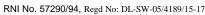
THE ASIAN AGE

NEW DELHI FRIDAY 21 AUGUST 2020



NATION 8

PM Modi writes to Dhoni, thanks him for making India proud





NATION 4

Ayodjya Ram Mandir construction starts, no iron will be used: Trust

TABLOID 9

Priyanka Chopra is playing the role of Ma Anand Sheela in upcoming drama, Sheela



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Congress leaders pay tribute to former PM Raiiv Gandhi on his 76th birth anniversary in Agartala on Thursday.

Heavy rain batters NCR, causes huge traffic jam

New Delhi: Incessant rain continued to lash Delhi, Gurugram and Noida on Thursday, resulting in waterlogging and slow traffic movement in different parts of NCR. Heavy traffic jams were reported at Narela-Bawana road, Raja Garden flyover, Kasturba Underpass, MB Rad, Jhandewalan Mandir, Jhilmil underpass, Azadpur vegetable market, Sarai Pipal Thala, Jahangirpuri, Madanpur Khadar, among other places. The Delhi traffic police appealed to residents to avoid the waterlogged roads.

More on Page 2

MP's Indore ranked cleanest city of India

Indore: Madhya Pradesh's Indore has been ranked the cleanest city for the fourth consecutive year under the Swachh Survekshan 2020, the Centre's annual survey on cleanliness announced Surat in Guiarat and Navi Mumbai in Maharashtra were ranked second and third.

More on Page 4

Night Currew in Punjab from today

Chandigarh: Calling for "warlike preparedness" to deal with the massive Covid spike in the state. Puniab chief minister Capt. Amarinder Singh ordered a series of emergency measures, including daily night curfew from 7 pm to 5 am and extension of weekend lockdown in the state from Friday. ■ More on Page 4



We can't create jobs... Let's create a recruitment agency at least!

NEATHER



Max: 32°C Min: 26°C **RH:** 76% **Rain:** 20%

Forecast: Partly cloudy

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana Tithi: Bhadrapada Shuddha Tadiya till 11.03 pm Star: U. Phalguni till 9.28 pm Varjyam: 6.19 am to 7.45 am; 5.04 am to 6.31 am (Saturday)

Durmuhurtam: 8.33 am to 9.24 am; 12.44 pm to 1.34 pm Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12

SUNSET TODAY 6.54 PM SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.54 AM MOONRISE TOMORROW 9.07 PM MOONSET TODAY 8.47 AM ■ Harris makes history, is 1st woman of colour to be V-P nominee

Harris seizes moment in historic V-P nomination

Aug. 20: Kamala Harris accepted the Democratic nomination for vice-president on Wednesday, cementing her place in history as the first Black woman on a major party ticket and promising she and Joe Biden will rejuvenate a country ravaged by a pandemic and riven by racial and partisan divides.

In an address capping the third night of the virtual Democratic National Convention, California senator introduced herself as the daughter of Jamaican and Indian immigrants and someone who embodies the values of a new, more inclusive America. Evoking the lessons of her late mother, Shyamala Gopalan, a biologist and

Indian immigrant, Ms Harris said that her mother instilled in her a vision of "our nation as a beloved community — where all are welcome, no matter what we look like, where we come from or who we love.

"My mother taught me that service to others gives life purpose and meaning. And oh, how I wish she were here tonight but I know she's looking down on me from above," she said. Ms Harris' mother died of cancer in 2009.

Mixing a former prosecutor's polish with the



Democratic vice-presidential candidate Senator Kamala Harris speaks during the third day of the Democratic National Convention at the Chase Centre in Wilmington, Delaware, on Wednesday.

deeply personal, Ms Harris also spoke of her Jamaican father and getting a "stroller's eye view" of the civil rights movement as her parents protested in the streets in the 1960s. "There is no vaccine for racism," Ms Harris said. "We have got to do the work."

"In this election, we have a chance to change the course of history," Ms Harris said. "We're all in this fight."

Ms Harris addressed a

party that has staked its future on bringing together a racially diverse coalition of voters. Barack

Harris says 'family is my chithis,' sends Twitter into a frenzy

Delaware: In her speech, Senator and Democratic vice-presidential nominee Kamala Harris emphasised the importance of her family in shaping her outlook as a person and as a leader. After talking of her mother Shyamala Gopalan, who Ms Harris

meaning the first Black Obama, first nation's President introduced the woman trying to be the

uncles, my aunts, and my chithis," Ms Harris said, using the Tamil word for aunt, sending Twitter into a frenzy. first Black person to hold the vice-presidency, pre-

New Delhi, Aug. 20:

Stepping up his attack against Shashi Tharoor,

chairman of the parliamen-

tary panel on information

technology, BJP MP and a

member of the panel Nishikant Dubey on Thursday wrote a letter to the Lok Sabha Speaker

requesting him to remove

the Congress leader from

Citing Lok Sabha rules, Mr Dubey in his letter to Speaker Om Birla alleged

'Spenserian' English with

a foreign accent does not

give freedom to an individ-

ual to not only disregard

our glorious parliamen-

tary institutions/organs to

meet his own political

ambitions but also to abuse our Constitution," and requested that any other

"speaking

the post.

tion event.

said "raised us to be proud, strong Black women," she spoke about

what family means to her. "Family is my

ceded her in the conven-— Agencies

Apologise by 24th & we'll be lenient: SC tells Bhushan

'Would be insincere to apologise for tweets that expressed my bona fide belief

PARMOD KUMAR NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

The Supreme Court of India on Thursday grant-ed time till August 24 to Prashant advocate Bhushan to reconsider his 'defiant statement" that he read out to the court in which he refused to apologise for his contemptuous tweets. The court said that if he modifies his statement and admits to making a mistake from the 'core of his heart," would take a "very lenient

Saying that he was "pained" at being "grossly misunderstood, Bhushan told the threejudge bench comprising Justice Arun Mishra, Justice B.R. Gavai and Justice Krishna Murari that his two tweets were not written in "absence mindedness" and that he would not offer an apology for them as they expressed what was and continues to be my bona fide belief"

"I don't want to consider it" and "I don't think it is likely," Mr Bhushan reiterated as Justice Mishra said, "Thinking process is always better... don't say later on that I was not given time.'

Thursday evening, the order posted on the Supreme Court's website said, "We have given time to the contemp-



I do not ask for mercy. I do not appeal to magnanimity. I am here, therefore, to cheerfully submit to any penalty that can lawfully be inflicted upon me... – Prashant Bhushan

tor to submit unconditional apology, if he so desires. be filed by 24.08.2020... In case, apology is submitted, the case to be posted for consideration on 25.08.2020' Attorney general of India

K.K. Venugopal, who

briefly addressed the court for the first time in the matter on Thursday, said that the contempt of court proceedings against Mr Bhushan for his two tweets should end with the court holding him guilty of criminal contempt. He should not be punished. "I make the request to your lordships not to punish him. Your lordships have held him guilty of con-tempt," Mr Venugopal tempt," said, clarifying that he was speaking as AG and not for the Government of India.

Turn to Page 2

India wants Indian lawyer to fight Jadhav case in Pak

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

Thursday said that it asked Pakistan to permit an İndian lawyer to rep-

Kulbhushan

Indian naval officer Kulbhushan Jadhav when his review petition comes up in a Pakistani civilian court against the verdict sentencing him to death on charges of "espionage and sabotage"

Ministry of external affairs spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said, "On this issue, we are in touch with Pakistan through diplomatic channels. For a free and fair trial in keeping with the letter and spirit of ICJ judgement, we have asked for Mr Jadhav to be represented by an Indian lawyer. However, Pakistan has to first address the core issues — giving copies of relevant documents of the case and providing unimpeded consular access to Mr Jadhav."

India had last month hired a Pakistani lawyer after Islamabad told New Delhi that the relevant documents in the case could be handed over only to an authorised lawyer. But, New Delhi had stated earlier that to "our surprise, as advised by the authorities. when the authorised lawyer approached the

Pakistani concerned authorities, they declined to handover the documents. FB ROW Tharoor calls Facebook to depose before panel on September 2

Farooq: Will discuss J&K agenda after all are freed

Srinagar, Aug. 20: Aug. 20: National Conference president | Thursday said that the



Farooq Abdullah on party would discuss and

Abdullah political review the agenda with regard to Jammu and Kashmir only after all leaders, including former chief Mehbooba minister Mufti, have been set

free.
"The aim of today's meeting was to ensure that the four leaders were free. We will discuss and review the political agenda once all political leaders are set free," Mr Abdullah said.

The Lok Sabha memwas talking to reporters at his residence here after meeting NC general secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar and former ministers Mohammad Shafi Uri, Abdul Rahim Rather

and Nasir Aslam Wani. Mr Abdullah said that he would also call other party leaders for similar meetings in the coming

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

In one day 69,652 test

India on Thursday registered 69,652 new

infections of novel coronavirus, taking

the country's overall cases to 28.37 lakh,

Union health ministry said. In 24 hours,

977 new deaths were recorded, taking the

nation's total death figures to 53,866.

India's recovery figures, however, remain impressive. With total recoveries

reaching nearly 21 lakh, the country's recovery rate is 73.91%. Health ministry

officials said the number of recovered

patients is now three times higher than

+ve, 58,794 recover

India, China agree to resolve issues expeditiously: MEA

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

India and China have agreed to resolve outstanding issues in an expeditious manner, the ministry of external affairs (MEA) said on Thursday while briefing the media on the ongoing diplomatic talks between the two coun-

India and China, in 18th Working Mechanism Consultation Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) meeting, held on Thursday to work towards de-escalation of troops in the Ladakh sector, "had a candid and in-depth exchange of views on the existing situation" and "agreed to resolve the outstanding issues in an expeditious MEA manner,'

Srivastava said. In a statement, the MEA said, "The two sides... reaffirmed that in accordance with the agreements reached between the two foreign ministers and the two

spokesperson Anurag

LADAKH ROW &

Special Representatives (SRs), the two sides will accordance with the existing agreements and protocols.

In a separate statement, the Chinese embassy said the two sides agreed to "further cool down the border situation, properly handle the remaining issues on the ground, and jointly maintain peace and tran-quility in the border areas'

Meetings between the two neighbours continue to be held amid perceived reluctance on the part of Chinese PLA troops to move back from their current positions at various points in the Ladakh sector.

DIPLOMATIC TALKS

continue to sincerely work towards complete disengagement of the troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Western Sector. In this context they agreed to resolve the outstanding issues in an expeditious manner and in

Delhi eateries & hotels

allowed to serve liquor

Taking a cue from states such as Punjab

and Rajasthan, Delhi government said

on Thursday that hotels and restaurants

will soon be serving liquor, but bars will

not be allowed to open yet. In view of the revenue situation, the cash-strapped

Delhi government asked the excise

department to "issue necessary permis-

sion for service of liquor in restaurants

and clubs by licensees at the table and in the hotel rooms". Last year, the Delhi government had earned around ? 7,000

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

Union mantri Gajendra tests

New Delhi, Aug. 20: Jal shakti minister Gajendra ingh Shekhawat on Thursday

said that he Shekhawat has tested positive for coronavirus. In a tweet, the minister said he underwent a coronavirus test after developing symptoms of the infection. The minister said he is getting admitted to a

hospital on the advice of doctors. "I underwent a coronavirus test after developing symptoms and the report has come positive. I am getting hospitalised on the advice of doctors. I request all who have come in my contact in the past days to isolate themselves and get tested," Mr Shekhawat tweeted in Hindi.



Speaking in 'Spenserian' English does not give free-dom to an individual to not only disregard our glorious parliamentary institutions to meet his own political ambitions but also to abuse our Constitution... I urge the Speaker to persuade Dr Tharoor to proceed on leave.

BJP wants 'foreign accented' Tharoor

sacked as head of Parliament's IT panel

member be appointed as the chairman of the committee in Mr Tharoor's

place. "Under rule 258(3) of the Rules of the Procedure and Conduct in Lok Sabha, I urge the Speaker to persuade Dr Tharoor to proceed on leave," Mr Dubey

Unfazed, Mr Tharoor on

Navalny was in a coma at

a Siberian hospital after

drinking tea laced with

poison at an airport cafe,

according to his representatives. Russian doctors

gave conflicting informa-tion on his condition,

 Nishikant Dubey Wednesday summoned Facebook to appear before the panel on September 2 to

discuss the issue of alleged misuse of social media plat-form in the wake of claims that the US firm did not apply hate speech rules to certain BJP politicians. Facebook has been asked

to depose before the panel on "safeguarding citizens'

Russian Opposition leader & Putin's

rights and prevention of misuse of social/online news media platforms including special emphasis on women security in the digital space".

Besides representatives of Facebook, the representatives of the ministry of electronics and information technology have also been asked to remain pre-

sent during the deposition. On Wednesday, Mr Dubey and Mr Tharoor filed breach of privilege notices against each other after a spat on social media over the Congress leader's remarks on summoning Facebook India's executives over reports that the social media giant went soft on some BJP leaders who had made hate speeches ahead of the general elections last year. — PTI

+ve for Covid

claiming he was stable but his life was still at risk. The 44-year-old critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin felt unwell on a flight back to Moscow from Tomsk, a city in Siberia, and was taken to a hospital after the plane made an emergency landing in Omsk, Mr Navalny's spokeswoman, Yarmysh, said on Twitter. He is on a ventilator in an intensive care unit. Hi allies believe the poison-ing is linked to his politi-



The 44-year-old critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin is suspected to have consumed poison in tea he had at the airport. During the flight, he started sweating and later lost consciousness, and has been in

Ms Kira Yarmysh said the anti-corruption campaigner must have consumed poison in tea he drank at an airport cafe before boarding the plane early Thursday. During the flight, Mr Navalny started sweating and asked her to talk to him so that he could "focus on the sound of a voice." He then went to the bathroom and lost consciousness, and has been in a coma ever

Other Opposition figures were quick to suggest remlin involvement. 'We are sure that the

only people that have the capability to target Navalny or myself are Russian security services with definite clearance Russia's political leadership," Verzilov, a member of the protest group Pussy Riot,



















SHORT TAKES

4 youth held for

planning dacoity Noida: Four men, all aged around 20, were arrested for allegedly planning to commit a dacoity in Greater Noida, police said on Thursday, Two illegal firearms were also seized from their possession, the police said, adding that two more of their partners are absconding. The accused were arrested by the police in Badalpur area of the district on Wednesday evening. The accused men have confessed to their involvement in multiple cases of loot in the area, during which they

would waylay individuals and rob them of cash and other valuables, including two-wheelers," a police spokesperson said. The men who were held have been identified as Kuldeep, Ashish Singh, Anuj and Dev Kumar, all residents of Bisahda village in Greater Noida, the spokesperson said. Two of their partners are absconding and they have been identified as Mukul and Vijay, both from the same village, the official said. An FIR has been lodged at the Badalpur police station against the accused, they have also been booked under relevant provisions of the Arms Act, the police said.

3 injured after roof of house collapses

New Delhi: Three members of a family, including a 16year-old girl, were injured after the roof of their house collapsed in outer Delhi's Multan Nagar area on Thursday morning, police said. The injured, identified as Radhey Shyam (48), his wife Kavita (44) and their daughter Mahak, were rushed to the Sanjay Gandhi Hospital. All of them sustained minor injuries and have been discharged after treatment, police said. The incident took place around 5 am. The three got trapped under the debris, police said. Two fire tenders were rushed to the spot for rescue operations, an official of the Delhi Fire Service said. DCP (Outer) A. Koan said, "All of them sustained minor

Apologise by 24th & we'll be lenient: **SC tells Bhushan**

injuries and were discharged

from hospital after being

Continued from Page 1 But Mr Bhushan, deflant and

unrelenting, quoted Mahatma Gandhi to the court.

"I did not tweet in a fit of absence mindedness. It would be insincere and contemptuous on my part to offer an apology for the tweets that expressed what was and continues to be my bona fide belief. Therefore, I can only humbly paraphrase what the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi had said in his trial: 'I do not ask for mercy I do not appeal to magnanimity. I am here, therefore, to cheerfully submit to any penalty that can lawfully be inflicted upon me'...," he told the court.

The AG's plea was declined by the court which said that "the way he (Bhushan) has worded his statement, we cannot accept vour argument. We are giving him time to consider" modification of his statement. Justice Mishra made it clear that if Mr Bhushan reconsiders and modifies his statement and admits to making a mistake from the "core of his heart," they would take a "very lenient view

The hearing saw Justice Mishra repeatedly asking Mr Bhushan to reconsider and make modifications to his statement that he had read out to the court, but Mr Bhushan was unrelenting and stood his ground. "The statement is well considered and thought out and it is unlikely to make any substantial change," Mr Bhushan said. On being asked again and again, he finally said, "I will consider and discuss with my lawyers'

At this juncture, Justice Mishra said, "We should not give verdict now" and gave Mr Bhushan two-three days time to reconsider his statement.

When Justice Mishra pointed to maintaining a "balance" and not crossing the Lakshman rekha while saying anything critical of the court, senior counsel Rajeev Dhavan said that Lakshman Rekha applies to judicial restraint as well Saying that when the August 14 judgment holding Mr Bhushan guilty of criminal contempt goes to academic circles it will be criticised. Mr Dhavan told the court that holding that the tweets in questions were not bonafide is not enough, as malafide with malicious intent too has to be established.

■ 'Did not tweet in fit of absent mindedness' **Bhushan to SC: It would be** insincere to offer apology

NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

Senior lawyer Prashant Bhushan told the Supreme Court on Thursday that he did not tweet in absence mindedness and it would be insincere and contemptuous on his part to offer an apology for the tweets that expressed what was and continues to be his bona fide belief. The top court on August 14 had held Mr Bhushan guilty of criminal contempt for his derogatory tweets against the judiciary, saying they cannot be said to be a fair criticism of the functioning of the judiciary made

in the public interest. A bench of Justices Arun Mishra, B.R. Gavai and Krishna Murari was told by Mr Bhushan, who him-self addressed the court along with senior lawyers Dhavan and Dushyant Dave representing him, that his tweets were nothing but a small

Noida: Covid

infection tally

rises to 6,776

Noida, Aug. 20: Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddh Nagar on Thursday recorded 79 new Covid infections taking the district's

taking the district's caseload to 6,776, official

The number of active

cases climbed to 794

from 785 on Wednesday

and 774 on Tuesday, according to the data released by the UP

health department for a

The district dropped to

14th position in the state in terms of active cases,

Also, 67 more patients got discharged during

the period. So far, 5,939

patients have recovered from Covid in Gautam

Buddh Nagar, the third

highest among districts

in UP after Lucknow

(12,813) and Kanpur

Nagar (7,666), it showed.

recorded 43 deaths

linked to the novel coro-

navirus and the mortali-

ty rate among positive

cases dropped to 0.63 per cent from 0.64 per cent

on wednesday and 0.65

per cent on Tuesday,

according to official sta-

tistics. The recovery rate

of patients remained at

87.64 per cent with no

change from Wednesday

The district has so far

data showed.

24-hour period.

the data showed.



▶ The top court on August 14 had held Prashant Bhushan guilty of criminal contempt for his derogatory tweets against the judiciary, saying they cannot be said to be a fair criticism of the functioning of the judiciary made in the public interest

attempt to discharge what he considered to be his highest duty at this juncture in the history of our

republic.
"I did not tweet in a fit of absence mindedness. It would be insincere and contemptuous on my part to offer an apology for the tweets that expressed what was and continues to be my bona fide belief. Therefore, can only humbly paraphrase what the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi had said in his trial: I do not ask for mercy. I do not appeal to magnanimity," Mr Bhushan said

court. Mr Bhushan told the bench that he has gone through the August 14 judgment of the court and was pained that he has been held guilty of committing contempt of the court whose majesty he has tried to uphold — not as a courtier or cheerleader but as a humble guard — for over three decades, at some personal and professional cost. I am pained, not because I may be punished, but because I have been grossly misunderstood, he

"I am shocked that the court holds me guilty of "malicious, scurrilous, cal-

justice. I am dismayed that the Court has arrived at this conclusion without providing any evidence of my motives to launch such an attack. I must confess that I am disappointed that the court did not find it necessary to serve me with a copy of the complaint on the basis of which the suo motu notice was issued, nor found it necessary to respond to the specific averments made by me in my reply affidavit or the counsel," the activist-lawyer said. many submissions of my

I find it hard to believe that the Court finds my tweet "has the effect of destabilising the very foun-dation of this important pillar of Indian democracy". I can only reiterate that these two tweets represented my bonafide beliefs. the expression of which must be permissible in any

29% Delhiites have antibodies for Covid: 2nd sero-survey

1,215 fresh cases take city's total tally to 1,57,354

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

The second serological (sero) survey in the national capital revealed that the percentage of people who have antibodies against the coronavirus disease increased to 29.1 per cent from 22 per cent. Out of these, females had a higher rate of 32.2 per cent, whereas 28.3 per cent of males had these antibodies. The first such survey was conducted between June 27 and July 10. Of those surveyed in that instance, 22.6 per cent had antibodies against the infection.

As many as 1,215 new cases and 22 deaths were reported in the last 24 hours. Of the total 1,57,354 cases in the city, 11,271 are active and 1,41,826 patients have recovered. The virus-related fatalities have gone up to 4,257. Delhi's Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Thursday said that 29.1 er cent of people tested in the survey were found to have antibodies present in them, against the coron a v i r u s . The results suggest that a population of about 60 lakhs in Delhi has already



Health workers arrange testing strips to test for Covid in a government school in New Delhi on Thursday. -AP

recovered after being infected by the virus. The samples for the survey were collected across all the districts of Delhi,

from August 1 to August 7. "Improvement across districts can be mapped in the range of six to 50 per cent. While the numbers increased only slightly in the North-East District, which already had a fairly nigh percentage in the previous survey of July, South-East Delhi has shown an improvement of about 50 per cent. Additionally, while 28.3 per cent of males had antibodies present in

RO No. PRDH-Advt. No:-11/2021/6046617600000/82369

them, the percentage of females with antibodies is 32.2 per cent," said Mr Jain

Mr Jain pointed out that positive development is that around 29 per cent of people have recovered. "It is relieving to know that nearly 29 per cent of the city's population has recovered after being infected from the coronavirus. On the other hand. 70 per cent of people have not developed antibodies, which means that they are vet to reach the stage of herd immunity," Mr Jain added.

The male population in

Huge jams across NCR as heavy rain causes flooding

AGE CORRESPONDENT

Following heavy rainfall in the national capital on Thursday morning, waterlogging, parts of house collapsed, falling of trees, and traffic movement at snail's pace were reported in various major areas across the city. For hassle-free commuting, the Delhi traffic police issued an advisory for the people informing them about the routes with heavy jams.

The water logging issue reported Jhandewalan Mandir on Rani Jhansi Road, M.B. Road at Lal Kuan (both carriageway), Anandmayee Marg near D.D. Motors (both carriageway), G.T. Road at Azadpur Subzi Mandi out gate (both carriageway), Sarai Pipal Thala (both carriageway), Mahindra Park Signal on G.T. Road carriageway), Jahangirpuri on G.T. Road (both carriageway), and G.T.K. Depot on G.T. Road as per the Delhi traffic

Many residents shared videos and pictures of vehicles plying through waterlogged roads on social media.

Meanwhile, civic agencies said that two parts house collapsed due to the



A man takes photo of a vehicle submerged in the lowlying waterlogged area in New Delhi on Thursday. - PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

rain in Dakshinpuri and Malviya Nagar. Traffic was also affected

as trees fell down in many places in the city. "Falling of trees were reported from Ambedkar Market in Safdarjung Enclave, Pushp Vihar area, Malviya Nagar, C.R. Park, Chhatarpur Mandir School Boys School near Chhatarpur Metro station, Hari Nagar area, Tughlakabad extension,

Sukdev Vihar, Lajpat Nagar area, New Friends Colony, and several other

parts across the city," said

a senior civic agency offi-Following the rainfall and waterlogging across the city, the DTP posted alerts on Twitter to

inform commuters about waterlogged roads. "M.B. Road traffic move-

Mathura Road due to water logging under Pul Pehlad Pur. Obstruction in traffic in the carriageway from Satyam towards Kasturba Maharaja

Surajmal Marg due to water logging at Jhilmil," the DTP tweeted. 'Traffic on Ring Road-Bhairon Road was affected due to potholes and traffic going from Ring Road towards Bhairon

Road was affected due to the bottle-neck route," it said in another tweet. "Traffic movement has

been closed on Rajpur Road from both sides due to a fallen tree near P.S. Civil Line. A tree fell down near the railway gate on Narela-Bawana Road due to which traffic is affected," it tweeted.

City restaurants, hotels allowed to serve liquor

SANJAY KAW

A day after allowing hotels to resume operations, the Delhi government has allowed hotels, restaurants and clubs in city to serve liquor and has directed the excise department to issue necessary permissions.

Taking a cue from states such as Punjab and Rajasthan, the government has allowed hotels and restaurants to serve alcohol in the rooms and at the tables respectively while keeping bars shut. Deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia has directed the excise department to issue "necessary ermission" for service of liquor in the restaurants and hotels. The decision has been taken keeping the revenue implications in mind. Last year, the cash-strapped Delhi government had earned about

The order signed by Mr Sisodia read: "Bars will remain closed under the

provisions of unlock guidelines of the Ministry of Home Affairs. However, several state governments, including Assam, Punjab, Rajasthan, etc, have permitted service of liquor by licence holders under the Excise Rule in the restaurants and clubs and in the hotel rooms. Considering the revenue implications, the excise department issued necessary permission for the service of liquor in the restaurants and clubs by licensees at the table and in the hotel rooms.

Restaurants in Delhi had permission to open from June 8, but with a series of safety restrictions that included the use of 40 per cent capacity, disposable menus and paper napkins. The hotels were allowed to open on Wednesday.

Delhi police head constable held for killing man

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG 20

head constable of Delhi police was arrested after he shot dead a 28year-old man with his service pistol on Thursday morning following a quarrel between them, officials said. Surender (47), posted at Shahbad Dairy police station, has been dismissed from service following the incident, they said. The incident took place

near a hotel in Budh Vihar area on Thursday morning, when Surender was returning home after finishing his night shift, police said.
The head constable

was coming back in a car along with another man named Deepak Gehlawat, who runs a southwest Delhi's Dwarka Mor police said. A quarrel broke out between them following Surender shot Gehlawat with his service pistol, a senior police officer

28% students lack electricity,

27% have no devices: NCERT

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

A study conducted by NCERT revealed that at least 27 per cent of students do not have access to smartphones or laptops to attend online classes.

It said 28 per cent of students and parents believe intermittent or lack of electricity was one of the major concerns hindering online teaching and learning. The survey with over participants, including students, parents, teachers and school principals from Kendriya Vidyalayas, Navodyaya Vidyalas and CBSE affiliated

schools, has pointed out that lack of knowledge of using devices for effective educational purposes and teachers not being well-versed with online teaching methodologies, caused hindrance in the learning process.

The survey showed that the maximum number of stakeholders opted for mobile phones as a medium for teaching-learning during the Covid period. It said about 36 per cent of the students used the textbooks and other books available with them. "Laptops were the secmost favoured option amongst teachers and principals.

City memorialise disasters of

past, prepare for future ones

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

As the city is commemorating 300 years of a major 6.5 magnitude earthquake that struck in July 1720, local groups are drawing lessons and gearing up to be safe from future

risks. At an event organised the Sustainable and Environment E c o l o g i c a l Development Society (SEEDS), families and schools were identified as leaders for community safety

During the event, Kamal Kishore, a member of the National Disaster Management Authority, upon the need for creating a culture of preparedness, which will go a long way in aligning government efforts towards a disaster resilient India with those of the citizens.

'The city needs to remember its past disasters with initiatives like setting up of museums so that there is a constant reminder,' said Dr Anshu Sharma. co-founder SEEDS. During the event, a survival essentials kit called the 'BhaGoBag' was also

unveiled.

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE EMD NAME OF WEBSITE OF THE BOARD NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER CLOSING (APPROX. BOARD/CORP./AUTH IN RUPEES (TIME) ANNUAL REPAIR FOR 2 NOS 1882 SFT AND 4 NOS 600 SFT AREA HOUSES REVENUE STAFF QUARTER AND OTHER RESIDENTIAL HOUSES IN MINI SECT. AT SONIPAT IN SONIPAT DISTT. FOR THE YEAR 2020-21. (RE-0130-2200575 pwd-eepd2-sonepat@hry.nic.in 14.08.2020 03.09.2020 http:// etenders.hry.nic.in PWD B&R BR. SONIPAT INVITE). + 2 OTHER WORKS ANNUAL REPAIR FOR RESIDENTIAL 30 NOS 440 SFT AREA HOUSES AND OTHER VARIOUS BUILDING IN MNSS RAI IN SONIPAT DISTT. FOR THE 14.08.2020 03.09.2020 http:// etenders.hry.nic.ir 2 PWD B&R BR. SONIPAT 106.21 LACS pwd-eepd2-sonepat@hry.nic.in YEAR 2020-21, + 6 OTHER WORKS 17.08.2020 25.08.2020 PWD B&R BR. KURUKSHETRA http:// etenders.hry.nic.in 3 UNDER PROVINCIAL DIVISION NO.1, PWD B&R, KURUKSHETRA RE-INVITE STRENGTHENING OF KAITH KALANAUR ROAD TO DARWA (ID 01732-237834 PWD B&R BR. 24.08.2020 http:// etenders.hry.nic.ir 4 9.50 LACS YAMUNA NAGAR 515) (0.00 TO 0.87) IN YAMUNA NAGAR DISTRICT 07.09.2020 CONSTRUCTION OF SUB HEALTH CENTRE AT DANGRA IN FATEHABAD http:// etenders.hry.nic.ir 01667-220120 14.08.2020 5 PWD B&R FATEHABAD 30.98 LACS DISTT. 01.09.2020 HARYANA PWD B&R PROCUREMENT OF FURNITURE FOR JUDICIAL COURT AT BILASPUR IN 19.08.2020 http:// etenders.hry.nic.in 80.54 LACS EXECUTIVE ENGINEER YAMUNA NAGAR DISTT. 03.09.2020 20.08.2020 31.08.2020 PANCHAYATI RAJ, http:// etenders.hry.nic.in 94672-51500 7 PRINTING OF BOOKS OF ACCOUNTS ETC (WITH MATERIAL) 10.62 LACS prexeeng.hsr@hry.nic.in RE-E-TENDER SPECIAL REPAIR/REWINDING OF 01 NO. 650 HP ELECTRICAL CLOSING DATE W/S MECH. DIVISION, 8 MOTOR, H.T. BHEL MAKE (P-9) AT PUMP HOUSE MC-10F M/GARH CANAL. 18.53 LACS www.etenders.hry.nic.ir 01282-251353 + 7 OTHER WORKS PDG WDG WITH HARD SHOULDERING AND STRENGTHENING OF LINK 01.09.2020 HARYANA PWD B&R NARAINGARH 20.08.2020 04.09.2020 ROAD FROM NH-73 TO NAGAWAN IN AMBALA DISTT (ID 847) (RE-INVITED) + 1 OTHER WORK 9 www.etenders.hry.nic.in EXECUTIVE ENGINEER TENDER NO. 2020_HRY_140065 A/MTC. ESTIMATES UNDER P.H.E S/DIVN. NO. 2, GOHANADISTT. SONIPAT - "CONTRACT FOR OUTSOURCING OF SERVICES FOR UNSKILLED/SEMI SKILLED JOB WORK FOR VARIOUS RURAL 01263-258417 19.08.2020 https://etenders.hry.nic.in PHE GOHANA 273.96 LACS WATER SUPPLY SCHEMES I.E. JUAN, CHITANA, DUBETA (UNDER PHE / ee1gohana@gmail.com / S/DIVN. NO. 2, GOHANA) AND ALL OTHER WORKS CONTINGENT THERETO". (FOR 9 MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF COMMENCEMENT) + 30 ohana@phedharyana.gov.in OTHER WORKS PROVIDING EQUIPMENTS/ITEMS FOR RTPCR MOLECULAR LAB DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT 20.08.2020 7015444191 EMD www.etenders.hry.nic.ir CIVIL SURGEON JIND 50000/dhs.csjnd@hry.nic.in DISTRICT INFORMATION 19.08.2020 ctmgrg@gmail.com 12 PROVISION OF HOUSE KEEPING SERVICES 1.25 LACS TECHNOLOGY SOCIETY GURUGRAM GURUGRAM.GOV.IN RECALLED TENDER NOTICE FOR THE WORK OF RAIPUR - PROVIDING FUNCTIONAL HOUSEHOLD TAPS CONNECTIONS (FHTC) AND LAYING OF PIPE LINE UNDER JJM. LAYING OF 4"DI WATER SUPPLY PIPE LINE CLOSING 01251-254086 http://etenders.hry.nic.in 13 PHED JHAJJAR 54.04 LACS DATE eeph2jhajjar@gmail.com 24.08.2020 INCLUDING DI/CI SPECIALS AND FUNCTIONAL HOUSE HOLD TAP CONNECTION IN VILLAGE RAIPUR UNDER JJM. + 2 OTHER WORKS PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY FACILITIES IN NEWLY APPROVED COLONIES 19.08.2020 OF THE TOWN, "REPAIR OF STAFF QUARTER, PUMP CHAMBERS AND http://etenders.hrv.nic.in 0184-2266003 14 PHED KARNAL 287.95 LACS OFFICE BUILDING OF PHE SUB DIVISION NILOKHERI AND ALL OTHER WORKS CONTINGENT THERETO." + 1 OTHER WORK FORESTER QUARTER AT SALHAWAS IN MATANHAIL RANGE + 1 OTHER DIVISIONAL FOREST 19.08.2020 01251-257258 http://etenders.hry.nic.in 15 21540/-OFFICER, JHAJJAR WORK SPECIAL REPAIR OF SUB DIVISIONAL HOSPITAL AT MOHINDERGARH IN CLOSING 01282-251267 / 16 PWD (B&R) NARNAUL MOHINDERGARH DISTRICT (I/C E.I. WORK) (RE-INVITED) + 1 OTHER 18.97 LACS (IRRIGATION & WATER CONSTRUCTION OF PARAPET WALL 3' HEIGHT OF V.R. BRIDGE AT RD 21.08.2020 01746-222392 17 1.30 LACS www.etenders.hry.nic.in DEPARTMENT HARYANA 55750 ON SARASVATI RIVER/DRAIN. rasvatidnktl@gmail.com PANCHKULA) PW (B&R), DEPTT. 18.08.2020 http://etenders.hry.nic.in 0129-2288187/ 18 56.45 LACS SERVICE ROAD OF ROB BALLABGARH OB BALLABGARH PALI DHAUJ SOHNA FARIDABAD ROAD IN FARIDABAD DISTRICT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT: www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in

SHORT TAKES

'Slight improvement

in Pranab condition'

New Delhi: Respiratory parameters of former President Pranab Mukherjee have shown a slight improvement, though he continues to be on ventilator support, the hospital said on Thursday. Mr Mukherjee, who was admitted to the Army's Research and Referral Hospital on August 10, developed a lung infection on Wednesday. Doctors attending on him said his vital parameters remain stable. "The respiratory parameters of Pranab Mukherjee have shown slight improvement though he continues to be on ventilatory support. His vital and clinical parameters remain stable and are being closely monitored by a team of specialists," a hospi-tal statement said. Mr Mukherjee was operated on for removal of a clot in the

Strict lockdown

brain on August 10 at the

Army Hospital in Delhi Cantonment. — PTI

enforced in Bengal

Kolkata: West Bengal on Thursday witnessed strict enforcement of the government's twice a week complete lockdown with the police cracking down heavily on violators in a bid to check the spread of the contagion. The lockdown will remain in force on Friday too. A total of 2542 people were arrested from across the state. including 378 in Kolkata, on the charge of violation of the lockdown guidelines and safety precautions. The complete lockdown on Thursday is part of the state govern-ment's plan to implement shutdowns every week since July 23 to break the chain of Covid-19 infection amid admission of community transmission in some parts of the state. All public transport, government and private offices, and other commercial establishments, barring those dealing with essential services, remained clos-ed due to lockdown. — PTI

2 electrocuted to death in WB zoo

Kolkata: Two employees of a private firm, engaged to install a hoarding inside Alipore Zoo, died on Thursday after coming in contact with a live wire, an official said. The two were rushed to hospital where they were declared dead, Alipore zoo director Asis Samanta told PTI. Another employee of the firm, who also electrocuted, is in hospital and his condition is stated to be serious. Samanta said, West Bengal Zoo Authority (WBZA) has ordered a probe into the incident, chief wildlife warden Ravikant Sinha said. A zoo source said the electrocution could have been caused due to heavy rain in the metropolis since Thursday morning. - PTI

Doc ends life due

to 'work' pressure

Bengaluru: A 43-year old government doctor on coro-navirus duty died of suicide in Mysuru district in Karnataka with some of his colleagues alleging he was under work pressure. The state government said an inquiry has been ordered into the death of the doctor and advised those battling the virus not to succumb to any pressure. According to the police, Taluk health offi-cer S.R. Nagendra was found hanging at his quarters in Alanahalli where he had been staying alone.

Nagendra's family was residing in another area in Mysuru district and he chose to stay alone out of fear of contracting the virus and spreading it, they said. Some of his colleagues alleged there was intense work pressure on him as he had been on Covid-19 duty. - PTI

2 top LeT men among 6 ultras killed in 4 days

Infiltration from PoK down by 50%: J&K DIG

YUSUF JAMEEL

Jammu and Kashmir's director general of police Dilbagh Singh on Thursday claimed that the security forces combating a three-decade old insurgency in the erstwhile state have wreaked the leadership structure of separatist militant organisations apart by killing as many 26 of their top commanders in, so far, this year.

He said that two of them — both belonging to outlawed Lashkar-e-Tayabba (LeT) — were "neutralised" in the past three days along with four other militants in three separate operations.
Mr Singh also claimed

that infiltration of militants from across the border had decreased by half this year. "The alertness of our forces and border management are so good that for the first time the level of infiltration has come down by fifty percent when compared to the past. Also, the local recruitment into the mil-

LOCAL RECRUITMENT into the militant outfits has decreased considerably. I think people, particularly our children, are listening to our advice and appeals and staying away from the gun, J&K

itant outfits has decreased considerably. I think people, particularly our children are listening to our advice and appeals and staying away from the gun".

DIG Dilbagh Singh said.

Speaking to reporters in Handwara town, he said, "We've succeeded in breaking the leadership structure of militants in Kashmir. Twenty-six top most commanders have been killed in encounters across the Valley, so far, this

Taking about the killing of LeT command-er Naseer-ud-Din Lone along with another militant in the latest gunfight with security forces that took place in Kralgund area of Handwara, the DGP said, "He was

involved in the killing of six CRPF personnel in separate terror attacks besides similar other acts including the murder of a local policeman. We had had reports that he was planning to carry out a big strike in north Kashmir after the killing of Sajad Ahmed Mir alias Sajad Hyder." Mir, also a senior commander of the LeT, was among three militants killed in a gunfight with security forces in Kreeri area of neighbouring Bandipore district earlier this week.

The group led by Mir had on Monday killed two CRPF jawans and a local Special Police Officer in a sneak attack carried out by them in Kreeri. In the ensuing encounter which continued for about thirty hours, all the three assailants including Mir, close associate Innayatullah and their Pakistani aide Osman and two Army jawans Grenadiers Ravi Kumar Singh and Prashant Singh were killed.

Pt. Jasraj cremated with state honours



Family members carry the mortal remains of late classical singer Pandit Jasraj during his funeral in Mumbai on Thursday. Pandit Jasraj (90) died due to a cardiac arrest at his home in New Jersey on Monday.

flood climbed to 27 as

81.79 lakh people were

affected in 16 districts

times the normal rain-

On an average, the

national capital gauges

11.3 mm rainfall from

8.30 am on August 19 to

8.30 am on August 20

Observatory, which pro-

vides representative figures for the city, record-

Road and Ridge weather

stations gauged 89.1 mm, 62.4 mm and 77.3

mm precipitation dur-

Rainfall recorded bel-

ow 15 mm is considered

light, between 15 and 64.5 mm is moderate and

above 64.5 mm is heavy.

Kuldeep Srivastava

the head of the IMD

regional forecasting

centre, said moderate rains will continue till

Thereafter, the intensi-

ty will decrease and the

city will witness on and

was

flooding in Gurgaon,

where roads turned into

small rivers and parks

resembled swimming

Friday morning.

off light rains.

There

ing the period.

ed 54.8 mm rainfall.

Safdarjung

Palam, Lodhi

every year.

Heavy rains hit

lives in several

parts of country

New Delhi, Aug. 20: WITH 2 more deaths,

rains disrupted

normal life in many

parts of the country,

including Delhi and adjoining Gurgaon, on

Thursday and led to worsening of the flood

situation in Uttar

Pradesh where over 870

villages in 16 districts

In Bihar, the flood situ-

ation remained grim.

With two more deaths,

the toll in the Bihar

flood climbed to 27 as

81.79 lakh people were affected in 16 districts.

submerged and electric-

ity and road links

snapped at several places in Odisha after torrential rains trig-

gered by a low-pressure

area over the Bay of

Bengal lashed the state.

In Jammu and Kashmir, multiple land-

slides triggered by heavy rains blocked the

Srinagar national high-

way, the only all-weath-

er road linking Kashmir

Rains in Delhi and its

neighbouring areas this

morning led to long traf-

fic snarls and damaged

property. The Ayanagar

weather station record-

ed 122.8 mm between

8.30 am on Wednesday

Thursday, which was 11

am on

8.30

to rest of the country.

Jammu-

Low-lying areas were

have been affected.

Heavy

India-aided projects in Bangla to finish soon

KUMARASWAMI NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

Several Indian developmental assistance projin Bangladesh, including the Rampal Maitree Power Plant, India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline and links between Akhaura-Agartala and Chilahati-Haldibari and Khulna-Mongla rail line are expected to get completed next year, New Delhi said on Thursday.

During the two-day visit foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla to Bangladesh that culminated on Wednesday during which he called on Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina — it was proposed that a highlevel monitoring mechanism be set up to regularly review the progress of the ongoing projects, New Delhi added.

In response to a questhe ministry of external affairs made it clear that Bangladesh did not raise either the issue of the NRC process in Assam nor the Indian Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) during discussions with India during the visit. The visit of the Indian foreign secretary came at a time when China has been trying to extend its economic influence in Bangladesh.

■ HAM chief upset with RJD over no talks before taking decisions

Blow to Bihar alliance, Manjhi quits

PATNA, AUG. 20

Hindustani Awam Morcha -Secular (HAM-S) on Thursday announced that it has decided to part ways with the grand alliance led

by the RJD in Bihar.

HAM leaders said that party chief Jitan Ram Manjhi has been upset with the RJD for not consulting alliance partners before taking any decisions and ignoring his demands for the formation of the coordination committee. Sources said that besides

snapping ties with the RJD and forming an alliance with other like-minded political parties in Bihar ahead of the Assembly polls slated to be held later

this year.
The final ultimatum

favour of snapping ties with the RJD and forming an alliance with other likeminded political parties in Bihar ahead of the Assembly polls later this year Mr Manjhi others in the party were also in favour of formation of coordination committee had ended a

Manjhi others in the party were also in

month ago following which it was being speculated that Mr Manjhi may quit the alliance and join hands with either the JD(U) or BJP. On Thursday after the decision to quit the grand

HAM spokesperson Danish Rizwan said that "those who don't listen to coalition partners will not listen to the people after coming to power. The decision to quit the grand alliance has been taken after our repeated demand for the formation of a coordina-tion committee was turned down by the RJD".

While both RJD Congress have been silent on the development, BJP hailed Mr Manjhi's decision to quit the grand alliance.

10 injured as **Naxals thrash** villagers in C'garh district

Raipur, Aug. 20: Ten persons, including five women and a minor girl, were injured after allegedly being beaten up by Naxals for supporting development activi-ties in their village in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district, the police said on Thursday.

The incident took place on Wednesday night in Chikpal village, where a group of 25 to 30 armed cadres thrashed over 20 villagers with sticks and butt of their guns, Dantewada Abhishek Pallava

The SP said the district collector had visited the village last month and assured to take up development

works there.
On the collector's direction, women in villages of Dante-wada formed groups and nominal funds were given to them to carry out various activities in their villages, he said. -PTI

MOIDS

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority Main Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar (U.P.) Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firms for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website www.noidaauthorityonline.com & https://etender.up.nic.in. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc. Fresh-Tender work.

(A) The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 03.09.2020 upto 5.00 PM and shall be opened/downloaded on dated 04 09 2020 at 11 00 AM

S.N.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1.	50/GM(R)/Sr.M(E&M)- II/2020-21/ET	Providing of New Traffic Signals at Various Sectors in Noida.	9.31
2.	52/GM(R)/Sr.M(E&M)- II/2020-21/ET	Providing & Fixing of Park Light in Rajat Vihar, Sector-62 and Sector-63A, Noida.	11.01
3.	53/GM(R)/Sr.M(E&M)- II/2020-21/ET	Supply and Installation of New Windows Split Type Air Conditioner in Sport Complex Building at Stadium Sector-21A, Noida.	19.16
4.	54/GM(R)/Sr.M(E&M)- II/2020-21/ET	Maintenance of Windows Split Type Air Conditioner in Sport Complex Building at Stadium Sector-21A, Noida.	7.18
5.	09/GM(R)/Sr.M(E&M)- II/2019-20/ET	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Fountain with LED Colour Changing Lights at Round about underpass NH-24 (Noida Entry Point), Sector-62, Noida.	20.10

Re-Tender work.

(B) The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 27.08.2020 upto 5.00 PM and shall be opened/downloaded on dated 28.08.2020 at 11.00 AM.

5.N.	JOD NO.	Name of Work	(Rs. Lacs)	ı
6.	17/GM(R)/Sr.M.(E&M)- II/2020-21/ET	Annual Maintenance of Park Light in Sector-62, Noida.	19.76	
Comment Management				

General Manager

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA







In the fight against coronavirus, Celebrate **Ganesh Chaturthi at home**



No idol of Lord Ganesha shall be set up in the tent/ pandal/public places.



People are advised to celebrate the festival at their homes.



Maintain social distancing of at least 2 yards.



Refrain from personal greeting.



If you step out of the house, wear a mask, carry a hand sanitizer and maintain social distancing.

Stay home and have a safe Ganesh Chaturthi!

E-mail to CP, Delhi at: cp.snshrivastava@delhipolice.gov.in | Write to CP, Delhi at P.O. Box No. 171, GPO, New Delhi FOR HELPLINE SERVICES CALL 1090 FOR IMMEDIATE POLICE HELP CALL 112

CLP leader Nath tightens grip over party over the party, virtually gaining the status of supre-

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY BHOPAL, AUG. 20

Former CM Kamal Nath has been declared leader of Opposition in the Madhya Pradesh Assembly.

State Assembly pro-tem speaker Rameswar Sharma accorded him status of the Leader of the Opposition in the House following a letter written to him by MP Pradesh Congress Committee apprising him of the party's decision to appoint



KAMAL NATH had stepped down as chief minister on March 20 in the wake of 22 Congress legislators, loyal to Jyotiraditya Scindia, resigning from the Assembly

him the Congress Legi-slature Party (CLP) leader. "I declare Mr Nath leader of Opposition in the House following a letter written to

me by the Congress in this regard," Mr Sharma told reporters on Wednesday Mr Nath, who stepped

down as chief minister on

March 20 in the wake of 22 Congress legislators, loyal to Jyotiraditya Scindia, resigning from the House, also holds the post of president of MP PCC.

Later. Mr Scindia and 22 ex-MLAs joined BJP. With his fresh appointment as CLP leader, Mr

Nath has tightened his grip

leader Chaturvedy who switched over to the saffron party from Congress along with 22 former Congress MLAs, took a jibe at Mr Nath for holding duel posts of PCC chief and CLP leader.

mo of state Congress.

A senior Congress leader said there was no violation of party rules or constitution in the appointment of Mr Nath as the Leader of

the Opposition.

SHORT TAKES

Russia wants to partner with India for Covid vaccine

New Delhi: Russia is looking for a partnership with India for producing Covid-19 vaccine Sputnik V, Kirill Dmitriev, the CEO of the Russian Direct Investment Fund, said on Thursday, Russian President Vladimir Putin had announced that his country has developed the world's first vaccine against Covid-19, which works quite effectively" and forms a "stable immunity" against the disease. Sputnik V has been developed by the Gamaleya Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, along with the RDIF. The vaccine has not been tested in Phase 3 or larger clinical trials. Addressing an online press briefing, Dmitriev said several nations are interested in the production of the vaccine from countries in Latin America, Asia and the Middle East. "The production of the vaccine is a very important issue. Currently, we are looking for a partnership with India. We believe that they are capable of producing the Gamaleya vaccine and it is very important to say that those partnerships to produce the vaccine will enable us to cover the demand that we have," he said. Dmitriev said Russia is looking forward to international cooperation. "We are going to do clinical

trials not just in Russia but also in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, probably in Brazil and India. We are planning to produce the vaccine in more than five countries and there is a very high demand from Asia, Latin America, Italy and other parts of the world regarding the delivery of the vaccine," he said. Alexander Gintsburg, the director of the Gamaleya Research Institute of **Epidemiology and** Microbiology and an academi-

cian at the Russian Academy of Sciences, said more than 20,000 people have taken part in the clinical trials, based on human adenoviruses or human adenoviral vectors.

Blow to RJD as Lalu 'samdhi', 2 other **MLAs join JD(U)**

Patna: The main opposition RJD on Thursday received yet another jolt ahead of the polls when its three more MLAs including old-timer Chandrika Rai, whose daughter is locked in a nasty marital dispute with Lalu Prasad's son, joined the ruling JD(U). Rai hinted that his daughter might contest the coming assembly polls. He, however, did not specify the name of the RJD leader against whom his daughter Aishwarva would contest polls, but asserted that there is no "safe seats" for both brothers -- Tejashwi Yadav and Tej Pratap Yadav -- in the state. Rais daughter Aishwarva had tied the knot with Prasads elder son Tej Pratap Yadav in May, 2018 though the latter filed a divorce petition barely six months later citing incompatibility. The matter is pending with a Patna court. Apart from Rai, the other two RJD MLAs who embraced JD(U) are Jai Vardhan Yadav, the Paliganj (Patna) MLA and grandson of former Union minister and famous Yadav leader Ram

Bus hijack kingpin in UP arrested after encounter with cops

Lakhan Singh Yadav besides

Faraz Fatmi, MLA from Keoti

(Darbhanga). — PTI

Agra/Firozabad: The alleged mastermind behind the hijacking of a bus with 34 passengers on board was arrested by the Uttar Pradesh Police following an encounter in Firozabad district on Thursday, officials said. Agra Senior Superintendent of Police Babloo Kumar said the police will invoke the stringent National Security Act (NSA) against Pradeep Gupta alias Gudda for the "sensational and audacious" act once the case is chargesheeted. The gunfight broke out around 5 am near a village in Fatehabad area between the accused and police teams, including Agra and Firozabad units, and a special operations group, he said. "Key accused Pradeep Gupta and his associate Yatendra Yadav were on a motorcycle but seeing the police check, they

opened fire and tried to flee.

Gupta got injured in retalia-

tory firing, while Yadav man-

aged to escape through the

farmlands," SSP Kumar told

reporters. - PTI

27.7% in containment zones exposed to Covid

Punjab's 1st survey was conducted in 5 zones from Aug. 1 to 17

Covid-19 infection have been found in 27.7 per cent of people in Punjab's containment zones, according to the findings of a sero-

This was Punjab's first exclusive survey and was conducted in five containment zones from August 1 to 17 among a systematically selected random sample population of 1,250 people. There were earlier surveys, but they were more generalised and conducted by the state government in coordination with the Indian Council of Medical Research, according to a government statement issued here.

The latest survey's findings were submitted to chief minister Amarinder Singh at a Covid review meeting on Thursday. "A total of 27.7 per cent of the people in Punjab"s containment zones are found to be positive for Covid antibodies, indicating that they have already been infected and have recovon a day when Delhi





■ The survey was Punjab's first exclusive survey and was conducted in five containment zones from August 1 to 17 among a systematically selected random sample population of 1,250 people

■ The findings showed that the Sars-CoV2 (Covid-19) antibodies' prevalence in the containment zones to be the highest at 40 per cent in Amritsar district, followed by 35.6% in Ludhiana, 33.2% in SAS Nagar, 19.2% in Patiala and 10.8% in Jalandhar district

■ The sample size was 250 people from each containment zone, and from each of the selected households, one person above the age of 18 was randomly chosen for

avirus," as per the sero-survey's findings.

The findings showed that the Sars-CoV2 (Covid-19) antibodies' prevalence in the containment zones to be the highest at 40 per cent in Amritsar district, followed by 35.6 per cent in Ludhiana, 33.2 per cent in SAS Nagar, 19.2 per cent in Patiala and 10.8 per cent in Jalandhar district.

survey findings, which showed that antibodies against the Covid-19 infection have been found in 29.1 per cent of people in the national capital.

For the latest Punjab serosurvey one containment zone each was selected in Patiala, SAS Nagar, Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Amritsar districts. These zones had reported a high number of Covid cases. The sample size was 250 people from each zone, and from each of the selected households, one person above the age of 18 was randomly chosen for the survey.

Overall, the sero- prevalence of Sars CoV-2 antibodies was found to be 27.7 per cent in the containment zones where the highest number of Covid-19 cases had been reported. The survey was aimed at finding out the prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies using Rapid Antibody test-

Night curfew in Punjab from today as Covid-19 cases surge

Amid rising coronavirus cases, Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh on Thursday ordered a series of emergency measures, including extension of weekend lockdown, with daily night curfew from 7 pm to 5 am in all 167 cities and towns in the state from August 21. Besides, the chief minister also ordered a total ban on all gatherings except wed-dings and funerals across the state till August 31. Amarinder, making the

announcement Thursday evening, called for "war-like prepared-ness" to deal with the spike in coronavirus cases.

"Enough is enough. We need to be tough without affecting the state's economy," the Chief Minister said today, adding that each of the more than 900 Covid-linked deaths in the

vate offices will work at 50 per cent capacity till the end of this month, as per the directives issued by the CM during a video conference meeting to review the COVID situation in the

Punjab has been witnessing a surge in Covid-19 cases and death toll for the last several days. On Wednesday, the state had reported 36,083 coronavirus cases with 920 deaths so far.

The chief minister also directed the police to ensure the ban on political protests and gathering is followed, and asked his own party — the Congress – to self-enforce the ban strictly.

Punjab on Thursday saw its biggest single-day spike of 1,741 coronavirus cases on Thursday, taking the Covid-19 tally to 37,824 in the state, according to a

Thirty-seven more fatalities were also recorded in the state and the death toll now stands at 957, it said The record jump in the

caseload came on a day when the state government announced extension of night curfew by two hours in all cities from August 21.

On August 17, the state had reported a maximum daily increase of 1,704 cases. Of the fresh fatalities, 10 deaths were reported from Ludhiana, five each from Mohali, Patiala and Sangrur, three from Jalandhar, two each from SBS Nagar, Amritsar and Hoshiarpur and one each Gurdaspur, from Kapurthala and Muktsar,

as per the medical bulletin. One death case reported from Amritsar on Wednesday was deleted as it was counted twice, it

■ Rahul says Modi govt decisions hit small businesses badly 'Modi ruined unorganised economy'

Raipur, Aug. 20: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday accused the Narendra Modi government of decimating the unorganised economy, comprising farmers, labourers and small businesses, in the last six years of its rule, and said that the country will not be able to generate jobs in the coming period as a result of that.

Addressing via video conferencing the foundation stone-laying ceremony of the party's offices to be built in 22 districts headquarters Chhattisgarh, he said that although the unorganised economy generates 90 per cent of the country's employment, the Modi government destroyed it through various moves

implementation "wrong GST".
The event was organised

on the occasion of the birth anniversary of former prime minister Rajiv

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been attacking the unorganised economy for the last six years. He did this because this sector has money and Modiji wanted to transfer it to big businessmen," Gandhi alleged. 'Wherever there is a

Congress government (in the states), we work to balance the unorganised and organised economies. The unorganised economy acts as a shock absorber in adverse situations.'

"If the country's unoreconomy secured and strong, it can absorb any kind of shock Farmers, labourers, small and medium business have been decimated as a result of demonetisation and extremely complex GST decisions by the

Gandhi, Congress leader 1 and cope with difficult situations. Our mother and

– Rahul

sister keep money at their home, because it works as a shock absorber," he added. "Farmers, labourers, small and medium busi-

ness have been decimated as a result of demonetisation and extremely complex GST decisions by the

Centre," the Congress leader alleged. "The first attack on the

unorganised economy was the decision of demoneti-sation by PM Modi. He made people deposit their hard-earned money in the banks and then with that money he waived loans of 10-15 businessmen friends and crony capitalists. Then he imposed the wrong GST that led to collapse of small and medium businesses and farmers," he said.

Slamming the Centre over the handling of the coronavirus situation, Mr Gandhi said, "Modiji suddenly implemented lock-down without one price." down without any prior notice. Why did he suddenly do this? There was a thinking behind it which was to target our unorgan-

Remembering Rajiv Gandhi



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi pays tribute to his late father and former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 76th birth anniversary at Vir Bhoomi in New Delhi on Thursday. Paying respects to his father, Rahul Gandhi said his father was a man with a tremendous vision and was far ahead of his time. Taking to social media and using the hashtag "Remembering Rajiv Gandhi", several Congress leaders hailed Rajiv Gandhi's contribution to nation building and his leadership.

I-T raids on Ram Mandir work starts, MP realtors escalate into political row

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

Income-tax sleuths on Thursday conducted raids on the establishments of nine major real estate developers in Madhya Pradesh, several of them were said to have links to the power corridor in the state. A strong contingent of

around 600 tax officers from Delhi conducted simultaneous raids on these establishments in Bhopal and Indore. The raids continued till the last reports came.
"At least 112 'benami'

RABINDRA NATH

BHOPAL, AUG. 20

CHOUDHURY

properties have come to fore so far following the raids. The properties include 357 acres in Bhopal. Besides, huge cashes were also recovered from one establishment. Valuation of the properties was being done," a senior tax officer told this newspaper. Sources said an anony-

mous letter reached the **Enforcement Directorate** (ED) last year informing that some retired and serving civil service officers of MP cadre have invested in some real estate companies in the state. The ED had then referred the matter to the Central Board of Direct Taxation for a

probe. The Congress gave a political spin to the raids, linking promoter Faith Group Raghavendra Singh Tomar to power corridor here. Party spokesman Narendra Singh Saluja released a picture of 2012 showing the builder in company of chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan to establish their alleged links.

The party also referred to several pictures post-ed in the real estate developer's social media site showing him in the company of state minister Aurobind Bhadoria at several places.

no iron will be used: Trust Engineers now testing soil health at temple site Ramb to donate copper

The Ram Mandir in Ayodhya will be con-Mandir will be built by structed by adhering to adhering to India's India's ancient and tradiancient and traditional tional construction techniques and copper plates

will be used to fuse stone blocks with each other. The construction has "begun" and currently soil testing at the site is being done. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had performed the "bhoomi pujan" of the temple on August 5.

Members of the Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra, Supreme Court appointed trust for the construction of the temple, held a meeting in New Delhi on Thursday. Asking "Ram bhakts" to donate copper for the construction, the trust said donors can "engrave family names, place of origin or their community temples' names" on copper plates which should be 18 inches long, 30 mm wide

▶ THE TRUST called upon devotees of Lord Ram to donate copper plates for the construction. The construction techniques

and three mm in depth. "This way, the copper plates will not only symbolize the unity of this country but also be a testament to the entire country's contribution towards construction, tweeted the trust. Iron will not be used in the con-

struction. "The Mandir will be built by adhering to India's ancient and traditional construction techniques. It will also be built to sustain earthquakes. storms and other natural calamities. Iron won't be used in the construction of the Mandir," the Trust

The Trust also called upon devotees of Lord

plates for the construction the meeting. After Trust's general-secretary Champat Rai said, "We are taking help of Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee and IIT Chennai. 1200 pillars with one metre diameter will be brought up from depth of 30-35 metre for a strong foundation." The temple will be built to sustain earthquakes, storms and other natural calamities. Engineers from CBRI Roorkee, IIT-Madras along with L&T are currently testing the soil at the temple site and the construc-

said the trust. The temple will be 161 feet tall, three-storey structure on a raised platform with multiple turrets, pillars and domes and in 'Nagara style' of architecture. The original design by renowned temple architect Chandrakant Sompura in 1983 has been slightly modified.

tion work is expected to

finish in 36-40 months,

Rajput case: CBI team to visit crime scene today

The CBI, probing the death case of Sushant Singh Rajput, is expected to collect all forensic, scientific and other crucial evidences pertaining to the case from Mumbai police on Friday.

Sources said a team of officials, along with forensic experts, has reached "Forensic Mumbai. experts will on Friday visit the crime scene in Mumbai where the Bollywood actor was found dead," sources said. The experts will collect fresh scientific evidences pertaining to the case, sources said.

Rajput (34), was found dead in his rented apartment in Mumbai's suburban Bandra on June 14.

"The experts will ask police to provide the belongings of the victims for a fresh medical and forensic analysis. They will also meet doctors who had conducted Sushant Singh Rajput's autopsy," sources said.

Yes Bank fraud case: Wadhawans get bail AGE CORRESPONDENT

The Bombay high court on Thursday granted bail to Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd promoters Wadhawan and Dheerai Wadhawan, who have been accused of money laundering Enforcement Directorate in the multi-crore Yes Bank fraud case. The brothers, however, will remain in jail as they have also been booked by

the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the same case. Justice Bharati Dangre granted them bail as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) failed to file its charge sheet in the case within the stipulated 60-day period. The court noted that there is a period prescribed in law for filing of the charge sheet, and an accused cannot be kept in custody even for a day after that stipulated time and they have the right to default bail.

An accused can seek default bail if the investigating agency fails to file a charge sheet against him or her in the case



Dheeraj Kapil

within the period prescribed under section 167 the Criminal Procedure Code.

Additional General Anil Singh, appearing for ED, sought the court to stay its order for two weeks so that the agency could appeal in the Supreme Court. Justice Dangre, however, refused and said once the right of default bail is due, the accused cannot be kept in custody thereafter even for a day. The court directed the duo to deposit ₹1 lakh each as surety and surrender their passports.

The brothers had sought bail claiming the ED failed to file its chargesheet within the stipulated period of 60 days. They were arrested by the ED on May 14 on money laundering money

Govt hikes aviation security fee by ₹10

New Delhi, Aug. 20: The civil aviation ministry has decided to charge higher aviation security fee (ASF) from domestic as well as international passengers from September 1, senior gov-ernment officials said on Thursday.

Making the air travel slightly costlier, the officials said the ASF for domestic flyers will be increased to ₹160 from starting next month, and international passengers will pay \$5.2 instead of \$4.85 as the ASF from September 1. The ministry had increased the ASF last year too. On June 7, 2019, the ministry said domestic passengers would be charged ₹150 instead of ₹130 as the ASF and international passengers would be charged \$4.85 instead of \$3.25 as the ASF from July 1, 2019.

The aviation sector has been significantly impacted due to the restrictions travel imposed in India and other countries in view of the coronavirus pandemic. All airlines in India have taken costcutting measures such as pay cuts, leave-with-out-pay and firings of employees in order to conserve cash.

Indore gets cleanest city tag for 4th time New Delhi, Aug 20: Indore was adjudged India's cleandifferent categories Varanasi was adjudged

■ Surat, Navi Mumbai bag 2nd, 3rd spot in Swachh Survekshan

est city for a fourth straight year while Surat and Navi Mumbai grabbed the second and third positions respectively, as the Centre announced the results of its latest annual cleanliness survey on Thursday. Varanasi, represented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Lok Sabha, was adjudged the 'Best Ganga Town' in the country, fol-

urban local bodies, fol-

lowed by Maharashtra and

Madhya Pradesh.

and Madhya Pradesh. lowed by Kanpur, Munger, Prayagraj and Haridwar. Chhattisgarh was given the 'Cleanest State' award in the category of states having more than 100

the 'Best Ganga Town' in the country, followed by Kanpur, Munger, Prayagraj and Haridwar. Chhattisgarh was given the 'Cleanest State' award in the category of states having more than 100 urban local bodies, followed by Maharashtra

The Swachh Survekshan awards 2020 — the fifth annual cleanliness survey of the country — were announced by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri at a ceremony where 129 awards were given in

The survey brochure describes the New Delhi Municipal Council as India's Cleanest National Capital (National or State Capitals/UT) . The NDMC comprises large part of Rajpath and the VIP zone of Lutyens' Delhi.

A total of 4,242 cities, 62 Cantonment Boards and 97 Ganga towns were surveyed, and 1.87 crore citizens participated in the exercise, according to the government.

Ambikapur Chhattisgarh has been ranked the cleanest city in the category of 1-10 lakh population, followed by Mysore in Karnataka and New Delhi Municipal area.

Cantonment Board had been ranked first while Delhi Cantonment Board and Meerut Cantonment Board have grabbed second and third positions respectively.

According to the survey results, Jharkhand was adjudged the 'Cleanest State' in the category of having less than 100 ULBs, followed by Haryana, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh. Indore has topped the ranking in the cleanest city category (having more than one lakh population), and is followed by Surat, Navi Mumbai. Vijaywada and Ahmedabad in that





THE ASIAN AGE

21 AUGUST 2020

CBI's Sushant probe may set troubling precedent

The Supreme Court's decision to hand over the entire investigation into the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput in Mumbai on June 14, and the circumstances surrounding it, to the CBI might seem, at first sight, to be justified given the ongoing political wrangling between the Bihar and Maharashtra governments over competing claims to jurisdiction by the Patna and Mumbai police forces, but it also sets a whole new precedent, one that may prove troubling in future.

The single-judge bench of Justice Hrishikesh Roy, taking recourse to the court's plenary powers under Article 142 of the Constitution, that enable it to pass any order to do "complete justice" in any case, said there was "no impediment" to endorsing the ongoing CBI investigation, and that due to "acrimonious allegations" at the political level, the "legitimacy of the investigation (by the Mumbai police) had come under a cloud". The CBI had taken over the investigation of the FIR registered by the Patna police, on a complaint by Sushant's father K.K. Rajput, after the state government's referral. The Mumbai police, which was probing the

Sadly, public faith in the effectively investigate even high-profile cases is low. It has been probing the death of actress Jiah Khan for almost seven years. NCP supremo Sharad Pawar hoped the CBI's Rajput probe won't be like the one into rationalist Narendra Dabholkar's 2013 murder, which remains unsolved.

actor's death under Section 174 CrPC, has been directed to hand it over to the CBI's ability to CBI. The real mistake by the Mumbai police may have been its failure to file an FIR, as much was made of the fact that the only FIR in the case was registered in Patna.

The court said it was handing the case to the CBI as "the trust, faith and confidence of the common man in the judicial process will resonate", but sadly, public faith in the CBI's ability to effectively investigate even high-profile cases is quite low. It has been probing the death of actress Jiah Khan for almost seven years, with little progress. NCP supremo Sharad Pawar said Wednesday, after the Supreme Court

order, that he hoped the CBI's Rajput probe won't be like the one into rationalist Narendra Dabholkar's 2013 murder, which remains unresolved. And memories are still fresh of the slipshod way in which it probed the 2008 murder of Aarushi Talwar, with matters hitting a dead end. That shocking crime remains an unresolved mystery.

The Supreme Court noted that the "steps taken" by the Mumbai police while probing Sushant's death "cannot be faulted", yet it directed the CBI to take over. More important, by endorsing the "Zero FIR" registered by the Patna police, which the Bihar government later transferred to the CBI, a new principle has been established. In India's federal system, law and order (and thus investigation of crime) is a state subject. A "Zero FIR" is meant as an enabler: to let people file FIRs near their homes or workplaces, which would then be shifted to the jurisdiction where the incident occurred. If everyone impacted by an event filed FIRs in the places they came from, and have it investigated there, it would mean chaos. If Rhea Chakraborty's family, for instance, were to file an FIR in West Bengal to protect her interests, would the Kolkata police investigate the Sushant case? And, hypothetically, if a crime had multiple victims from different states, could they or their families file separate FIRs in their home states? Would all these cases then be probed by the CBI?

That said, one only hopes the CBI now investigates Sushant's death effectively and ensures that he and his family get justice swiftly.

Time to legalise betting?

ndian cricket and online gambling sites have been willing bedfellows for years. The association of IPL with a business witnessing exponential growth now is further strengthened by Dream11 wining the bid to IPL 2020 title rights. Dream11 is also partly owned by the major Chinese new economy company Tencent. The nationalistic outcry that saw mobile phone maker Vivo step aside in the face of India-China hostilities along the LAC has led to this more queasy association with Dream11.

A hue and cry at the turn of the millennium over bookmakers inducing cricketers to throw matches and fix spot events with the lure of filthy lucre led to BCCI banning a few players, including a captain. But Indian cricket has been cavorting freely with gambling since the advent of IPL. The show goes on despite the image of the cash-rich league being shredded in Supreme Court over betting shenanigans linked to two IPL franchises, which were

The paradoxical stand of the game that runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds stands exposed by legitimising of gambling interests that have gone online in the expanding Internet era after a semi crackdown on mobilenetworked illegal bookmakers. While the politicians and police stood to gain the most from links with bookmakers at a time when all sports betting in India took place underground, IPL's endorsement of online gambling lends this strange legitimacy even as the internet explodes with betting.

Players, including the BCCI president Sourav Ganguly and the modern game's leading icon MS Dhoni, are endorsing gambling sites as brand ambassadors. Of course, our laws are to be blamed for the stigma traditionally attached to gambling, except in horse racing. Proposals to legalise sports betting are gathering dust in the face of the the great wall of Indian hypocrisy. It is a pity then that an ambiguous status quo is buttressed by an ambivalent moral attitude. While match-fixing must be shot down with the keenest eye, India can take an honest look at legalising betting.

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Democrats' Joe Biden: The man in the muddle



V. Sudarshan

been made Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden's remarks at a diaspora event three days ago that he is "standing with India in confronting the threats it faces in its own region platform, where there was

and along its borders". This is what the Democratic Party's 2016 precisely one sentence to do with India, said: "We will continue to invest in a long-term strategic partnership with India — the world's largest democracy, a nation of great diversity, and an important Pacific power." If you were hoping for a significant advance on this, here is the single sentence that embraces India in the 2020 draft: "And we will continue to invest in our strategic partnership with India the world's largest democracy, a nation of great diversity, and a growing Asia-Pacific e carefully the highlighting of the geographical preciseness.

'Strategic partnership'' is one of those overblown phrases that the more it is thrown about, indicate a situation that is often inversely proportional to the reality it purports to convey. It is unclear, for instance, exactly how many times India and the United States have met for a strategic dialogue ever since the US-India strategic and commercial dialogue was kicked off with much fanfare in 2015. Maybe once? Twice? Yet Joe Biden's supportive statement comes as New Delhi faces, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi pointed out in his Independence Day speech, that there is a simultaneous situation both on the Line of Control as well as the Line of Actual Control. Unfortunately, both are joined at the hip with the erstwhile state of Jammu

and Kashmir. Irrespective of whether the LAC situation is the result of poor "chowkidari" or substantial vigilance, it is a twoin-one situation that is going to provide the strategic overhang as New Delhi manoeuvres itself out of

its nonplussed state.

Though both Joe Biden and Donald Trump have spoken warmly of their support for India vis-\vec{x}\cdots. China and Pakistan, there are practical limits to how much Washington can or will swing its weight exclusively behind India and in what manner. Its record remains patchy irrespective of the politics of the occupant of the White House, even on core Indian interests such as effective prevention of terrorism in any form emanating from Pakistan. Given America's continued stakes in the stability of Pakistan and

Afghanistan, the next US President's approach to regional issues will be tempered by many factors, major players — India, China, and Pakistan operate under the nuclear umbrella.

The situation is unique

and unparalleled, with

Chinese troops sitting in presumptive Indian territory, and the United States having little or no leverage over China to moderate its strategic goals. Some previous instances blow like straws in the wind. Whether it was our response to the attack on our Parliament in 2001. the 1999 Kargil intrusions. the July 2018 response to the attack on the Army camp at Uri or the February 2019 Balakot airstrike after a car bomb killed around 40 paramilitary jawans in Pulwama, the American emphasis has been strictly to hasten de-escalation. The situation has not been helped with our leaders using phrases like "qatal ki raat" — or a night of

 ${\it requiring translation-to}$ describe a putative rain of missiles on Pakistan, which Prime Minister Modi did after Balakot. Nor such boasts as "Pakistan ke paas nuclear button hai. To hamare paas kya hai be? Yeh diwali ke liye rakhe hai kya?" Again, this was the Prime Minister. Remarks of this kind make the threat of the use of nuclear weapons more likely, not less likely, and reactions unpredictable. American war gamers at the Pentagon and at their various war colleges are certain to be busier now than ever before with more hitherto improbable scenarios. And consequently,

much more worried. Any analysis America's coming to New Delhi's aid vis-a-vis China should thus start with the government's spurning any offer at mediation, which US President Donald Trump continues to hold out at the drop of a hat. It is another matter that Mr Trump thinks that he has enough leverage with China to knock some sense into it, even as he pivots his country's relationship with China into free fall. It is worth pointing out that if the US Afghanistan after years of trying to fix it, it is largely because it was unable to prevail effectively over Pakistan even where its core national interests are concerned. How wise would it then be to trust the US to intervene effectively in our interest? Indian policymakers know this is only a chimera which only strengthens instincts and conditions for mediation. In the end, our self-inter-

Any analysis of America's coming to New Delhi's aid visà-vis China should thus start with the **Indian government's** spurning any offer at mediation, which **US President Donald Trump con**tinues to hold out at the drop of a hat

ests. Though the Americans have indeed tried. whatever Americans have tried with Pakistan have not worked so far, except de-escalation. Even when we mobilised our entire armed forces during Operation Parakram, in January 2002, neither were the Pakistanis frightened nor did the Americans yield to faux brinkmanship, which ulti-mately with Americans controlling the sea lanes and air over Pakistan, was plain silly and had very bad outcomes for hundreds of our soldiers and others who died collaterally due to the rigours of mobilisation. Are we still so short of policy options?

All that the LAC situation gives the Americans is the wherewithal to sell us more and fancier, not to mention urgently required, military hardware and software to pre-pare us to better defend ourselves under the rubric of "deeper strategic ties", while we still continue to battle the Chinese at the LAC with stones and clubs for fear of escalation. How this can be done openly with all the talk of ʻatma nirbharta" going on, is worth pondering over. Whether all this will effectively improve matter of inspired speculation at best. Curiously, the Prime Minister felt it pertinent to point out in his Independence Day speech that as many as 184 out of the 192 countries in the United Nations backed India for the rotating nonpermanent Council seat. That is neither here nor there. How many more countries' support do we need to throw the last Chinese PLA soldier out of our territory and keep them permanently out? Or in other words, if only the USS Nimitz could be brandished more effectively,

The writer is the author of Adrift: A True Story of Survival at Sea and Anatomy of an Abduction. He writes, among other things, on diplomacy, security, strategic affairs and foreign policy.

say... in the Himalayas?

CLEAN UP FACEBOOK

Facebook has become a part and parcel of everyone's life. It is no exaggeration to say that today no one's life is complete without a daily peek into the world of social media. Facebook brings friends together. In the Kozhikode aircraft accident, Facebook was used to arrange blood donations. There are many instances in which Facebook has played a positive role. So while we debate whether or not to delete our accounts and rightly, following the recent revelations, it will be better if the management of the website can be brought around to exercise regulation. For this, the government must actively take up talks.

> V. Nagendra Kumar Hyderabad

ONLINE SOLUTION

KARNATAKA HAS come out with an online service that allows people to check their Covid-19 test results by entering the specimen referral form ID. The portal has been developed by the state Covid-19 war room. It has been done under the aegis of IAS officer Munish Moudgil. If you are positive, don't panic, just quarantine yourself at home, he said. The government vice is ongoing in Tamil Nadu. More online services, and crowding in hospitals will decrease. That will ensure a better outcome for all.

Sanjana Soni

PITCH SPECIALIST

THE DEATH OF G. Kasturirangan at the ripe old age of 89 removes from the scene a former cricketer, administrator, pitch curator and a keen student of the game. A fine fast-bowler, he developed a unique action of delivering his thunderbolts off the wrong foot and scalped 94 wickets in 36 matches. Though he was picked for the Indian team to tour the West Indies in 1952, he declined to go because of personal reasons and never played for the country. He served as the chairman of the BCCI's ground and wickets committee and had an immaculate knowledge of soils, grass and fertilisers. He has well and truly left his mark on the game.

N.J. Ravi Chander

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Bhattacharyya



Stop Chinese 'criminals' making hay inside India

very passing day the Chinese underworld's deep penetration of India seems to grow, and this country looks utterly incapable of doing anything about it. Whether individuals or companies, they all have the muscular backing of the Chinese Communist Party and its various secret arms and are confident that the long arm of Indian law can't touch

India is, of course, not the only country where they are operating. But in some places and some countries, realisation is slowly dawning that these activities by Chinese state and nonstate actors can't be permitted to continue. This is so in the United States, Canada and some European countries that allowed the Chinese to penetrate their economies untramelled for decades, but now there is a change in thinking. The hard line by Washington of late is a case in point, one we need to emulate. New Delhi's helplessness is bringing these Chinese criminals to justice only confirms the CPC's longheld view that India is intrinsically weak, timid, and scared to act against Chinese lawbreakers in India, apprehensive of Beijing's retribution. Why else has India failed to counter the CPC's "deep penetration strike" and "forward deployment" in India. It's equally hard to comprehend New Delhi's delayed strategic blueprint to pre-empt and deter these or launch a counter-offensive to protect its supreme national interests.

When news came on August 12 about Chinese "Charles Peng, aka Luo Sang" committing a massive hawala offence of hundreds of crores rupees in India, with the help of fellow Chinese, as well as Indian bankers and chartered accountants, through 40-plus bank accounts, it was no surprise.

A day later, August 13, it emerged Luo Sang had been arrested two years ago on serious espionage charges. Why was he still roaming free, who had come to his rescue and facilitated his release? He was caught entering India illegally via Nepal without any valid travel documents. Subsequently, he married a Manipuri woman, and in a short time managed to get documents to become an "Indian citizen". How did a man arrested for spying manage to obtain bail from the courts? He faced charges of "forgery, cheating, impersonation" and of being a "logistical support provider to the Chinese embassy". Is the Indian system so corrupt that it will aid someone working directly against our national security

Any number of Chinese criminals have been caught in India smuggling gold and high-value goods worth crores of rupees in the past three years. Have any of them been prosecuted or jailed under stringent laws like the Conservation of Foreign Exchange & Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act (Cofeposa)? The list is almost endless: Hong Feng Wong; Luen Fat Ng; Gong Changro Ng; Wen Chi Lai; Mu Donh Vhmh; Wang Syuan; Fano Pei Chieh; Huang Shan Yu; Chui Chun Chin; Shen Yen Lin; Zhang Guigiong; Zhang Guanghua; Ye Xiuchi; Gu Meizin; Zhou Yin; Yu Sheng Huang; Xia Qianbin; Yu Shi are only some examples. We now have a high-profile gold smuggling case in Kerala, linked allegedly to its highest office. What about these state-sponsored Chinese criminals?

From money-laundering to banking, gold smuggling to fishing, it's the same story over and over again - with Hindustan repeatedly taken for a ride. As our soldiers valiantly try to confront the Chinese PLA across Ladakh. in Pangong Tso to Galwan Valley, as well as in Sikkim and Arunachal, the

Chinese Han criminals and CPC agents seem to have access to our finance, commerce, trade, banking, fishing and investment sectors. The porous India-Nepal border is an entry point for espionage. Remember, after Ottawa cracked the whip on Huawei, how four Canadians caught stranded in the People's Republic were sentenced to death for espionage? Can we draw some lessons?

In June 2019, 10 Chinese vessels were apprehended fishing illegally in Maharashtra, and sought "emergency" shelter in Ratnagiri, 131 nautical miles from the Indian Navy's western fleet headquarters. This was the Fu Yuan Yu fleet, owned by Dong-Xing-Long Ocean Fishing Co Ltd, based in Fujian. They entered India on June 7, 2019, and were caught soon afterwards, with illegal gear on the vessels, with 19 of its 37 crew members having expired pass-ports. But what did India do, despite a clear breach of our laws? Almost nothing. Those were the days of a renewed post-Doklam "Hindi-Chini bhai bhai"!

As most of the government and our armed forces have realised by now, the Chinese, having made deep incursions into our territory, are determined not to give up an inch. The CPC has already subdued Moscow, which is scared of losing control of Siberia, it has bought over Pakistan and is continually instigating India's neighbours. It has committed long-term technology theft in America and Europe. Now the target is India, which made the cardinal blunder of allowing the Chinese entry into its economic sphere. We are on the backfoot, so much so that our ambassador in Beijing meets second and third-rung CPC functionaries and junior PLA generals, literally cajoling them to ensure a return to their pre-April 2020 position in Ladakh. Will China's ambassador in New Delhi Sun Weidong, who addresses some forum or the other almost daily, confer with low-level leaders or junior Indian Army generals? After the June 15 Galwan outrage, he wasn't even summoned by the external affairs ministry for an explanation. What are we so afraid of?

Wake up, India. De-couple our economy from China swiftly, or the Chinese will try to convert Hindustan into another semi-vassal state. India's 1.3 billion people will never accept that.

> The writer is an alumnus of the National Defence College











IN BRIEF

Iran unveils 2 new missiles

Tehran: Iran's state TV is reporting the country has unveiled two new missiles amid heightened tensions between Iran and the United States They are named after top Iranian Gen Qassem Soleimani and Iraqi militia leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, who were killed outside Baghdad's international airport in a US strike in January. The "Martyr Hajj Qassem" surface-to-surface ballistic missile has a 1,400kilometre range, according to the semi-official Fars news agency. State TV said the "Martyr Abu Mahdi" naval cruise missile has a 1,000-kilometer range.

Man gets 55 yrs for UK bombing

London: The brother of the suicide bomber who set off an explosion at a 2017 Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, England, killing 22 people and injuring hundreds, has been sentenced to a minimum of 55 years. Hashem Abedi had denied helping plan the attack at the end of the Manchester Arena concert on May 22, 2017, but was found guilty of murder, attempted murder, and conspiring to cause explosions. His sentencing had been postponed due to travel restrictions put in

place because of the Coronavirus pandemic. His elder brother Salman Abedi, who set off the bomb, died in the explosion. Sentencing Hashem on Thursday, judge Jeremy Baker said the two brothers were "equally culpable for the deaths and injuries caused by the explosion".

Chokehold: City to pay \$6.5 Mn

New Mexico: A New Mexico city has agreed to pay \$6.5 million to the family of Mexican American man who was choked to death by a police officer. A settlement agreement made public this week by Las Cruces, New Mexico, calls for the city to pay the family of Antonio Valenzuela within 30 days and promises the

local government will embark on various police reforms. Financial terms of the settlement were not previously disclosed. Under the settlement, Las Cruces police agreed to ban all chokeholds and fire any officer who violates the new policy - something officials say the city already does. The city also must try to adopt a

warning system involving officers who use excessive force and forge a policy so officers can undergo yearly mental health exams. Any police reforms must be approved by the city council.

ABEYWARDENA IS LANKA PARL SPEAKER

Colombo, Aug. 20: Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena, who was sacked for opposing the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord in 1987, has been unanimously appointed as the Speaker of Sri Lanka's new parliament which met for the first time on Thursday following the August 5 general election. At the inaugural session of the 9th parliament, Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena proposed Abeywardena for the post.

The resolution was seconded by opposition Member of Parli-ament Ranjith Madduma Bandara. Soon after he was appointed, Abeywardena, 75, was congratulated by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and all other legislators.

Abeywardena, who is from the southern district of Matara, was removed from his seat in 1987 after entering the House 4 years before from the then ruling United National Party (UNP). He was opposing to the Indian intervention in Sri Lanka's conflict with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who were fighting to create a separate homeland for the Tamils in the country's north and east. His sacking from parliament came as the then President JR Jayewardene and the then Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi signed the deal which brought the Indian troops to Sri Lanka's northern and eastern battle fields. Abeywardene was against the provincial councils system introduced as part of the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord by India in its bid to make Sri Lanka grant political power to the Tamils.

The system created nine provincial councils. Abeywardene, ironically became the chief minister of one of them, the southern provincial council in 1994 until he contested the 2001 national parliamentary election.

Trump ex-adviser Bannon nabbed for fraud

New York, Aug. 20: US President Donald Trump's former top adviser Stephen Bannon was arrested on Thursday and charged for his role in defrauding thousands of donors in connection with an online crowdfunding campaign known as 'We Build the Wall' that raised more than \$25 million. Bannon, 66, was charged in an indictment along with Brian Kolfage, 38, an Air

Force veteran from Florida, Andrew Badolato, 56, a financier also from Florida and Timothy Shea, 49, of Colorado, 'Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York Audrey Strauss said on Thursday. The men were arrested on Thursday morning and Bannon will be presented in the Southern District of New York, while others will make their court appear-

ance in their jurisdictions. "As alleged, the defendants defrauded hundreds of thousands of donors, capitalising on their interest in funding a border wall to raise millions of dollars, under the false pretense that all of that money would be spent on construction," Strauss said. It was assured to donors that Kolfage, the founder and public face of 'We Build the Wall', would

not be paid a cent but the defendants secretly schemed to pass hundreds of thousands of dollars to him, which he used to fund his lavish lifestyle, he added. The men are each charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering, each of which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison.

Philip R. Bartlett said the defendants allegedly engaged in fraud when they misrepresented the true use of donated funds.

"As alleged, not only did they lie to donors, they schemed to hide their misappropriation of funds by creating sham invoices and accounts to launder donations and cover up their crimes, showing no regard for the law or the

serve as a warning to other fraudsters that no one is above the law, not even a disabled war veteran or a millionaire political strategist." According to the Indictment unsealed in Manhattan federal court, starting in approximately December 2018, Kolfage, Bannon, Badolato and Shea, and others, orchestrated a scheme to defraud hundreds of thousands of donors, including donors

in the Southern District of New York. In particular, to induce donors to donate to the campaign, Kolfage repeatedly and falsely assured the public that he would "not take a penny in salary or compensation" and that "100% of the funds raised...will be used in the execution of our mission and purpose" because, as Bannon publicly stated, "we're a volunteer organisation".

Harris slams Don for leadership failure, vows to fight for nation

Republican leader 'turns our tragedies into political weapons': V-P nominee

Washington, Aug. 20: Senator Kamala Harris has scripted history as she became the first Indian-American and also the first PoC woman to accept the nomination for vicepresident from a major political party in the US. Harris, 55, was nominated as the vice-presidential candidate on Wednesday at the virtual Democratic National Convention where she attacked President Donald Trump's for "failure of leadership" and blamed the Republican leader for the "lives and livelihoods" of the American people amidst the ican people amidst the Coronavirus pandemic.

"I accept your nomina-tion for vice president of the United States of America," she said while accepting the Democratic Party's nomination to be the running mate of the presidential candidate Joe Biden. In her acceptance speech, Harris paid tribute to the PoC women that came before her and she vowed to fight for the nation. "Let's fight with conviction. Let's fight with hope. Let's fight with confidence in ourselves, and a commitment to each other," she said. In reference to her

Indian heritage, Harris used a Tamil expression in speaking of "my uncles, my aunts — my chitthis". Harris said she was there standing on her mother's shoulders, a woman who "came here from India at age 19 to pursue her dream of curing cancer. At the University of California, Berkeley, she met my Donald Harris who had come from Jamaica to study economics". She assailed Trump's "failure of leadership".

She said the Republican leader "turns our tragedies into political weapons". Former vice president Joe Biden and Harris will challenge Trump and his Vice-President Mike Pence in the November 3 election. "We must elect a president who will bring something different, something better, and do the



tanced from former vice president and Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden at the end of the third day of the Democratic National Convention, being held virtually amid the Coronavirus pandemic, at the Chase Center in Wilmington, Delaware on Wednesday.

Harris: 'Oh, how I wish my mother was here'

vention by remembering

her late mother, Shyamala

Gopalan Harris, lament-

"My mother taught me

Washington, Aug. 20: Democratic National Con- in my sister, Maya, and me Accepting the Democratic Party's historic nomination for the US vice-president, Kamala Harris fondly remembered. Chennai-born

ing the fact that she could remembered her not be there to see her mother daughter's achievement. who instilled in her the that service to others gives life purpose and values like compassion and service to others meaning. And oh, how I wish she were here tonight but I know she's which helped her to grow as a strong woman and be proud of her Indian herlooking down on me from above," she said. Harris' mother died of cancer in itage. Harris opened her vice-presidential acceptance speech on Wednesday night at the virtual

2009. "My mother instilled important work. A president who will bring all of us together to achieve the President. I knew Joe on future we collectively want," Harris said, makthe campaign trail. But I first got to know Joe as the ing a passionate plea father of my friend," she said. "And here's the thing: We can do better before Americans to vote

"We must elect Joe and deserve so much Biden. I knew Joe as Vice more," she said. "Joe will bring us together to build an economy that doesn't leave anyone behind. Where a good-paying job is the floor, not the ceiling." -PTI

the values that would

chart the course of our

lives. She raised us to be

proud, strong women.

And she raised us to know

and be proud of our Indian heritage," Harris

said. Harris in her impressive speech said that her

nomination is a testament

to the dedication of gener-

ations before her. Women

and men who believed so

fiercely in the promise of

equality, liberty, and justi-

ce for all, she said. -PTI

WORSHIP WOES FOR MUSLIMS. **SIKHS: OBAMA**

New York, Aug. 20: Minority communities like Sikhs and Muslims have been made to "feel suspect" for the way they worshipped, former US president Barack Obama has said as he tore into Donald Trump's presidency and warned American voters that his administration would "tear oul democracy down" to get re-elected. Delivering an impassioned speech at the 2020 Democratic National Convention, Obama launched a scathing attack on Trump's policies and rhetoric, a break with the longstanding tradition of former presidents not publicly speaking out against their successors.

He urged Americans to vote in the November elections.

Belarus leader digs in as protests go on

Minsk, Aug. 20: Demonstrators again took to the streets of the Belarusian capital and other cities Thursday, keeping up their push for the nation's authoritarian leader to step down after extending his 26-year rule in a vote the opposition saw as rigged. President Alexander Lukashenko has dismissed the protesters as Western puppets and threatened opposition leaders

with criminal charges. Following that, a leading opposition figure reported receiving threats and being threatened with arrest. The 65-vear-old Belarusian leader dismissed the European Union's criticism of the Aug. 9 vote and told its leaders to mind their own business.

them to power.

The EU leaders on Wednesday rejected the official results of the election that showed Lukashenko win

80 per cent of the vote and ed outrage, forcing authorexpressed solidarity with protesters. The EU said it's preparing sanctions against Belarusian officials responsible for the brutal post-election police actions. During the first four days of protests, police detained almost 7,000 people and injured hundreds with rubber bullets, stun grenades and clubs. At least three protesters

died. The crackdown fuell-

ities to change tactics and stop breaking up crowds that grew to an unprecedented 200,000 on Sunday.

Police again beefed up their presence on the streets of the Belarusian capital Wednesday, blocking access to some government buildings and also deploying in numbers outside major factories where workers have been on strike since Monday. The

engulfed major factories across the country cast a tough challenge to Lukas-henko, who had relied on blue-collar workers as his core support base. In a bid spreading, On Wednesday, he warned that the participants would face dismissal and ordered law enforcement agencies to protect factory managers from the opposition pressure. — AP

Merkel hosts Greta for talks on climate crisis

Berlin, Aug. 20: German Chancellor Angela Merkel hosted Greta Thunberg and other leading Fridays for Future activists in Berlin on Thursday for talks on the EU's climate goals, with the campaigners expected to condemn "political inaction".

Merkel said Swedish 17-year-old Thunberg and her co-campaigners Luisa Neubauer from Germany and Belgium's Anuna De Wever and Adelaide Charlier had requested the meeting and she was "pleased" to welcome them to the chancellery.

The activists warned ahead of the talks that they were dismayed at the lack of progress in fight-ing climate change despite promises

European governments. "When it comes to action we are still in a state of denial. The climate and ecological crisis has never once been treated as a crisis," they wrote in a letter published in Germany's Der Spiegel and Britain's The Guardian.
"We will tell Merkel that

she must face up to the climate emergency -- especially as Germany now holds the presidency of the European Council. Europe has a responsibility to act." The meeting comes exactly two years after Thunberg, then 15, started skipping school to strike outside the Swedish parliament to dramatise the need for action against



Greta Thunberg

global warming. The strike movement has since spread across the world and Merkel has repeatedly expressed her admiration for the masses of young people demon-strating on Fridays for more climate protection.

But the activists say nothing concrete has changed. "Effectively, we have lost another two crucial years to political inaction," they wrote, calling on countries to urgently halt all fossil fuel investments. Despite its green reputation abroad, Germany is struggling to meet its own climate targets as the country remains heavily reliant on coal because of its decision to phase out nuclear energy after the 2011 Fukushima disaster.

Europe's top economy was widely expected to miss its goal of reducing climate-heating green-house gas emissions by 40 per cent this year com-

Col. Assimi Goita takes over Mali

says he's now in charge of the West African country, declaring himself chairman of the junta that forced the democratically elected but unpopular president to resign. Col. Assimi Goita, one of the five military officers who announced this week's coup on the state broadcaster ORTM, declared himself chairman of the junta now in power. "By making this intervention (the coup), we have put Mali first," Goita said in a broadcast that showed him meeting with the top officials of government ministries and urging them to resume work Thursday.

"Mali is in a sociopolitical and security crisis," he said. "There is no more room for mistakes." Across Africa and around the world, leaders have strongly condemned this week's coup, calling for

Bamako (Mali), Aug. 20: A an immediate return to colonel in Mali's army civilian rule and the release of ex-President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and his prime minister, Boubou Cisse. The two leaders were detained by mutinous soldiers on Tuesday who surrounded the president's private residence in Bamako and fired shots into the air. Under duress, Keita

later announced his resignation on state television, saying he did not want any blood to be shed to keep him in power. Analysts have said there were few signs that political opposition leaders were aware of the coup plot in advance, though they now stand to benefit through an opportunity to serve in the transitional government promised by the junta.

The opposition, known as the M5-RFP, announced it would hold a rally Friday in Bamako.

PEOPLE I CONNECT Communications like letters and diaries used during Spanish flu of 1918 have disappeared

Japan museum portrays pandemic life via daily things

menus. Directions for attending a funeral. A leaflet from a local shrine, announcing the cancellation of summer festivals. These humble, everyday artifacts of life in the pandemic have found a home in the Historical Museum of Urahoro, in Hokkaido, northern Japan, a town of just 4,500 residents that lacks a McDonald's or

movie theatre.

But thanks to the museum's curator, Makoto
Mochida, it has a repository of the dross of the moment, stuff that may future generations

what it was like to live in the time of Covid-19 how life was profoundly changed with social distancing and growing fears over the outbreak.

"I am fascinated by how things connect with people," Mochida said. Some people are surprised he's hoarding what appears to be garbage, said Mochida, who has even problems throwing away things at home, too.

"Things furnish an excellent way to accurately archive history," he said. So there are documents that show how children were taught to shift to

online schooling. And instructions, complete with diagrams, on how to make a mask from a handkerchief. Several hundred objects have been collected so far, after a call went out to residents.

In the wake of the last great pandemic — the socalled Spanish flu of 1918-19, which killed more than 50 million people globally —letters and diaries provided insight into daily life. But these days, those analog communications have all but vanished. And their digital versions, like emails and

social media posts, are all

THERE ARE documents that show how children were taught to shift to online schooling. And instructions, complete with diagrams, on how to make a mask from a handkerchief. Several hundred objects have been collected so far, after a call went out to residents.

but lost in a sea of cyberspace, Mochida said. So it is left to Mochida to curate the flotsam and jetsam of the Coronavirus.

He is planning a big exhibition of his finds next February to follow up on the smaller display now at the museum, located in the Urahoro library, showing how masks have evolved in a short time.

At first, masks were hard to find in Japanese stores. Handmade varieties were primitive, concocted from old shirts and stockings. Then came innovations, like draping masks that allow for eating and drinking, or sheer plastic ones. They eventually became fashion statements, some with fancy embroidery. Cases of Covid-19 have

been growing in Japan, but they have not reached the levels of the hardest hit nations like the US, Brazil and several regions

of Europe. Urahoro has not yet recorded a single case. At first, the community brushed the outbreak off. Then fears began to creep in, especially toward outsiders, and households with adult children working in Tokyo or nearby cities, who could come home to visit.

Then came the adjustments. For the tiny town, takeout — including the local specialty "spa-cut",

topped with a fried meat cutlet, usually pork — has become the rule after restaurants shut to in-person dining.

Before the pandemic, it wasn't even an option. Shoko Maede, who was born in Urahoro and works as a cook at a nursery school, feels she can almost picture people decades from now trying to remember life amid the pandemic. "They may think, 'Oh, so this was the way it was,'" she said, after visiting the museum. "Things do reveal how people think." -AP

FINANCIAL

Chronicle

FRIDAY | 21 AUGUST 2020 | NEW DELHI



INDICATO	%	
Sensex	38,220.39	-1.02
Nifty 50	11,312.20	-0.84
S&P 500*	3,374.95	0.00
Dollar (₹)	75.03	-0.27
Pound Sterling (₹)	98.19	0.94
Euro (₹)	88.85	0.50
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	52,819 ▼ 1,492	2.82
Brent crude (\$/bbl)	* 44.75	-0.62
IN 10-Yr bond yield	d 6.000	-0.008
US 10-Yr T-bill yiel	d* 0.648	-0.027
* As of 9:30 PM IS	Т	

US jobless claims climb above 1 million

The number of laid-off workers seeking US unemployment benefits rose to 1.1 million last week after two weeks of declines, evidence that many employers are still slashing jobs as the coron-avirus bedevils the US economy. The latest figures, released on Thursday by the Labor

Department, suggest that more than five months after the viral outbreak erupted the economy is still weak, despite recent gains as some businesses reopen.

Fact & fiction: **EPFO** slashes job numbers



Net new enrolments with the EPFO rose to 6.55 lakh in June from 1.72 lakh in May, according to its latest payroll data. Its provisional payroll data last month had shown that net new enrolments stood at 3.18 lakh in May but the figure has now been revised to 1.72.174. Net new enrolments with the EPFO hover around / lakh every month. Latest data shows net new enrolments in April were just 20,164 against 1 lakh stated in July.

Banks sanction ₹1 lakh cr loans to KCC holders

The finance ministry said banks have sanctioned over Rs 1 lakh crore concessional loans to Kisan Credit Card (KCC) holders to help farmers meet financial requirements during the Covid-19 crisis. As on August 17, as many as 1.22 crore KCCs have been sanctioned with the credit limit of Rs 1,02,065 crore, and this will go a long way in reviving the rural economy and accelerating agricultural growth, the ministry said.

HFCs require ₹3.8-4.5 lakh cr for refinancing

Housing finance companies (HFCs) are likely to see a muted portfolio growth and would require Rs 3.8-4.5 lakh crore to meet their refinancing requirements in the current fiscal, says an Icra report. The pandemic effect is expected to lower the housing credit growth to 5-8 per cent in FY21, significantly below the last three years' CAGR of 14 per cent. The share of commercial paper borrowings came down to 4 per cent in FY20.

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■ Uptick in activity may not be as large as believed

Babus fear protracted economic slowdown

SWATI BHAT & MANOJ KUMAR MUMBAI/NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

India is staring at a protracted slowdown as coronavirus cases reach its countryside, with signs of recovery in the rural economy hailed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi "at best a mitigating factor", government officials and analysts said.

The world's No.5 economy reports first-quarter GDP data on August 31 and, according to a Reuters poll, it is likely to have contracted 20 per cent over April-June. It is forecast to shrink 5.1 per cent in the year to March 2021, the weakest since 1979.

Nearly half of the country's 1.38 billion population rely on agriculture to survive, with the sector accounting for 15 per cent of the economic output.

Modi has been citing higher fertiliser demand and sowing of monsoon crops, both key signs of rural activity, to show



there are "green shoots" in the economy.

But four government officials said the uptick in activity may not be as large as believed given a spike in virus cases in rural areas that were initially isolated from the pandemic.
"The economic situation

has in fact worsened since April and May, and we are likely moving towards a longer economic slowdown than earlier expected," said a finance ministry official. The official pointed to

sluggish consumer demand and a slowdown in rural lending as causes for concern.
"The situation on the

economy front is very seri-

ous and the government's hands are tied on the fiscal front," a government adviser with direct knowledge of the budget plans said.

Both declined to be named. A ministry spokesman declined to comment. New virus cases emerging outside major cities, dashing hopes the rural economy will be a buffer against shrinking exports and manufacturing.

"While a recovery in rural activity provides a glimmer of hope, it is at best a mitigating factor," said Rahul Bajoria, a Barclays economist. Bajoria expects India's GDP to have contracted 22.2 per cent in the June

Farmers planted nearly 14 per cent more land between June 1 and July 31 than last year given good monsoon rains, while fertiliser production rose 4.2 per cent in June.

"Even as the momentum coming from the agriculture sector...is a positive, we believe this may not sustain due to surplus labour concerns, along with an increasing proportion of active Covid-19 cases," said Upasna Bhardwaj, economist at Kotak Mahindra Bank.

Icra believes pent-up demand contributed to some improvement in manufacturing in June and July, and that it may not continue in August due to lockdowns.

"Flattening of India's virus curve is critical for a pickup in production. Once the economy unlocks fully, we expect exports to lead to recovery and domestic demand to lag," said Kapil Gupta, chief economist, Edelweiss. —Reuters

Think-tank to advise Maha govt on economy

Pune, Aug. 20: A group of economists and scientists, who recently held a meeting with Maharashtra chief minister on how to revive the economy hit by Covid-19, will submit a detailed action plan for accelerating the state's growth.

They would provide inputs on what can be done to revive growth in the short, mid and long terms, eminent

scientist Dr Raghunath Mashelkar, who is the president of Pune International Centre (PIC), a thinktank, told PTI on Wednesday. Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray

and deputy CM Ajit Pawar had a detailed virtual meeting on Tuesday with economist Vijay Kelkar, HDFC chairman Deepak Parekh, former diplomats Vijay Gokhale and

Gautam Bambawale, Mashelkar and other members of the PIC.

As PIC has members with diverse expertise, it had come up with some policy papers on agriculture, industries, education and other issues during the last year's state Assembly elections. In January, those papers were shared with the CM, who liked them, Mashelkar said.

Axis Bank to hire gig workers for one-yr jobs

New Delhi, Aug. 20: Axis Bank has plans to employ nearly 1,000 people under its new hiring initiative Opportunities', a model devised to attract skilled talent that can work with the bank remotely, from anywhere in the country, according to a company official.
This hiring model has

two working patterns, first is full-time permanent job and the second is based on the duration of a project.
"Our idea is that Gig

would be large (regular) jobs. We wanted to make it as effective as a normal job would have been for anyone both in terms of being content with the job or what people learn from their jobs... Over the next one year, we will add 800-1,000 people working through this model and that is the minimum I am saying, Rajesh Dahiya, executive director (corporate centre), Axis Bank, said. Earlier, the mindset was that for working, you have to come to the office, but now this work from home concept has changed it. He said the bank will look for good talent, including young people, experienced mid

country.
'Gig-a-Opportunities'
will have full-time permanent jobs and also project-specific with a fixed term that last eight months or a year, he said. —PTI

level professionals and

women, from across the

Rising steel prices hit export sectors

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 20

Rising steel prices have hit the exports of valueadded products and made them less competitive in the international market. Along with increasing iron ore exports, curbs on import of steel from China, Vietnam and South Korea are also pushing up domestic steel prices.
"In the backdrop of

restrictions on imports from China, Vietnam and South Korea, Indian steel makers have raised the prices across different product categories, making the raw material cost for user industries skyhigh and leaving the engineering exporters noncompetitive in the inter-national market," says Engineering Export Pro-

motion Council of India. The export of valueadded products, including automobile components, industrial machinery has been down in the past few months. Higher steel prices will further affect the competitiveness of Indian value-added products, it said.

Pig iron and steel prices had gone up by Rs 3,000 per tonne in the local market in July. Further, hot rolled coil prices have moved up by Rs 700-750 per tonne on an average, cold-rolled coil prices by Rs 500-550 per tonne, steel pellets by Rs 300-350 per tonne and iron ore fines and lumps by Rs 200-250 per tonne.

"Iron ore exports have been increasingly happening of late. Though they started exporting



when the demand was low in the domestic market, it is being continued even when demand is picking up. The lower import of steel from the international market is also making the steel producers hike the prices,' said Mahesh Desai, chairman, EEPC India.

According to him, international prices of some of the categories used by Indian steel product manufacturers are lesser than the domestic prices.

But, the government had imposed anti-dump-ing duty on imports of certain types of steel products from China, Vietnam and South Korea for five years. Duties ranging from \$13.07 per tonne to \$173.1 per tonne have been levied on imports of flat rolled product of steel, plated or coated with alloy of aluminium and zinc from these three countries.

MSMEs are not in a situation to use advance authorization scheme to import steel at higher duties. "In such a scenario, the

dependence of India's engineering industry on the domestic steel market is only expected to increase in the coming months," said Desai.

Pharma, med tech not sure of govt targets

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 20

The government expects bulk drug and medical device parks to attract cumulative investment of about Rs 77.900 crore and generation of about ,55,000 employment. The industry, however, finds it very ambitious.

The government had announced schemes for development of three bulk drug parks and four medical device parks. Apart from increasing central assistance for development of common infrastructure facilities in the parks, the government will also extend production-linked incentive (PLI) to manufacturers of bulk drugs and medical devices in these parks.

"Government will provide an incentive at the rate of 5 per cent on incremental sales for a period of five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with a total outlay of Rs 3.420 crore, minister of chemicals and fertilisers D. V. Sadananda Gowda said at

According to him, bulk drug and medical device parks are expected to attract cumulative invest-

GOVT PLANS

FURTHER STAKE

New Delhi, Aug. 20: The

government is planning to sell part of its stake in

Indian Railway Catering

Tourism

(IRCTC) in the current fis-

cal, and has invited bids

from merchant bankers

for managing the sale

invest a part of the paid

up equity capital of IRCTC out of its share-

holding through 'Offer for

Sale (OFS) method of

shares by promoters

Securities and Exchange

Board of India (Sebi) Rules and Regulations,"

Dipam said while inviting

Request for Proposal.

through

exchanges'

the

"The GoI intends to dis-

SALE IN IRCTC

ment of about Rs 77,900 crore and can generate ment. For the medical device sector alone, investment could be to the tune of Rs 40,000

crore with generation of

1,40,000 new employment

opportunities. However, the industry is not quite convinced about the government estimate. "This is the assumption of the government. We will have to wait and watch. They assume that companies will leave China and come here. But that might not happen immediately. Even among domestic companies we have not seen a huge interest to invest thousands of crores," said G.S.K. Velu, chairman and MD of Trivitron Healthcare.

According to pharma veteran S. V. Veeramani, some states like Haryana, Gujarat and Telangana have evinced interest in setting up the parks. "Pharma companies might be interested in establishing API manufacturing plants. But whether, they will bring in around Rs 38,000 crore of investment has to be seen." he said

Gmail service restored after global outage

New Delhi, Aug. 20: Gmail service, which suffered a global outage for hours on Thursday, has according to Google.

Some users faced issues with Gmail like being unable to log in, add attachments and receive messages since morning. On Thursday morning, GSuite status dashboard—which provides performance information on various Google services-said the company was investigating reports of an issue with Gmail. When contacted, a

Google spokesperson confirmed that the problem has now been resolved. In its latest update, Google said: "...We apologise for the inconvenience and thank you for your patience and continued support. System reliability is a top priority at Google. We are making continuous improvements to make our systems better". The firm provided multiple updates, stating it is investigating the issue and that there was a disruption in sending emails, Meet recording and creating files in Drive, among others.

SELECT MIDCAPS JUMP AS ECONOMY UNLOCKS RAVI RANJAN PRASAD

Unlock themes and undervalued stocks are emerging as big gainers in the broader market rally super-large-cap stocks are showing signs of fatigue after touching

five-month highs in the last one-month period. Unlock theme gainers included stocks from tourism & hospitality, entertainment, aviation, consumer retail and power utilities, among others.

Big gainers included Indian Hotels, EIH Hotel, Interglobe Aviation, Spiceiet. Future Retail. Avenue

Supermarts, Shoppers Stop, Jubilant Foodworks, GMR Infra and Inox Leisure, among others.

Some midcap stocks are also seeing value buying after languishing as their business prospects are improving and rose sharply on Thursday like NHPC (12.17 per cent), auto parts maker Varroc Engineering (17.75 per cent), water treatment specialist Va Tech Wabag (15.90 per cent) and Ashok

Leyland (2.89 per cent). The Nifty Midcap-50 has moved up 9.73 per cent in the last one- month while the Midcap-100 has moved up by 9.53 per cent.

SHARP GAINS IN UNLOCK THEMES Share price

	Aug. 20	July 20	
Indian Hotels	102.55	81.65	
EIH Hotel	88	60.2	
Interglobe Aviation	1,199.30	971.35	
Spicejet	51.55	48.75	
Future Retail	127.75	110.75	
Avenue Supermarts	2,286.35	2,018.95	
Shoppers Stop	172.70	157.35	
Jubilant Foodworks	1,965.60	1,751.35	
lnox Leisure	307.80	227.5	
Tata Power	61.50	49.05	
Source: FC Resea			

CV-makers stare at ₹6K-cr net loss

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, AUG. 20

Commercial vehicle (CV) makers will face a six-fold increase in net loss to Rs 6.000 crore this fiscal due to a 30 per cent decline in sales volume on an already weak base.

Tata Motors, Ashok Leyland, Mahindra and and Mahindra Commercial Vehicles together accounted for about 90 per cent of industry volumes in fiscal 2020. The net loss, combined

with a stretch in working capital owing to support extended to dealers and suppliers, could result in sizeable negative cash flows and thus ballooning debt, says a research note. "While this may constrain credit metrics in

the current fiscal, credit profiles of manufacturers will be supported by strong balance sheets and comfortable cash buffers, ratings agency Crisil said in a report on Thursday.

CV-makers were already hit by new overloading norms and a slowing economy when the Covid-19 pandemic arrived, and sales volume had fallen 29 per cent in fiscal 2020.

In the first quarter of his fiscal, volume plunged another 85 per cent because of the pandemic-driven lockdown.

The resultant sharp slowdown in industrial activity has hard-braked sales of medium & heavy commercial vehicles which account for twothirds of industry rev-

Gold is new currency as paper currencies lose value sus oil or other real com-

RANJEETHA PAKIAM

Gold will extend its record-setting rally on "massive currency debasement" and expectations for further stimulus, according to SkyBridge Capital, an alternative investment firm, which recently added exposure to the metal after exiting in 2011.

'When you think of curdebasement the question is, what is the dollar going to weaken against, and when you look around the globe, it's hard to be excited about alternative currencies," said Troy Gayeski, cochief investment officer and senior portfolio manager, listing the euro, yuan and emerging-market currencies. "So, gold is obvi-

NATURAL ALTERNATIVE CURRENCY Gold seen rising amid 'massive currency debasement'

■ Spot gold (R1) ■ Bloomberg dollar spot index (L1) - 1900 를 - 1800 를 1260 — <u> 종</u> 1240 — -1800*를* 1220 --1700-16001180 🌮 - 1500 1160 -Jul

currency.' precious metal surged to a record well above \$2,000 an ounce earlier this month--although prices have stumbled since then---as central banks, including the

unleashed vast stimulus to

support economies hurt ously a natural alternative

> by the coronavirus pandemic. That's spurred bets that paper currencies will lose their value as money supply jumps. Goldman Sachs Group Inc calls gold the currency of last resort and has forecast more

> > Gold is "fairly rich ver-

modities, but it hasn't appreciated nearly as much as money-supply growth since its previous peak in September of 2011," Gayeski said in an interview. "It wouldn't surprise us if by the end of next year, it's around the \$2,100-to-\$2,200 range. Spot gold hit an all-time

high of \$2,075.47 on August 7 as the dollar weakened and real interest rates fell well below zero. On Thursday it was at \$1,930 an ounce, up 27 per cent this year. Prices eased midweek after minutes from the Fed showed it edging away from a step that would underscore a commitment to an extended period of ultra-loose

policy.
Ultimately, the driver for

gold is "you have massive currency debasement, particularly in the US,"

Gayeski said. SkyBridge, which manages \$7.35 billion, has about 3 per cent exposure to gold, with the majority of positions taken in the past two months. The fund-of-funds manager's primary exposures are to US cash-flow-generative strategies backed by tangible assets, including residential mortgage-backed securities

While the latest round of fiscal stimulus talks haven't yet yielded a deal, the Fed has already swelled its balance sheet by about \$2.8 trillion this year, with Goldman cautioning that US policy is triggering -Bloomberg

Property insurance premia buck trend

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 20

The increase in premium rates and higher demand post-lock-down helped property insurance premiums grow by 36 per cent between April and July despite the overall degrowth in general insurance premiums.

The gross direct premium collected under property insurance has grown by 36.3 per cent since the beginning of the fiscal to Rs 9125 crore against Rs 6695 crore in the same period of previous fiscal. Property insurance has bucked the general trend in other segments, which have either de-grown or grown in low single digits due to the pandemic.

The growth in gross property premium is mainly due to the hike in premium rates by insurance companies this year. In the beginning of the

calendar year, reinsurer General Insurance Corporation (GIC-Re) had increased its reinsurance rates for select occupancies and later for all the occupancies it was reinsuring. "GIC-Re had been asking the general insurers to follow risk-based pricing as the premiums were lower than the burn rate derived by the Insurance Information Bureau. IIB has been collecting the data of claims and premiums for the past few years," said R few years," said R Chandrasekaran, former secretary general of Gene-

ral Insurance Council. Since the de-tariffing in 2007-08, general insurers have been charging lower premium rates in order to grab business. This competition among the insurers had led to unviable rates. However, after GIC Re hiked the reinsurance rates, the premium rates

too have gone up.
Further, post lock-down, several incidents of fire mishaps were reported from different parts of the country as and when the factories were opened. This has increased the demand for property insurance, Chandrasekaran.









The current prize

money for national

sporting honours for

Khel Ratna, Arjuna,

Dronacharya all set

to get a shot in the

However, when contacted

Sports Śecretary Ravi

Mittal, said he was not

aware of any such develop-

"I am not aware. I don't

money for

(Lifetime)

know anything," Mittal

said when reached for a

awards will also be increased from ₹5 lakh to

According to the proposal, the cash reward for the regular Dronacharya

award, which is currently

the same as the one for life-

time achievement, is set to

If implemented before August 29, the government will have to shell out a

hefty amount as an unprecedented 62 have

been recommended by the Sports Ministry's selection

committee for this year's

National Sports Awards.

be increased to ₹10 lakh.

Dhyanchand and

arm.

ment.

comment.

₹15 lakh.

regular

MAINTAIN THE PRIDE OF

New Delhi, Aug. 20: Double Olympic medallist

wrestler Sushil Kumar on Thursday indicated that the selection committee runs the risk of lowering the dig-nity of the annual national sports awards by making

An unprecedented five Khel Ratna and 29 Arjuna

I congratulate the ones who have been nominated

but I feel people should work towards maintaining the

dignity of these national sports awards. This is not

even an Olympic year. I myself is an athlete, so I am happy for all, but we must maintain the pride attached with these awards," Sushil said.

In 2016, the government honoured four athletes — P.

V. Sindhu, wrestler Sakshi Malik, gymnast Dipa Karmakar and shooter Jitu Rai — with the Khel Ratna after their performances at Rio Olympics. — PTI

award recommendations have been made to the sports

minister by the selection panel, raising eyebrows. He said it is necessary to, instead, "maintain the pride" attached with these awards.

The prize

Dhyanchand

Dronacharya

NATIONAL AWARDS

New Delhi, Aug. 20: The Sports Ministry is plan-

ning a massive hike in the

prize money for the National Sports Awards, a

proposal which, once approved, will lead to Khel

Ratna awardees getting ₹25

lakh while leaving the

Arjuna winners richer by

Currently, the Khel Ratna comes with a cash prize of ₹7.5 lakh, while the Arjuna

It has been learnt that the

ministry is busy giving final touches to the propos-al after which Sports

Minister Kiren Rijiju will

make a formal announce-

ment by August 29 — the National Sports Day when the annual honours are given away every year.

"The prize money of

National Sports Awards is

set to be increased signifi-

cantly. A proposal in this regard has already been made. The minister active-

ly pushed for it after ath-

letes complained that the

prize money of sports awards is too less," a

Sports Ministry source

"The proposal is still under consideration and if

accepted by the government, the new cash rewards will be given from this year itself," the source

too many recommendations.

awardees get ₹5 lakh.

₹15 lakh.

Ministry to raise

prize rewards

TAKES SHORT

Two tennis players

go into quarantine

New York: Two players within the US Open bubble have been dropped from the ATP and WTA Western and Southern Open and sent into quarantine after contact with a Covid-19 positive individual. Tournament officials announced the move on Wednesday, a day after learning that a non-player within the controlled environment had tested positive for the virus. The person who tested positive is in isolation for 10 days but contract tracing showed two players, neither of whom was identified, had been in "close and prolonged contact" with the individual. The players have not experi-

enced any Covid-19 symptoms but after input from the US Open medical team and in consultation with the New York City Department of Health, they were removed from the Western and Southern Open and sent into quarantine. The tournament, usually in Cincinnati, was moved to New York this year to serve as a

tuneup for the US Open.

No Bryan brothers at the US Open

New York: Bob and Mike Bryan were not on the entry list released for men's doubles at the U.S. Open on Wednesday, possibly signaling the end of the 42-year-old American twins' record-breaking careers. The Bryans won five of their 16 Grand Slam doubles titles together in New York, most recently in 2014. Mike also won the 2018 U.S. Open with Jack Sock when Bob

was recovering from hip The U.S. Tennis Association announced its women's and

men's doubles fields, including

wild cards. Three-time U.S. Open champion Kim Clijsters received a wildcard entry in doubles to go along with the one she got for singles as she makes her Grand

Slam comeback. The tournament begins singles competition August 31, and doubles on September 2. The doubles fields are being cut from 64 to 32 teams for women and men this year to reduce the number of people on-site because of the Coronavirus pandemic. - AP

Tiger plans to

stay out of woods

Norton, USA: Tiger Woods has been careful to manage his schedule to avoid playing too much as he tends to a lowe back that has gone through four surgeries. Now the idea is to play as much as he can. "The plan is to play four out of five." Woods said on Wednesday after playing the back nine at TPC Boston. That's the plan. It's an ambitious plan for a 44-vear-old who tries to avoid playing consecutive weeks. much less the three in a row that might be required for him to reach the Tour Championship

for the first time since he won at East Lake in 2018. That's also the last time Woods plaved three weeks in a row. Woods wasn't sure where he stood in the FedEx Cup. He thought it was number 28, his position when golf shut down on March 15 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Having played only twice since golf returned in June, he has fallen

TWO PROTEAS CRICKETERS POSITIVE

to No. 49.

Johannesburg: Two players of the South African men's cricket team have tested positive for Covid-19 and will miss a specially-arranged culture camp, the country's cricket board said on

Thursday Cricket South Africa (CSA), though, did not disclose the names of the two players, according to ESPNCricinfo CSA had conducted 50 tests on players and support staff before the team's culture camp in Skukuza from August 18 to 22. The camp, focussing on the team's "identity, environment and performance goals", features 32 players. - AFP

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Kings XI Punjab team pose for a photograph inside a flight during their travel on Friday.

Teams dash to Dubai

IPL sides pack their bags & head to UAE for 13th edition

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR

As IPL teams start descending on Dubai for the much-awaited 13th edition of the league, the Bio-Secure Environment protocols have come into effect. While Rajasthan Royals and Kings XI Punjab were the first teams to leave for the UAE on Thursday, Chennai Super Kings will land in Dubai on Friday evening. CSK have booked an entire wing of Taj Dubai where they will be based throughout the tourna-

Around 55 members, including players, net bowlers, support staff, franchise officials, marketing and social media team will leave Chennai by a chartered flight on Friday.

"All our Indian players, except Harbhajan Singh, will be on the flight. Harbhajan will join the team later in Dubai.
Shardul Thakur and
Ravindra Jadeja who
missed the camp have
reached Chennai" said reached Chennai," said CEO of Chennai Super Kings, K.S. Viswanathan. Foreign players who are not part of the Caribbean Premier League and England-Australia ODI series are on their way to

Viswanathan said the team will start their training session only after the mandatory six-day quarantine period. "During this phase, players and officials are not allowed to step out of the room All their meals will be served in the room. They will be tested on Day 1, 3 and 6. All players have been

Lisbon, Aug. 20: Serge Gnabry struck a first-half

Lewandowski also scored

as a ruthless Bayern Munich taught Lyon a harsh lesson in their

Champions League semi-

final in Lisbon on

Wednesday, winning 3-0 to

set up a tantalising final against Paris Saint-

minute lead in stunning

style, and the Germany

winger scored again just

after the half-hour mark.

Gnabry has now scored

nine in nine appearances

in this season's competi-

had blasted

into an 18th-

Germain.

Gnabry

join the bubble.



Family members of Kings XI Punjab's Karun Nair gave the batsman a farewell with a special message to win the IPL trophy this year.

briefed on safety protocols," he said.

"The biggest challenge as a franchise is to bring the players into a bio-bubble. We had a camp in Chennai for our Indian players and we had to test everyone involved in organising it. It's been a huge challenge, but it's a worthy exercise. As a franchise, we will leave no stones unturned in our bid to provide players safe environment," added Viswanathan.

Three-time champions Chennai Super Kings will training at the Internation Cricket Ccouncil's Academy, located next to the ICC head-

Lewandowski's

inevita-ble goal, his 55th

of the season, came two

minutes from time. Bayern as a team have 42

goals in 10 Champions

SEVILLA FACE INTER

FOR EUROPA CROWN

What is the point of the

Europa League? If Inter

wins Friday's final, it

would be a milestone in its

bid to dethrone Juventus

in Italy and re-establish

itself as a Champions

League heavyweight. But

Sevilla has a special affec-

tion for a competition it's

won five times.

League outings.

Gnabry nets brace,

Bayern make final

Robert

tion.

quarters in the heart of Dubai Sports City.

MASK EARNS MONEY FOR CSK

The most sought after branding spot on an IPL team iersev is the chest logo which is given to the

prime sponsors. However, in the run-up to the tournament, teams could earn some money through a different avenue. In Covid-19 times. face masks will a prominent branding area

Chennai Super Kings have already roped in a sponsor for their vellow masks. "Players won't be using it on match days

Test to start early

lost time due to bad weather in the upcoming final Test in Southampton by starting a day's play 30 minutes earlier.

The newly adopted flexible approach to starting times was announced Thursday, a day before the start of the test, after the second match of the series was blighted by rain and bad light and ended in an unsatisfacto-

Captains and coaches of both teams have agreed to the changes, with the England and Wales Cricket Board saying "further consideration will be given to applying these

SUSPENDED DOCTOR

Meanwhile, CSK team Madhu doctor Thottappillil, who was suspended by the franchise following his tweet on the Indo-China border clash, is back and will accompany the squad to Dubai. He had tendered an unconditional apolog after the controversial post was termed "inappro-

priate" by the franchise.
"His suspension is over. His role is crucial, especially in the bio-bubble environment," Viswanathan.

Cricket faced accusations of being stuck in its

weather.

to the venues on time. For a 10.30 a.m. start, 98 overs can be bowled in the

half hours.

Viswanathan.

EUROPA LEAGUE FINAL

Sevilla vs Inter Milan

from 12.30 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

vs Los Angeles Clippers from 6.30 am (Saturday). All matches on Sony Six, HD

Eng vs Pak's 3rd

Southampton, Aug. 20: changes at future series England and Pakistan will be able to make up for England leads the series England leads the series 1-0 after winning the first test in Manchester.

ways during the second test at the Rose Bowl, when each day's play was affected by inclement

The tests are being played in empty stadiums for this series because of Covid-19 restrictions, so there were no concerns about spectators getting

day and the morning session would last two and a

Live on TV

THIRD TEST

England vs Pakistan from 3.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

Philadelphia 76ers vs Boston Celtics from 4 am (Saturday); Dallas Mavericks

Mavericks move past Clippers

New York, Aug. 20: Luka Doncic has his first NBA postseason victory, though probably not the way he expected.

Instead of leading the Dallas Mavericks on the court, he was helping lead cheers from the sideline as his teammates pulled away while he sat.

Doncic scored 28 points and the Mavericks put together the pivotal run when he was out to beat the Los Angeles Clippers 127-114 on Wednesday night and even the Western Conference playoff series at a game apiece.

"This is how we're going to have to win games," Mavs coach Rick Carlisle said. "Our depth is going to be a big part of it.'

Two nights after scoring 42 points in the highestscoring debut in postseason history, Doncic played just nine minutes in the second half because of foul trouble. He finished with eight rebounds and seven

The 21-year-old picked up

Luka Doncic scored 28 points as **Dallas Mavericks** beat Los Angeles **Clippers 127-114** and even the **Western Conference** playoff series at one

his fourth foul less than a minute into the third quarter, shaking his finger toward the Dallas bench that he didn't want to come

game a piece.

He stayed on then and, when he did come out toward the end of the period, Dallas put together a strong stretch of basketball. A finishing 14-4 spurt made it 98-85 entering the

And even after Doncic picked up his fifth less than a minute into the final period and had to go out again, the Mavs pushed the lead to 18 in the final 12

Dhoni important illustration of new India: PM

Lewandowski during their Champions League semifinal at the Jose Alvalade Stadium

Lyon's goalkeeper Anthony Lopes (left) tries to stop Bayern Munich's Robert

in Lisbon, Portugal, on Wednesday. Bayern won the game 3-0.

New Delhi, Aug. 20: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has described Mahendra Singh Dhoni as the embodiment of a new India where family name does not make one's destiny in a letter to the enigmatic former captain, who retired from international cricket last week.

A thankful Dhoni shared the letter on his Twitter page on Thursday, his first social media post since the "consider me retired" note on Instagram that stunned the cricket fraternity on

Saturday. You have been one of the important illustrations of the spirit of new India,

where family name does not make young people's destiny but they make their own names and their own destinies," wrote the PM in his letter to the twotime World Cup winner.

'Where we come from does not matter as long as we know where we are headed — this is the spirit that you have exuded and inspired many youngsters with," he said.

Dhoni, who is also an Honorary Lieutenant Colonel in the Territorial Army, thanked the PM for the appreciation.

"An Artist, Soldier and Sportsperson what they

crave for is appreciation,

sacrifice is getting noticed and appreciated by everyone.thanks PM @narendramodi for your appreciation and good wishes," he

In the lengthy note to the celebrated cricketer, the PM also lauded the calm demeanour with which Dhoni led the Indian team. "No matter what hair-

style you sported, your calm head remained the same in victory or defeat, which is very important for every youth," he said referring to different hair cuts that Dhoni made famous after sporting an eye-catching long mane at

that their hard work and the beginning of his

Calling him one of the greatest captains and one of the best wicketkeepers the game has seen, Modi said, "Your dependability in tough situations and your style of finishing matches, particularly the 2011 World Cup final will forever be etched in the public memory for generations.'

"The correct way to assess your impact is as a phenomenon.

The 39-year-old stumperbatsman is widely considered a game-changer in international cricket and earned respect for his foresight on the cricket field, which made punts look like well thought out strategy. He will now be seen in action in the IPL, starting

September 19 in the UAE. Rising from humble beginnings in a small town, you burst onto the national scene, made a name for yourself and most importantly, made

India proud," Modi wrote.
The PM said Dhoni's rise and conduct after achieving that fame gives inspiration to voungsters who "like you haven't been to cushy schools or colleges, neither do they belong to illustrious families but they have the talent to dis-

tinguish themselves at the highest level.

Modi hailed Dhoni's ability to take risks and make them work, citing the 2007 T20 World Cup final in which the then skipper handed the ball to littleknown medium pacer Joginder Sharma in a tense final over against

"Many of your memorable on-field moments exemplify a particular generation of Indians.

arch-rivals Pakistan.

generation of 'This Indians does not hesitate to take risks and back each other's abilities in even the toughest of situations seen in the way you took

risks many times backing little known youngsters to deliver in high pressure situations," he noted. "The 2007 World Cup

final is a perfect example of this spirit."

He also mentioned Dhoni's well-documented involvement with the armed forces. During his

sabbatical from cricket last year, Dhoni had spent a number of weeks training with his unit in the Territorial Army. "You were most happy

being among our army personnel. Your concern towards their welfare has always been remarkable,' the PM said.