

'NO POLL WHEN LIFE IS UNCERTAIN'

P7



DONALD TRUMP  
DOES U-TURN ON  
DELAYING ELECTION

P10



AT LEWIS FUNERAL,  
OBAMA SEEKS BOOST  
TO VOTING RIGHTS

P10



PLANNING SPORT  
IN THE TIME OF  
THE PANDEMIC

P12

## WEATHER

Generally cloudy sky. Light rain/thunder-showers. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 34 and 27 degrees Celsius respectively.

**RAINFALL:** 000.8 MM

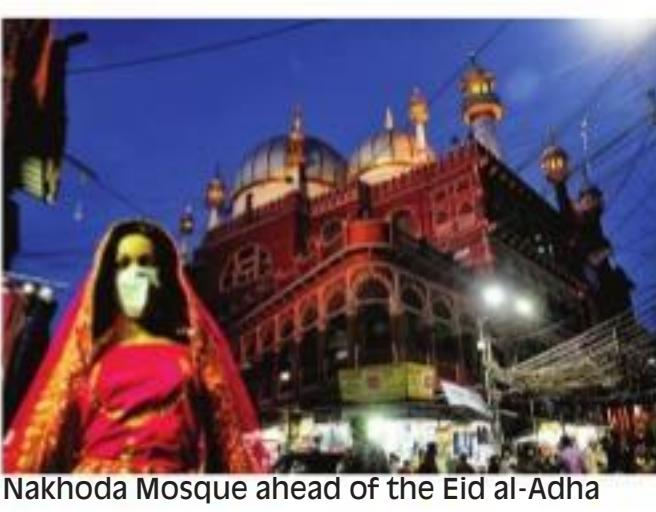
**RELATIVE HUMIDITY**

Max: 91% Min: 67%

**TEMPERATURE**

Max: 34.8°C (+1) Min: 27.3°C (0)  
SUN RISES 05:44 hrs SUN SETS 19:12 hrs  
MOON RISES 17:35 hrs MOON SETS 04:05 hrs

## THUMBNAILS



Nakhoda Mosque ahead of the Eid al-Adha festival in Kolkata on Friday.

SNS

**Delhi's Covid caseload hits 1.35L:** Delhi on Friday reported 1,195 new Covid-19 patients, which pushed the total number of such cases to 1,35,598 in the city. According to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin, the recovered Covid patients numbered 1,20,930 now. The Covid recovery rate climbed to 89.18 per cent in the national capital which recorded 27 fresh Covid fatalities.

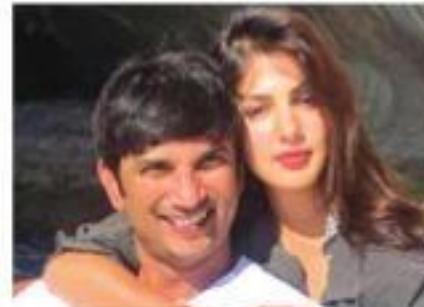
P9

**Hong Kong polls:** Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam announced Friday that the government will postpone highly anticipated legislative elections by one year, citing a worsening coronavirus outbreak in the semi-autonomous Chinese city. The Hong Kong government is invoking an emergency ordinance in delaying the elections.

P11

## Sushant Rajput's death: ED files case against actress

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI/MUMBAI, 31 JULY



Actress Rhea Chakraborty faces more trouble as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday filed a money laundering case against her and her family on the basis of a Bihar police FIR in which Sushant Singh Rajput's father has accused them of abetting the Bollywood actor's suicide.

Chakraborty, 28, meanwhile, broke her silence over the FIR filed against her to say Satyamev Jayate (truth shall prevail), and that she had immense faith in god and the judiciary. She said this in a brief video statement released through her lawyers.

The chorus for a probe by the CBI in Rajput's death case which was getting murkier by the day also grew louder with Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader and Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan saying only the central agency can do justice in the matter amid what he called a "tussle" between the Bihar and Mumbai police. Union minister Prakash Javadekar said he expects a free and fair probe into the death case to ensure that truth comes out.

A Bihar Police team which is in Mumbai to investigate the FIR registered in Patna against Chakraborty, recorded the statement of Rajput's ex-girlfriend Ankita Lokhande, in which she is reported to have said the late actor was not under depression, a police official said.

The 34-year-old actor, who was dating Chakraborty, was found hanging in his apartment in Mumbai's Bandra area on June 14.

The ED had called for the Bihar police's First Information Report (FIR) registered on Tuesday and after studying it, the probe agency decided to slap charges under the Prevention of Money Laundering

Act (PMLA), officials said.

They said an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) has been filed against the accused named in the FIR that includes Chakraborty, her family and six others.

Chakraborty and some others are expected to be called for questioning soon.

The ED is understood to have taken up the case after it analysed the contents of the FIR filed on the basis of the complaint by Rajput's father and gathered some independent information about the dead actor's income, bank accounts and companies. More such details and another FIR filed by the Mumbai Police to probe Rajput's death will be part of the ED's probe, according to the officials.

Rajput's father Krishna Kumar Singh (74), who resides in Patna, has also alleged that the actress was aided by her family members, including parents, since they all were looking to purloin the assets of his son worth crores of rupees and started interfering in all aspects of his life.

The father also said he wanted a police investigation to ascertain where the Rs 15 crore deposited in a bank account held by Rajput was transferred. Officials said the ED will probe allegations of mishandling and purported diversion of Rajput's money and operation of his bank accounts. The agency will probe if anyone used Rajput's income and his companies for money laundering and creating illegal assets, they said.

The inquiry will look into the facts and circumstances leading to the incidents, as well as into any other issue connected or relevant to the incident and the circumstances leading to it, an official spokesperson said.

The chief minister promised strict action against anyone found complicit in the case. Amarinder also directed police to crack down on any spurious liquor manufacturing units that may be operating in

the state.

The death toll in the incident was initially reported as 21, but officials later said this has risen to 38. According to government officials, while 19 people died in Tarn Taran, spurious liquor claimed 10 lives in Amritsar and nine in Batala since Wednesday night.

In a crackdown on Friday, Punjab Police arrested seven bootleggers in over 40 raids in Amritsar, Batala and Tarn Taran. Police also arrested Balwinder Kaur, a resident of Mochhal village in Tarsikka area of Amritsar. The SHO of the Tarsikka police station, Bikramjit Singh, has been suspended, Amritsar's SSP (Rural) Vikramjit Singh Duggal said.

The post mortem of four persons will be conducted today to ascertain the exact cause of the deaths.

Giving details of the case,

(WITH PTI INPUTS)

STYLING: PUNIT KUMAR

PHOTOGRAPH: PUNIT KUMAR

ARTWORK: PUNIT KUMAR

DESIGN: PUNIT KUMAR

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PHOTOGRAPH: PUNIT KUMAR



*Violence, corruption and hegemony goondaism under police protection have become a part of the governance; what do we call it, Hirak Rajar Deshe*

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR  
WEST BENGAL GOVERNOR

# LG rejects AAP govt's bid to open hotels, weekly markets

An enraged AAP blasts LG Baijal, charging that this was yet another instance of the Centre's move to undermine the democratically-elected Delhi govt and overturn its decisions

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

**D**elhi Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal today dismissed the Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP government's decision to allow hotels and weekly markets under Unlock 3.

As the coronavirus (Covid-19) situation continues to be "fragile" and the threat is still "far from over", the LG has taken this decision, officials sources said.

"The LG has rejected the Delhi government's decision to allow hotels and weekly markets under Unlock 3," sources said. LG Baijal is also chairman of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority.

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The Kejriwal government had yesterday decided to allow hotels to reopen in the city

under Unlock 3 from 1 August. It also decided to allow weekly bazars (markets) on a trial basis for seven days with social distancing and all necessary Covid measures



FILE PHOTO

in place. The Delhi government decided to allow the operation of hotels, hospitality services and street hawkers in the city. "These decisions are in

continuation of several important decisions taken by CM Arvind Kejriwal in the past few days to ensure Delhi's economy, which was impacted severely by the lockdown, gets back on track," a gov-

ernment statement had then stated.

"Since hotels of Delhi are no longer linked to hospitals, Delhi government has also decided to allow normal functioning of hotels and hospital

tality services, as already permitted under Centre's unlock guidelines," the statement added.

The AAP was enraged by the LG's bid to reject the Kejriwal government's deci-

sions.

Reacting to the LG's move, the AAP said the Centre must stop interfering in decisions of the Delhi government and stop undermining its authority.

The development comes a day after Baijal overturned the Delhi Cabinet's decision to reject the Delhi Police's panel of lawyers for arguing the cases related to recent North-east

Delhi riots in the Supreme Court and the high court.

Talking to reporters, AAP spokesman Raghav Chadha said, "The Centre derives sadistic pleasure by inflicting pain and misery on people of Delhi and undermining the democratically elected government of Delhi."

"In the last few days, we have seen on several occasions that the Centre interfered in decisions of the Delhi government," he said.

The first example is the home isolation module which Centre earlier opposed, but later took back its decision after opposition from the people, Chadha said, adding that the second is the lawyers panel of the Delhi government on Delhi riots was changed and then the third example is rejecting the Delhi government's proposal to open hotels and weekly markets but now

when the Delhi government wanted to open it, he added.

The NDMC's anti-larva action teams have visited the Lok Nayak Bhawan, UPSC building, Jam Nagar House, PM House, Parliament House, Doordarshan, White House, CAT premises, Punjab House, Haryana Bhawan, Himachal Bhawan, Paryavaran Bhawan, Mausam Bhawan, IIC, IIBC and Chinmaya Mission.

The council has undertaken an intensive drive to check the rooftops, kachcha portions and premises of government buildings, private buildings, hospitals, electrical sub-stations, police stations, markets and residential colonies in all its 14 circles in New Delhi area for taking precautionary measures to check and control in spreading dengue, malaria and chikungunya diseases, informed NDMC official issuing a press statement.

"Over 3,10,313 houses have been visited and 5,67,408 water containers have been checked out of which 1541 were found positive for larva breeding. As per the certain provisions of the NDMC Act 1994, as many as 1498 notices and 43 challans have been issued till this weekend," said an official statement.

According to the council, there are fewer cases of the vector-borne diseases this year compared to last year. Only one case each of dengue and chikungunya has been reported in the NDMC area.

The NDMC has issued advisories to the presidents and secretaries of Residents Welfare Associations, Markets and Traders Associations, SHOs of police stations and the executive engineers of CPWD to take steps against mosquito breeding in their areas.

It also focused on raising awareness through messages, mobile phone calls, video-conferencing and other means. The council sends 50,000 SMSs every week to residents, urging remedial action against mosquito breeding in their locality.

## NDMC issues notices against mosquito-breeding

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has issued 43 challans and 1498 notices under anti-larval campaign to contain the spread of dengue, malaria and chikungunya in the Capital.

The council has undertaken an intensive drive to check the rooftops, kachcha portions and premises of government buildings, private buildings, hospitals, electrical sub-stations, police stations, markets and residential colonies in all its 14 circles in New Delhi area for taking precautionary measures to check and control in spreading dengue, malaria and chikungunya diseases, informed NDMC official issuing a press statement.

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when the Delhi government wanted to open it, he added.

On 8 June, the Centre had allowed operation of hotels and weekly markets but now

when the Delhi government wanted to open it, he added.

Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri, who conducted the hearing through video conferencing, granted the relief to the 72-year-old and asked him to join the investigation as when required.

Khan's tenure in the commission ended recently.

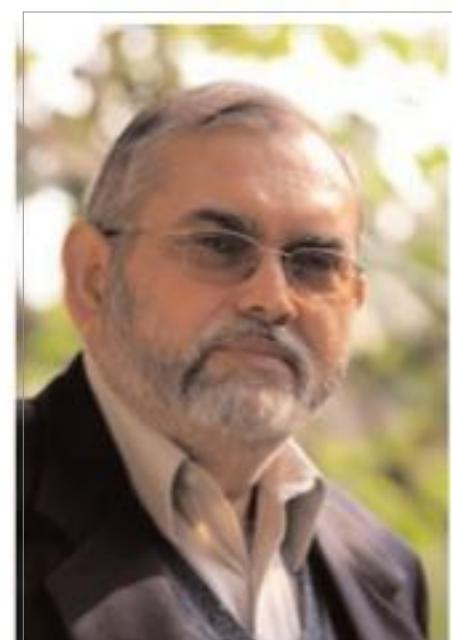
"The petitioner (Khan) is admitted to anticipatory bail on furnishing of a personal bond of Rs 50,000 and one surety of the like amount in the event of arrest," the judge said while dictating the order.

The court was informed by advocate Vrinda Grover, appearing for Khan, that he has already submitted his laptop to the police and joined the investigation a number of times.

Prosecutor M P Singh said he has instructions from the police that Khan is no longer required for further investigation.

The high court, while granting pre-arrest bail to Khan, asked him to cooperate in the investigation and in case of change in address, inform the investigating officer.

He was also asked not to



leave Delhi without prior intimation to the police.

The court was hearing a plea by Khan seeking anticipatory bail in the seditious case lodged against him, citing his age, health issues and risk of contracting COVID-19.

The court had earlier granted him interim relief, asking the police not to take any coercive measure against him till July 31.

On April 28, Khan had published, through his official page on social media, a post that allegedly had seductive and hateful comments.

On May 2, based on a complaint, Delhi Police Special Cell lodged an FIR against Khan under sections 124A and 153A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for the alleged offences of sedition and promoting feelings of hatred between different groups on the grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence and language.

## Sisodia holds meeting with teachers and parents on online education

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

have to reduce our other expenses so that we continue with our children's education," Sisodia said.

Thanking the parents for their support, he said, "You have transformed your home into a school. This is the fourth review meeting on online and semi-online education provided by Delhi Government schools."

Sisodia informed the parents that the students who did not have online resources were contacted through phone calls. A semi-online pattern was introduced for them and study material was given to them.

He shared the case of a child who did not have access to online education. A teacher came forward to help him. She took the help of his neighbour and arranged that facility for the

student.

The Deputy Chief Minister admitted, "Online education is not an alternative to what we teach through schools. Going to school helps in the all-round development of a child. So, we want the schools to re-open as soon as possible."

The government had to resort to online education suddenly without proper planning. But now it can be said that the experiment has been successful. Parental involvement during these online sessions has been a blessing in disguise, Sisodia added.

The government schools of Delhi created history this time by getting 98 per cent results. "Five years ago when we got 88 percent results, we gave ourselves the target of achieving 90 per cent. Today, the results are 98 per cent. But let us not be complacent. Let's think of moving forward," he advised.

During the interaction programme, a mother said that children were enjoying this form of education a lot. School teachers have worked hard and this is a good opportunity for children to learn and grow.

Other parents described online education as a useful tool.

Teachers said earlier we used to connect mainly with children, but now we are getting an opportunity to interact with parents too.

It also claimed that the police officer's order stated: Due care and precaution be taken while arresting any person. All evidences including direct and technical evidences be properly analysed and that all the arrests are backed by sufficient evidence be ensured. No arbitrary arrest should be made in any case and all evidences must be discussed with Special PPs (public prosecutors) assigned for each case.

The order purportedly added: Supervisory officers ACPs/DCPs SIT & Additional CP/Crime (Headquarters) may guide the IOs (investigating officers) suitably.

During the hearing, the high court said there is no dispute that senior officers have to guide the juniors as per the current ground situation.

The court made it clear that whether notice is to be issued on the petition or not will be decided after pursuing the letters to be placed by the police.

When advocate Amit Mahajan, representing the Delhi Police, contended that the petition was highly mischievous, the judge shot back this letter (of special CP) is also mischievous. Tell me what was the

need to issue this letter. The high court was hearing a petition filed by Sahil Parvez, whose father was shot dead allegedly by communal rioters near his home, and Mohd Saeed Salmani, whose elderly mother was allegedly lynched in her house by rioters, seeking quashing of a July 8 order issued by Special Commissioner of Delhi Police (Crime and Economic Offences Wing).

Advocate Mehmood Pracha, representing the petitioners, claimed that the July 8 order amounts to an unlawful and illegal interference in the performance of investigative functions by police officers.

He argued that the police order was against the law and there was no provision in the law to pass such an order.

They (police) are sending this message that the riot was between two communities, which is shocking, he contended.

The high court had earlier asked the police to place on record the order passed by the special CP and had observed that no action can be taken based on a news report, on which the petition was filed, unless some authenticity to the claims is provided.

## Delhi riots: HC questions Special CP over order issued to probe teams

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

The

Delhi High Court Friday questioned the Special Commissioner of Police for issuing an order to its teams probing the northeast Delhi riots asking them to exercise due care and precaution while making any arrests.

The court's questioning came on a plea by the families of two victims who were killed during the February violence here, alleging that the senior officer's order to the chiefs of teams probing the riot matters was sending a wrong message.

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait asked Special Commissioner of Delhi Police (Crime and Economic Offences Wing) Praveer Ranjan, who joined the hearing through video conferencing, as to what was the need to issue such a letter on July 8 to his subordinate officials and queried if the police issues such orders in other cases also.

To this, the IPS officer replied that this is a normal practice adopted by them to sensitise the officials to exercise due care and precaution during the investigation, he said, adding that besides the riots matter, they have passed several such orders in other cases in the past.

He said whenever any complaint or input comes to his knowledge, such a

communication is issued, as was done on July 8.

An input was received by the agency and whenever such input is received, we sensitise our officers so that they shall exercise due care and precaution during the investigation, he said, adding that besides the riots matter, they have passed several such orders in other cases in the past.

As per a news report, on the basis of which the petition was filed, the Special CP passed an order on July 8 stating that the arrest of some

prejudice is caused to the members of any community.

The high court directed Ranjan to place within two days five such orders or letters in a sealed cover, which he or his predecessor has issued on receiving a complaint or representation and listed the matter for further hearing on August 7.

It claimed that the senior police officer's order said,

community representatives are alleging that these arrests are made without any evidence and are even insinuating that such arrests are being made for some personal reasons.

Hindu youth from riot-hit area in northeast Delhi had led to a degree of resentment among the Hindu community and due care and precaution must be taken while making arrests.

It claimed that the senior police officer's order said, community representatives are alleging that these arrests are made without any evidence and are even insinuating that such arrests are being made for some personal reasons.

FILE PHOTO



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The high court had earlier asked the police to place on record the order passed by the special CP and had observed that no action can be taken based on a news report, on which the petition was filed, unless some authenticity to the claims is provided.



The BJP got four MPs of TDP merged with it overnight in Rajya Sabha. That merger is right and the merger of six MLAs with the Congress in Rajasthan is wrong

ASHOK GEHLOT  
RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER

The Statesman  
NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 01 AUGUST 2020

03

# Minor Dalit girl raped and killed in Muzaffarnagar

Accused arrested; the outrage occurs in UP's Muzaffarnagar district amid sustained rise in heinous crimes and atrocities against Dalits and other vulnerable sections across the country

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
MEERUT, 31 JULY

**A**mid sustained rise in heinous crimes and outrageous atrocities against Dalits and other vulnerable sections of society in different parts of the country, a minor Dalit girl was allegedly raped and murdered by a 21-year-old man in a village in the Mansoorpur area in Muzaffarnagar district in Uttar Pradesh on Thursday evening.

The accused was reported to be the 9-year-old Dalit girl's neighbour.

The accused, Sunil Kumar, was arrested by the police on Thursday night in the wake of a complaint lodged by the family members of the deceased girl. Following the identification of the accused, the police recovered the victim's dead body from the village field.

Her alleged rape would be confirmed only after her post-mortem report is obtained, said Manoj Kumar Chahal, SHO of the Mansoorpur police station.

The SHO said that the deceased girl was last seen with the accused on Thursday

evening. She and her elder sister had gone out to play with other children near the temple located on the outskirts of the village.

When they were playing, Sunil, who was known to the sisters as a neighbour, asked the younger sister to come along with him for a ride on his bike. He told the elder sister of the deceased that he would drop her home later.

Enthused by the prospect of having a ride on a motorbike, the minor Dalit girl, unaware of the ordeal she was about to go through, left with Sunil.

When she did not return

home till late evening, her worried family members enquired from her elder sister. She told their parents that the younger sister had gone for a ride on Sunil's bike.

Her concerned family members started search for the girl and filed a complaint with the Mansoorpur police after they failed to trace her.

Late in the night, Sunil was arrested and the police recovered the dead body of the minor Dalit girl from a nearby village field.

SHO Chahal said that a case has been registered against Sunil on charges of murder and

that they were waiting for the post-mortem report of the girl for confirmation of rape.

If the rape is confirmed in the post-mortem report, the charge of rape under the relevant section would also be included in the FIR, the police officer said.

Circle officer of the Khatauli area of Muzaffarnagar district, Ashish Pratap Singh, said that the police have not interrogated the arrested accused yet. He also said that the crime of rape would be added in the FIR against the accused if it is confirmed by the girl's post-mortem report.

## TJ: HC seeks Centre, police response on 24 foreigners' pleas to quash FIRs

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

The Delhi High Court Friday asked the Centre and the police to respond to pleas by 24 foreigners seeking quashing of FIRs against them for attending Tablighi Jamaat event here and allegedly indulging in missionary activities in violation of visa norms and breaching anti-COVID-19 guidelines.

Justice Anuj Jain Ram Bhambhani, conducting the hearing through video conferencing, asked the Centre and Delhi Police to file their status reports on the issue before the next date of hearing, August 10.

The court was informed

that these 24 foreigners, who have filed two separate petitions, have already admitted their guilt in the FIR lodged by the crime branch of Delhi Police in the matter and pleaded for lenient punishments under the provisions of plea bargaining.

They were allowed to walk free on payment of varying fines and pleading guilty for minor offences related to the COVID-19 lockdown violations, the counsel for the foreigners said.

However, they are not able to fly back to their countries due to the pendency of other FIRs lodged at Seelampur police station, said senior advocate

Rebecca John, representing the foreign nationals.

When the petitioners wanted to go back to their countries, it transpired that a second FIR is also pending against them and the charge sheet has been filed before the trial court, she said.

She contended that the police cannot lodge separate FIRs for the same alleged offence and they are unable to go back due to lookout circulars (LOCs) being opened against them.

She said while the first FIR was lodged on March 31, this second FIR by the Seelampur police was registered on April 1, as they were staying in a masjid there and the police then took them to a quarantine centre.

In the two petitions filed by advocates Ashima Mandla and Mandakini Singh, the petitioners have sought quashing of two FIRs registered at police station Seelampur under various sections of IPC and the Epidemic Diseases Act.

The petitioners said that the FIRs registered at Seelampur are untenable in law in light of foreign nationals having entered into plea bargaining.

"Under the law, second FIR is impermissible and there is an operational bar from prosecution of same offences arising out of the corresponding cause of action under Article 20(2) of the constitution of India (widely known as doctrine of double jeopardy) as well as section 300 of the CrPC," the plea said.

national petitioners have duly entered plea bargaining and consequent deportation orders have been issued by the court.

They said that the allegations in the FIRs before this court are similar to the FIR of crime branch, in which 911 of the 955 foreigner jamaatis have entered into plea bargaining.

"Under the law, second FIR is impermissible and there is an operational bar from prosecution of same offences arising out of the corresponding cause of action under Article 20(2) of the constitution of India (widely known as doctrine of double jeopardy) as well as section 300 of the CrPC," the plea said.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 31 JULY

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur today said although positive COVID-19 cases have gone up in the state during the last few days, the situation was fully under control.

He said that the Union government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was providing all possible help to the Himachal government to fight this pandemic.

He said that on the request of the state government, the Central government had provided 500 additional ventilators to the state.

Thakur was addressing the people of Chopal through video conferencing as he also inaugurated and laid foundation stones of developmental projects worth Rs 165 crore out of which several have been dedicated and work was in progress on the remaining.

The Chief Minister said that people of Chopal have also generously contributed towards the PM CARES Fund and Chief Minister Covid-19 Fund.

He said that the state government has made adequate arrangements for smooth transportation of

apple produce during the current season. He said that sufficient arrangement of carton boxes and trays have been made to the fruit growers for packaging their produce for transportation to various markets of the country.

Thakur said that farmers were being provided anti-hail nets and other plant protection material at highly subsidized rates. He said that efforts were also being made to provide irrigation facilities to maximum farm areas to motivate farmers to go for cultivation of cash crops.

Jal Shakti Minister Mahender Singh Thakur said that the foundation stone of a drinking water supply scheme worth Rs. 38.97 crore, which was laid by the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh as well as Theog area. He said that Himachal Pradesh has emerged as the best State in effective implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission.

EID EVE



A child offers prayers on the eve of Eid al-Adha at Jama Masjid in the Capital on Friday.

## Delhi violence: HC dismisses former councillor's plea in UAPA case

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

The Delhi High Court Friday dismissed a plea by former Congress municipal councillor Ishrat Jahan, booked under anti-terror law UAPA in a case related to communal violence in northeast Delhi in February, challenging an order that extended by 60 days the time for completing the investigation.

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait said there is no illegality or perversity in the trial court's order.

Finding no merit in the present petition, the same is accordingly dismissed with no order as to costs, the high court said.

Jahan, who was arrested on February 26, has challenged the trial court order extending beyond the 90 days mandated under UAPA, the time for completing the investigation by two more months.

Delhi Police has opposed the plea saying that the high court should not intervene in the matters as far as the order of the additional sessions judge, extending the time to probe the case, is concerned as there was no infirmi-

ty in it.

The high court said the trial court judge had passed the June 15 order after going through the mandate of the provisions of the law and after recording his satisfaction.

In view of the facts recorded above and the settled legal position of law, I am of the view that the public prosecutor had moved an application for extension of time to file charge sheet, after going through the whole matrix of the case and after satisfying himself as per the law as enumerated in the second limb of Section 43(D)(2)(b) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

Learned judge also after going through the facts and circumstances and mandate of provisions of law of the Act mentioned above and after recording his satisfaction had passed impugned order. Therefore, I am of the view that there is no illegality or perversity in the said order, Justice Kait said in a 19-page judgement.

The high court said the trial court judge has in unequivocal terms held that that there exist sufficient reasons to extend the period of investigation, detention of the accused beyond the period of 90 days as contemplated under the UAPA.

The satisfaction of the court for extension of the period of investigation is clearly recorded in the impugned order dated June 15. This satisfies the requirement of section 43-D of UAPA, it said.

The high court added that it was apparent that the trial court formed an opinion on the basis of submissions, perusal of case diary and report of the prosecutor, which was duly examined to satisfy the requirements of law that what the progress of investigation was and the specific reasons for detention of the accused beyond the period of 90 days.

It added that the trial court has considered all relevant circumstances for passing the order granting extension of period of investigation.

It noted that the similar issue came before the coordinate bench of the high court in JNU student Sharjeel Imam's UAPA case and his plea was dismissed while upholding the trial court order by which time for investi-

tigation was extended.

Imam was arrested in relation to his alleged instigating speeches during the anti Citizenship (Amendment) Act and National Register of Citizens protests.

The high court on July 20, had reserved order on Jahan's plea challenging the trial court's June 15 order granting a 60-day extension to police to complete its investigation against her and activist Khalid Salfi.

Jahan had sought setting aside the trial court's order, saying it was erroneous, bad in law and wrong on facts and against the democratic and fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Her counsel had contended that the prosecutor had not applied his mind while filing the application in the trial court.

The trial court, in its June 15 order, had said the prosecution had set out a case for extension of the statutory time period to conclude the investigation but the investigating officer was not divested of his obligation of concluding the probe expeditiously.

## 5-day serosurvey to begin in Capital from today

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

The next round of sero-prevalence survey in the national capital is slated to begin on Saturday, with authorities gearing up for the five-day exercise to comprehensively analyse the COVID-19 situation in Delhi.

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain on July 22 had announced that after analysing the results of the last survey, it was decided that more such exercises would be done every month to formulate better policies for tackling the COVID-19 situation in the national capital. The next sero-prevalence survey is scheduled to take place from August 1-5.

The health department has prepared a detailed plan under which every district medical officer has been asked to conduct the survey in their respective jurisdictions, officials said.

Delhi recorded 1093 fresh coronavirus cases on Thursday, taking the tally in the city to over 1.34 lakh, while the death toll from the disease climbed to 3,936, authorities said.

The active cases tally on Thursday was 10,743, down from 10,770 the previous day.

The last sero-prevalence

study was done by the Delhi government in association with the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) from June 27 to July 10. The study had found that around 23 per cent of the people surveyed in Delhi had an exposure to the novel coronavirus, the central government had said.

"The results of the sero-survey conducted from June 27-July 10 came out yesterday, and it shows that nearly one-fourth of people had developed antibodies, meaning they had got infected and recovered. Most of these people who were sampled did not know that they were infected earlier," Jain had told reporters a day after the results were announced by the Health Ministry.

The Delhi government has now decided to conduct more monthly sero-surveys to find greater percentage of such people who had got infected and recovered, so as to formulate better policies for tackling COVID-19, he said.

Health department officials, when contacted, however, did not share much details on the planned exercise from August 1-5.

The number of tests done per million, as on Thursday was 53,533 it said. On Thursday, the number of containment zones stood at 694.

A senior official in south Delhi district administration,

ARCHANA PHULL  
SHIMLA, 31 JULY

The newly-appointed Himachal Pradesh Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president and Lok Sabha MP from Shimla, Suresh Kashyap said he had no idea of his elevation to the coveted party post in advance, but asserted that he is prepared to take up the challenge.

"I am a soldier. A soldier's work is different but he faces whatever challenge comes. The party leadership has given me a new responsibility. It is a big role and I will try my best by taking along everyone in the party in Himachal," Suresh Kashyap told The Statesman in an interview.

He said in BJP, things are different and lobbying has no place.

Kashyap, 49, who worked with Indian Air Force for over 16 years, represented the Pachhad Assembly segment in Sirmaur district twice in a row, before he was fielded for Lok Sabha polls from Shimla Parliamentary constituency (reserved) in May 2019.

Kashyap, who took over as BJP chief last week, succeeds Dr Rajiv Bindal on the party post, who had resigned in May

after four months of getting the responsibility of state BJP President. Dr Bindal had resigned as Speaker of HP Assembly before he was elected as state BJP Chief in January, 2020.

Kashyap, who is not recognised with any camp in BJP so far, said he was grateful to the BJP leadership in the centre and state for picking up an ex-serviceman and a Scheduled Caste leader to head the

party organisation in Himachal Pradesh for the first time.

He said he had never thought of entering politics, when he sought retirement from Indian Air Force and came back to the village due to personal reasons pertaining to family.

"I was over 33 years then. I was educated, so the locals pushed me into the Panjab elections early last decade. In 2005 I was elect-

ed as a member of the Block Development Committee. In 2006, I got the job of a Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT) in school. However, in 2007, I was picked up by BJP ticket for Assembly election from Pachhad, which was known as a Congress bastion, with former minister Gangu Ram Musafir representing it seven times in a row. I lost the first election. However, I won in 2012 polls and then in 2017," he said, narrating his journey in politics so far.

Kashyap said the BJP is strong and all BJP Presidents in the past have done much hard work to bring the party to this level. He said his foremost challenge is to strengthen the party further ahead of 2022 Assembly polls for a repeat of the BJP government.

He said there would not be any shuffle in the party with his taking over, as the appointments were made recently. "Some additions could however be there," he said.

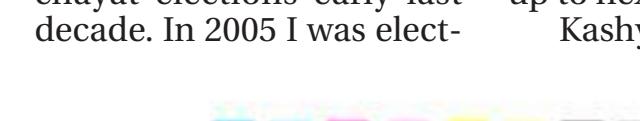
He said the party has already worked to the level of Panna Pramukhs and his effort would not be to spread door to door in the run up to next elections.

Kashyap, who is relative-

ly younger in the party, was cautious about his expression. When asked that Hamirpur district, which had given two times former Chief Minister, Prem Kumar Dhumal, is being sidelined in the Jai Ram cabinet, the new state BJP President said, "It is not like that. Union Minister of State for Finance, Anurag Thakur is from Hamirpur. He has got a very important portfolio in the centre." He said the induction of ministers is the prerogative of Chief Minister in consultation of party leadership in the centre. "They decide taking into consideration several factors," he said.

The state BJP chief denied any infighting in BJP and if some senior MLAs did not attend the BJP Legislature Party meeting last evening, it was due to some personal engagements. "There is no bickering and the party is united," he said.

Asked whether former party President, Rajiv Bindal is being ignored, Kashyap said Bindal was a strong leader from Nahan and he had done great work in the backward district while health minister in BJP government in the past.





A health official collects nasal swab sample from a woman to test for Covid-19 at a civil hospital in Amritsar on Friday. **APP**

**1,310 fresh cases in Kerala:** Kerala on Friday reported 1,310 fresh Covid-19 cases, taking the total number of persons affected in the state to 23,613. With report of three more deaths on Thursday the toll has gone up to 77. **SNS**

**Gujarat HC relief to private schools:** Private schools in Gujarat scored a major victory on Friday as the HC invalidated state government's decision, asking them not to demand fees from students for the period they remained closed. The 15,000-odd private schools locked horns with the government as the latter ruled that fees should not be collected for lockdown period during which only on-line classes were held. **SNS**

**Ram temple:** Senior RSS functionary Dattatreya Hosabale on Friday said Ram temple in Ayodhya will be a symbol of "cultural nationalism", while asserting its construction is not merely a religious affair. **PTI**

# Andhra's three-capital Bills get Governor's nod

Covt yet to announce when it plans to shift capital from Amaravati to Vizag

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
HYDERABAD, 31 JULY

**P**aving the way for the formation of three different capitals, Andhra Pradesh governor Biswabhusan Harichandran gave his assent to the two Bills - Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill, 2020 and Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Authority (Repeal) Bill, 2020 - seven months after the chief minister first proposed an executive capital in Visakhapatnam, a legislative capital at Amaravati and a judicial capital at Kurnool.

However, there are petitions in the High Court against the shifting of the capital from Amaravati which was designated as the capital city by the erstwhile TDP government led by N Chandrababu Naidu and hence the two Bills will have to pass through legal hurdles before implementation.

A section of the farmers in Amaravati agitating against the new capital plan are hanging on to the slim chance that the Bills will fail to withstand legal scrutiny.

However, the governor is said to have sought legal advice before giving his nod.

Prior to the assent of the governor there has been high drama as the Bills were passed twice in the Assembly in January and June but the Legislative Council which is dominated by the TDP had sent the two to the Select Committee.

However, the committee was not set up for months prompting the government to get the Bills passed in the Assembly second time and then had sent it to the governor for his assent.

In between, angered by the Legislative Council's stand the ruling party passed a resolution to abolish the Upper House in the state. When the Bills were sent to the governor along with TDP president N

**YSR announces ₹5,000 for plasma donors**



Devotees wearing facemasks while visiting a temple in Hyderabad. **FILE PHOTO**

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
HYDERABAD, 31 JULY

Undaunted by the increase in Covid-19 cases, Andhra Pradesh is gearing up to reopen schools from 5 September and provide the students with masks while tourist spots in the state will be kept open from 15 August onwards.

Chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy instructed officials to prepare for the launch of another welfare scheme for

providing uniform, text books and shoes to the students and hoped that the situation will be normal by that time. The chief minister said the children should be provided with masks they must be taught about how to use them.

Andhra Pradesh has once again reported 10,376 new cases with 1,40,933 positive cases and 75,720 active ones. So far 1,349 people have succumbed to the virus. Telangana, too, recorded a new

high with 1,986 fresh cases and 62,703 the total positive cases.

Fourteen people died, pushing up the death toll to 519.

In order to encourage plasma donors the state government has also decided to pay Rs 5,000 to them as incentives. The chief minister directed officials to strictly monitor medicines, treatment, food and hygiene in the 138 Covid hospitals in the state.

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The pandemic has given the world a chance to take outrageously bold decisions to create a new order where there is no global warming, no wealth concentration and no unemployment.

NOBEL LAUREATE AND FOUNDER OF THE GRAMEEN BANK, MUHAMMAD YUNUS

IN A CONVERSATION WITH CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI,

**The Statesman**

05

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 01 AUGUST 2020

## THUMBNAILS



A shopkeeper arranges an idol of Goddess Lakshmi for 'Vara Mahalakshmi Vratha' in Bengaluru on Friday. ■ AFP

**DU begins online classes:** The Delhi University has said that it will begin the 2020-2021 academic session from 10 August with online classes for undergraduate and postgraduate students. The university had announced summer vacations till 9 August. PTI

**Sonia Gandhi stable:** Congress president Sonia Gandhi, who has been admitted to the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in New Delhi, is showing improvement in her condition, hospital authorities said on Friday. Gandhi was admitted for routine tests, according to a health bulletin. PTI

**Budding cyclist gets racing bike from President**

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

A Delhi boy, Riyaz, who dreamt of excelling as a racing cyclist, and won a bronze medal in the Delhi State Cycling Championship, practising on a borrowed sports cycle, today received a gift of a racing bicycle from President Ram Nath Kovind.

A student of Class 9, Riyaz hails from Bihar, and works in an eatery to supplement his father's paltry income as a cook. The President learnt about his achievements from reports in the media. Riyaz's passion is cycling, and he practices hard after studies and work.

Monsoon in the range of 96-104 per cent of the LPA is considered normal.

The official rainfall season in the country is from June 1 to September 30. The onset of monsoon over Ker-

## Pandemic shadow over *rakhi* biz as siblings refrain from visiting each other

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad town further into penury.

There isn't much to do. Nobody has come to buy anything so far, she said dejectedly, dusting once again the colourful threads she has sourced from all over.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues its spread across the country, this is one Rakhi, a festival that celebrates sibling bonds, where many brothers and sisters won't be meeting in large family parties or even small lunches and dinners.

The hours hang heavy, one slipping into another without a rupee earned, pushing the 42-year-old rakhi's vendor in



A vendor sprays sanitizer as a preventive measure against the spread of Covid-19 on rakhis at his shop ahead of 'Raksha Bandhan' in Hyderabad on Friday. ■ AFP

and small businesses that were hoping to make some money to tide them over the

corona crisis. Earlier, women would go for a walk in the evening and stop by the shop

to buy rakhis'. This disease has ruined us completely, Rajbala, who has been selling rakhis' for 15 years, said. After four months of lockdown, the fear of contracting the infection runs deeper than ever. I have asked my brothers to tie a rakhi thread on my behalf. There is no way we are going to risk each other's families in these times by visiting them, said Chhaya Singh, a homemaker in Ghaziabad. She also has no trust in online shopping.

Who knows how many hands the rakhi' will go through before reaching my brother. I don't think it is safe, Singh added.

Amrita Mehta, a Gurgaon-based IT professional, would normally travel to Jaipur to meet her brother on the day. But not this year.

I am apprehensive about visiting my brother in Jaipur. I have sent rakhis' to some cousins and told the rest to tie one on their own, Mehta said.

The reluctance of Singh and Mehta to celebrate the festival, dooms doom for vendors like Rajbala. And they are only one cog in the festival wheel.

Pepaa, a recycled paper product company, would normally get 15,000 orders for its plantable rakhis' (with seeds). This year, the number came

down to less than 5,000.

The startup deals in nature-friendly products such as plantable paper, notepads, carry bags and calendars, and its rakhs', aimed at a more sustainable festival, were a bight.

"Every year, we reportedly throw away eight million rakhs across the country after the festival. By investing in a plantable rakhi you can do the environment a favour, Coimbatore-based entrepreneur Divya Shetty said.

Most corporate offices are closed and with that a major chunk of her revenue is gone as they form the bulk of her clients.

## Envoy of China, Australia in Delhi exchange barbs over South China Sea

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

The ambassadors of China and Australia in New Delhi were involved in a verbal spat over Beijing's actions in the South China Sea.

It all started after Australian High Commissioner Barry O'Farrell yesterday stated that his country was deeply concerned by China's actions in the disputed sea and also called for restraint along the LAC between India and China.

The east and northeast India division has also recorded 12 per cent more rainfall. The division comprises West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and the northeastern states.

The deficiency in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh is 50 and 59 per cent respectively. Delhi has also recorded a deficiency.

The central India division has a three-per cent deficiency.

The division comprises Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and the Union territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.

The two Union territories have recorded deficient rainfall.

The south peninsula meteorological division of the IMD has received 19 per cent more rainfall than normal.

The division covers Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, July 30, the country had

received one per cent more rainfall than normal.

The northwest division of the IMD has a 19-per cent deficiency. It comprises Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana and the Union territories of Chandigarh, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

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The situation started improving for some days now, but there are nearly 30,000 people taking shelter in relief camps.

Over 1,300 villages in 22 districts are still under the deluge.

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Over 1,300 villages in 22 districts are still under the deluge.

Telangana, Kerala, Karnataka and the Union territories of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and Puducherry.

Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Puducherry have received excess rainfall.

The east and northeast India division has also recorded 12 per cent more rainfall. The division comprises West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and the northeastern states.

Meghalaya and Bihar have witnessed excess rainfall. However, the rainfall has been deficient in Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram.

**Assam floods:** The flood

situation in Assam has improved in the last few days except in some western districts, where the Brahmaputra and its tributaries are flowing above danger mark for weeks.

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## Exploiting misery

It is by now well known that governments – Union and state – monitor social media carefully, are extremely sensitive to criticism, and have sometimes gone as far as to slap serious charges, including of sedition, for statements they deem offensive. But curiously this process of monitoring appears not to have brought to the attention of governments the many complaints of exploitation by sundry service providers which flood social media in these difficult times. Certainly, beyond the occasional meaningless assurance to act, there is little to suggest that the different ministries of the Union government or the various state governments have acted in any significant measure to crack down. Governments have patted themselves on the backs for their spirited response to the epidemic, for the beds they have made available, for their extensive testing and contact tracing and for ferrying stranded Indians home. But there is another side to the story which scarcely raises official eyebrows. Complaints of overcharging by hospitals, of Covid care packages that cost several lakh rupees, of not releasing bodies until extortionate charges are paid, of exorbitant prices being quoted by chemists for critical drugs, of the exploitative choke-hold on medical essentials and of even a thriving black market in tickets for Vande Bharat flights abound on social media as anguished Indians cope with the many ills that the epidemic has visited on them.

The efforts of governments to curb malpractices have been ineffectual at best. In Delhi, despite the government having capped rates for treatment at private hospitals, the exploitation continues as vested interests collaborate to keep enforcement at bay. Hospitals accredited to the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare providers (NABH) are supposed to charge Rs 10,000 a day (including PPE cost of Rs 1,200) for isolation beds, Rs 15,000 (including PPE cost of Rs 2,000) for ICU beds without a ventilator and Rs 18,000 (including PPE cost of Rs 2,000) for these beds with a ventilator. But horror stories of patients being charged up to Rs 2 lakh a day are common, and in the absence of punitive action are likely to repeat themselves.

Tickets on Vande Bharat flights – aimed at repatriating stranded Indians – are sold by Air India on its website, through its booking offices and through what are called authorised travel agents. More than one Indian stranded overseas has complained of how tickets become unavailable within a few minutes of the flight being opened for booking, and how thereafter a network of agents arranges tickets at a premium, with passengers being asked to pay twice and sometimes two-and-a-half times the listed price. It seems no special provision has been made to accommodate Indians wanting to return on account of a bereavement, and they are largely left at the mercy of these touts. As Indian commerce presents its least edifying face to a desperate public, there is nothing to suggest that the ministries responsible for health and civil aviation have taken effective steps to curb malpractices. This must change.

## Fresh concerns

Concerns that the incumbent American president may explore all possible means to ensure he does not have to vacate the White House any time soon were raised afresh this week with Mr Donald Trump hinting at the possibility of delaying the election, due in November, because of the coronavirus epidemic. While American law allows wide latitude to the state and local governments in the conduct of a Federal election, the date of the election is cast in stone as the first Tuesday of November, which means this time around polling will take place on 3 November. The inauguration of the next President will take place on 20 January 2021.

There is no precedent for the Presidential election to be delayed; during wars and calamities the process has followed the same calendar. As the New York Times noted, "Mr Trump is facing about as dire a run-up to a presidential election as any incumbent could imagine: the worst quarter in the economy on record, an unceasing health crisis, protests nationwide and a country paralyzed by the lack of a financial recovery plan with no solution in sight – all compounded by his own inability to curtail his behaviour." Some days ago, Mr Trump had made it clear that he would not go quietly if he lost the election, after raising concerns that mail-in voting would be sabotaged. Now, he has raised a fresh bogey. Despite being told by his campaign officials that tabulation of votes may not be completed on 3 November, Mr. Trump has tweeted, "Must know Election results on the night of the Election, not days, months or even years later!" His Democratic rivals are concerned that he may claim victory based on same-day tallies without waiting for the count to be completed.

Whether any or all of this will really happen or will be allowed to happen by the United States Congress and the people of the country is in the realm of speculation. But the muted responses of his Republican colleagues to the statements of Mr. Trump could suggest either that they are not taking them seriously or that they are taking them so seriously that they have been shocked into silence.

For it is now well known from White House leaks that Mr Trump has often discussed with associates whether the election can be delayed and been told unequivocally it cannot without a Constitutional amendment. His continued flirtation with the idea, and this time on a public platform, is bound to cause some alarm. For some time at least, the embarrassment of Americans who have often flaunted their country's democratic virtues is likely to continue.

# Trump's paranoia

Fellow-Republican and former Presidential nominee, Mitt Romney, forewarned the Republicans in 2016 when he said, 'Dishonesty is Donald Trump's hallmark' and sagely added 'His imagination must not be married to real power'. But it was, and as predicted, Trump lives dangerously in a make-believe world where he can do no wrong, or ever lose



**D**onald Trump's niece, Mary Trump, has released a damaging tell-tale of her uncle and the sitting US President titled, 'Too much and never enough: How my family created the world's most dangerous man'. While it lists multiple examples of the now-familiar narcissistic traits of President Trump, it presently alludes to his make-believe world and its implications for the 2020 Presidential elections.

Mary Trump has a doctoral degree in clinical psychology and as an insider, she is competent to give familial examples as opposed to revealing anything startling new, about the irascible and unpredictable Trump – but she does. She goes beyond narcissism and suggests a medical sociopath! A sociopath is typically weak, vain and lacks empathy, and in countless instances that required Presidential sobriety and statesmanship, the temperamental Trump spared none, not even some of his 'own' or the US' traditional allies.

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Psychology says that sociopaths manipulate people and circumstances to their own advantage – they instinctively blame others when they fail or have ready justifications for their own behaviour. Mary describes Donald Trump's unique dexterity and felicity for his own stated untruths that, "by the time the doorbell rang, he probably already believed his version of

events"! This disturbing trait now seems to be incubating and playing out in the run-up to the elections, as almost all poll pundits are talking about a likely win for Democrat candidate, Joe Biden, in the November 2020 US Presidential elections.

Donald Trump is struggling to ratchet up confidence in his candidacy, after disastrously living in denial through the Covid saga and its crippling impact. Today he desperately needs enemies and reasons to still try and pull a bunny out of the hat, or at least justify the end-result, as is writ all over. Trump's playbook is about winning at any cost, by hook or by crook, with ends justifying the means.

Therefore, he is refusing to publicly commit to accept the electoral verdict, as the grudging leader had done in the 2016 elections.

In an unashamed disrespect for electioneering traditions and processes, Trump refuses to give a gentleman's word, "No, I'm not going to just say yes. I'm not going to say 'no,' and I didn't last time, either!"

The President's former lawyer and fixer, Michael Cohen, warns, "given my experience working for Trump I fear that if he loses the election in 2020 that there will never be a peaceful transition of power". Implicitly, Trump is incapable of handling a public defeat and therefore the prospects of an unacceptable humiliation. Joe Biden is already drumming up noises of how Trump will go hell-for-leather to 'steal' the elections and that the US military will probably have to intervene and escort Trump out

of White House, when the results pour in.

Trump had shown similar misplaced pugnacity and inelegance in rejecting the fact that Hillary Clinton had won more popular votes in 2016 (albeit, not the electoral votes). Trump had instituted a Presidential Commission to investigate the loss of popular votes, and when the investigations came a cropper, he incredulously stated that it had uncovered "substantial evidence of voter fraud". Today, Trump is clutching the implausible straws of 'mail-in-voting' to raise the bogey of a potential 'fraud' that could be advantageous to the Democrats. Non-partisan experts rubbish all such conspiracy theories and deny the possibility of any substantial 'fraud'; five US states have been using the same for years.

It is more likely that Trump is setting up someone or something to blame and for that invoking the paranoia of 'outside influence' amongst his constituents and to assuage his own disturbed soul and personality. Trump has had the undistinguished and unmatched record of averaging over 23 lies or untruths in a day, in just 2020, by independent fact-checkers. His imagined ghosts have led to unprecedented threats of declaring national emergency, ordering troops or even goading his core constituents to take on 'fake' media and unsupportive judges.

The looming challenges of a peaceful transition of power in 2020 are staring at America, if the pollsters have got it right this time. Trump is unlike former fel-

low-Republicans who had enough grace and humility to accept electoral defeat, fair and square.

In his concession speech, John McCain on losing his second bid had said, "Sen. Obama and I have had and argued our differences, and he has prevailed. No doubt many of those differences remain. These are difficult times for our country, and I pledge to him tonight to do all in my power to help him lead us through the many challenges we face". Even Trump's bitterest rival, Hillary Clinton, had maintained the constitutional dignity to insist in her concession speech in 2016, "Our constitutional democracy enshrines the peaceful transfer of power and we don't just respect that, we cherish it".

But Trump is not McCain, Romney, Clinton, Democrat or even Republican, he is just plain Donald Trump. The portents of his unwillingness to exit after a possible electoral defeat are real, and his moral vacuity will not deter him from indulging in desperate and reckless theatrics and grandstanding. Sadly, in a deeply polarised country, he will still have believers, and the soul of the nation will be further hurt and poorer for the animalistic instincts of a lonely man. Ironically, the man who still controls the governance levers and has gone to extreme lengths to tinker with the established norms and nonpartisan professionalism in governmental institutions, is today fearing 'the most corruption election in our nation's history', under his own watch!

Across the societal spectrum, the institutions of the Military, Judiciary, Republican leadership, Religious and Civic leaders will need to brace and prepare, should the narcissism or sociopathy of an individual get the better of good sense and propriety in accepting the electoral results.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**  
ASIAN VOICES

## Why Covid-19 could complicate haze prevention

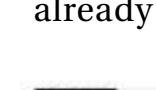
Although the Covid-19 pandemic has dominated headlines in 2020, it is unfortunately not the only danger to public health that Singapore and South-east Asia face this year. With the return of the dry season, there is a chance that transboundary haze released by forest and peat fires in Indonesia might return. Early action is needed to ensure that the region does not end up battling health threats on multiple fronts. The Indonesian provinces of Central Kalimantan, Riau and South Sumatra have already declared states of emergency in response to rising numbers of hot spots, or possible fires detected by satellites. This is a typical precautionary practice at the start of the mid-year dry season, and is not in itself alarming. Rather, it signals that the provincial authorities are increasing patrols and fire suppression efforts, with the state of emergency allowing them to request help from the central government.

Indonesia has good reason to take the threat of haze seriously. Official figures show that nearly 900,000 Indonesians suffered from respiratory ailments at the height of last year's haze, and the World Bank believes that the crisis cost the country some US\$5.2 billion (\$7.2 billion), or 0.5 per cent of Indonesia's gross domestic product. Typically, the likelihood of haze depends on two factors. One is how

hot and dry the weather is likely to be. The other is human activity. The haze-inducing fires in Indonesia are thought to be largely man-made, the result of fire being used to clear land for agriculture. Government policy, as well as action by both the authorities and private sector, is therefore critical to the success of fire prevention and management. Based on the weather alone, we are not likely to see a major haze incident like the one last year, when the region suffered an unusually strong drought. Projections by the Asean Specialised Meteorological Centre and other agencies suggest that the 2020 dry season might be milder than average.

Indonesia has taken steps to strengthen fire and haze prevention across the country. Since 2011, Indonesia has stopped granting new licences for companies to convert primary forest and peatland to agricultural use.

This started off as a moratorium in 2011, a temporary measure that ended up being periodically extended in two-year intervals. Last August, Indonesian President Joko Widodo made the ban permanent, a move that signalled the nation's continued commitment towards safeguarding the environment. The National Police announced earlier this month that 73 people and two companies are currently under investigation for setting fires since the start of the year. A coastal area of Jakarta shrouded in thick haze last month.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## Some good in the new policy

**SIR,** This refers to the report 'NEP: Long-due reforms, but devil lies in the details, say experts' (July 31).

That we have been following the same old education policy that was framed 34 years ago despite the demands on the sector having undergone a sea change in the interim, speaks tragic volumes for our pace of reforms.

But the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) approved by the Cabinet on Wednesday offers a ray of hope. By delivering on its promise of providing greater flexibility and skills to students and greater autonomy to educational institutions, it may prove to be a game changer.

NEP has done well by bringing the until now uncovered age group of three to six years under the school curriculum, as early childhood care is crucial for the development of mental faculties.

Care however is needed that pushing the mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5 may not be yet another assault on English medium schools, through which even the poorest parents try to improve their child's prospects.

The idea of lower 'stake' board exams is very welcome but the requirement for all students to take exams in Grades 3, 5 and 8 is worrying. Not all new exams however are unwelcome. An SAT-like university entrance test could indeed be more efficient and less traumatic than the current admission processes.

There couldn't be a worthier goal than 50 per cent GER in higher education by 2035, up from the current 26 per cent. NEP really disappoints here by failing to allow for-profit education.

Without this reform, giving students greater flexibility of coursework alongside multiple entry and exit points for higher studies will fail to draw a response. On top of this, private HEIs are being told to offer more free-

ships and scholarships – which government institutions should be providing – even as fee caps are proposed. Such overdose of regulation is like poison for the educational ecosystem and it hurts the students the most.

Yours, etc., Sanjay Chopra, Mohali, 31 July.

### HYPE OVER STRUCTURE

**SIR,** After a gap of 34 years, India's National Education Policy (NEP) – a poll promise of the BJP in 2014 – is set to get a major makeover and this is a welcome step. When the government is under Narendra Modi, then how one be surprised to know that a stream of RSS affiliates were involved in the drafting process?

As per media reports, there were meetings between RSS functionaries, education ministers of some

BJP-ruled states, representatives of the Government and NEP drafting committee chairman Kasturirangan.

The main theme of NEP2020 is an extra year of pre-school and undergraduate programmes, skills education from Class VI and the option of learning Sanskrit "at all levels of school".

But I am unable to understand why NEP 2020 incorporates a retrograde and regressive move to abolish English as a medium of education up to class V (because home language, mother tongue or regional language is to be the language of education till class 5).

This action will cripple students during their future journey in higher education. Many think tanks believe that the proposed reforms involve too much "hype"

over structure and nomenclature and ignore the ground reality.

Yours, etc., Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee, Faridabad, July 30.

### BENEFITS STUDENTS

**SIR,** After a lot of deliberations and a prolonged wait, the Union Cabinet has finally approved the new National Education Policy, putting in place systemic reforms. If implemented skilfully, the NEP is sure to reduce regulatory hassles and promote autonomy in the higher education sector. On the face of it, the NEP looks to benefit both students and education providers. It aims to provide importance to students' practical knowledge instead of just pushing them towards parrot-fashion learning, and to help them develop a scientific temper from a young age.

Perhaps, another major benefit from the NEP is that it will make it easier for foreign colleges to set up their campuses in India, and this will help students who are unable to go abroad, with global exposure.

Yours, etc. Ranganathan Sivakumar, Chennai, July 30.

### OVERDUE REFORM

**SIR,** This is with reference to the news on the new National Education Policy (The Statesman, 30 July) wherein a brief introduction has been given about the draft of the much-awaited policy placed after nearly three and half decades and approved by the Union Cabinet.

It has been noted that massive changes or reforms have been done by introducing a new 5+3+3+4 structure instead of 10+2 and renaming the nodal ministry to give it a new face.

Undergraduate studies have been re-structured with provision of making

subjects major or minor and grading basic certificate, diploma and degree certificates on completion of the first, second and third years of study, respectively.

Science students with Physics as a major can take music or yoga as a minor subject.

Most noteworthy point is that the syllabus of all subjects will be reduced to core knowledge as per the needs and demands of the present time.

However, the analysis published today quotes renowned scholars as saying that the devil lies in the details.

But in the long run, overdue reforms have been brought in, following the standards followed internationally.

Yours, etc., Birkha Khadka, Duarseli, Siliguri, 31 July.



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## 'No poll when life is uncertain'



The tenure of the JDU-BJP government in Bihar will end in November 2020. With the Covid-19 infection spreading fast in Bihar, holding polls for a new Bihar Assembly would pose a huge challenge to the Election Commission of India. RJD spokesman and Rajya Sabha MP from Bihar, **MANOJ JHA**, is known to be one of the most eloquent and articulate political spokespersons in the country. He completed his masters from the Delhi University (DU) in 1992 and PhD in 2000. He was a lecturer at the Jamia Millia Islamia from 1994 to 2002. He has been a professor at the DU's department of social work and was its head between 2014 and 2017. In an interview with **ABHIJEET ANAND**, Jha spoke on a range of political and electoral issues. Here are the excerpts:

**Q. You have been trying to oust the BJP from Bihar. How hopeful are you that the RJD will succeed in doing that in the upcoming elections?**

A. First of all, in politics you're adversaries. You fight on two different premises. In 2015, the BJP was decimated. The mandate was in our favour. We were the single largest party. And our alliance had won two-thirds majority. But in 2017, I think for the first time in the history of India, a party which had lost in the elections became part of the ruling coalition. That tells you about the health of democracy. We are going into the election with two objectives. One, people of Bihar should penalise those who actually robbed the mandate of 2015. Two, we are going in this election with a very important and wholesome blueprint for the transformation of Bihar. We want people of Bihar to give us a chance so that we can deliver.

**Q. The RJD is against the RSS' ideology. Does that make the Congress its natural ally?**

A. The RSS calls itself a cultural organisation but it indulges in everything

that is not cultural. They take political decisions. Their people speak political language on issues — even, in one instance, on China. When you want the government to say something, we hear from the RSS. The default template of the RSS is not similar to the default template of India. India is inclusive, the RSS is exclusive. India stands for everybody, the RSS stands for somebody at the cost of everybody. India believes in civilisational ethos which says "sarve bhavantu sukhinah, sarve santu niramaya (may all sentient beings be at peace, may no one suffer from illness)". The RSS does not believe in that. India believes in ideas of Gandhi and Nehru, the RSS doesn't.

**Q. There is speculation that the RJD might form an alliance with the BJP. What do you say to that?**

A. These speculations can only come in the minds of people who have lost their senses. I have no qualms about saying that only people who have lost their mental balance can ever imagine a thing like this. My

leader (Lalu Prasad Yadav) is in jail. You know he was the one who arrested L K Advani. He was the one who stood when entire north India was burning. He did not allow that flame to reach Bihar. The only thing we have known is that we are not meant for compromise with communal, sectarian politics. We might lose elections. We have lost in the past. That doesn't mean we will compromise on our basics. Social justice, secularism and inclusive development is our motto.

**Q. The BJP says that organised crime has come to an end during their coalition government's tenure in Bihar. Your response?**

A. I would want informed citizens to compare the charts — 1990-2005 and 2005-2020 — on every indicator, not only crime. I can vouch that those people will never face the real data. Muzaffarpur case, that's a shame not only for the state but for civilisation. When did it happen? Not during our regime. Then you have seen the corruption, mob lynching. People can

talk. But if they compare the data, they will find it otherwise.

**Q. Is the RJD asking for postponement of the Bihar election?**

A. All non-NDA political parties of Bihar - the CPI-M, CPI, HAM, RSLP, VIP, RJD and Congress - met the Election Commission. We submitted a memorandum (to the EC). We have described the vulnerable conditions. No institutional care, minimum testing, rapid rise of Covid. Now, in democracy, while we have to ensure free and fair elections, we have to also ensure maximum voter participation. There is a fear in the minds of people. What will happen if we end up having only 30 per cent turnout? We have apprised them about the precarious health conditions. Their own people, one of them who was part of EVM training, a teacher from Khagaria, he died (after being detected Covid positive). Ten persons who were carrying EVM machines in Begusarai have been detected positive. These are the issues we have brought to the domain of Election Commission along with the issues of virtual rallies and expenditure. We appeal to them: please have a level-playing field and act accordingly.

**Q. What do you think will be the impact of lockdown and migrant labourer issue on the Bihar election?**

A. The way the Bihar government handled the migrant labourers issue — that will remain in our memory forever, whatever be the outcome of the elections. For the first time, migrant workforce left different places in Telangana, Delhi and Mumbai in search of home. But the home state was not willing to allow them to come. So this episode, I think will remain forever in the memory of everyone in Bihar. As far as lockdown is concerned, the Bihar government has wrongly perceived the lockdown as a kind of vaccine against corona-

virus. It is in fact a cushion, a cover under which you work on institutional care, doing testing, providing basic medical kits and PPE kits and so and so forth. The Bihar government didn't do that. As a result of this, the cases are exploding now. In spite of being in the Opposition, while these things will appear to you as favourable conditions for elections, we are worried for the people of Bihar. Elections don't matter now. We don't want elections when there is uncertainty of life.

**Q. Right from day one, the RJD has been against the 10 per cent reservation for economically backward in the general category. Is it doing so to expand its electoral base?**

A. I was the one who spoke against it in the Rajya Sabha. Our only argument was that develop a database first. You cannot decide on arbitrary things without a database all of a sudden. This is not how the Constitution works. This is not how policies are made. When the Mandal Commission came, it had many volumes to support its argument. It had a database. We wanted a similar database. But then this government was in a hurry. Their idea was not to provide justice. Their idea was to make it a talking point for the election.

**Q. Are there differences in the Bihar Opposition's grand alliance over whether Tejaswi Yadav will or won't be its face in this election?**

A. Absolutely not, come what may. There is no doubt. Every political party can give some argument. But ultimately, everybody knows that, we are the nucleus in Bihar politics. Everybody knows the vote share. Everybody knows that the RJD has declared Tejaswi ji as its face. I think when you talk about alliance, these issues don't matter. More or less every alliance partner, they know the reality, and we will win together.

numbers of this big cat have increased from 88 to 96. Human-tiger conflict is common in the villages of Sundarbans. Primary victims of these tiger attacks are fisherman and honey collectors. Tiger widows are women who lose their husbands in a tiger attack. According to a report, Satjelia Island in the Gosaba block of West Bengal has around 100 such tiger widows.

According to official records, 52 people were killed between 2010 and 2017 due to tiger attacks. But the real figure could be higher as illegal entries into the reserve forest are not intimated to forest authorities by the families.

On May 20, Odisha, West Bengal and Bangladesh were hit by super-cyclone Amphan. This resulted in massive devastation throughout the Sundarbans Tiger Reserve amidst the Covid-19 lockdown. Official statements have mentioned that about one-third of the Sundarbans was damaged due to the disaster and 1,200 sq km of the total 4,263 sq km of forests had been destroyed. The cyclone and associated flooding destroyed earthen dams that would impact the productivity of farmlands. In this economic vacuum, illegal entry into the forest and tiger poaching cases may increase which would result in more human-tiger conflict.

The Covid-19 pandemic has restricted the ecotourism influx in forest areas; labour migration was also stopped due to the lockdown. As a result, the socio-economically marginalised forest fringe communities are under immense economic stress. This may result in more human-wildlife conflicts scenario as well as push people into the clutches of illegal wildlife traders of China. The enigmatic tiger, the flagship conservation species of India, faces an uncertain future amidst the natural disasters and Covid-19 lockdowns in eastern India.

The writers are associated with the Jindal School of Environment & Sustainability, O.P. Jindal Global University, Haryana, India.

NO 28030

### OCCASIONAL NOTE

The question of future sites for factories in urban areas is now under the consideration of the Calcutta Corporation and the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. The Rent Committee appointed by the Bengal Government in accordance with the resolution of the Legislative Council last September suggested the desirability of not licensing any more factories than exist at present in the central areas. The Bengal Government have asked for the opinion of the Corporation, which, in its turn, has sought the counsel of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, so that there is every prospect of obtaining in the end a well considered view of the subject. Meantime the Health Officer of Calcutta has submitted what may be regarded as the hygienic ideal. While supporting strongly the proposal to prohibit new factories in the central areas of the city, he considers that this does not go far enough, and suggests that the time has now come when portions of the city or its environments should be definitely set apart in future for large industrial concerns, particularly where steam power is used. This leads to the alternative ideas of the reservation of zones along existing canals, railways, and docks; or the development of the extensive area in Tangra set apart for offensive trades and hide godowns so as to concentrate factories, tanneries, to the east of the city. The Health Officer is inclined to favour the Tangra area, with the understanding that parks or breathing-spaces should be provided.

### NEWS ITEMS

### TECHNICAL EDUCATION

His Excellency Sir George Lloyd, speaking at the New Poona College, dealt with the question of Technical Education and its present day aspect. India, said His Excellency, is now in economic competition with the great industrial countries of the world and the generation that is growing up must be equipped for this competition; for no great industrial concern can prosper without good material from which to take its staff, and, that condition can never be attained unless a certain proportion of her young men receive technical education equal in quality to that which is obtainable in the foremost industrial countries. Parents who are sending their boys to school shoulder a great responsibility if they do not consider the possibilities of each of the many professions that are open to them.

### PRECAUTIONS AT OORGAUM

Oorgaum, July 31  
The Khilafat Committee of Madras, Bombay, Delhi and other places in India have sent circulars which are being distributed amongst Muslims here enjoining observance of third Khilafat day, tomorrow 1st August, and requested Hindus and Mahomedans to close their shops and business, and devote the day to prayer and fasting. The local Khilafat committee is circulating the notices advising observance of full hartal on Sunday, and requesting mining employees not to absent themselves from work without permission from their employers. The Inspector-General of Police, Mysore, arrived here today to see what arrangements have been made. No breach of the peace is apprehended. The Indian Defence Force and police are taking precautionary measures to safeguard the public in the event of any disturbance.

### U.S. POLITICS

At the opening of the Republican National Convention at the Coliseum today, Senator Lodge, the temporary Chairman, defended the Senate's opposition to the Peace Treaty as a patriotic duty. He declared that President Wilson and the autocracy he represented must be excluded from any future control because he stood for a non-American theory of government. The people must now make a vital choice between President Wilson's plan and the independence and safety of the United States. He promised that the Republicans would cope with the profligate evil. He urged that firm steps should be taken to end the "disgraceful record" of the United States during the past seven years with regard to Mexico. It was the primary duty of the United States to deal with Mexico under the Monroe Doctrine but nothing was done.

### MADRAS LOCAL BODIES

A Government Order says the Government have reduced the number of nominative seats on local bodies. This number will be still further reduced when the new District Municipalities Act and the proposed amendments of the Local Boards Act come into operation. The few nominative seats that will remain are mainly intended for the representation of minorities and of the depressed class. Under these circumstances it is inevitable that the number of departmental officials nominated as members of local bodies should be reduced. If at any time a local body should need the advice of such officers he should be invited to a particular meeting at which his assistance will be actually required.

ABHIROOP CHOWDHURY AND ARMIN ROSENCRANZ

Around one third of the tiger reserve area of Indian Sundarbans was destroyed due to super-cyclone Amphan and the flooding at Assam has killed hundreds of wildlife at Kaziranga, inundating 85 percent of the forests while submerging thousands of villages across the region.

The enigmatic Royal Bengal Tiger (*Panthera tigris*) is the carnivore and keystone species of the tropical ecosystem. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red data list, tigers are 'Endangered', and their population is following a 'decreasing trend'. Unlike other cats, the tiger's range is restricted to pockets of wilderness scattered around eastern Asia.

In India, hunting of tigers was totally restricted by 1970 and Project Tiger was initiated by Government of India in 1973. The recent tiger census report indicates an increase in tiger population from 2,226 in 2014 to 2,967 in 2018 which is a success story of tiger conservation efforts.

The highest population of tigers in eastern India are in tiger reserves of Assam (Manas, Nameri, Kaziranga and Orang) followed by West Bengal (Sundarbans and Buxa), Arunachal Pradesh (Namdapha, Pakke, Kamlang), and Mizoram (Dampa). But these regions are also an active hub for tiger poaching and illegal wildlife trade because of their proximity to China and Myanmar due to the demands of tiger parts in Chinese medicine.

Research indicates that the Myanmar border town of Tachilek and its Thai neighbour, Mae Sai, were important hubs for the trade in tigers in South-east Asia. Tiger parts were sold



without restrictions in the Myanmar-China border town of Mong La for their use in traditional medicine as well as decoration. According to a report, there is a sharp decline in tiger population outside the protected areas in the eastern states of India.

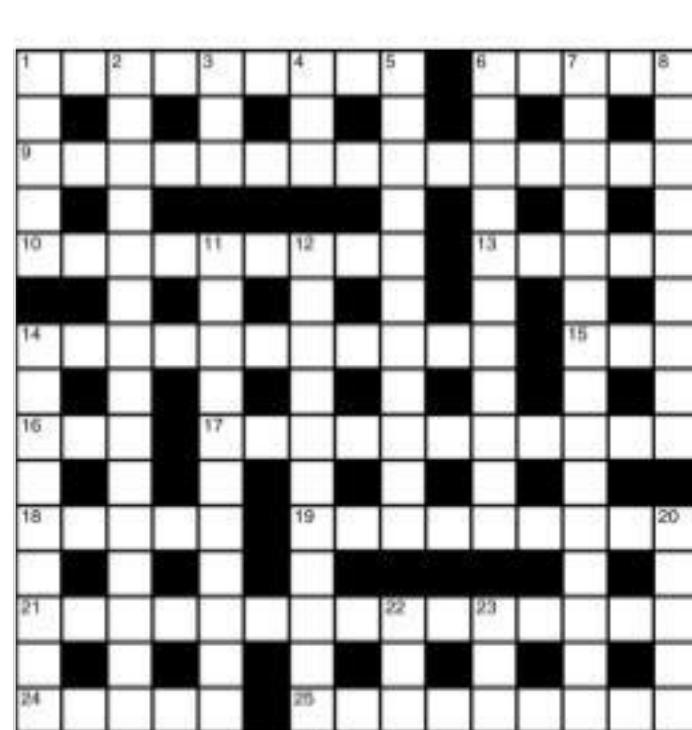
Despite government initiatives and conservation measures, illegal smuggling of wildlife is common. According to a report, illegal trade continues in the Tamenglong district of Manipur. This may be a major reason behind slow increase in tiger populations in these areas of impact.

According to a report, 100 animals

have died due to flooding in Kaziranga, a UNESCO world heritage site and abode of about 2,400 one-horned rhinoceros. Eighty-five per cent of the reserve forest area of Kaziranga is under water. Thousands of villages are submerged due to the flood and people have been shifted to temporary relief camps. Wildlife displaced due to the flood is also migrating to the higher grounds for survival and this may increase man-wildlife conflicts in the region.

The Indian Sundarbans is the only abode of mangrove tigers in the world. According to the latest tiger census, the

### CROSSWORD



#### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

WORDGAME	JERSIEY	VILITAIVIA
POIA	AUX	EGP
DUBONNET	NINTH	ULM
ODDS	REPEATEDLY	APC
MIDDLE	LAYASIDE	COL
ABERRANT	EMPIRE	TRICHTHY
MINIMALIST	CITY	SCATHINGLY
ARGUE	STRIPOUT	DALLI
MEMORY	MIDNIGHT	HOGA

#### SOLUTION FOR 25 JULY

SICRATICHY	VILITAIVIA
QAQOI	EGP
ULM	ULTRAMARINE
APC	COL
TRICHTHY	SCATHINGLY
SCATHINGLY	DALLI
HOGA	EIT
TENNIS	NAIROBIT
THOUGHT	A D S G N F
TROPOPO	OUTFOX
EVIL	WINDERMERE
M F J D T E R A	PHILATELIST
L C C M T T O	AWL
SINAIKY	REDOLENT

#### ACROSS

- 1 China divided: the end is nigh (4,2,3)
- 6 Put to work for paper in combat zone, my boss receives gong (5)
- 9 Circled 'No. 4' literally remedied with it? (10,5)
- 10 Breaking: Man in Raincoat opens up to public (9)
- 13 Peppery fish quite dry on the inside (5)
- 14 Grand lakeside wing appended to complete force's HQ (11)
- 15 Modified one's language (3)
- 16 Area that's dry up tree (3)
- 17 Perhaps European is satisfied with Scarface staying at home? (11)
- 18 Knock beers back near the rear of the Lawyer's Bar (5)
- 19 City trader's unloaded fruit stalls they pick (9)
- 21 Yet some go when he plays for time? (3,4,3,5)
- 24 Mark signalling about daughter in top hat (5)
- 25 Helicopter for American to attend ologist's gathering (3,6)
- 26 ... and whatever else "hero" wrote is for pulping (2,9)

#### DOWN

- 1 Master Cellarman cleared out, making space for old burgundy (5)
- 2 With a bit of luck hitherto, we won't easily concede (5,2,3,5)
- 3 Sparklers kill (3)
- 4 Just twenty letters – not much put on top of what's taken from bin ... (3)
- 5 ... and whatever else "hero" wrote is for pulping (2,9)
- 6 Finally the successor to M adapted to Bond's compulsion (11)
- 7 Maybe sledgehammer learner deployed in stunt to crack Brazil nut? Me joshing (5,10)
- 8 Regularly he suffered from tickling parrot's ass (9)
- 11 Fellow bossed everyone at firm – bar a Quebecker? (11)
- 12 In 11's world history nearly everyone's overlooked what's experienced by those eating cake (6,5)
- 14 Oafs had to open rubbish bags, dispersing balls (9)
- 20 I declare the end of this dreadful year (5)
- 22 He's greedy, Henry – his shot past Lehmann? (3)
- 23 Yorkshire Wensleydale wouldn't be the same without her! (3)

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

India still has 300 million mobile subscribers trapped in the 2G era

MUKESH AMBANI  
RELIANCE INDUSTRIES CHAIRMAN

## THUMBNAILS

**JSW Energy terminates acquisition deal:** Sajjan Jindal-backed JSW Energy on Friday said it has terminated its Rs 5,321-crore deal to acquire GMR Kamalanga Energy due to Covid-19 related uncertainties.

"With elapsing of long stop date, both parties have mutually agreed to terminate the transaction given continued uncertainty due to Covid-19 pandemic," JSW Energy said in BSE filing on Friday. In May, the sale of GMR Energy's entire stake in GMR Kamalanga Energy Ltd to JSW Energy was put on hold due to Covid-19 outbreak. PTI

**Export norms:** Online applications filed by exporters only from 5 to 8 August will be considered for getting licences or permission by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade for shipments of 2- and 3-ply surgical masks, medical goggles and diagnostic kits, according to trade notices of the DGFT. This is part of the procedure laid out by the Directorate for exporters to file applications to seek licence for shipments of these goods. PTI

**Digital signature:** Markets regulator the Securities and Exchange Board of India on Friday allowed listed companies to use digital signature certifications till 31 December for submissions made to the stock exchanges under the disclosure norms. Earlier, this was permitted till 30 June. PTI

**Honda Fireblade:** Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India announced the commencement of booking for its super sports motorcycle, the Honda Fireblade and the Honda Fireblade SP. The Honda Fireblade and the Fireblade SP can be booked at Honda's premium BigWing dealerships, says HMSI in a Press release statement. SNS

**Make in India:** Thomson has launched 'Make in India' certified Android TV developed in India in partnership with Google starting at Rs 10,999. It has entered into the luxury segment with 75" premium android licensed TV that is priced at Rs 99,999. These are available from 6 August, only on Flipkart, says a company statement. SNS

**Covid detection app:** AccuLabs has partnered with Vivo India to develop application for early detection of Covid-19. Vivo smartphones' superior camera capabilities has helped in developing the early detection mobile app ~ Lyfas, says a Press release.

**Piaggio launch:** Piaggio India has launched the iconic Vespa VXL, SXL Facelift 2020 Range and the sporty new Aprilia Storm with disc brake and digital cluster. The company had unveiled these new offerings at Auto Expo 2020 in Greater Noida and recently commenced the pre-bookings, according to a Press release. PTI

**UCO Bank posts Q1 net profit of ₹21.5 crore**

NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

Public sector UCO Bank today posted a net profit of Rs 21.46 crore in the first quarter ended June 2020 on lower bad loan provisions. The bank had registered a net loss of Rs 601.45 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal year. On a quarter-on-quarter basis, UCO Bank had logged a profit of Rs 16.78 crore in the March quarter this year.

Interest income fell to Rs 3,662.64 crore during the quarter from Rs 3,816.53 crore a year ago.

Its provisions for bad loans and contingencies for the period came down to Rs 1,180.37 crore as against Rs 1,802.89 crore a year ago. PTI

# Eight core industries' output contracts 15% in June 2020

Retail inflation for industrial workers eased to 5.06% in June 2020 from 8.59% in June 2019

SNS & PTI  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

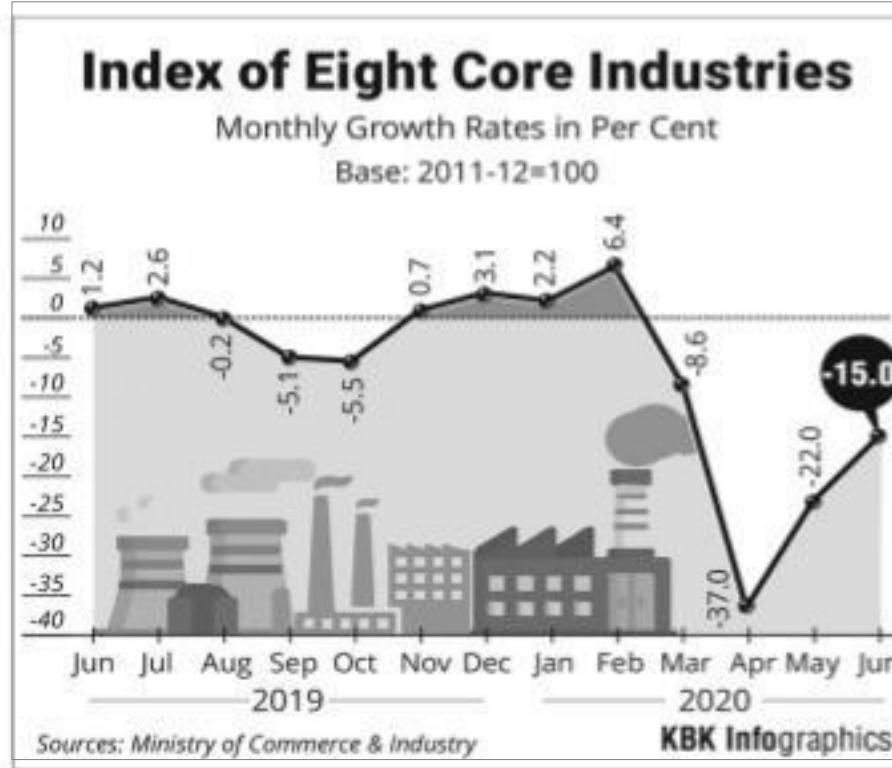
**T**he production rate of India's eight major industries remained deep in the red in June 2020, says the official data released today. However, it also noted that the rate of fall in the Index of eight core industries decelerated on a sequential basis on account of opening up of economic activities.

Contracting for the fourth consecutive month, the output of eight core infrastructure industries shrank by 15 per cent in June due to fall in the production of coal, crude oil, natural gas, steel, cement and electricity.

The eight core sectors had expanded by 1.2 per cent in June 2019, data released by the commerce and industry ministry today showed.

Though not comparable, the ECI index had shown a growth of 1.2 per cent in June 2019.

"Its cumulative growth during April to June 2020-21 was -12.46 per cent," said the office of Economic Advisor.



er Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.

"Final growth rate of Index of Eight Core Industries for March 2020 is revised at (-) 8.6 per cent."

Barring fertiliser, all seven sectors - coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, steel, cement, and electricity - had recorded negative growth in May.

The output of coal, crude

oil, natural gas, refinery products, steel, cement and electricity declined by 15.5 per cent, 6 per cent, 12 per cent, 8.9 per cent, 33.8 per cent, 6.9 per cent, and 11 per cent, respectively.

During April-June 2020-21, the sector's output dipped by 24.6 per cent as compared to a positive growth of 3.4 per cent in the same period previous year.

These eight industries account for 40.27 per cent in

the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). In May, the sectors' output contracted by 22 per cent.

**Retail inflation:** Retail inflation for industrial workers eased to 5.06 per cent in June this year from 8.59 per cent in the same month of 2019, mainly due to lower prices of certain food items and kerosene oil. It was recorded at 5.10 per cent in May 2020,"

## FACTS &amp; FIGURES

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a labour ministry statement said. Food inflation stood at 5.49 per cent in June 2020 as against 5.88 per cent in the previous month and 5.47 per cent during the corresponding month a year ago.

Retail inflation for industrial workers measured in terms of Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW) for June 2020 increased by 2 points and stood at 332.

labour minister Santosh Gangwar said: "The All-India Index for June 2020 stood at 332 with a rise of two points compared to previous month. However, rate of annual inflation moderated to 5.06 per cent from 5.10 percent in the previous month and 8.59 per cent in the month a year before."

This index is utilised primarily for measuring Dearness Allowance (DA) payable to workers in the organised sector including PSUs, banks and insurance companies besides government employees, the minister added stressing upon the importance of the CPI-IW.

feature phones to an affordable smartphone.

Reliance Jio has been at loggerheads with Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea over interconnection usage charges that are levied on each outgoing call because of existence of 2G technology.

At present charge of six paisa is levied on every outgoing call on to the network of other mobile operators.

Ambani said that India took a big flight into the bright future with the advent of mobile services in 1995.

He said that the birth of fixed-line telephony was a rare moment in history when fiction became a fact. However, it provided only partial freedom of communication.

"It did not completely remove the constraint of distance, people needed to communicate from anywhere to anywhere round the clock," Ambani said.

He said that mobile phones have become affordable beyond all expectations. In 1995, the cost of a call from one cell phone was Rs 24 which comprised Rs 16 for the caller and Rs 8 for the called.

## Fiscal deficit touches 83.2% of Budget estimate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

The country's fiscal deficit during the first quarter of this fiscal widened to Rs 6.62 lakh crore or 83.2 per cent of the Budget estimate, mainly on account of poor tax collections due to the coronavirus lockdown.

Fiscal deficit during the corresponding period of last year was 61.4 per cent of the Budget estimate.

The government had pegged the fiscal deficit for 2020-21 at Rs 7.96 lakh crore or 3.5 per cent of the GDP in the Budget which was presented by the finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in February.

These figures, however, may have to be revised significantly in view of the economic disruptions created

by the Covid-19 crisis.

In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit stood at Rs 6,62,363 crore at end-June, as per data available from the Controller General of Accounts (CGA).

Fiscal deficit had soared to a seven-year high of 4.6 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019-20, mainly on account of poor revenue realisation which dipped further towards the close of March because of the lockdown.

As per the CGA data, the government's revenue receipts stood at Rs 1,50,008 crore or 3.4 per cent of the Budget estimate (BE). During the same period of the last fiscal, the realisation was 14.5 per cent of the BE.

The data further showed that Rs 1,34,043 crore has been transferred to state governments as devolution of share of taxes by the Central government up to June, which is Rs 14,588 crore lower than the previous year.

Tax revenue stood at Rs 1,34,822 crore or 8.2 per cent of BE during the first three months of the fiscal. During

the first quarter of the last fiscal, the tax revenue was 15.2 per cent of the BE.

Total receipts of the government amounted to 6.8 per cent of the BE or Rs 1,53,581 crore.

In the Budget, the government had estimated the total receipts for the fiscal at Rs 22.45 lakh crore.

The government's total expenditure stood at Rs 8,15,944 lakh crore or 26.8 per cent of the BE at end-June. During the same period of the last fiscal, the total expenditure was 25.9 per cent of the BE.

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This index is utilised primarily for measuring Dearness Allowance (DA) payable to workers in the organised sector including PSUs, banks and insurance companies besides government employees, the minister added stressing upon the importance of the CPI-IW.

The jump was aided by decline in bad loans and sale of minority stake in its subsidiary SBI Life Insurance

During the quarter, the bank has made an additional provision of Rs 1,836 crore on account of Covid-19 related accounts, it said.

Observing that the spread of Covid-19 across the globe has resulted in decline in economic activity and increase in volatility in financial markets, the bank said it is gearing itself on all fronts to meet the same even though the challenges continue to unfold.

The situation continues to be uncertain and the bank is evaluating the situation on an ongoing basis. Major challenges for the bank would arise from extended working capital cycle and waning cash flows," it said.

Despite these conditions, there would not be any significant impact on the liquidity and profitability of the bank, it added.

On a consolidated basis, SBI net profit rose by 62 per cent to Rs 4,776.50 crore as against Rs 2,950.50 crore in the same quarter a year ago.

As a result, the provision for bad loans declined to Rs 9,420.46 crore from Rs 11,648.45 crore in the year-ago period.

At the same time, total income increased Rs 87,984.33 crore as compared to Rs

# business

## Ambani calls for urgent policy steps to do away with 2G

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani today called for urgent policy measures to move away from 2G service, which started 25 years ago, and make it a "part of history". On the silver jubilee of the 1st mobile phone call made in India, Ambani said that 2G era feature phones have kept around 300 million subscribers away from basic Internet services when both India and the world are venturing into 5G domain.

"I specifically refer to the fact that India still has 300 million mobile subscribers trapped in the 2G era, their feature phones keep them excluded even from the basic usage of the Internet at a time when both India and the rest of the world are standing at the doorsteps of 5G telephony. I think necessary policy steps should be taken with utmost urgency to make 2G a part of history," Ambani said.

He said that mobile phones have become affordable beyond all expectations. In 1995, the cost of a call from one cell phone was Rs 24 which comprised Rs 16 for the caller and Rs 8 for the called.

"It did not completely remove the constraint of distance, people needed to communicate from anywhere to anywhere round the clock," Ambani said.

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The party in the state (Bengal) is run either by the Centre or Gujarat

ON THE BJP AFTER HE DITCHED THE PARTY AND REJOINED THE TRINAMUL CONGRESS

BIPLOB MITRA, SOUTH DINAJPUR LEADER

# Odisha lifts lockdown ; night curfew & weekend shutdown to continue

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 31 JULY:

**O**disha government lifted the lockdown but continued with the existing week end shutdown and night curfew (from 9pm to 5am) across the state as it announced its Unlock 3 guidelines for the month of August.

The relaxations will however not apply to containment zones as designated by district authorities.

In line with the relaxations made by the central government, Odisha also decided to open gyms,nasiums and yoga centres.

Religious institutions and places of worship across the state will remain closed. Education institutions also remain shut



till end of August, said the order issued today.

Special Relief Commissioner K P Jena issued the order today and detailed the activities that will continue to remain exempt from restrictions like construction and industrial activity.

Government and private offices, banks have been asked to function at reduced staff.

## Odisha hikes penalty for mask violation

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 31 JULY:

Odisha government decided to hike penalty for not wearing masks and said the fine will be Rs 1000 for the first two offences and Rs 500 for further violation.

Cinema halls, malls, theatres, auditoriums will continue to remain closed.

It is pertinent to note that four districts – Ganjam, Khurda, Gajapati and Cuttack as well as Rourkela municipal area had been under lockdown due to high COVID 19 caseload.

Today's order effectively lifts the lockdown in these districts.

Similarly violation of social distancing norms in commercial establishments, shops and marriages etc will attract a fine of Rs 10,000. Not more than 10 people will be allowed to congregate and a violation of this will invite a penalty of Rs 10,000.

Local authorities shall demarcate containment zones in accordance with the guidelines of MoHFW. Only essential services will be permitted in such containment zones.

The night curfew from 9pm to 5am will be enforced throughout the state.

Weekend shutdown shall be implemented on all Saturdays

and Sundays in the month of August, 2020. However on 1 and 2nd August there is a relaxation till 1 pm.

The rest of the order pertained the exemptions and free movement of people and goods relating to agriculture, horticulture, fisheries, veterinary services etc.

Service sector industries, including IT/ ITeS, Hotel & Hospitality units, operation of hotels and hospitality units, including their associated offices, movement of staff and associated personnel (for take away food).

Government officials, professionals, businessmen or any other person travelling to Odisha on work and intending to exit the State by rail, road or air within 72 hours are exempt from quarantine.

JSW Energy drops move to acquire GMR Kamalanga plant

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 31 JULY:

JSW Energy terminated its GMR Odisha Kamalanga Energy buyout deal due to Covid-19 pandemic.

With the elapsing of long stop date, both parties have mutually agreed to terminate the transaction given continued uncertainty due to Covid-19 pandemic, said JSW Energy.

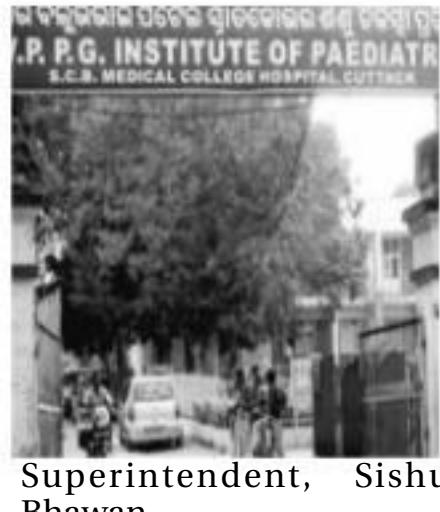
JSW Energy was to acquire GMR Kamalanga Energy, which owns and operates a 1,050 MW (3x350 MW) thermal power plant in Dhenkanal district of Odisha, for Rs 5,321 crore.

COVID-infected baby dies, 'positive' mother flees with body

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 31 JULY:

A 32-year-old COVID-infected woman escaped from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Post Graduate Institute of Pediatrics (Sishu Bhawan) in Cuttack with the body of her virus-infected month-old son, the hospital authorities said.

"An FIR has been lodged with the Lalbagh Police. The baby who was afflicted with respiratory disorder had tested positive and later died today. His mother was also diagnosed with COVID in the antigen test. The woman was shifted to an isolation ward. She later fled with the child's body", said Saroj Satpathy,



Superintendent, Sishu Bhawan.

Only four COVID infections - two patients and an equal number of attendants have so far been detected from Sishu Bhawan. No health professional has so far tested positive for the disease, informed.

## 'Eleventh hour' COVID guidelines distress people

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 31 JULY:

Odisha government appears to have adopted a rather strange practice of issuing orders pertaining to lockdown relaxations, night curfew etc at the proverbial eleventh hour keeping anxious people of the state in suspense.

The set of guidelines were to lapse at midnight on 31 July and it was only late in the evening of the said day that the state government came out with its order for the month of August.

Sheer insensitivity, charged

annoyed businessmen here. Why cant the government come out with its order at least one day prior to the expiry of its earlier instructions, they asked.

Till late in the evening telephones kept ringing as all sections of people kept enquiring whether lockdown has been lifted from tomorrow or not.

Significantly, before the state government came out with its Unlock 3 announcement, several districts had issued their own set of instructions like extending lockdown for four to five days.

The inexplicable delay forced the government to provide relaxation in its week end shutdown scheme for the first weekend of the month – tomorrow and day after (1&2 August) from 5 am to 1 pm.

A senior government officer tried to explain that it is a very complex COVID management related issue.

But when states across the country are able to take decisions early or synchronize with the central government's announcement in this regard why cant Odisha do the same is the question that begs an answer.

## 61% vacancies in doctor posts in Ganjam forced govt to draw from other districts

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 29 JULY:

Doctors pooled in from different districts like Koraput, Malkangiri, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Nawarangpur had to be deployed in Ganjam district, the COVID hotspot in Odisha because over 61 per cent of the doctors' post in the district was lying vacant.

The home district of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik found itself in a dire situation as the virus spread rapidly and the dearth of doctors made the situation worse.

IAS, OAS officers in large numbers were deployed to try help the local administration and the next step was to fetch doctors from other districts at the risk of evoking angry outbursts like 'is the life of a tribal cheaper than the rest' kind of charges from the Opposition parties.

With over 61% of doctors' post vacant in Ganjam there was no way out.

Of the 177 sanctioned posts in the district, 82 are filled up while 94 are lying vacant with a vacancy rate of 61.38%, said official sources.

With the situation slipping out of control, Odisha government had shifted 100 doctors from backward tribal districts like Koraput, Malkangiri, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Nabarangpur and Kandhamal to Ganjam.

Ironically these five districts account for a huge backlog

government deputed 241 (PG) doctors from medical colleges to different districts.

Presently there is an average 61 per cent shortage of doctors across the state.

vacancy in doctors' post to the tune of 62%. As many as 828 doctors' posts are lying vacant in these six districts. The existing vacancies were adversely affecting the government-run health service network. Further squeezing out the manpower has worsened the situation in these districts.

Besides, the government-run health service network is being badly hit in Nuapara and Sundargarh districts with a positivity (10.44%) and growth (4.93%) also rose today.

The spike in infections in Sundargarh, Gajapati, Rayagada, Koraput, Sambalpur, Kandhamal and Malkangiri turned out to be disconcerting. The contagion is no more confined within the hotspots and is slowly spreading its tentacles.

Gajapati and Sundargarh

## Odisha Covid cases rise to 31,877, death toll 177

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 31 JULY:

districts are showing rapid increase in number of cases.

Meanwhile the Ganjam and Khurda districts continue to remain the epicenter of novel corona virus in the State with the tally surpassing 10,000 and 4,000-mark respectively in the two districts. Both the districts with 368 and 214 fresh cases today's district-wise COVID count.

Ganjam (10,364) and Khurda (4,200) district have so far accounted for 14,564 infections- 45.68% of total cases reported from the State till date.

Meanwhile the COVID tally today inched close to 32,000-mark recording 1,000 plus single day spike with the tally getting more than tripled in three weeks.

With eight patients dying of the infections today, the fatality count has climbed to 177.

Of the new infections, 914 were from quarantine centres while 585 were local contact.

## Odisha targets 20,000 tests per day Mobile swab collection van launched in Bhubaneswar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 31 JULY:

Odisha government has decided to try and conduct 20,000 COVID 19 tests per day during August. Presently the number of tests per day average about 11,000.

It may be noted that two months ago the government had set a target of 15,000 tests per day but strangely had scaled down tests to less than 4000 per day during the month of June.

In July it evidently realised the mistake and ramped up

tests to achieve 8000 to 11000 tests per day resulting in a nearly three fold increase in number of cases.

Another development today was the launch of a mobile sample collection van in Bhubaneswar. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) launched the service to carry out swab collection.

The two lab technicians in the van may simultaneously collect the samples of two persons while maintaining a safe distance.

Those undergoing tests would have to furnish all their particulars, including mobile numbers, Aadhar numbers, address etc before collection of samples, said BMC officials.

## Govt college lecturer ploughing his farm land



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BOLANGIR, 31 JULY:

A lecturer in a government college, Koutuka Pandara has taken to farming as educational institutions remain closed due to the pandemic.

Koutuka said "I belong to a farmer family. My father was a farmer. I have six sisters and two brothers. And farming is the only source of income for us".

He joined as a lecturer in 2009 and is a researcher in folklore, tribal literature.

Students recall that even in classrooms, he used to encourage them to take to entrepreneurship and businesses.

Koutuka said "I belong to a farmer family. My father was a farmer. I have six sisters and two brothers. And farming is the only source of income for us".

## 16,789 prisoners released from Odisha jails

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 31 JULY:

Odisha government released around 17,000 under-trial prisoners and convicts on bail and parole from prisons to decongest the jails and to keep the spread of novel corona virus infections at bay.

Apart from releasing the prisoners as per the apex court order, 1,202 jail inmates have also been evacuated to less congested prisons as part of precautionary measures to contain the spread of COVID-19, the official said.

While 150 the convicts have been released on parole, the 16,639 UTPs were given timely step to take care of the infected inmates. As many as 5,231 inmates from the Berhampur circle jail which has witnessed the highest number of 54 COVID cases have been released.

official of jail administration.

"Abiding by the apex court order, the high powered committee and the district undertrial review committee comprising among others the district judges had been constituted and the prisoners were accordingly released by the order as part of the initiative to decongest the jails", said DGP (prisons and correctional services) Santosh Upadhyay.

The spurt in infections in Berhampur jail is a cause of concern. As there is likelihood of more infections, the jail covid care centre is a timely step to take care of the infected inmates. The contagion is no more confined within the hotspots and is slowly spreading its tentacles.

The jails in the state are currently not overcrowded as the prison administration has decongested the prisons in view of the health emergency.

## Delhi's Covid caseload reaches 1.35 lakh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY:

recovery rate climbed to 89.18 percent in Delhi today from yesterday's figure of 89.07 percent.

The national capital took into account 27 new cases of death due to Covid-19 today, which increased the total number of such fatalities to 3,963 in the city so far.

The health bulletin stated that the number of active cases of coronavirus infection was 10,705 in Delhi now.

The total number of Covid tests conducted today was

19,091. There were 5,763 patients undergoing treatment under home isolation in the city. The number of containment zones stood at 692.

Of the total number of 14,303 hospital beds available for Covid patients in Delhi, 11,371 were vacant now. The vacant beds in the dedicated Covid care centres numbered 5,340 while there were 391 such beds in the dedicated Covid health centres in the city.

Since the lockdown Koutuka was at his village and took to farming over the last three months.

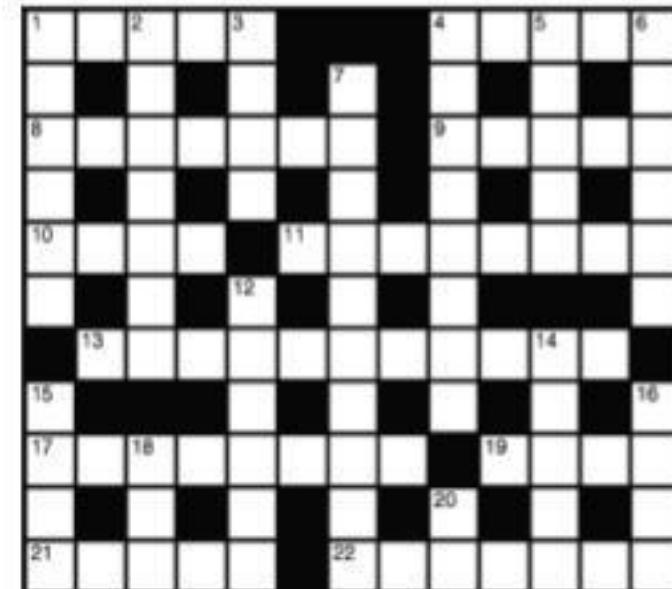
He joined as a lecturer in 2009 and is a researcher in folklore, tribal literature.

Students recall that even in classrooms, he used to encourage them to take to entrepreneurship and businesses.

Koutuka said "I belong to a farmer family. My father was a farmer. I have six sisters and two brothers. And farming is the only source of income for us".

## LEISURE

### 10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Caper (5)
- 4 Humorous (5)
- 8 Massive (7)
- 9 Rule (5)
- 10 Sacred (4)
- 11 Throttle (8)
- 13 Eyeight defect (11)
- 17 Stimulating (8)
- 19 Devotees (4)
- 21 Sun-dried brick (5)
- 22 Fashionable (1,2,4)
- 23 Seaside golf course (5)
- 24 Prestige (5)
- 25 Nickel (6)
- 26 Burial mound (7)
- 27 Geometric solid (4)
- 28 Guarantee (8)
- 29 Article (5)
- 30 Over there (6)
- 31 Money-raising match (11)
- 32 Languid (8)
- 33 Fish, shellfish, etc (7)
- 34 Feature (6)
- 35 Valuable things (6)
- 36 Circus entertainer (5)
- 37 Support (4)

- DOWN
- 1 Settle (6)
- 2 Looks, 15 Embassy, 16 Status, 18 Recur, 20 Event.
- 3 Exclude, 17 Incur, 21 Tableau, 23 Desires, 24 Nasturtium, 25 Open-minded, 26 Yeti.
- 4 Boozier, 9 Audit, 10 Posture, 11 Adieu, 12 Nickel, 13 Cockles, 14 Defect, 15 Embassies, 16 Status, 17 Incur, 18 Recur, 19 Devotees, 20 Event.
- 5 Article (5)
- 6 Over there (6)
- 7 Money-raising match (11)



While it remains unclear how long the pandemic will last, Covid-19 activity will likely continue for some time.

WHITE HOUSE VIROLOGIST DR. ANTHONY FAUCI

IN PREPARED TESTIMONY FOR A SPECIAL HOUSE PANEL INVESTIGATING THE PANDEMIC

## WEATHER

CITY	MAX(°C)	MIN(°C)
SINGAPORE	30	27 H
HONG KONG	28	25 R
TOKYO	32	23 CL
LONDON	26	13 CL
DUBAI	44	32 CL
SAN FRANCISCO	19	13 CL
NEW YORK	31	24 CL
MOSCOW	20	13 H

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

## THUMBNAILS



A lion is fed at Bioparque Wakata in Jaime Duque park near Bogota. AFP

**US troop withdrawal:** Germany's defence minister on Friday described the planned withdrawal of some 12,000 US troops from her country as regrettable, while suggesting it underlines the need for Europe to do more for its security. AFP

**Epstein case:** Newly unsealed court documents provide a fresh glimpse into a fierce civil court fight between Jeffrey Epstein's ex-girlfriend, Ghislaine Maxwell, and one of the women who accused the couple of sexual abuse. The documents were from a defamation suit filed by one of his alleged victims. AP

**Vietnam virus death:** Vietnamese state media reported the country's first ever death of a person with coronavirus amid renewed outbreak after 99 days without any cases. AP

## France, Italy, Spain see startling coronavirus hits to economies

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
PARIS, 31 JULY

France, Italy and Spain reported precipitous contractions on Friday for their coronavirus-battered economies, with the pandemic wiping out years of growth in a matter of weeks as the lockdowns closed shops, factories, and restaurants.

The Spanish economy shrank by 18.5% in the April-June period from the previous quarter, the French economy nearly 14% and Italy 12.4%. The Spanish contraction was by far

## TENDER

**H.P PWD NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
Sealed item rate tender on the form 6&8 are invited by the Executive Engineer, Dharampur Division, HPPWD Dharampur on behalf of Governor of HP for the following works from the approved and eligible contractor enlisted in HPPWD.

**TENDER SCHEDULE:**  
1. Date and time of receipt of application for the upto 4.00 PM tender form upto 17.09.2020

2. Date and time of issue of tender form : 18.09.2020 upto 4.00 PM

3. Date and time of receipt of tenders: 19.09.2020 upto 11.00 AM

4. Date and time of opening of tenders: 19.09.2020 upto 11.30 AM

The tender form will be issued against cash payment (non refundable), the earnest money in the shape of NSC/FDR/Deposit at call of any Post Office/Bank in H.P duly pledged in the name of the Executive Engineer, Dharampur Division, HPPWD Dharampur must accompany with each tender. Conditional tender and tender received without earnest money will summarily be rejected.

Sr. No	Name of work	Estimated cost (In Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Time
1.	C/O Bharari to Tasli Nallah via Balh road in KM 0/00 to 3/4/90 (SH: Formartion cutting 5/7 mtrs wide in KM 0/500 to 0/700)	4,9600/-	10000.00	Two Months

**Terms and Conditions:**

- The contractors/firms should possess the following documents at the time of application (Photocopy to be attached): i) Latest renewal of enlistment. ii) PAN (Permanent Account No.), iii) Copy of GST registration. iv) Copy of EPF Number, v) Owned/Hired documentary proof of the machinery required for the work. vi) Cost of tender, vii) Earnest Money.
- The Contractors/firms are required to quote their rates both in figures and words, failing which under-signed reserve the right to accept/reject any or all tenders without assigning any reasons.
- 1% cess charges on the amount of work awarded will be recovered from the contractor and the contractor has to get registered with Labour Officer-cum-Registering Officer-cum-Cess Collector within one month from the issue of the award letter.
- The contractor will give affidavit that he has not two or more works in hand for execution, failing which the application shall be rejected.
- The offer of the tender shall remain valid upto 120days after the opening.
- The Executive Engineer reserves the right to reject/cancel any or all the tenders without assigning any reason(s).

Executive Engineer,  
Dharampur Division,  
HP.PWD, Dharampur,

## Trump does a U-turn, says no to delay in presidential polls

Trump had floated the idea of postponing 3 Nov polls citing irregularities in the mail-in vote

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
WASHINGTON, 31 JULY

Donald Trump has quickly taken back his suggestion to delay November's presidential election over alleged fraud concerns after he failed to garner support from top Republicans.

Seeking a second consecutive term, Trump is facing a formidable challenge from Democratic nominee and former vice president Joe Biden, who, according to major national opinion polls, has double digit lead over the Republican president.

The presidential election date in the US is statutorily set as "the Tuesday next after the first Monday in the month of November" equalling "the first Tuesday after 1 November".

Trump on Thursday for the first time openly floated the idea of postponing the presidential elections on 3 November, citing irregularities in the mail-in vote.

The suggestion was immediately criticised by leaders of the opposition Democratic Party. He also failed to garner support from his own Republican Party.

Later in the day, Trump walked back on his suggestion.

"I don't want to delay. I want to have the election. But I also don't want to have to wait for three months and then find out that the ballots are all missing and the election doesn't mean anything," Trump told reporters at a news conference when asked about his tweet suggesting election be delayed.

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



President Trump looks on as patients donate plasma at Red Cross National Headquarters in Washington, DC, on Friday. AFP

and safely vote???" he tweeted on Thursday morning.

Reacting to Trump's suggestion, Senate Judiciary Chairman Lindsey Graham, a South Carolina Republican and Trump ally, told CNN when asked about the President's call to delay the election: "I don't think that's a particularly good idea."

Graham said he believed Trump's "concerns about mail-in voting are valid, but delaying the election is not the right answer." Majority Whip Senator John Thune, a member of Republican leadership, said that there will be an election in November despite the President's tweet.

"I think that's probably a statement that gets some press attention, but I doubt it gets any serious traction," he said.

"I think we've had elections every November since about 1788, and I expect that will be the case again this year," he said.

Any change of date would have to be approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate. Democrats control the House of Representatives and some have already said they will not support any delay to the vote.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a California Democrat,

responded to the President with a tweet of her own quoting the Constitution, that gives Congress the authority to "determine the Time of choosing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Vote." At his White House press conference, Trump said that the Mail-in Vote would delay the counting of votes and election results.

"I don't want to be waiting around for weeks and

months and literally, potentially, if you really did it right, years, because you'll never know. These ballots are missing," Trump said. "That doesn't include absentee. Absentee is different. Absentee you have to work, and you have to send in for applications. You have to go through a whole procedure."

"For instance, I'm an absentee voter because I can't be in Florida because I'm in Washington. I'm at the White House. So I'll be an absentee voter. We have a lot of absentee voters and it works," he added.

Democrats are pushing for Mail-in Votes.

During the Covid-19 pandemic era, a large number of Americans are expected to opt for mail in voting to avoid standing in line and going to a polling booth.

Trump has expressed fear that this might be rigged and the counting of votes itself might take a long time and the results would not be declared on the night on 3 November, which normally happens.

Trump faces rare rebuke from GOP: President Trump repeatedly tests the Republican Party's limits on issues including race, trade and immigration. On Thursday, he struck a boundary.

GOP officials from New Hampshire to Mississippi to Iowa quickly pushed back against Trump's suggestion that it might be necessary to delay the November election.

Iowa Sen. Chuck Grassley was especially blunt: All I can say is, it doesn't matter what one individual in this country says. We still are a country based on the rule of law, and we want to follow the law.

New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu vowed his state would hold its November elections as scheduled. Rep. Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., who leads the House Republican Conference, said,

"The resistance to this idea among Republicans is overwhelming." The top Republicans who have spent the past four years championing Trump in Congress, also distanced themselves.

## RED ALERT



Social distancing signs seen around Borough market in Halifax to enforce the government's virus restrictions on Friday. AFP

## UK announces stricter lockdown rules for England ahead of Eid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LONDON, 31 JULY



Millions of households in north England, including those in Manchester, Bradford and Leicester cities, face stricter lockdown rules than the rest of the UK from Friday amidst a feared spike in Covid-19 cases.

The rules include a ban on households from mingling together indoors and comes just ahead of the Eid festival, which usually involves different households getting together.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Friday applied brakes on further easing of lockdown measures, due from this weekend, in England, fearing a spike in the COVID-19 cases.

Addressing a briefing at Downing Street in London, Johnson said, "we must squeeze the brake pedal" to keep the virus under control and also announced that face coverings will become mandatory across many more indoor settings, such as cinemas, besides just public transport and shops and supermarkets.

"The prevalence of the virus in the community, in England, is likely to be rising for the first time since May," said Johnson, referring to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) data.

That means until August 15 at the earliest, casinos, bowling alleys, skating rinks and the remaining close-contact services must remain closed. Indoor performances will not resume, pilots of larger gatherings in sports venues and conference centres will not take place, and wedding receptions of up to 30 people will not be permitted," he said.

"We're constantly looking at the latest data on the spread of coronavirus, and unfortunately we've seen an increasing rate of transmission in parts of northern England, said UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock.

Mosques and other places of worship have reopened for prayer and communal worship, but in a different socially distanced and secure way. This means that while mosques can remain open, many will not be able to welcome as many worshippers as before, the department said.

The Opposition Labour Party criticised the government for the lack of clarity over the measures and for announcing them "late at night" on Thursday.

Meanwhile, stricter localised restrictions currently in place in Blackburn, announced last Friday, which saw indoor swimming pools, indoor fitness and dance studios, indoor gyms and sports facilities remaining closed, will continue.

## H1B: 'USCIS took steps to prevent abuse'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
WASHINGTON, 31 JULY

The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has implemented rules, policy memoranda, and operational changes that protect the economic interests of US workers and businesses and prevent abuse and fraud in employment-based visa programmes

JOSEPH EDLOW, DY DIRECTOR OF POLICY, USCIS TOLD LAWMAKERS DURING A CONGRESSIONAL HEARING

USCIS told lawmakers during a Congressional hearing on Thursday.

Prominent among these include ensuring the fees that certain H-1B petitioners must now pay ultimately to help train US workers, clarifying calculation guidelines for the one-year foreign employment requirement for L-1 petitions in order to "ensure consistent adjudication."

Among other steps are changing the H-1B cap selection process in order to increase the chances of selection for beneficiaries who have earned a master's degree or higher from a US institution and expanding collaboration with the Department of Justice (DOJ) to better detect and eliminate fraud by employers.

The H-1B visa is for short-term seasonal workers while L-1 is for internal company transfers. The USCIS has issued the first report of kind estimating the number of H-1B non-immigrants authorised to work in the United

States and has instituted electronic filing for multiple forms and, for the first time ever, using an electronic registration process for the purpose of H-1B cap selection, he told members of the House Judiciary Subcommittee Hearing Citizenship and Immigration.

Sharvari Dalal-Dhein, Director of Government Relations, American Immigration Lawyers of America, told Congressmen that the USCIS data reveal the percentage of completed cases with request for evidences (RFEs) increased from 22.3 in FY2015 to 40.2 in FY2019.

Even when the RFEs and NOIDs ultimately result in approvals, the unnecessary delay caused by their issuance effectively means that USCIS reviews each application or petition twice - once upon initial review and again in response to what is often a needless RFE or NOID.

He said that when these RFEs and NOIDs result in improper denials, US employers and individuals are forced to turn to the federal courts to seek relief.

## At Lewis funeral, Obama calls for renewing Voting Rights Act

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
ATLANTA, 31 JULY



Former President Barack Obama gives the eulogy at the funeral service for the late Rep. John Lewis in Atlanta, Georgia. AFP

since the Supreme Court diminished the landmark law in 2012.

You want to honour John? Let's honour him by revitalising the law that he was willing to die for, Obama said, arguing that the bipartisan praise for the Georgia congressman since his death isn't enough.

Obama endorsed ending the Senate filibuster if that is what's needed to pass an overhauled voting law.

He called the procedural hurdle that effectively requires 60 votes to pass major legislation a Jim Crow relic, referring to the segregation era. The Democratic-led House has adopted a sweeping rewrite of the Voting Rights Act, now named for Lewis. It faces opposition in the Republican-led Senate and likely couldn't get 60 votes even if Democrats reclaim a narrow majority after the November elections. Specifically, Obama called for all Americans being

registered to vote automatically, restoring voting rights to felons who have completed their sentences, expanding early voting, ending partisan gerrymandering of districts and making Election Day a national holiday.

Obama noted that the original Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its renewals drew Republican and Democratic votes in Congress and were signed by presidents from both parties.

Obama singled out former President George W Bush, a Republican, who also spoke on Thursday at Ebenezer Baptist Church near downtown Atlanta. Still, Obama said, there are those in power doing their darnedest to discourage people from voting by closing polling locations and targeting minorities and students with restrictive ID laws even undermining the Postal Service in an election that's

going to be dependent on mail-in ballots. Hours before Lewis' funeral, Trump suggested delaying the November election, something he doesn't have the authority to do. Trump has claimed that a surge of mail ballots because of the pandemic will threaten the election's legitimacy.

Trump has opposed moves in Congress to help the financially struggling US Postal Service handle the sharp uptick in mail voting.

Obama compared current national circumstances to the earlier civil rights era when Lewis helped lead the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and became an understudy to King. Bull Connor may be gone, but today we witness with our own eyes police officers kneeling on the necks of Black Americans, Obama said, alluding to killing of George Floyd.





## WARMING UP

Irrepressible AC Milan forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic (photo, left) likened himself to film character Benjamin Button after scoring twice in a 4-1 Serie A win at Sampdoria. "People tell me I'm old and tired but I'm just getting warmed up," he said.

For more updates

[www.thestatesman.com](http://www.thestatesman.com)

## THUMBNAILS

**Gymnastics row:** A review of Australian gymnastics was announced on Thursday after former athletes had gone public with accounts of physical, mental and emotional abuse in the sport. The probe will be carried out by the country's Human Rights Commission.

**Tokyo Games:** Next year's coronavirus-postponed Olympics could be held in front of a "limited number of spectators" to prevent the spread of infection, Tokyo 2020 chief executive Toshiro Muto has said. The Tokyo 2020 Games are rescheduled for 2021.

**Crime & punishment:** The global governing body for athletics will expel Russia's federation, suspended since 2015 for having broken anti-doping rules, if it fails to pay a hefty fine before 15 August. There is now a taskforce overseeing Russia's reinstatement efforts.

**Trick missed:** Tennis is "missing a trick" by not including more team events involving both men and women on the main tours, three-time Grand Slam-winner Andy Murray has said. Mixed doubles is currently played only at the four Grand Slams on the pro circuit.

**New role:** Former Italy star Andrea Pirlo has been appointed coach of the Juventus U-23 team. "Andrea is the new coach of the U-23 team. Welcome back coach Pirlo," Juventus said in a statement. Pirlo also played for Inter, AC Milan and New York City FC.

**Fifa stinks:** A Swiss special prosecutor has launched criminal proceedings against Fifa chief Gianni Infantino, Swiss officials said on Thursday, as part of an investigation into suspected collusion between him and the country's attorney-general Michael Lauber.

**Napoli's appeal:** Napoli chief AD Laurenti said on Thursday that the Italian club's Champions League last-16, second-leg game against Barcelona should be moved from Spain where there was a new wave of coronavirus cases. "I hear of a lot of fear," he said.

**England win:** David Willey (5/30) guided England to a six-wicket win over Ireland at Southampton on Thursday in the first One-Day International. Ireland were dismissed for a modest 172 in a match that marked the return of white-ball cricket from the virus lockdown.

**Rabindra retained:** Akhil Rabindra will look to build on his strong 2019 season in Europe, with the Aston Martin Racing (AMR) Driver Academy announcing that they will be retaining him for the 2020 season as well.

## WARMING UP

Irrepressible AC Milan forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic (photo, left) likened himself to film character Benjamin Button after scoring twice in a 4-1 Serie A win at Sampdoria. "People tell me I'm old and tired but I'm just getting warmed up," he said.

[www.thestatesman.com](http://www.thestatesman.com)

## 'Most Tokyo Olympics volunteers worry about pandemic impact'

AGENCIES  
TOKYO, 31 JULY

More than 60 per cent of the volunteers for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics are "worried or anxious" about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Games, a survey has found.

Japanese state broadcaster NHK said on Friday that Tokyo 2020 organisers had conducted the survey this month of volunteers who would be working mainly at event sites.

About 26,000 out of the 80,000 people who have signed up responded to the survey which allowed multiple answers

for each question.

Asked what their main causes of worry or anxiety about the Games were, 66.8 per cent said they were how the pandemic would affect the format of the event and how infection preventive measures would be carried out during the Games, NHK said.

Thirty-four per cent also said that they did not have much opportunity to know about their work because their training had been postponed.

Some commented that they were worried about the risk of infection when working as volunteers. Others mentioned uncertainty over whether the



Games would actually be held. On Thursday, the organising committee began asking vol-

unteers if they still wanted to work at the Games, which had been rescheduled for 23 July to

8 August, 2021.

The Tokyo metropolitan government on Thursday con-

firmed a fresh single-day record of 367 new cases of the novel

coronavirus.

Tokyo governor Yuriko Koike (in photo)

said that the Japanese capital was "facing a critical situation" and was "on the

verge of an explosive increase of infections."

New daily infections in the capital of 14 million have topped the 200-mark on nine of the past 10 days, with the cumulative total on Wednesday reaching 12,228 infections, of which around 50 percent were confirmed in this month alone.

Koike said that containing the spread of the new coronavirus in the Japanese capital was the very first step toward the successful hosting of the postponed Olympics and Paralympics next summer.

She also said the Tokyo metropolitan government was holding talks with the International Olympic Committee, the games organisers and the Japanese government to realise the targeted simplification of the games' operation.

Tournaments cancelled

The Badminton World Federation has cancelled four tournaments scheduled for September in Asia, including the

China Open, due to developments surrounding the spread of COVID-19.

In updating its Tournament Calendar 2020, BWF said the cancelled events included the China Open and the Japan Open.

"These decisions to cancel tournaments are made in the best interests of the health of the players, spectators, volunteers and member associations. We are deeply disappointed to have to cancel tournaments, but feel that the well-being of everyone involved is most important at this time," said BWF secretary-general Thomas Lund.

## Disappointing that IPL 13 will not be held in India: Smith

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

Rajasthan Royals skipper Steve Smith (in photo) has expressed his disappointment regarding this year's Indian Premier League (IPL) being played outside of India. The 13th edition of the cash-rich league, which was postponed in March due to coronavirus pandemic, will now be held in the UAE from September.

IPL chairman Brijesh Patel had last week confirmed that this year's league will be played around the 19 September to 8 November window and the same has been communicated to the franchises.

Smith stated players will have to adapt to the conditions of the UAE but that's not going to be a problem as according to him, everyone will be eager to just get on the field and play good quality cricket following the coronavirus stoppage.

"I think part of being a professional cricketer is to adapt to any condition you are faced with and that is going to be the clear message from the coaching staff," Smith told reporters via videoconference after special premiere of Rajasthan Royals' documentary 'Inside Story' which showed



cases the team's 2019 IPL campaign.

"Conditions in Dubai can be similar to what you get in India or it can be different, it's about adapting on the run to what the condition suits. Couple of players obviously have experience of playing there before. The IPL was there in 2014 I think, so a lot of people have played IPL there before."

"I think guys will be just

jumping out of their skins to play some quality cricket. Obviously it's disappointing that it's not in India. We would have absolutely loved to play there," he added.

Smith also spoke about the prospect of players coming into the tournament a bit rusty considering some of them haven't played international cricket for a while now following the COVID-19 hiatus. The talismanic Australia

batsman said everyone would be on the same boat with this regard and thus there won't be an added advantage for any team in particular.

"Yeah, it has been challenging. A lot of players haven't played any cricket. From that point of view it will be an even contest," Smith said.

"Everybody will be going in with the same sort of preparation which is nice. It has been incredibly different times and guys are trying to get their cricket back in any way possible."

"It certainly is going to be very exciting when IPL rolls around that's for sure," he added.

Meanwhile, Royals' youngest star Riyan Parag also spoke about the return of the IPL. He became a household name last year following his half-century against Delhi Capitals. At 17 years and 175 days, Parag holds the record for being the youngest player to score an IPL fifty.

"Pressure is only there if you think about it. To be honest I don't think about all these taglines, whatever the media or whatever the people say," Parag said.

'30-50% attendance during IPL in UAE'

The Emirates Cricket Board

is eager to fill up 30-50 per cent of the stadiums with spectators when the IPL is held in the UAE provided the government there approves, its secretary Mubashir Usmani said on Friday.

While announcing the dates of the IPL, its chairman Brijesh Patel had said that the decision on letting in fans during the event will be taken by the UAE government.

"Once we get the confirmation from the BCCI (on Indian government's approval), we will go to our government with the complete proposal and SOPs which will be prepared by us and the BCCI," said Usmani over phone.

"We will definitely want our people to experience this prestigious event but it is totally the government's decision. For most events here, the number ranges from thirty to 50 percent capacity, we are looking at a similar number."

"We are hopeful of getting our government's approval on that," he added.

The UAE has little over 6000 active cases of COVID-19 and the overall situation around the pandemic is under control.

## Hulkenberg to race at British GP after Perez tests positive

AGENCIES  
SILVERSTONE, 31 JULY



Nico Hulkenberg (in photo) made an unexpected return to Formula One on Friday, stepping in at Racing Point after Sergio Perez tested positive for the coronavirus ahead of the British Grand Prix on Sunday.

The 32-year-old Hulkenberg lost his seat at Renault for this season so was available when Racing Point team principal Otmar Szafnauer made the call.

The German was immediately back in action for the first time since November, driving in first practice on Friday at Silverstone, where no fans are attending due to the pandemic restrictions.

"I was on my way to the

Nurburgring for another racing project when the call from Otmar came," Hulkenberg said.

"That was less than 24 hours ago, so it feels a bit surreal for me right now, but I like a good challenge and this is certainly a great car underneath me, that the team had done a fantastic job."

Reporting no symptoms of the virus, Perez said it was a reminder how vulnerable everyone is to becoming infected.

"After Hungary I took a private plane to Mexico to see my mum for two days because she had a big accident. So as soon as she left hospital I was able to see her," he said.

"Then I came back to Europe, same way, with all the protocols in place. And I just got it, I don't know from where."

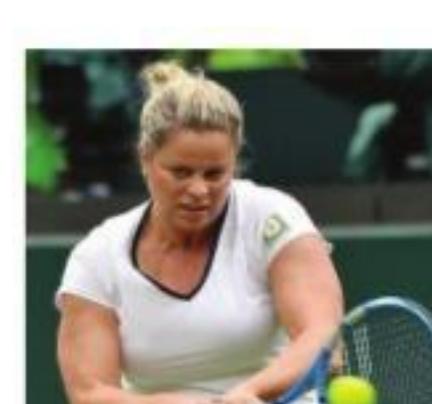
## Clijsters, Osaka, Venus among wildcards in US Open tune-up

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
NEW YORK, 31 JULY

The event, typically staged in Cincinnati two weeks before the US Open, was moved to Flushing Meadows and would be played 20 August and 28 August inside the National Tennis Centre bubble without spectators as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

US Open play will begin there on 31 August.

Clijsters, a mother of three, returned to the WTA Tour this year after retiring in 2012. She was ousted in her first match at Dubai in February and in Monterrey in March. She had first retired in



2007 before making a comeback in 2009, when she won the first of back-to-back US Open titles to go with her first in 2005.

Former world number one Clijsters also captured the 2011 Australian Open and in 2017 was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame with 41 singles titles.

Osaka, 22, won the 2018 US Open and 2019 Australian Open. The 10th-ranked star was listed as the highest-paid female athlete in the world by Forbes magazine in May.

Williams, 27, was a shock

winner of the 2017 US Open after an 11-month absence due to a right foot injury that saw her ranking plunge to 957th in the world.

Venus Williams, 40, has won seven Grand Slam titles and 49 career events overall. The former world number one became only the sixth woman to reach 800 all-time match wins.

McNally, 18, was a Washington semi-finalist last year and took 23-time Grand Slam-winner Serena Williams to three sets at last year's US Open.

## Newcastle takeover off as Saudi Arabian group withdraws

JACK DE MENEZES  
LONDON, 31 JULY

The proposed Saudi Arabian-led takeover of Newcastle United has collapsed after the commercial agreement with the club's current owners expired.

A joint statement from the Saudi Public Investment Fund, PCP Capital Partners and RB Sports & Media consortium that had lodged the £300m takeover bid confirmed that they had withdrawn their offer due to the "unforeseeably prolonged process" to gain approval from the Premier League.

The takeover has been under consideration by the league for an astonishing 17 weeks without resolution, resulting in the agreement between the Investment Group and current Newcastle owner

under which the next season will start and the new norms that will arise for matches, training and other activities.

"As often occurs with proposed investments in uncertain periods, time itself became an enemy of the transaction, particularly during this difficult phase marked by the many real challenges facing us all from Covid-19."

The statement also issued a thank-you to Newcastle supporters who had welcomed the takeover with ferocious adulation, having grown tired of Ashley's reign in charge.

"We feel great compassion for the Newcastle United fans with whom we shared a great commitment to help," it added. "We would like to say that we truly appreciated your incredible expressions of support and your patience

throughout this process. We are sorry it is not to be."

"Unfortunately the prolonged process under the current circumstances coupled with global uncertainty has rendered the potential investment no longer commercially viable."

The development means that Ashley will remain in charge of the club when the new Premier League season begins on the weekend of 12 September, despite actively looking to sell the club and putting no further investment into the team this summer due to his expected departure.

The Premier League has been coy on the Newcastle take-over due to their requirement to keep matters surrounding the Owners and Directors Test confidential.

THE INDEPENDENT

## FPAI courts controversy on East Bengal's ISL inclusion, president Renedy clarifies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 31 JULY

The Football Players Association of India on Friday courted controversy when it shot off a letter to the AIFF and ISL, calling for East Bengal's inclusion in the top-tier league without the consent of its president Renedy Singh.

In a letter addressed to All India Football Federation (AIFF) general secretary Kushal Das, which is also marked to ISL organisers Football Sports Development Ltd (FSDL), the association's general manager Cyrus Confectioner requested the concerned stakeholders to set aside their differences for a quick resolution of the matter.

"We the association sincerely urge you to include the East Bengal into the ISL without any hesitation or delay," FPAI general secretary Cyrus Confectioner said in the letter.

"The clubs should settle their matters internally with the federation and FSDL regarding their participation in the ISL or any other league for that matter," the former player, who also captained the national team, added.

Expressing his shock at being bypassed by his junior on such a sensitive matter, Renedy, a decorated former India mid-fielder, clarified that his body's job is only to support players and not clubs.

"It is rich in history and is one of the oldest and most premier clubs having a massive fan following, something which the sport needs for it to grow and thrive in India."

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