlier work, pub-

lished a year ago, where they made use of ordinary iron rust, again iron oxide, to create fibres and films of conducting, organic chain molecules. In the current paper, they work on the hematite content of the clay, and the microstructure of bricks, to deposit a layer of nano-fibres made of conducting chain molecules and create conducting sheets on opposite sides of the bricks. When these bricks are used to construct a wall, the wall becomes a beehive of conducting surfaces, which can be manipulated to gather and store electric charge.

It is a property of conducting surfaces – when in pairs separated by an insulator – that they can be charged to opposite polarities. What this implies is that the negatively charged surface has an excess of negatively charged electrons, which have been driven there when the pair was charged. As the two surfaces are insulated, the difference in charge can remain for long periods. When the two surfaces are connected by a conductor, like a copper wire, however, the charges equalise and there is an electric current through the wire. And rapid charging and discharging of such an arrangement is often used to control electrical circuits which carry variable or alternating currents.

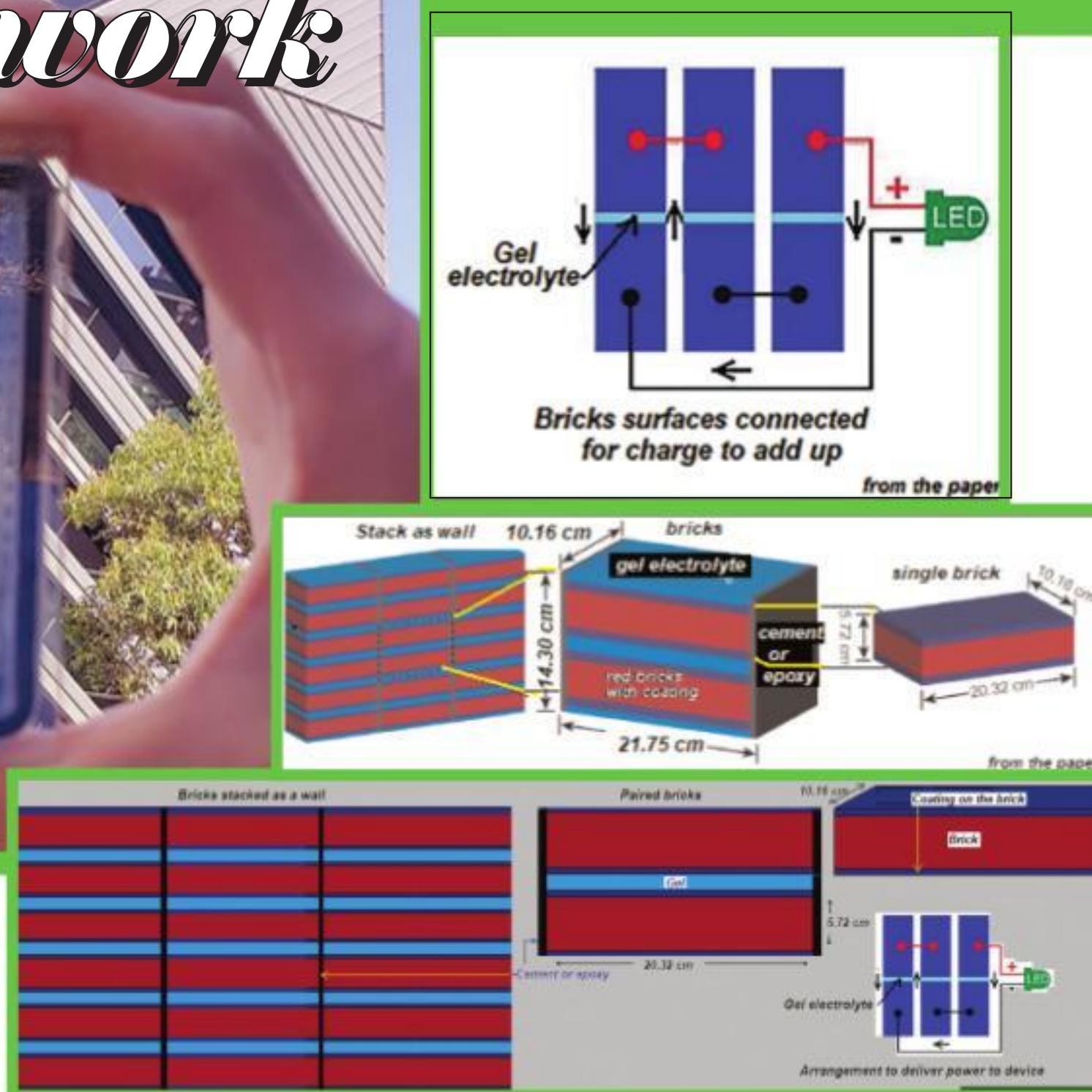
Large pairs of conducting surfaces can be created, for instance with metallic coating on two sides of a strip of paper, which is rolled up, and these are used in electronic circuits. Arrangements with high capacity, even “banks” where several devices are arrayed and combined, are used to control the effects of rise and fall in demand or supply in the public electricity network. The normal, storage battery, like a car battery, too stores charge that is driven on to lead plates through a reversible chemical reac-

tion. In the same way, the specially processed bricks created by the Washington University team are separated by a gel which can undergo a chemical change, like in the storage battery.

The picture shows how the conducting surface is coated, and the bricks, which have the coat of the conducting film, are stacked, adjacent ones being separated by the gel. And the columns of bricks are separated by a layer of cement, or an adhesive epoxy, to build a wall. And groups of bricks are arranged with the conducting surfaces connected so that the differences in charge add up. “A fired brick’s open microstructure, mechanical robustness and eight per cent iron oxide content afford an ideal substrate for developing (the bricks) that readily stack into modules,” the paper says. Coated with epoxy, they are stable, stationary and waterproof, the paper says.

The battery, or the interconnected assembly of charged devices, can be charged, the paper says, to deliver power of 1.6 Watt hours of energy for every square metre of wall. This would not amount to a great deal of power, but it is possible to include different kinds of masonry – the bricks, concrete blocks, paver blocks – as storage resources, and this would add up to a large area. The current work is a proof of concept – we can expect improvements both in the coating and in design of bricks, for more effective area. The

**The walls in our buildings could double as a store of electric energy**



study also shows that the current coating stays 90 per cent effective for 10,000 cycles of charging and discharging. If the cycle is once a day, that is about 30 years!

Another “green” idea in building technology, recently proposed, is to go back to the use of wood as a construction material. The idea is to save on reinforced cement concrete, as manufacture of steel and cement lead to huge carbon dioxide emissions. Wood has strength comparable with RCC, has less weight and large members are fire resistant, whereas steel begins to buckle at high temperature. And then, the wood is a carbon store, while growing more trees would draw more carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. Construction of buildings with wood as the material for the structure, while the walls are of brick treated to work as a reservoir of electric charge, would substantially reduce the carbon footprint of residential and commercial buildings. The efficiency of solar panels is rising and innovative methods of harnessing solar power are being developed. If the ideas were integrated by architects and town planners, living spaces could become more sustainable, apart from making the concepts a part of popular understanding.

The writer can be contacted at response@simplescience.in

## PLUS POINTS

### Maths for birds



Scientists from the University of Sheffield in the UK have used mathematical modelling to understand why flocks of long-tailed tits segregate themselves into different parts of the landscape.

The team tracked the birds around Sheffield’s Rivelin Valley which eventually produced a pattern across the landscape, using maths helped the team to reveal the behaviour causing these patterns.

The findings, published in the *Journal of Animal Ecology*, show that flocks of long-tailed tits are less likely to avoid places where they have interacted with relatives and more likely to avoid larger flocks, whilst preferring the centre of woodland. It was previously unknown why flocks of long-tailed tits live in separate parts of the same area, despite there being plenty of food to sustain multiple flocks and the birds not showing territorial behaviour.

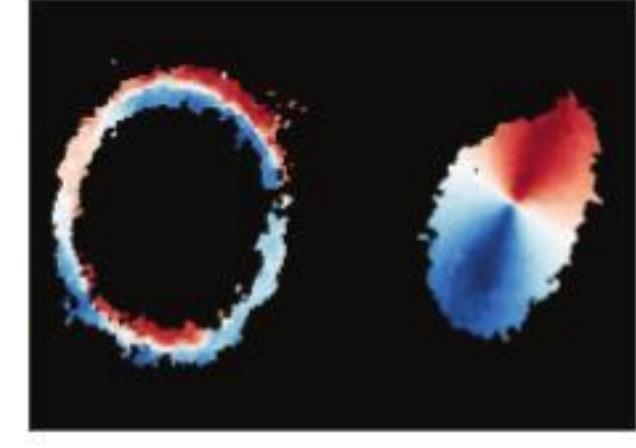
The equations used to understand the birds are similar to those developed by Alan Turing to describe how animals get their spotted and striped patterns. Turing’s famous mathematics indicates if patterns will appear as an animal grows in the womb, here it’s used to find out which behaviours lead to the patterns across the landscape.

Territorial animals often live in segregated areas that they aggressively defend and stay close to their den. Before this study, these mathematical ideas had been used to understand the patterns made by territorial animals such as coyotes, meerkats and even human gangs. However, this study was the first to use the ideas on non-territorial animals with no den pinning them in place.

Natasha Ellison, a PhD student at the University of Sheffield who led the study, said, “Mathematical models help us understand nature in an extraordinary amount of ways and our study is a fantastic example of this.”

“Long-tailed tits are too small to be fitted with GPS trackers like larger animals, so researchers follow these tiny birds on foot, listening for bird calls and identifying birds with binoculars. The field work is extremely time consuming and without the help of these mathematical models these behaviours wouldn’t have been discovered.”

### Surprising find



Astronomers have found a galaxy “surprisingly” like our own Milky Way – further away than any before. The galaxy is 12 billion light-years away, meaning that our image of it comes from when the universe was relatively young, at just 1.4 billion years old.

As such, it offers a way of looking back at galaxy formation in the early universe, when it was only 10 per cent of its current age. But scientists were puzzled to find that it was far more similar than expected.

Galaxies from so early in the universe were expected to be turbulent and unstable, in line with existing theories about galaxy formation. But the newly-discovered one was not nearly as chaotic as predicted.

That surprising discovery could, in turn, lead to a new understanding of how galaxies form and what processes could have been happening in the early universe.

“The big surprise was to find that this galaxy is actually quite similar to nearby galaxies, contrary to all expectations from the models and previous, less detailed, observations,” says co-author Filippo Fraternali, from the Kapteyn Astronomical Institute, University of Groningen in the Netherlands.

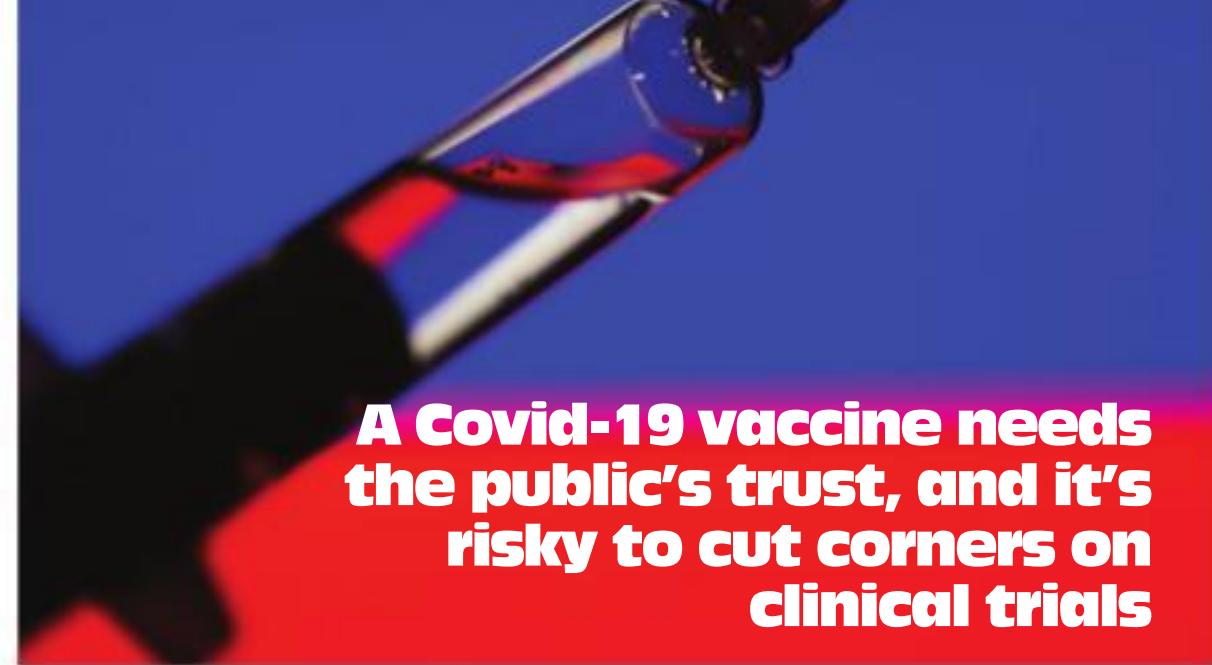
When the researchers looked at the newly-discovered galaxy known as SPT0418-47, they saw that it had features that are characteristic of our own Milky Way. It had a rotating disc and a large group of stars around its middle, which scientists refer to as a “bulge”, and which has never been seen before in the universe.

“This result represents a breakthrough in the field of galaxy formation, showing that the structures that we observe in nearby spiral galaxies and in our Milky Way were already in place 12 billion years ago,” said Francesca Rizzo, from the Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics in Germany, in a statement.

The new paper, “A dynamically cold disk galaxy in the early Universe”, has been published in *Nature*.

—The independent

## CONCERN ABOUT SPUTNIK V



**A Covid-19 vaccine needs the public's trust, and it's risky to cut corners on clinical trials**

ABRAM L WAGNER

Russia’s announcement that a fast-tracked Covid-19 vaccine is registered there, with plans for quick distribution in the general population this fall, is being condemned by scientists worldwide.

Findings from scientific studies of this vaccine, named Sputnik V, are not available. Large safety and efficacy trials are only now getting underway. But despite only two months of preliminary testing in people, Russian President Vladimir Putin called the vaccine “quite effective” and it’s received regulatory approval.

In other places, notably the United States, China and the European Union, even as researchers rush to develop vaccines, they continue to publish studies of these vaccines at a more measured pace than is happening in Russia.

As an epidemiologist who studies vaccine hesitancy and vaccine-preventable disease, I’m concerned about this news from Russia. After essential workers and high-risk groups are vaccinated, I would want to be among the first in line for an approved Covid-19 vaccine, but the medical research system must make

sure any vaccine is safe and effective before distributing it to the population at large.

#### Clinical trials have a valuable role

Before any drug, vaccine or medical device is licensed for use in the general population, it needs to go through several rounds of large-scale testing. These studies are designed to make sure the intervention is safe and effective, and to understand what the appropriate dosage will be.

Under normal conditions, the research required to bring a vaccine to market can take decades. For example, before the HPV vaccine was licensed in the U.S. in 2006, a phase III clinical trial enrolled 18,644 participants in 2004–2005, a phase II clinical trial had enrolled 1,113 participants in 2000, and the laboratory studies that led to a vaccine candidate had been published in the early 1990s.

In the face of the coronavirus pandemic, scientists around the globe are focusing their efforts on developing a Covid-19 vaccine. They’re working at an unprecedented pace to move through the necessary clinical trials to end up with a safe and effective vaccine. One of the most time-

consuming parts of clinical trials is enrolling participants, and pharmaceutical companies have sped up this process by lining up volunteers early, obtaining important baseline data from them even before a vaccine candidate is available.

#### Problems if the vaccine is released too early

Carefully conducted clinical trials are necessary to identify any problems with the vaccine. For example, studies of a new type of measles vaccine in the early 1990s found that it was detrimental to baby girls, and so it was never licensed to the general population. The existing measles or measles-mumps-rubella vaccine available in the US and other countries is highly safe and effective.

It could also be that the vaccine is not effective in some categories of people. Phase I and II clinical trials have small sample sizes and may not include individuals from high-risk groups. For example, a recently published phase II clinical trial of a Covid-19 vaccine excluded obese people, those with chronic diseases and pregnant women. However, these are all groups that should be able to get the vaccine in the future. More studies,

including phase III trials, are necessary to discover if the vaccine works in the general population. Preliminary results should be available by the end of 2020. The concern is that by introducing the vaccine early, without adequate testing of safety, effectiveness and dosing, the population may be presented with a vaccine which is not safe or not effective, and with little information on which vaccine schedule is best.

Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Dr Stephen Hahn has said the FDA will not “cut corners” in approving a Covid-19 vaccine in the US despite an accelerated programme, dubbed Operation Warp Speed.

#### Rushing to market

But is there ever an ethical reason to release a vaccine early, even without going through all phases of clinical trials?

Although it would be wonderful to get a vaccine into the population quickly, there could be substantial downsides if researchers and manufacturers cut corners. Imagine a vaccine that often had serious side effects that weren’t caught in small trials before it was widely administered.

An untested vaccine wouldn’t just harm the people vaccinated. If negative perceptions about the safety or efficacy of a Covid-19 vaccine spread throughout the population, it could limit how many people are willing to get the shot and perpetuate disease transmission.

Trust in vaccination programmes is crucial. Russia, in fact, provides an important historical example. In the 1990s, trust in the country’s public health system rapidly decreased, and rates of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccination fell as a result. A large outbreak of diphtheria then spread through Eastern Europe, leaving over 4,000 people dead.

Hasty rollout of a Covid-19 vaccine could prime people not only to not trust the Covid-19 vaccine, but also to doubt vaccination and public health systems as a whole.

Vaccinations should be developed by impartial scientists and evaluated by nonpartisan government officials. By cutting red tape, procedures can be prioritised and sped up, but they must not be skipped.

The writer is research assistant professor of epidemiology, University of Michigan, US. This article first appeared on www.theconversation.com





## FRESH HOPE

David De Gea (photo, left) remains confident in his ability despite scrutiny over his position and performances, with the goalkeeper fully focused on helping Manchester United challenge for trophies next season. A bitter season ended on Sunday when Sevilla secured a 2-1 comeback win to end United's Europa League hopes.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

## THUMBNAILS

**Enter Nortje:** Indian Premier League franchise Delhi Capitals on Tuesday announced the signing of Proteas paceman Anrich Nortje as the replacement for England's Chris Woakes, who had earlier pulled out of the tournament. IPL to be fresh for the home summer.

**Home tune-up:** Wrestler Vinesh Phogat will continue to train at home in Bhiwani as she has refused to attend a national camp starting on 1 September in Lucknow. The Wrestling Federation of India was recently allowed by the Sports Authority of India to hold the camp.

**Safe return:** Six of the senior hockey players who had tested coronavirus-positive earlier this month and were shifted to hospital, were now said to be cured, put in quarantine at the Sports Authority of India's jewel-in-the-crown National Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru.

**Silva moves:** David Silva has joined Real Sociedad on a free transfer after leaving Manchester City. Following the expiration of his deal at the Etihad, the Spanish midfielder has opted to move back to La Liga, penning a two-year deal with the Basque club.

**Takeover bid:** Newcastle United have held talks with the Bellapragha Nova Group group over a takeover bid, the Singapore-backed company said. BNG said that negotiations were at an advanced stage and that the group was willing "massively" to "contribute."

**Klopp's plan:** Jurgen Klopp says that he might turn his back on football once his present contract with Premier League champions Liverpool ends in 2024. He had wanted to take a year off after leaving Borussia Dortmund in 2015 but Liverpool came calling that October.

**New role:** Belgian international defender Vincent Kompany has hung up his boots at the age of 34 to become manager of Anderlecht on a four-year contract, the club announced Monday. Kompany joined Anderlecht from Manchester City in 2019 as player-manager.

**Setien sacked:** Barcelona have sacked coach Quique Setien. Since the La Liga runners-up were demolished 8-2 by Bayern Munich in the Champions League quarter-finals on Friday, it had been expected that the Spaniard would soon be shown the door at the Nou Camp.

**Championships postponed:** The Asian Boxing Championships, which were to have been held in India in November-December, have had to be postponed to next year owing to the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the national federation said on Tuesday.

## Rohit, Vinesh, Rani among five for Khel Ratna

Another 'unparalleled' 29 were recommended for the Arjuna award

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

**S**tar cricketer Rohit Sharma (photo, left), wrestler Vinesh Phogat (photo, centre), and women's hockey captain Rani Rampal (photo, right) were among an unprecedented five picked for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, while another unparalleled 29 were recommended for the Arjuna award by the sports ministry's selection committee here on Tuesday.

Paddler Manika Batra and Rio Paralympic gold-winning high jumper Mariyappan Thangavelu were the other two recommended for the country's highest sporting honour by a 12-member selection committee. Rampal was a late addition to the initial list of four.

The 33-year-old Rohit will only be the fourth cricketer after Sachin Tendulkar, just-retired Mahendra Singh Dhoni and current skipper Virat Kohli to be conferred with the Khel Ratna. Tendulkar was the first Indian cricketer to get the honour in 1998, followed by Dhoni in 2007 and Kohli in 2018. Kohli won it jointly with weightlifter Mirabai Chanu.

The committee, comprising the likes of Virender Sehwag and former hockey captain Sardar Singh, met at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) headquarters here and finalised the names after deliberations that took up the first half of the day.

Star paddler Manika was recommended for her remarkable



accolade with the final decision resting on sports minister Kiren Rijiju.

In 2016, four athletes -- star shuttler PV Sindhu, gymnast Dipa Karmakar, shooter Jitu Rai, and wrestler Sakshi Malik -- were collectively given this award.

Terming it as one of the biggest moments of her career, Vinesh promised to live up to the expectations associated with the award.

"It's a proud moment for me. It was a long wait but it was worthwhile. If God permits I would live up to the reputation associated with this award," Vinesh said.

Thangavelu got the recognition for his gold medal in the 2016 Rio Paralympics in the T42 high jump category. T42 applies to athletes with single above the knee amputations or a disability that is comparable.

The period of consideration for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award, India's highest sporting honour, is between 1 January, 2016 to 31 December, 2019.

## 'Saw his acumen standing in slips and told BCCI that he is the next captain'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

all 400 plus employees, are Indians," a BCCI source said. "Their Indian investors are Kalarai Capital and Multiples Equity. Even Dream11's product is available exclusively for use only by Indians. Only a single-digit percentage minority stake is held by Tencent," the official added.

Dream11 has been one of the IPL sponsors for a couple of years now.

## Dream11 wins IPL title sponsorship rights at 222 cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 18 AUGUST

Dream11 on Tuesday won the IPL title sponsorship rights with a bid of Rs 222 crore, replacing Chinese mobile phone company Vivo for a four and a half month deal.

However, as recently as last month, the BCCI's Anti Corruption Unit (ACU) had sought an inquiry against the company after it was reported that the platform had links to a fake T20 league which was held in a Punjab town but was live-streamed as a game in Sri Lanka.

The ACU investigations showed that kits used by players in the tournament had the Dream11 logo and the event was live streamed on FanCode. Both Dream11 and FanCode are part of Dream Sports group.

While the BCCI managed a title sponsor at a short time but the money coming in is less than what it was getting from Vivo.

"...that was always going to be the case. Those who were expecting that Vivo's bid will be matched were unaware about current economic climate. The Tatas may have had filed Expression of Interest but they were never interested in bidding.

"BCCI wanted Tata as their presence adds a lot of credibility," an industry insider said.

Standing in the first slip and observing Mahendra Singh Dhoni's match-reading skills convinced Sachin Tendulkar that he was ready for India captaincy, something he told the BCCI when he was asked for his suggestion back in 2007.

Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid had decided to give juniors a chance in the inaugural ICC World T20 that year and BCCI had asked the maestro about who would be his choice for captaincy.

"I wouldn't get into details how it happened but yes I did say when I was asked (by the senior BCCI people) as to what do I think," Tendulkar recollects during an interview to PTI on the just-retired former India captain.

"I had mentioned that I won't be going to SA as I was carrying a few injuries... But back then, I used to stand in the slip cordon and I used to interact with MS and understand what he was thinking, the field setting and I would discuss all those aspects.

"I observed his match reading and I came to a conclusion that he had a good cricketing brain so I suggested to the board that this is what I feel. MS should be the next one to take charge," India's greatest batsman recollects what transpired 13 summers back.

Tendulkar said he was

impressed by Dhoni's ability to convince anyone of his decisions.

"Whatever I was thinking and whatever he thought, we were more or less on the same page. If I have to convince you about something, I have to be on your page and that is exactly what happened with MS. We both were thinking alike and that's why I suggested he should be the one."

Dhoni's promotion to Test captaincy in 2008 happened at a time when the Indian dressing room still had Tendulkar himself, Rahul Dravid, VVS Laxman, Virender Sehwag, Harbhajan Singh and Zaheer Khan as senior cricketers.

Asked how he rated Dhoni's handling of senior players, Tendulkar said: "I can only speak for myself that I didn't have any aspirations to become captain. I can tell you that I was not wanting to become captain and what I wanted was to go out and win every match for the team."

# The Statesman Sport

Postal Reg. No. DL (ND)-II/6088/2018-19-20

## Root calls for changes in regulations relevant to light and weather

VITHUSHAN EHANTHARAJAH  
SOUTHAMPTON, 18 AUGUST

England captain Joe Root (in photo) has called for changes in the regulations over light and weather delays after the second Test between England and Pakistan was ruined by both.

Just 807 balls were delivered at the Ageas Bowl across the last five days, the ninth fewest bowled in a Test match in England. A combination of rain that washed out the entirety of day three and bad light that had both sides off the field for longer than they were on it.

However, at times, the appetite to dry the outfield or stay on with the floodlights was absent, with day four the nadir when play was abandoned at 4:30pm but then playable by 6pm because of a burst of sunny weather.

The ECB and \*\*\*Sky\*\*\* were understood to be irritated by Sunday's premature abandonment, especially in a summer where the outlay to get matches played has been so great as the England and Wales Cricket Board scramble to stem their financial losses. They will register at around £1.06 million following confirmation that Australia will tour for three Twenty20s and three ODIs.

Root was batting in the indoor nets with batting coach Jonathan Trott at the time of the call was made, with England seven for one after five overs after Pakistan had been bowled out for 236 in their first



innings. While he credits both sides for showing professionalism in the cricket that was played, which included 38.1 overs on Monday in which the hosts made it to 110 for four before fist bumps brought the match to a close at the start of the final hour.

"I do think it's hard to blame the umpires here," said Root. "I think there's something bigger that needs looking at higher up the chain. It frustrated a lot of people seeing the sun out later on (on Sunday). The hard thing was to understand how wet certain area were and I'm sure that was something discussed by the officials."

"You'll have to ask them but as players, we don't want to be sat watching, we want to be involved in exciting test cricket and make an impact on the world stage. We're all for playing as long as it's safe, we don't want anyone injured because it might potentially favour one side more than the other. It is understood the International Cricket Council is open to reassessing its regulations, with early starts and the use of a pink ball when the

light fades up for debate. Using pink balls will require a good deal of planning given the number of cricketers harbouring doubts over its suitability for top-level cricket among other reservations. But adjusting 11 am starts to 10:30 am is a very real possibility considering this already takes place in South Africa and Australia when time in the game has been lost the day before.

It has not been in the case in England because of the logistical issues around informing ticket-holders of the early start, which is usually only agreed upon at the end of the previous day's play, and the extra burden on spectators to tweak their travel plans accordingly.

Given these games are not played with spectators and both sets of players and all the necessary broadcast staff are living on site at the Ageas Bowl, it could perhaps be in play by this Friday for the start of the third and final Test of the summer.

"I'm not sure exactly what channels that would have to go through," said Root when asked if he would be receptive to that specific change so soon. Once that's been put in place, I'm not sure how flexible things are to change because it might potentially favour one side more than the other. But moving forwards, it is something that could be potentially looked at beyond this series."

THE INDEPENDENT

## Cycling prodigy in hospital after falling 30 feet off bridge

LAWRENCE OSTLER  
LONDON, 18 AUGUST

Remco Evenepoel (in photo), one of the best young riders in world cycling, is recovering in hospital after falling 30 feet from a bridge in a crash during Il Lombardia.

The Belgian Deceuninck-Quick Step rider was descending from a high climb in the leading pack when he hit the bridge wall and was thrown over the edge into a ravine. Paramedics attended the 20-year-old before carrying him to an ambulance.

He suffered a fractured pelvis and a right lung contusion and is expected to be out of action for several months.

"Remco Evenepoel has been tended to by the doctors and is now taken to the hospital with the ambulance," said an initial team statement, before later adding:

"(He) suffered multiple injuries during Saturday's Il Lombardia."

"One of the favourites at the start of the season's second Monument, Remco Evenepoel crashed inside the last 50 km, on the descent of Sormano, hitting a bridge wall and going over it into a ravine. Placed into a precautionary neck brace and taken to the Como hospital by ambulance, Remco was conscious at all times as he underwent a series of examinations."

iations to reveal the extent of his injury.

"Unfortunately, the X-rays showed a fractured pelvis and a right lung contusion, which will keep Evenepoel a winner of four stage races this season - on the sidelines for the upcoming period. Our rider will remain in the hospital overnight under observation, before flying to Belgium."

Evenepoel is considered the next big thing to come out of cycling mad Belgium, and has been frequently compared to the great Eddy Merckx.

Evenepoel already has a series of impressive wins to his name, including the 2018 junior road race and time trial world titles, the 2019 Clásica de San Sebastián, the 2019 European time trial title and the recent Tour de Pologne.

It was only last week in Poland that his team-mate Fabio Jakobsen suffered a horrific crash of his own during a sprint finish on stage one. Jakobsen was put into an induced coma and required plastic surgery on his face, before being transferred to a hospital in his native Netherlands to continue treatment.

THE INDEPENDENT

## Lukaku and Martinez shine as Inter thrash Shakhtar to reach Europa League final



Inter Milan 5  
Shakhtar Donetsk 0

MARK CRITCHLEY  
DUSSELDORF, 18 AUGUST

Something is stirring in Milan. After nine long years without silverware and having suffered the disappointment of missing out on their first Serie A title in a decade, Inter Milan thrashed a hapless Shakhtar Donetsk and will travel to Cologne to play Sevilla in Friday's Europa League final.

Lautaro Martinez showed why he is one of European football's most coveted forwards with two goals - either side of a Danilo D'Ambrosio header - while Romelu Lukaku scored two more, displaying the type of clinical finishing with which his former Manchester United

sorely lacked in Sunday's semi-final.

It was only a few weeks ago that Antonio Conte, in typical fashion, was threatening to end his spell at the Giuseppe Meazza after only a year due to a perceived lack of support from above. Conte's abrasive style of managing upwards is not for every owner, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to argue with. It gets results.

Shakhtar actually dominated the play for spells, particularly during a tight first half, though Inter ended it ahead and never looked back.

Everything went almost exactly as Conte planned, with Shakhtar registering a shot on target. Martinez, meanwhile, scored with the first of Inter's, in a brutally simple

goal borne of goalkeeper Andriy Pyatov's error.

Pyatov had only just lowered a hand raised in apology for his misplaced kick when Nicolo Barella's perfectly placed cross from the right evaded the heads of the retreating Shakhtar defence and found that of Martinez. A glancing finish looked simple yet was brutally effective, leaving the goalkeeper to only slap the crossbar in frustration.

The celebrations were wild enough for Roberto Gagliardini accidentally to jump straight into the back of D'Ambrosio's head and momentarily daze his team-mate. Perhaps that explained why, a few minutes later, the full-back was one of three Inter players - along with Martinez and Lukaku - to get in each other's way and somehow fail to convert from close-range.

Shakhtar had failed to score only once since restart before this game and should have maintained that record shortly after the hour mark, when Junior Moraes met Mykola Matyvenko's cross with a downward header. It was a nearly a mirror image of Martinez's chance yet lacked the same conviction and was blocked by the legs of Samir Handanovic.

That was the chance on which this semi-final turned, as no more than two minutes later, it swung Inter's way decisively. Again, it was a header and this time D'Ambrosio made no mistake, powering through the back of Matyvenko to meet Marcelo Brozovic's outswinging corner.

Lukaku had been a strangely quiet presence up to that point but was determined not to let his goalscoring streak in this competition expire before the final.

Again, Shakhtar were the architects of their own downfall, with Yevhan Konoplyanka's careless pass to the edge of his own penalty area picked

up by Martinez then slipped through for Lukaku to finish.

The Belgian was not done and showed the type of direct running at opposition defenders which made him such a brilliant - yet strangely unappreciated - success in the Premier League. Davit Khocholava was left in his dust, with seven minutes remaining, he slipped Inter's fifth beyond Pyatov.