



WINDOWS

Theatre maestro Ebrahim Alkazi passes away

New Delhi: Considered the father of modern Indian theatre, Ebrahim Alkazi, the first Director of National School of Drama (NSD) breathed his last in the capital on Tuesday. He was 94. Also an art connoisseur, collector and gallery owner, he founded Art Heritage Gallery in New Delhi. This Royal Academy of Dramatics Art (RADA) pass-out staged more than 50 plays during his distinguished career and won the BBC Broadcasting Award in 1950.

Imran unveils map showing Kashmir as part of Pakistan

Islamabad: On the eve of the first anniversary of the revocation of the contentious Article 370 and Article 35A, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan unveiled a new political map which includes the UT of J&K as part of Pakistan on Tuesday. Khan has decided to present the new political map at the United Nations as well. The Imran Khan Cabinet approved the new map in which the complete Jammu and Kashmir, is shown integrated with Pakistan.

IS bomber involved in Afghan attack was a Kerala doctor

Kabul/New Delhi: Of the 11 ISIS suicide bombers involved in the Afghanistan prison break terror attack that left 39 people dead on Monday, one was a doctor from Kerala. Official sources told IANS that the ISIS suicide bomber has been identified as Kallukettiya Purayil Ijas, a physician and resident of Kasargod in Kerala. On Sunday evening, as per official sources in Kabul, 11 ISIS terrorists stormed the Jalalabad prison to break free their cadres, killing 39 people.

NATION



HINDUTVA NOW BASIC COAT ON CANVAS OF INDIAN POLITICS: GOVINDACHARYA

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BUSINESS



COVID SPREAD HITS GDP REVIVAL

P6



DRAFT DEFENCE POLICY AIMS AT 'SELF-RELIANCE'

Eyes ₹1.75 lakh crore turnover in defence manufacturing by 2025

PURNA SINGH

New Delhi: The Ministry of Defence made several announcements under the 'Self-reliant India' package to include India among the world's leading countries in the defence sector, aerospace and naval shipbuilding sectors.

The Union government is eyeing a turnover of Rs 1.75 lakh crore in defence manufacturing by 2025 as it has identified the sector as a potential driver to boost the overall economy, according to a draft of a major policy prepared by the Defence ministry.

The draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 set an export target of Rs 35,000 crore in aerospace and defence goods and services in the next five years, which has been estimated as part of the total projected turnover.

The policy is envisaged as overarching guiding document of the defence ministry to provide a "fo-



cused, structured and significant" thrust to production of military hardware and platforms for self-reliance and exports, officials said.

Officials said the policy is aimed at developing a dynamic, robust and competitive defence industry, including aerospace and naval shipbuilding, to cater to the needs of the armed forces.

In May, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman rolled out a number of reform measures for the

defence sector including making separate budgetary outlay to procure Indian-made military hardware, increasing FDI limit from 49 per cent to 74 per cent under the automatic route and generating a year-wise negative list of weapons which will not be allowed to import.

India is one of the most lucrative markets for global defence giants as it figured among top three importers of military hardware in the world for the last eight years.

AAP to recast its Delhi unit

New Delhi: The Aam Aadmi Party has decided to restructure its Delhi unit at Assembly, district, ward, polling station and booth-level, senior party leader and minister Gopal Rai said on Tuesday. The restructuring exercise is being undertaken with an eye on the 2022 municipal polls in the city. Rai, who is also the AAP's Delhi convener, said the restructuring will start from Wednesday and will continue till August 20. He said the party will give new responsibilities to those who performed well in the assembly elections held earlier this year.

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Gopal Rai
A 15-day restructuring exercise will start from Wednesday. The restructuring at district, assembly, ward, polling station and booth level also aims to strengthen the organisation

Bihar seeks CBI probe into Sushant's death



Patna: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar recommended a CBI investigation into the death of Sushant Singh Rajput on Tuesday, shortly after the actor's father pressed for it in a phone call. "Since the family has given its consent, we are recommending a CBI probe on the FIR which was lodged in Bihar," Nitish Kumar said. Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had earlier ruled out a CBI investigation alongside the Mumbai police probe into the actor's death on June 14. Continued on Page 5



Disburse pension to elderly on time: SC

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday said pension to elderly persons should be disbursed on time and those living in old age homes across the country be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitisers and face masks during the persisting COVID-19 pandemic.

The elderly are suffering and steps should be taken by the administration to attend to them whenever any request is made, the Apex court said.

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TABLIGHI JAMAAT

HC seeks response from Centre on foreigners' plea

HANS NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Tuesday sought response of the Centre and the police on two separate pleas by 23 foreigners seeking quashing of FIRs against them for attending the Tablighi Jamaat event here and allegedly indulging in missionary activities in violation of visa norms and breaching anti-COVID-19 guidelines.

Justice Anup Jairam 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, when similar petitions are also listed.

The high court also asked the police to submit a tabulated summary of all the FIRs and charge sheets, filed or to be filed before the trial court, along with their present status. The court was informed that these 23 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. Continued on Page 5

Over 30 Telugus crack Civils

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: More than 30 Telugus have successfully cracked the Civil Services Examination 2019 whose results were announced by the Union Public Service Commission on Tuesday. Pedditi Dhatri Reddy of Hyderabad has secured 46th rank in one of the toughest competitive examination in the country. She is an IPS officer of Telangana cadre and under training at the National Police Academy. She got selected for the IPS in the second attempt and has already completed phase-1 training.

Continued on Page 5

Trump's new order on H1B a blow to Indians

Washington: In a huge blow to Indian IT professionals eyeing the US job market, President Donald Trump on Monday signed an executive order preventing federal agencies from contracting or subcontracting foreign workers -- mainly those on H1B visa -- from hiring. The move came over a month after the Trump administration in June 23 suspended the H1B visas along with other types of foreign work visas until the end of 2020 to protect American workers in a crucial election year. The new



restrictions took effect from June 24. The H1B visa, most sought-after among Indian IT professionals, is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign

workers in specialty occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. The technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from

countries like India and China.

"Today I am signing an executive order to ensure that the federal government lives by a very simple rule, higher American," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office of the White House before signing the order against hiring H1B visa holders for federal contracts. Trump told reporters that his administration will not tolerate firing of hardworking Americans in the pursuit of cheap foreign labour.

Continued on Page 5

Ayodhya comes alive ahead of Mandir event

PM arrives for 'bhoomi puja' today

The ancient city of Ayodhya has come to life as it awaits the final moment. The town is all lit up and decorated with diyas and colored lighting, almost like a mini-Diwali.

The temple town on the banks of River Saryu, is beautifully illuminated as it preps up for the 'bhoomi puja' of the much-awaited Ram Temple on Wednesday. Beautification activity is going on at the 'Ram Ki Paidi' - a riverfront along the Saryu. With just a few hours to go, Ayodhya is awaiting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's arrival for the foundation-stone laying ceremony.

Buildings on both sides of the roads that the Prime Minister's convoy will take from the helipad at the Saket College in the city to reach the Ram Temple Janmabhoomi site is being given a fresh coat of yellow paint with various characters of the Ramayana on them. Life-size sketches of both Lord Ram and Sita will adorn the helipad at Saket College, sketches and drawings of Ramayana characters will adorn the building walls on both sides of the roads.

Priests have fetched the soil of the Yamunotri Dham, water of the Yamuna river and the Brahma Kamal flower that grows in the Himalayan region. Continued on Page 5



This is how Ram temple will look once built

Ayodhya: The design and structure of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya was released by the government a day before the bhoomi puja is scheduled to take place. The structure of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya boasts domes, intricate pillars as well as multiple turrets. The height of the structure would be 161 ft and double of what was originally planned. The entire structure is likely to be embellished with intricate carvings. Architect Chandrakant Sompura, whose family specialises in temple architectures, was asked to design the Ram Temple around 30 years ago. Sompura said that he followed the 'Nagara style' architecture. Initially the Ram Temple was designed to have two domes, which was then tweaked to include five. There would be a tower over the sanctum sanctorum.

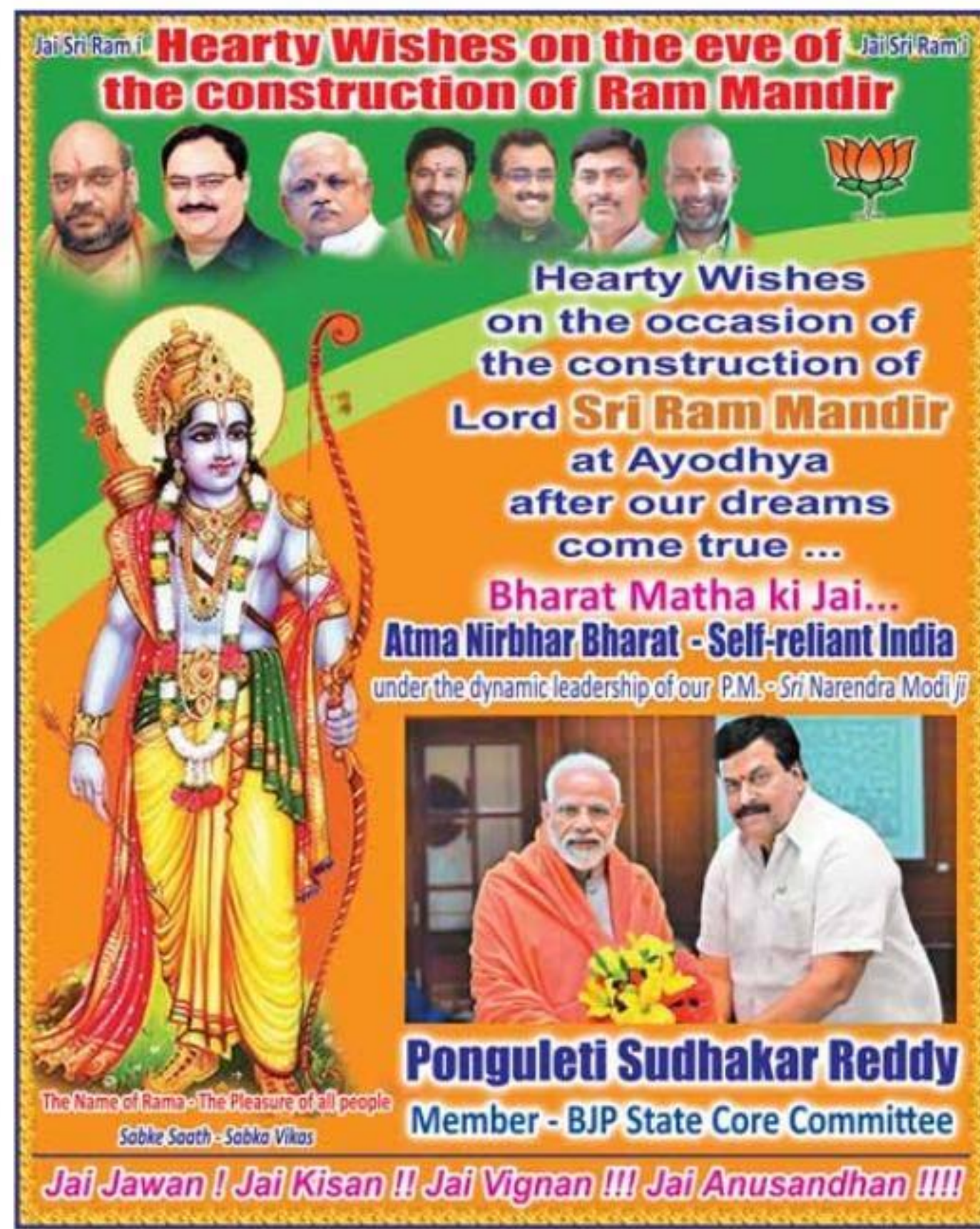
PM's itinerary

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone for the construction of a historic Ram temple in Ayodhya on Wednesday. He will be in the city for three hours on the day. According to official itinerary, he will start from Delhi at 9.35 am. The ceremony is scheduled to take place in the afternoon.

The PM will first go to Lucknow on a special plane from Delhi, and from there to Ayodhya on a helicopter. He will then go to Hanuman Garhi for Lord Hanuman's darshan.

The main programme of bhoomi puja will begin at 12:30 pm and Modi will lay five silver bricks as the temple foundation amid the chanting of religious hymns at 12:40 pm. The priests and religious leaders supervising the entire event said that the muhurat for the bhoomi puja will last only for 32 seconds. Special puja and Vedic rituals have been going on at the ceremony venue since Monday ahead of the bhoomi puja.

Continued on Page 5



Womenia

TWEET PATROL



PRANITHA SUBHASH
@PRANITASUBHASH

In the last couple of days, many of our leaders have tested positive for COVID-19. Wishing a speedy recovery to Shri. @AmitShah, @BSYBJP & @siddaramaiah avaru. Get well soon..



PARENTING DURING PANDEMIC

The pressures of juggling work, chores, and your kids' school schedules while under lockdown can seem overwhelming

TEJAL SINHA

With schools and most workplaces closed due to COVID-19, many of us have found ourselves dealing with a new, and often very stressful, family situation. As well as having to work from home and run the household, you're likely also trying to keep your kids on track with their virtual school work all while being confined to home, cut off from the support of friends and loved ones.

As a parent at this time, it's easy to feel that you have so many roles to fulfill that you can't possibly perform any of them well. But it's important to remind yourself that this is a unique situation, a global health emergency that none of us have had to face before.

Join forces with other parents

Reach out via phone, email, or social media and exchange tips for keeping kids focused and engaged. You can also organize a virtual activity or study group,



PARENTING

which has the added bonus of providing social interaction for your child. Collaborating with other parents may help you feel less isolated as well.

Connect with your child's teacher

Remember, they're also getting through this by trial and error. Be honest about what is working and what isn't. Your child's teacher has a good understanding of their academic strengths and weaknesses, so they may be able to help you come up with a more

individualized learning plan.

Find out what your child already knows

You can approach the discussion by asking what your child has heard. This will allow you to address any misconceptions.

Get creative with lessons

Doing a science experiment, for example, or cooking with measurements, can be a good way of bringing lessons to life. And consider your child's strengths. If they love to draw and write,

now is a good time to set them free with pencils and paper.

Make time to laugh

There's certainly a lot of fear and heartbreak in the world right now, but there are also still chances to share a laugh and enjoy some lighthearted relief. Try to create opportunities for fun with your family.

Easing your kids' anxiety about coronavirus

While some kids are content to read or play video games

rather than focus on the situation in the world right now, others may have questions. Your kids might have expressed fears about the pandemic, or shown a change in behavior, like being unable to sleep at night.

Keep lines of communication open

To keep fear from building up, let your kids know that you'll keep them updated as you learn more information. You can also use this as a teaching opportunity, explaining how their immune system fights disease.

Empathise with their frustrations

As well as all the other frustrations of lockdown, older kids may also be missing important school events such as exams, dances, and graduations. Validate their feelings and listen without trying to convince them that they'll be fine or reminding them that others have it worse. Encourage your kids to be creative with how they interact with their friends.

Let them set their own schedule

Give them choices whenever possible and let them know you're available to help keep them on track and plan breaks if they need it. Giving your teenagers autonomy also means holding them responsible for certain chores, such as helping with cooking and cleaning.

Cement your commitment to one another

If finding your soulmate once seemed like a rocky road, get ready for the reality of how to make a relationship last. That's because relationships can be complicated, messy, and at times, downright hard. But the good news is that they're usually totally worth the effort.

You and your partner will need to navigate the relationship path in order to discover the route that works best for you, but that doesn't mean you can't stop and ask for directions along the way. For more trusted sources, turn to a professional relationship therapist or Lasting, a science-based relationship app backed by The Knot.

Whether your relationship status is one date in, recently engaged, honeymoon is over, or together so long you've lost count, we've gathered up the relationship advice of experts and real couples alike to help cement your commitment to one another.

Respect each other's minds

You and your partner have two completely different minds that

have been constructed over decades of time and continue to evolve. That means you'll think and feel differently about practically everything and find yourselves in disagreements, both big and small. That's also why, in a conflict, the objective isn't to 'win,' like many think—it's to understand your partner's perspective. It is important for couples to keep in mind that your partner's opinion is valid and worthy of respect, even when you're tempted to think it's not.



Disconnect to connect

Social media and the internet in general can put a strain on one-on-one time. Just because you two may be the only people in the room together doesn't mean you're spending quality time with one another. Put down your devices when out together and unplug when home. Take a 24-hour break to play board games or cook a meal together.

Get a tune-up

In the same way you see a general practitioner once a year for early detection, marriage counselling is a great idea once a year as well, if not more. Considering an app like Lasting makes it easier and more accessible than ever. It smartly gets to know your relationship and then builds a customized program just for your significant other with sessions on everything from communication to sex.

Find a safe space

When both people want it to work, it's only a matter of finding a common ground and a common language, a safe space, where the friction of the relationship can be resolved. Oftentimes this space and communication style ends up happening in therapy, but if couples can invent that in their relationship beforehand, counselling is both easier and more often than not, not needed.

Invest in your partner

Relationships have a strong chance of surviving when they are based on 'the good' in the other person, where both partners work together to feed that good and are inspired to become better themselves. These relationships are more sustainable than those based simply on pure pleasure or usefulness, because they're based on what partners actively put into them rather than what they can get out of them.

Children with special needs being left behind during Covid-19

A lot of kids with disabilities find comfort in routine, when that routine gets disrupted, their anxiety goes up and tend to behave differently.

The pandemic disrupted the lives of children across the board, but it caused immense stress for those with disabilities, especially the hearing and speech impaired and children with Autism and other sensory processing disorders.

Dr Garima Vegivada, Clinical Director-Speech Language Pathology, Hear 'N' Say Clinic, Secunderabad, "Parents and child experts alike are definitely worried about their emotional state in these intense times, compounding the concern is the impact of lack of in-person instruction on children with special needs in the long run. These Special Children have unique needs and deserve greater personal attention, continuous engagement and more consistent care."

Extraordinary situations like the current one leading to closure of schools and non-emergency therapies, result in loss of skills the special kids assiduously acquired over a period of time. Lack of daily therapies in such children actually lead to overall backsliding. Since these kids need full-time care and they not going back to their routine at the earliest impacts the family's social and financial fortunes, with several being



working parents busy with their daily routines while struggling to make ends meet.

However, tele-rehabilitation widely practiced abroad can retrieve the situation and provide the much needed solace to such children and their parents. It's not been popular in our country due to lack of or poor tele-connectivity, but with COVID-19, we along with the world have seamlessly moved online and tele-rehabilitation becomes a real possibility. This enables not just the children in cities but even those in the remotest part to access and benefit from the therapies.

Tele-practice, also known as 'online speech therapy' involves video conferencing, interactive

activities, assessments, progress tracking. Keeping child's interest in mind, systematic plans are discussed with parents before the session and children are encouraged to perform activities using toys and household items which are easily available at home and more, through a private and secure virtual classroom. The patient gets the therapy right at his home from a certified therapist over the Internet.

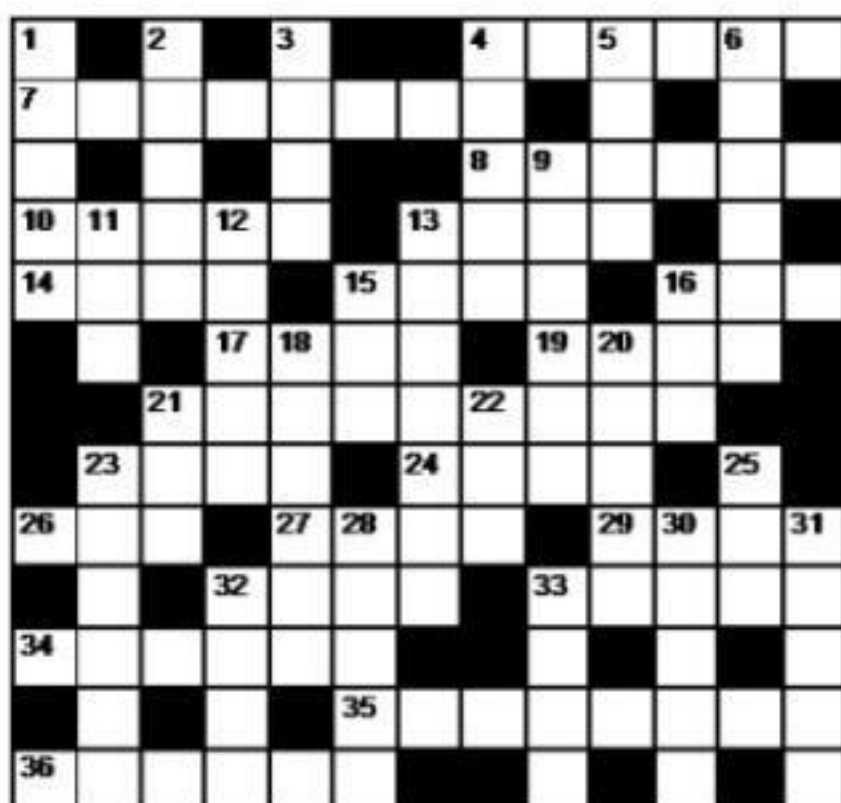
Eight-year-old Viren, who was a regular for one to one session at a therapy clinic, had an abrupt disruption due to lockdown. As he started showing severe behavioural changes, his parents explored options, to their delight they hit upon the online speech therapy. By then a handful of trained Hearing and speech therapists adept at tele-practice started offering the highly skillful service.

Initially his parents were apprehensive about the quality and the child's attention span for it. But therapist specially trained for online therapy made his sessions so interesting and engaging that the child hasn't missed even a single session since then. Because the therapy is being rendered in the precincts of their home, the entire family got involved and the child has shown enormous improvement. The parents too are immensely relieved, as they are spared of regular long commutes to the clinic involving time and effort.

TODAY

Bloggers Day

If you have ever created a blog before, the chances are you have probably used Blogger, especially for your first ever blog. A lot of students will be nodding their heads while reading this. Brings back good memories. Of course, there is a huge blogging community today. Some people blog to get their opinions heard others blog to make money. A lot of these people rely on Blogger to do so! Blogger Day celebrates everything that this platform is about.



SOLUTION TO AUGUST 4

CROSSWORD

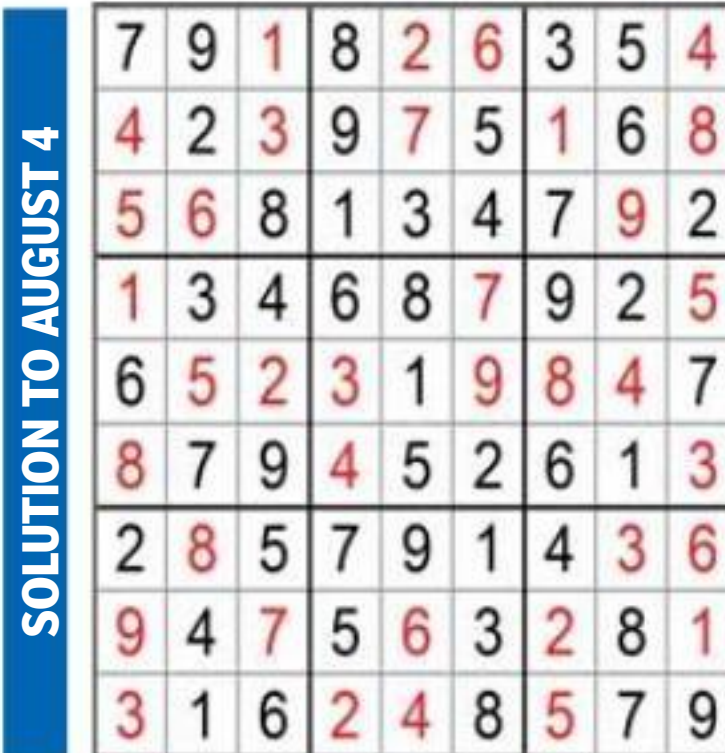
Across

- 4 Organisation of service clubs (6)
- 7 Playful (8)
- 8 Computer compact discs (2-4)
- 10 Irritable - Mole's friend! (5)
- 13 Couples (4)
- 14 Kind of gin (4)
- 15 Hounds' quarry (4)
- 16 Alcoholic drink (3)
- 17 Health resorts (4)
- 19 Before long (4)
- 21 Caves across the sea from Mumbai (9)
- 23 Exchange (4)
- 24 Footway (4)
- 26 Definite article (3)
- 27 Christopher Robin's bear (4)
- 29 Always (4)
- 32 Curved (4)
- 33 Insane (5)
- 34 Patna resident? (6)
- 35 Soft wool type (8)
- 36 Spiritualist session (6)

Down

- 1 Junkies (5)
- 2 Portuguese football club (5)
- 3 A kind of support (4)
- 4 Happen repeatedly (5)
- 5 Rocky hill-tops (4)
- 6 Stay behind (6)
- 9 Does not (6)
- 11 Boxing great (3)
- 12 Unit of magnetic induction (5)
- 13 A device for damping shock (4-3)
- 15 Comforter or quilt (3)
- 16 Tibetan gazelle (3)
- 18 Pungent condiment (6)
- 20 Not the same (5)
- 21 Female sheep (3)
- 22 Old time musical hit (3)
- 23 A European bird (6)
- 25 Flat-topped red cap with tassel for Muslim men (3)
- 28 Preserved for later (2,3)
- 30 Gentleman's gentleman (5)
- 31 Actress Winona (5)
- 32 A farm building (4)
- 33 Small salmon (4)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO AUGUST 4

NEWS ROUNDUP

Here's how Anushka loves to irritate Virat

Actress Anushka Sharma loves to annoy her husband, Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli, by beating him at board games.

On Tuesday, Anushka conducted an interactive question-answer session on Instagram, where she shared a lot of fun anecdotes and meaningful advice among followers.

When a user asked her about one thing she does to irritate Virat, she replied, "If I beat him in any board game and then rub it in. He hates losing in anything!"

Anushka also spoke about the factors that help in creating a successful relationship.

"Faith, knowing that love is acceptance, a good relationship is a commitment, a promise to be there for better or worse because through the ups and downs it allows the individuals the space and understanding to grow into their highest human potential," she added.

Virat and Anushka got married in 2017 in Italy.



Hindutva now basic coat on canvas of Indian politics: Govindacharya

Lucknow: Hindutva is now the "basic coat on the canvas of polity" and political parties subscribing to its various shades may be vying for power in future as socialism and secularism are no longer the pivot of politics, former RSS ideologue K N Govindacharya said on Tuesday.

Govindacharya, once a powerful BJP general secretary, underscored its significance, saying this marks the return of national politics to its "roots" of Hindutva which, he added, remained at the margins for decades before going from strength to strength 2010 onwards.



As "special assistant" to the then BJP president L K Advani during 1988-91, Govindacharya is considered a key figure in planning the "Rath Yatra" taken out by Advani in 1990 which had propelled the Ram Janmabhoomi movement and consequently the

party to the centrestage of Indian politics. Speaking to PTI, he noted that Congress leaders like Digvijay Singh and Kamal Nath have now been speaking in favour of the temple's construction, and said this signals that even many Opposition leaders understand the issue's ideological and emotional significance to the masses.

To a question, he said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has embraced Hindutva, and people in turn have embraced him." The Congress under Sonia and Rahul Gandhi "declined" and became "discredited" by antagonising masses, he claimed, adding that a

big part of the credit for the BJP's rise should be given to opposition parties. The Congress should return to the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, he said, observing that Indira Gandhi was much "wiser" to Hindutva sentiments after her return to power in 1980 following her party's big defeat in 1977.

"Many pro-Hindutva or Hindutva-subscribing political groups may vie in competition for supremacy and a better slice of gains in future. The basic coat on the canvas of polity is Hindutva now," Govindacharya, the BJP general secretary (organisation) between 1991-2000, said.



Sadhus walk by a road ahead of a groundbreaking ceremony of the temple dedicated to the Lord Ram in Ayodhya on Tuesday

Singhal family among select guests

Jaipur (IANS): Salil Singhal, nephew of late VHP leader Ashok Singhal who played a pivotal role in the Ram temple movement, will be among the select guests who will share the dias with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat along with Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at the Ram temple Bhumi Pujan ceremony.

Salil Singhal's younger brother Arvind said that his brother along with his wife Madhu and son Mayank will participate in the Bhumi Pujan ceremony for Ram temple. They shall reach Ayodhya on Tuesday.

Salil is the son of Ashok Singhal's elder brother, said Shri Ram Mandir Teerth Kshetra Trust general secretary Champat Rai on Monday adding that he shall be seated on the dias with all the guests. Salil is chairperson and managing director of PI Industries Limited and he is based in Delhi.

Ayodhya to be decorated with tonnes of flowers

Ayodhya (IANS): Ayodhya will be decorated with nearly 400 quintals of flowers for the 'bhumi puja' of the Ram temple on Wednesday.

The blue 'aparajita' or Vishnukanta flowers, that are grown in the rural parts of Bengaluru, have been brought in to the holy city for the much-awaited occasion.

The double-toned marigolds in orange and red are being brought in from Kolkata, while orchids are being imported from Thailand.

About 600 kg of red and pink roses, 240 kg gerbera and 300 kg



carnations are also being brought in to adorn the venue of the bhumi puja and also the adjoining temples.

"Nearly 400 quintals of flowers will be used to decorate the

'bhumi puja' site. Ayodhya and the temples will wear a festive look - the kind never seen before," said Prem Nath, who is overseeing flower decorations on the 'bhumi puja' site and the makeshift Ram temple.

According to Prem Nath, flowers will also be used to make 'rangoli' at more than 50 spots in the holy city by the students from Ram Manohar Lohia Faizabad University.

"The aparajita flowers will give a blue shade to the rangolis," he said.

Dalits ignored: BJP ally

Lucknow (IANS): Striking a discordant note right on the eve of the most awaited 'bhumi puja' ceremony in the country for the grand Ram temple, Apna Dal MLA Choudhary Amar Singh on Tuesday claimed that Dalits have been ignored when invitations were extended for the ceremony in Ayodhya.

The Shohratgarh MLA said that President Ram Nath Kovind should have also been invited for the event. "The shilanyas was done in the Congress regime by the then President Buta Singh. He did the 'shilanyas' and he was a Dalit," said the MLA from Apna Dal (S), an ally of the BJP

in Uttar Pradesh.

"Dalits and backwards have been deprived of an opportunity to attend the Ayodhya bhumi puja event. The haste which PM Modi showed for building the temple should have also been shown for providing houses and pensions to the poor," he said. "Those who struggled for the temple have been ignored. The trust constituted for the construction of the temple does not have people from backward, SC and ST communities. It is a 'Ved Pratha trust' and seems that Lord Ram belongs only to the BJP," Choudhary Amar Singh said.

Woman's 28-year fast to end today

Jabalpur (IANS): On August 5, when the 'Bhumi Pujan' for the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya will take place, a 81-year-old Urmila Chaturvedi, a resident of Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, will break fast after 28 years. When the disputed structure was demolished in Ayodhya in 1992, she had given up eating pledging that she would consume food only when the Ram temple construction will take place. Chaturvedi recounts that she was distressed by the violence that erupted after the disputed structure was demolished in Ayodhya and vowed she would have food only after the construction of the Ram temple with the consent of all stakeholders. Since December 6, 1992, she has been surviving on fruits and spends most of her time reciting Ramayana and chanting prayers.



HEAVY RAIN LASHES MUMBAI; TRAINS, ROAD TRAFFIC HIT

Mumbai (PTI): Heavy rains lashed Mumbai and neighbouring Thane district overnight, causing water-logging at several places and affecting local train services and road traffic movement on Tuesday morning, officials said.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has appealed to residents to stay at home and urged commercial establishments, except those providing essential services, to remain closed on Tuesday as heavy rains are likely to continue for next 48 hours.

This is the heaviest spell of rain in the financial capital since 2005,

198 mm rain in four hours is a huge amount of rain, any city in the world will collapse with such rain: Aaditya Thackeray



Sea waves crash ashore during high tide and heavy monsoon rain, at Marine Drive in Mumbai

Maharashtra minister Aaditya Thackeray said. "198 mm rain in

four hours is a huge amount of rain. Any city in the world will collapse with such rain," Thackeray said.

Suburban train services on the harbour line were stopped in the morning due to water-logging on rail tracks while services on the western and central lines were also affected, a civic official said.

Local trains in Mumbai and suburbs are currently being operated only for those involved in essential services in the wake of the coronavirus crisis.

3 in custody for raping 75-yr-old

Kochi (IANS): Police in Kerala have taken three people into custody for brutally assaulting a 75-year-old woman.

According to the police, the incident took place on Sunday afternoon, when the aged woman was at her friend's house, close by her home.

The police while being tightlipped on the incident, have registered a case under sections of rape and said the probe has begun.

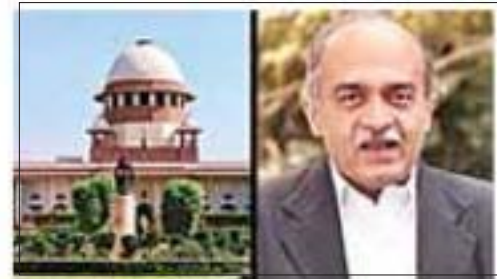
The Kerala Women's Commission has also suo moto registered a case.

Thin line between free speech, contempt: SC

New Delhi (IANS): Taking up the 2009 contempt of court case against lawyer Prashant Bhushan, the Supreme Court said on Tuesday that there is a thin line between free speech and contempt, adding that the issue now is how to save the system's grace and bring the matter to an end as well.

A bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra asked Senior Advocate Rajeev Dhavan, representing Bhushan, to suggest ways to resolve this matter.

Justice Mishra told Dhavan: "Can you suggest some way to avoid this rigmarole? You can resolve it." In response, Dhavan said that Bhushan had already provided an explanation on the



matter. After a brief hearing on the matter through videoconference, the hearing was turned into in-camera proceeding. But before that happened, the bench had asked Dhavan for solution to the case. The contempt case pertains to Prashant Bhushan's comments on the judiciary during an interview to the Tehelka magazine in 2009.

In the previous hearing on the

matter, Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal, representing Tarun Tejpal from Tehelka magazine, had submitted that since the last hearing was held in 2012 he was yet to go through the documents in the case.

In response, Justice Mishra had replied that the court would have to resume the hearing. When Sibal pleaded that he needed time to prepare, Justice Mishra said the court would give him enough time for the purpose. Dhavan too had said that time was required to go through the records and prepare for the hearing. He pointed out that Senior Advocate Ram Jethmalani, who appeared for Bhushan earlier, had passed away last year.

Indian-origin woman researcher killed while jogging in US

Houston: A 43-year-old Indian-origin woman researcher in the US was killed while she was out jogging and police have initiated a homicide investigation, according to media reports.

According to the police, Sarmistha Sen, who was based in Plano city in the state of Texas, was randomly attacked and killed while jogging on August 1 near the Chisholm Trail Park.

Her body was found lying in the creek-area near Legacy Drive and Marchman Way by a passerby, according to a report in the WFAA.com. Sen, a mother of two sons, was a pharmacist and researcher who studied molecular biology and worked with cancer patients, the fox4news reported.

According to the Dallasnews.com, a person of interest in the case has been arrested on a burglary charge.

He was identified on Monday as 29-year old Bakari Abiona Moncrief, and is in custody at the Collin County jail, the report said.

Police say around the same time of the murder, someone broke into a house nearby on the 3400 block of Michael Drive, fox4news.com reported.

"This is not something we see and definitely something very very random," Plano police spokesperson David Tilley was quoted as saying by the WFAA.com.

IRS officer Pradeep Singh tops Civil Services Exam 2019

New Delhi (PTI): IRS officer Pradeep Singh tops the list of 829 candidates who have qualified for the prestigious Civil Services, including the IAS, the IPS and the IFS, the Union Public Service Commission announced on Tuesday.

The top three rank holders -- Singh, Jatin Kishore and Pratibha Verma -- are serving officers. Singh

is a resident of Haryana, while Kishore hails from Delhi and Verma from Uttar Pradesh.

"It is like a dream come true. It is a pleasant surprise for me. I always wanted to be an IAS officer. I would like to work for the deprived sections of society," Singh told PTI on phone from his home in Sonapat.

Twenty-nine-year-old Singh, a

2019-batch Indian Revenue Service (customs and central excise) officer, is undergoing probation at the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN) in Faridabad.

He said his main emphasis would be on improving education and farm sectors as he has become part of the most sought-after Indian Administrative Service.

"I have opted for my home state Haryana as the preferred cadre state for the IAS. I am happy that I will now get the chance to work for my state," said Singh, who had taken leave to prepare for the examination.

Second-rank holder Kishore is a 2018-batch officer of Indian Economic Service (IES) and currently posted as Assistant Director in the

Ministry of Rural Development here. "It was my second attempt in the civil services examination. I am happy to have got second rank," he told PTI.

Kishore, aged 26, said education and environment would be his focused areas. He is a native of Delhi. Verma, an officer of Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax), said she wanted to become an IAS offi-

cer since her childhood. "I was inspired by the way IAS officers act as the first responder at the time of any crisis. They are always on the frontline at the time of difficult situation.

That is why I decided to prepare again for the exam (after getting selected in the IRS)," she said. Verma had got 489 rank in the civil services exam 2018.

RAJASTHAN CRISIS

Give up BJP's hospitality if you want dialogue, rebels told

New Delhi: Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala on Tuesday said that dissident MLAs should give up the hospitality of the BJP and the security of Haryana police if they want to hold a dialogue with the party. Asked whether the doors for dissidents are open, Surjewala said that the legislators should first hold a dialogue with the party on the condition that they give up the security of Haryana police in Manesar, and the hospitality and friendship of the BJP.

"Gangrapes are happening, people are being beaten up in Gurgaon. There is no police available for them, but 1,000 policemen are deployed for the security of 19 MLAs.



The legislators should first give up the Haryana police's security, and friendship and hospitality of the BJP, return home and only then

will the dialogue take place," he said. Surjewala also read out a statement released by party leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on the

foundation laying of the Ram temple in Ayodhya on Wednesday. In reply to a question, Surjewala said that politics should have 'dharma' instead of having a politics of 'dharma'. He also said that Bihar police's interference in connection with a probe into actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death was unfair because it was the jurisdiction of Maharashtra Police. "Bihar police cannot interfere in the jurisdiction of Maharashtra police. Such a situation may lead to anarchy, because enforcing law in a state is the responsibility of the state government," he told reporters outside Hotel Suryagarh where the party MLAs are staying.

PIA sacks 63 staff for fake degrees, embezzlement

Islamabad: The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) last month sacked 63 of its employees, including 5 pilots, on charges of fake degrees, embezzlement and absence from duty. All five of the sacked pilots were holding fake licences, said PIA spokesperson Abdullah Khan, adding that all employees were dismissed in accordance to the law. Twenty-eight employees were removed for fake education credentials and 27 employees were sacked for being absent from duty without notice, Khan told The Express Tribune.

Two employees were fired on charges of embezzlement and one employee was fired for incompetence. Further, the airlines demoted four employees for refusing to work and held back increments of three employees for

violating standard operating procedures.

Last month, the airline had sacked 17 pilots on the order of the federal cabinet. The 12 captains and five first officers were found to have 'dubious' flying licences. The pilots were dismissed following Aviation Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan's probe into the May 22 Karachi plane crash.

In June, the minister had told the Parliament that 262 pilots in the country held "suspicious flying licences" and would be grounded immediately. The domestic flight from Lahore to Karachi crashed in a residential area near the Jinnah International Airport in Karachi on May 22. The Aviation Minister's probe report blamed the pilots and the air traffic control for the tragedy that killed 97 people. PTI

Gold dilemma: rising prices, falling sales

In classic economics, the price of a commodity or product should fall whenever sales decline. The explanation is simple. Fall in sales means there is no demand for that particular product. When there is no demand, price should come down unless a minimum support price (MSP) is on offer from the government or an artificial demand is created by producers by forming a cartel. But gold, the most precious metal, is defying this basic economic logic these days thanks to the ongoing Covid-19-induced global economic crisis. In its recent report, World Gold Council (WGC) said global gold demand fell by 11 per cent to 1,016 tonne during April-June 2020 from 1,136.9 tonne in the same period a year ago. The demand for gold jewellery took a much bigger hit. Jewellery consumption was down by a higher 53 per cent worldwide to 251.5 tonne

against 529.6 tonne a year ago. In India, the world's second biggest consumer of gold after China, demand for the yellow metal during April-June 2020 was down by a whopping 70 per cent to 63.7 tonne from 213.2 tonne a year ago. This is the second lowest gold consumption in a quarter in India after the first quarter (January-March) of 2009 when the demand for gold in India nosedived to 40 tonnes due to global recession then. Further, demand for gold jewellery also came down by 74 per cent to 44 tonne during three months to June 2020. This data reaffirms the popular assumption that demand for gold in India comes mainly from the jewellery segment. As the WGC numbers show, the demand for gold came down drastically in the last few months. But gold prices paint a divergent picture. International gold spot price rallied 22 per cent to nearly \$2,000 per ounce. In India, spot gold prices went up by over 40 per cent while gold futures jumped 35 per cent so far in this calendar year. The higher rise in prices in India is on account of rupee depreciation though. On Monday, gold quoted at Rs 54,678 per 10 gm. But why gold prices are skyrock-

eting even though sales have nosedived worldwide? The answer is simple. The yellow metal has become a safe haven for investors now as the global economy is going through a deeper crisis triggered by Covid-19. WGC data showed that total investment demand globally for gold doubled to 583 tonne during April-June this year from a low of 295 tonne in the same period a year ago. But investment flow into physical gold like bars and coins was down 32 per cent while gold-backed ETFs (electronic traded funds) attracted massive investments to the tune of 434.1 tonne, a 300 per cent jump from the year ago period. Therefore, investments into gold ETFs and similar products are driving the rally in gold prices, not the consumption. But will gold prices continue to glitter post-Covid-19? There are ample chances of gold prices going down globally. But that may not be true in India as gold prices are linked to rupee's behaviour. If the Indian currency further depreciates against greenback, Indians are unlikely to benefit from the price fall in global markets. Anyway, divergent trends in gold price and demand may not last long. That's for sure.

Life and times of Farzana or Begum Samru

SHREYA ILA ANASUYA

Consider a girl called Farzana. No one knows for sure where she came from, and even the exact year of her birth is contested, though we can assume it was in the middle of the 18th century. Some sources say she was Kashmiri, others say she was born to the second wife of a man in Kutana.

Her biographer, John Lall, speculates that Farzana's mother was the mistress of a man called Asad Khan, and that the former "became the target of her stepson's venom after the death of her husband". There is speculation, also, that the woman was a tawaif. Mother and daughter fled to Shahjahanabad, says Lall, but Farzana's mother did not survive.

Farzana found herself in a kotha in Chawri Bazaar (the same kotha, Lall says, where her mother had performed years before, and where the embattled duo was headed in the first place). It is here that she trained in music and dance, and here that she started to perform.

In 1765, five years after she is said to have arrived at the kotha, she met a European mercenary called Walter Reinhardt. More popularly known as Samru, he led four battalions that consisted of at least 2,000 soldiers. He had made an enemy of the British because of his leading role in the Patna massacre of 1763.

Farzana was young, too young — a teenager, in a land where the age of consent would, almost a hundred years after she met Reinhardt, be fixed at 10, and fiercely contested many times afterwards. Reinhardt was in his forties. For the next 13 years, Farzana was, as historian Durba Ghosh writes, "his constant companion".

Lall imagines she "had a will of her own" and that "she accepted the new life this strange chance had thrust upon her" — which he had no way to claim, as she did not leave a memoir to articulate how she really felt about this. All we know is that any way we look at it, she was a child who was simply given no choice in the matter.

Ghosh tells us that the word Begum was a signifier for women of noble birth and was rarely used as an alternative for the word Mrs, as it was in Farzana's case. No one knows if they were ever legally married, but in the public eye they were as good as married. Ghosh argues that the act of her naming had a lot to do with this.

In 1774, Reinhardt asked the Mughal emperor, Shah Alam, for jaidad, or land, which he was granted in Sardhana two years later. This remarkable change in station, argues Ghosh, was possible because of Begum Samru's intervention. The decision to settle in Sardhana, too, was supposedly hers — this was the region of her birth. When Reinhardt died in 1778, she inherited what he had — his battalions, his land, and with it, the title of the jagirdar of Sardhana.



Political power changed hands, but she was able to maintain her own position, and even improve it, by negotiating not only with the Mughals, but also with the Marathas and the British. This did not go unnoticed — she was a source of great interest for colonial travellers. To them she was gracious and unfathomable — her clothes were not only “unfeminine”, they combined Mughal and European styles, much like her names. Nor was she obsequious to them — for their visits, she hired entertainers, including actors who satirised them openly. In her lifetime she did much to improve Sardhana: “As a local ruler, she improved living conditions, introduced agricultural reforms, and promoted civil services by building schools and hospitals,” writes Ghosh

As Ghosh points out, being a politically influential woman partner was not what set Begum Samru apart. This was fairly common. What was unusual was the fact of her succession. She not only found favour with the officers of Samru's battalions, who preferred her to his son from another woman, but also Shah Alam himself confirmed her position.

Consider Joanna. Three years after

Samru's death, Begum Samru was baptised, and gained this moniker. One of the many things this did, politically, was that it "successfully obscured her status as a dancing girl," says Ghosh. "She represented herself alternately as a Muslim noblewoman, a Catholic aristocrat, a pious Christian and patron, and benefactor and benevolent ruler to the people of Sardhana."

Consider Zeb-un-nissa, for this is the name Shah Alam granted her for her assistance in maintaining the rapidly waning power of his empire.

What Farzana could not have chosen, Begum Joanna Samru Zeb-un-nissa could. In 1790, she met a Frenchman called Armand Le Vassoult who joined her battalions, and three years later married him. Consider, with this marriage, her public proclamation that she was simultaneously Joanna Nobilis Sombre, as well as Zeb-un-nissa.

She had married for love, but it ruined her politically. The battalions that had been so loyal to her rebelled against him, so much so that two abandoned her in favour of Reinhardt's son, whom they had formerly rejected so that she could succeed. At this time of turmoil, the couple was forced to escape Sardhana; Armand lost his life, and the Begum was briefly captured before being given back her former position.

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In her lifetime she did much to improve Sardhana: “As a local ruler, she improved living conditions, introduced agricultural reforms, and promoted civil services by building schools and hospitals,” writes Ghosh.

She has not been erased from history, though she is not remembered with the same fervour which accompanies memories of more palatable women rulers. But her political acumen is sometimes described in ways that show the limits of our cultural imagination when it comes to women. Too many accounts of her life convey an almost tabloid-like fascination of her possible romances with European men and describe her as an upstart.

In 1822, over a decade before she died an extremely wealthy woman, Farzana built the Basilica of Our Lady of Graces, which to this day attracts visitors to Sardhana like nothing else does. It is here that her heir, David Dyce Sombre, commissioned Italian sculptor Tadolini to create a memorial to her life. In white Carrara marble, she holds court, overlooking scenes from her life and rule. In her hands she holds the scroll that confirms her claim over Sardhana, ultimately unencumbered by her relationship to a man.

(This article was first published on www.firstpost.com. Republished with their permission)

Thought leadership: Need of the hour

M RAGHURAM REDDY

We are living in one of the worst times in history as Covid-19 pandemic has opened up a can of worms, hitting countries across the world politically, economically and socially. As far as India is concerned, Covid-19 has added destitution to the poor, constant misery to the unemployed, desolation to the directionless youth, morbidity to the marginalised sections of society. It badly hit agriculture, business, industries, small scale sector, tourism, education, IT sector, health system etc., leaving the world traumatised and up the creek.

The only solution to these complex issues can be provided by what is called the 'thought leadership'. Thought leadership connotes a leadership orientation underpinned by unconventional leadership that is historically nuanced, culturally sensitive and contextually grounded. Thought leadership, distinct from other forms of leadership, is about 'leadership that is based on progressive ideologies, beliefs orientations with significant programmes and impact appeal'.

Introduced in the early 1990's the concept of thought leadership coined by Joel Kutzman, was first used to describe a futurist, a person who was widely known and acclaimed for his/her unique thoughts and ideas that were considered unusual at the time and yet suitable for the present and forthcoming times. Thought leadership breaks into two constituent parts as 'thought' and 'leadership'. Thought means ideas, thinking, reasoning, views etc., which are well required entities of a person. The leadership is the art and process of leading, guiding, motivating and influencing a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal.

A thought leader is a change maker who moves and inspires others with his innovative ideas and help turn those ideas into reality. They spread their ideas, programmes or initiatives far beyond a particular organisation or society to make a broader impact in their organisation or community.

The need for a thought leader can be traced in almost all fields of work whether it is politics, military, business, strategy and other arenas where challenges confront. Thought leadership is important for running an organisation, especially larger ones. Because of complexity and length of the decision-making in a complex environment where a large number of people are involved in the process, thought leaders can be handy in taking an immediate decision.

Thought leadership is viewed as a radical departure from all traditional leadership styles. It is all about promotion of new ideas, an initiative rather than a position or role. It goes with the function rather than structure alone. Moreover, thought leadership is democratic, egalitarian, ephemeral, non-hierarchical, and it is not easily monopolised.

It has the capacity to anticipate and think. A thought leader is one who always favours innovation and development, a progressive person. He/she always plans for the future and considers future developments when making plans, especially in relation to using modern methods.

Thought leadership involves in constant monitoring that ideas can result in action. In today's competitive world, only those organisations can survive which offer a competitive edge over others and surely thought leaders can help organisations in achieving so. Thought leader enables the organisation to withstand any adverse economic conditions in the geographic area in which it operates.

They do not exclusively rely on the advices but think independently and weigh the ideas received before implementing to excel in their chosen field which would sustain over generations and thereby create a favourable impact on the larger sections of society.

Thought leadership can carve out a distinct space and does not go with the crowd.

Thought leadership qualities can be exhibited by even non-managerial employees with progressive mindset and the capability of championing new ideas.

Thought leadership can inspire the entire team to draw results by being able to instill the necessary zeal in the team to accomplish the goals. Thought leaders can be construed as someone who stands above subject-matter expertise and stands as an icon in his/her sphere by exhibiting track record.

Thought leadership has the highest credibility which is an indispensable quality and a prerequisite. Thought leaders help us in making informed and concrete decisions and give us confidence to stick and move ahead with the idea.

Thought leadership is expected to follow a pre-emptive and preventive approach. Thought leaders drive the people to align to the new ideas to achieve the vision and mission and such leaders visualize the organization's growth over a long period and carefully design the organization's structure so that it will not succumb to the competitor's onslaught and sustain the growth year after year.

Thought leadership is the most successful leadership in their respective fields but their expertise and experience vary. And what matters is expertise with diverse experiences to be adopted in other fields also. Thought leaders are followed because of their ability to bring deep insights into the subject of own experience which will enable them to the other side of the coin to see a subject in different dimension that focuses their attention to thinking beyond the conventional forms.

Thought leadership is intertwined with innovation. As a critical element to the success of the organisation, innovation is becoming a strategic priority and core value of the companies in the current business scenario. It can be a savior from downturns as innovative approaches are in demand even during unfavorable economic and social conditions. It focuses on internal efficiencies and fosters improved work quality which in turn leads to increased productivity and social benefits. Based on the power of ideas to transform our way of thinking a strong tie is established between motivation and thought leadership.

Thought leader can emerge from any source. But those who want to be a thought leader should have knowledge, insight, experience and a point of view put together. They should develop these qualities simultaneously. In other words, for thought leadership, thought liberation and critical consciousness should be concurrently. Thought leadership without a liberated mind is futile. Higher levels of consciousness based on comprehensive understanding of phenomena make for a better thought leader.

Thought leaders should not just be individuals who produce valid scientific ideas and observations rooted in their respective knowledge. They ought to be individuals who can read complex situations well and can bring out the best in other people. In other words, a thought leader should lead others also to think, innovate, self-motivate and reach their highest potential. What is needed is an insight with a strategic and thought leadership traits in with a zeal to uplift the society to higher levels of development and well-being. Thought leader should think differently, bring innovative ideas and implement the ideas which he thinks as the best to suit the needs of society which he leads and ensure the overall growth of the society which sustain over generations.

The emergence of thought leadership is a long-term process. Moreover, thought leadership status cannot be achieved easily. One has to muster own experiences and create credibility over a long period of time. It requires patience, persistence, hard work and willingness to listen to comprehend and to learn from others. Because, those who observe and connect information from a number of sources are generally well positioned to create ideas that are congenial to the needs of society. All these things cannot be achieved by those leaders who try to emerge from scratch; it takes a sufficiently longer time than the society can wait for. So, the plausible solution is that the current leaders from different fields should realise the necessity of the unique type of leadership and try to acquire thought leadership traits with a vision, mission and commitment. As thought leaders, they have to dedicate themselves for solving the knotted problems the society is facing. The world remembers those successful leaders as the ones who have left their footsteps in the sands of time.

(The writer is Professor & Head, Department of MBA, SVCE College, Tirupati)



Knowledge matters, not grades

The new date of the NEET 2020 exam is September 13 and JEE Advanced is September 27 which is rescheduled because of the outbreak of pandemic. There is just one month left for the exams now. Students are busy with their last-minute revisions. Parents and teachers are struggling hard and even anxious about how their child will perform. These feelings are resulting in a lot of stress among the children. Apart from these kinds of pressures, proving one's own worth is really what students are bothered about. Mental health of the child during this time needs to be supervised. If a student really learns the content and then uses it for the exams and even if he does not do the best in the exam, it is the system which is failing not the student. So, students must be aware that knowledge will come handy at some point in life. Parents and teachers must make sure their chil-

dren are enjoying the learning, being organised and systematic. Society must create the environment for the students that there is a beautiful world waiting to be explored by all equally. The need is to open our eyes and celebrate whatever results they achieve tomorrow.

P Koushik Vijay, Warangal

Prevent crowd gathering in Ayodhya

Propos the news 'Only PM, 4 others on stage' (dated August 4), it is good that social distancing norms are being strictly followed at the stone laying ceremony in Ayodhya. Though it is a historic day and given the normal circumstances, crowds could have been in millions. It is good that the government is taking all precautions to avoid crowding on the stage but it is equally important that the government must ensure that there is no large gathering there. As the reports suggest, a large number of people are reaching out to Ayodhya on this historic day. If this happens, whether the stage is crowded or not, the outcome shall be disastrous. It is very important that crowds are stopped at its origin and not at the destination. If Markaj gathering in Delhi proved disastrous, Ayodhya event has larger potential to be even more disastrous, if not checked in time.

Bholey Bhardwaj, Mumbai

Stop police atrocities on civilians

This refers to the reports about increasing police atrocities against Dalit in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and several northern States. There is an urgent

need to establish an independent investigative body to look into the cases of police abuse. Currently, there exists a complex procedure regarding the investigation of complaints against police officials. Police officers are generally not inclined to investigate their colleagues and peers. Data released by the National Crime Records Bureau reveal that in 2018 none of the 89 cases of custodial violence could yield a conviction. Under such circumstances, it is extremely difficult to maintain the accountability of police towards civilians. In addition to the independent complaints body, a civilian review board is also necessary to oversee the functioning of the police. Collaboration between community and police must also be encouraged to facilitate efficacious policing.

Further, police officials need to be trained in order to reduce systemic bias and transform the police into a professional organisation committed to serving civilians. Excessive use of force by police officers is of great concern. Quality education and training would prevent officers from employing disproportionate use of force. Experts have also suggested simulation training as an effective tool. A number of simulators are available, focusing on issues like excessive use of force, implicit bias, ethical decision-making and community policing. There is also scenario-based training which employs real-life situations to record the responses of participants. The scenario can be based on discussions among participants. Simulation and scenario-based training must be implemented with a clear idea about the objective of police training. These training modules would definitely help reduce police abuse.

Meghna S, Hyderabad

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Revolutionary singer Vangapandu passes away

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Parvathipuram (Vizianagaram): Veteran revolutionary writer and balladeer Vangapandu Prasada Rao breathed his last at his residence here due to cardiac arrest on Tuesday morning. He is 77. He was active in Jananatyia Mandali, the cultural arm of People's War Group, which he co-founded along with Gaddar, and travelled in villages, mostly tribal areas extensively creating awareness through his folk songs and impromptu performances on the social and political exploitation.

Born in Pedabondapalli village of Parvathipuram mandal in 1943, he spent all his life for workers, tribals and other downtrodden sections of society. Prasada Rao wrote around 300 songs for movies. He had association with popular folk

● The 77-yr-old activist strived all his life to create awareness among downtrodden sections of society on social injustice

● Last rites performed with State honours on the directions of CM



singers and balladeers Gaddar, Goreti Venkanna Vandemataram Srinivas and others.

'Em pillado veldam vastavaa' song, who wrote and sang for movie Ardhraatri Swatantryam was very popular. He performed in thousands of programmes on streets, in villages, towns and cities. He also worked as guest faculty with Andhra Univer-

sity's department of Theatre Arts.

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu, apart from many of his associates and friends in literary and art circles expressed condolences over his demise.

His final rites were performed with state honours as per the orders of the Chief Minister, here on Tuesday evening. Prasada Rao's son Dushyant performed his last rites while singing his songs. Locals gathered at the graveyard to pay homage to the popular balladeer of north Andhra. He is survived by wife, two sons and a daughter. His daughter Usha is working as head of cultural wing the state government.

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: The state government on Tuesday ordered a special drive for full-scale inspection of all industrial units in the state to ensure compliance of safety protocols, in the backdrop of a spate of accidents that claimed tens of lives in recent days, particularly in the port city of Visakhapatnam.

A seven-member committee headed by joint collector (welfare) has been constituted in each district to carry out the special drive within 90 days. The panel would take up the work with the involvement of officials from factories department, AP Pollution Control Board, boilers department, State Disaster Response and Fire Services Department and Director of Electrical Safety and Chief Electrical Inspector (energy department).

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy held a review meeting at his camp office here on the measures to be taken for safety and prevention of accidents and pollution control in industries.

During the review meeting, the officials said that a special drive is being conducted in industries to inspect the safety measures being followed by the industries. The drive will be completed in the coming two to three months.



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy reviewing industrial safety with officials at his camp office in Tadepalli on Tuesday

● A 7-member committee headed by Joint Collector (Welfare) constituted in each district to carry out the special drive within 90 days

● During a review on industrial safety, CM tells officials there should be strict compliance of safety rules by industries as well as monitoring by officials as in foreign countries

● Officials suggest formulation of New Industrial Safety Policy

The officials proposed that a New Industrial Safety Policy should be brought out and the existing safety regulations of industries should come under its purview.

The meeting decided to bring out an Industrial Atlas showing the location of industries and industrial parks in the state along with their categorisation.

The Atlas should be like a

guide and reckoner for those who want to start an industry in the state. The Compliance Report should be submitted by the industries twice in a year, the Chief Minister said adding that the companies should display the details on the steps taken besides a third party inspection.

There should be monitoring on industrial parks as well to see if the rules are being followed

and the overseeing mechanism should be strong.

"The Vizag gas leak would have been averted if the inhibitors were in place. The mishap took place as there was no one to supervise. In foreign countries, there will be a penalty if Compliance Report is not submitted but we do not have that system. We should adopt such policies and those responsible for industrial mishaps should be sternly dealt with. Any death in industrial sector should be compensated with an ex gratia of Rs 50 lakh. The Industrial Safety Policy should include such specifications," the Chief Minister said.

Industries special chief secretary K Valavan, environment special chief secretary Nirab Prasad and other officials were present at the meeting.

JAC urges AP CM to rethink on capital

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Vijayawada: The leaders of the joint action committee (JAC) of the Amaravati Parirakshana Samiti here on Tuesday appealed to Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy to think once again on the shifting of the capital from Amaravati to Visakhapatnam.

Addressing the media, CPI state secretary K Ramakrishna expressed happiness over the status quo order given by the High Court and said that the Chief Minister was ruling the state in a stubborn manner. He started the rule of the state 14 months with destruction and going ahead with it. "If the Chief

Minister has any grudge against the former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu, he could have targeted him instead of destroying the state," he added.

The Chief Minister should concentrate on controlling the Covid-19 rather than other issues, he suggested. The Covid-afflicted persons are not served food properly, doctors and nurses are not attending on them. "If Jagan is confident on his decision, he can dissolve the Assembly and seek fresh mandate with Amaravati as the agenda," Ramakrishna said.

JAC convener R V Swamy said that the people of Amaravati have been agitating for the

last 230 days. The people are compelled to move the judiciary on the decision of the state government, he said.

He appealed to the Chief Minister to think over the issue and take a suitable decision in retaining the capital at Amaravati. He pointed out that Visakhapatnam is at the distance of 1,200 km from some Rayalaseema district, which is very difficult to reach.

Congress leader Sunkara Padmasri, former ZP chairperson Gadde Anuradha, BJP leader Velagapudi Ramakrishna, Lok Satta leader Narla Malati, Dr Sailaja and others also spoke.

PM's itinerary

Continued from P1

ITINERARY

9:35 am: PM leaves from Delhi

10:35 am: Landing at Lucknow airport

10:40 am: Departs to Ayodhya in helicopter

11:30 am: Lands at Saket Colony helipad, Ayodhya

11:40 am: Undertake darshan at Hanuman Garhi

12:00 pm: Reach Ramjanmabhoomi site, spend 10 minutes for Ram Lalla's darshan

12:15 pm: Tree plantation at Ram Mandir premises

12:30 pm: Attend bhoomi puja at Ram Mandir site

12:40 pm: Foundation stone laying ceremony

1:10 pm: Meets members of the trust

2:05 pm: Leave for Saket Colony helipad

2:20 pm: Departure for Lucknow.

RISE IN PRICE OF YELLOW METAL

Demand shoots up for one-gram gold ornaments

- Traders attract customers with slew of incentives
- Offer wide variety of designs with regard to bangles, earrings, rings, chains, necklaces, bracelets and Vaddanams
- Women representing the rich, middle class and poor keen on purchasing one-gram gold ornaments
- The cost of chains varies from Rs 450 to Rs 4,000, bangles from Rs 200 to Rs 2,500 and price of necklaces based on the stones studded
- There are as many as 500 one-gram gold shops in East Godavari district

S S CHARY

Rajamahendravaram: The gold merchants are using their charms to attract the customers, struck by ever rising prices of yellow metal. Moreover, the gold traders are throwing a slew of incentives including reducing of making charges and also offering depreciation (tarugu) too.

In the wake of the skyrocketing prices of gold, poor, middle class and even rich women are



showing interest in purchasing one-gram gold which is within their reach. The demand for one gram gold is increasing day by day.

One-gram gold ornaments are made with silver, copper and brass with a light gold coating with one year guarantee. Variety of ornaments such as bangles, chains, necklaces, bracelets, vaddanams, earrings, talibottu and rings are being made.

One-gram gold jewellery is sold piece wise as against gram wise of other gold ornaments. The one-gram gold ornaments come from Jaipur and Mumbai. The cost of chains varies from Rs 450 to Rs 4,000, bangles from Rs 200 to Rs 2,500 and price of necklaces rate based on the stones studded.

There are as many as 500 one-

gram gold shops in the district and of them 70 shops are in the city.

According to a shop owner RM Rao, one-gram gold ornaments are having good demand and even rich women are purchasing the ornaments which are equal in shine when compared ornaments made of yellow metal. With each passing day, many designs are flooding the market and with this customers are getting attracted to the designs.

Moreover, there is no fear about theft of one-gram gold and also at present one gram gold ornaments are a boon to poor and middle class people.

Meanwhile, the ornaments will be exchanged if they are damaged during the guarantee period.

Somireddy welcomes HC stay on capital

Nellore: TDP senior leader Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy welcomed the stay orders of the High Court on the issues

Suggests that Governor should examine all the issues involved before giving his assent to 'hasty decisions' of the State govt

of three capitals and abolition of the CRDA. In a statement on Tuesday, he said that the Governor has to check orders of the government whether they are legitimate or not before giving his assent. He said the Supreme Court and the President of India gave their approval earlier that when the High Court of Andhra Pradesh had proposed to set up capital in Amaravati. The state government cannot shift high court from one place to another as per its whim.

In contrast to the position of law, the Governor had simply signed on the bills for three capitals that includes shifting high court. He said the Raj Bhavan should not endorse the hasty decisions of the state government without considering sentiments and legal issues involved in them.

TDP district president and MLC B Ravi Chandra demanded that Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy should accept the challenge of TDP supreme N Chandrababu Naidu to go for fresh mandate. He said the state government was acting cruelly even though the farmers who handed over their lands for the capital city had been staging protests for the last four months.

Disburse pension to elderly on time: SC

Continued from P1

The authorities should ensure timely disbursement of pension to them and the elderly in old age homes be provided PPE kits, the court said.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan said this while hearing a plea filed by former Union minister and senior advocate Ashwani Kumar who said that at the time of the pandemic, it is necessary that pension to elderly reaches them on time.

Ashwani Kumar told the top court that crores of elderly people are living alone and appropriate direction should be issued that pension reaches to those, who are already identified and eligible for it, on time.

Senior advocate V Mohana, appearing for the Centre, told the bench that states are already making efforts in this regard and this is not an adversarial issue.

When Mohana sought one week to file reply on the plea, Kumar opposed it and said urgent actions are needed in this matter.

The petitioner also raised the issue of the need to provide face masks, sanitisers and PPE to the elder people to protect them from the deadly virus.

The bench also dealt with another application which has sought direction for treatment of elderly for coronavirus without any discrimination.

Bihar seeks CBI probe into Sushant's death

Continued from P1

Earlier in the day, Nitish Kumar said: "The DGP spoke to Sushant Singh Rajput's father this morning and he gave consent for a CBI inquiry. So now, we are recommending a CBI probe in the matter." The Bihar Police, have, meanwhile, recorded the statement of Rajput's friend and creative content manager Siddharth Pithani in connection with the actor's death.

The Bihar Police also recorded that statement of Rajput's manager Deepesh Sawant, the official said, adding that statements of 10 people have been recorded so far. They had earlier recorded statements of Rajput's sister, former girlfriend Ankita Lokhande, director Rumi Jaffrey, his cook, friends and doctor. A team of Bihar Police is in Mumbai to probe Rajput's death after his father lodged a complaint in Patna against his friend Rhea Chakraborty and other members of her family allegedly abetting his suicide. The investiga-

tion into the actor's death turned into a Mumbai Police versus Bihar Police row on Monday, with Bihar IPS officer Vinay Tiwari alleging that he was "selectively quarantined" till August 15 after his arrival in Mumbai on Sunday. Tiwari, Superintendent of Police, Patna City (Central), was sent to Mumbai to monitor the investigation by a Bihar Police team, which is probing an "abetment to suicide" case on the basis of a complaint filed by the actor's father in Patna last week.

Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh had said while he could not comment on the officer being quarantined as it was a BMC issue, as per the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Mumbai Police has the jurisdiction to investigate the case. A lawyer representing Rhea said Bihar government recommending the case to CBI has no legal sanctity as its state police doesn't have jurisdiction over the case.

Trump's new order on H1B a blow to Indians

Continued from P1

"As we speak, we're finalising the H1B regulation so that no American workers be replaced ever again. H1B should be used for top highly paid talent to create American jobs, not as inexpensive labour programmes and destroy American job," said the President who was surrounded across the Cabinet Room table with individuals campaigning against job outsourcing.

AAP to recast its Delhi unit

Continued from P1

"A 15-day restructuring exercise will start from Wednesday. The restructuring at district, assembly, ward, polling station and booth level also aims to strengthen the organisation," Rai said.

"We will review the works of our leaders at these five levels and then, the party will make a decision. Those who have done good work during the COVID-19 pandemic will also be considered for new responsibilities," the AAP leader said.

The municipal elections will be held in 2022. In 2017, the AAP lost the MCD elections.

However, in the assembly elections this year, the Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP had won 62 seats and the BJP bagged eight seats in the 70-member Delhi Assembly, while the Congress had drawn a blank.

Over 30 Telugus crack Civils

Continued from P1

This time she got selected for IAS. She said she will get into IAS. Dhatri is a graduate from IIT Kharagpur and worked as financial analyst with Deutsche Bank.

Another candidate from Telangana is Katta Ravi Teja of Hyderabad. Ravi Teja is at present with the Indian Postal Services. He secured 77th rank. He is a graduate from IIT Delhi. Teja said he had always aspired to become an IAS officer. During his second attempt, he secured

349th rank and got into Indian Postal Service. This time he gave first preference for IAS and second preference for IRS.

Another IIT graduate from Mumbai M Makarand achieved 110 rank. He is from Siddipet. State Finance Minister T Harish Rao congratulated Makarand for achieving life goal of becoming civil servant. Police constable son D Vinayakanth has got 516 rank in the Civils exam. Currently, the ranker is working as Assistant Executive Officer in Rajya Sabha

Secretariat. His father Srinivas is working as constable in Special Branch in Siddipet Police Commissionerate.

A Pradeep Singh topped the civil services examination and Jatin Kishore and Pratibha Verma secured second and third positions. A total of 829 candidates have been recommended by the Union Public Service Commission for the appointment to posts including IAS, IFS, IPS, and central services, Group A and Group B.

HC seeks response from Centre on foreigners' plea

Continued from P1

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, adding that their deportation orders were also issued.

However, they are not able to fly back to their countries due to the pendency of other FIRs lodged at various police stations here, said advocate Ashima Mandla, representing the foreign nationals.

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

These 23 petitioners are nationals of Australia, South Africa, Indonesia and Sri Lanka and are arrayed as accused in the charge sheets filed by the police.

TODAY'S QUOTE

July exports reach last year's level

“Our exports have almost reached last year's July level, with nearly 90 per cent of our export of July 2019 having come back. Several indicators are reflecting that the economic activities are reviving in the country

– Commerce Minister **Piyush Goyal**



COAL MINING

No entry for Chinese cos in mine auctions

The government has restricted participation of companies from countries sharing a land border with India in the ongoing auction of coal mines for commercial extraction by the private sector. The Coal Ministry has issued a corrigendum to the tender document issued for commercial coal mining

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)

US Dollar	79.55	South	
Euro	92.85	African Rand	4.96
UAE Dirham	22.47	Hong Kong Dollar	11.14
Thai Baht	2.78	Japanese Yen	0.81
British Pound	101.88	New Zealand Dollar	52.08
Australian Dollar	56.27	Saudi Riyal	22.01
Canadian Dollar	58.87	Swedish Krona	9.88
Swiss Franc	85.25	Singapore Dollar	57.28

DELHI WEDNESDAY 5 AUGUST 2020

BIZ BRIEFS

ITC PSPD gets green rating

Hyderabad: ITC's Paperboards and Specialty Papers Business (PSPD) facility at Bhadrachalam has been conferred the GreenCo Platinum Plus rating by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Green Business Centre. It is the only facility in the pulp & paper sector and the second company overall in the country to have received this prestigious rating. The rating, which is given to industries for demonstrating leadership and commitment towards environment conservation, is a recognition for ITC's core commitment to sustainable business practices. The GreenCo Platinum Plus rating puts ITC's Bhadrachalam unit at par with green standards of other world-class facilities. Sanjay Singh, Corporate Management Committee Member, ITC, said, "In line with ITC's Triple Bottom Line philosophy, PSPD's commitment towards being at the forefront of environmental resources conservation and replenishment has helped it to synergise environmental and economic sustainability".

Cigniti posts ₹29 cr net

Hyderabad: Cigniti Technologies Limited, a software testing services firm, on Tuesday reported Rs 29.11 crore net profit for the first quarter ended on June 30 in the current fiscal as against a net profit of Rs 29.26 crore in Q4FY20. The company's consolidated revenue from operations for the quarter under consideration stood at Rs 218.40 crore. The EBITDA for the June quarter was at Rs 36.05 crore and EBITDA margin stood at 16.5 per cent. C V Subramanyam, company's Chairman & MD, said, "I am pleased to announce that for the first quarter we have witnessed sustained growth performance on the back of increased efficiency and new opportunities. As a company, we are optimistic on new growth prospects and new strategies in the post Covid world with the emergence of digital innovation."

Nuvoco wins CSR award

Hyderabad: Nuvoco Vistas Corp Ltd, a manufacturer and retailer of building materials, won FICCI CSR Award 2018-19 in the education category for its project 'Shikshit Sunderhattu' at the 18th edition of FICCI CSR Awards. The award ceremony was held virtually recently in the wake of Covid 19, where Anurag Thakur, Minister of State for Finance & Corporate Affairs, presented the award to Joydeep Chatterjee, Chief of CSR & Corporate Affairs, Nuvoco for its CSR project near Jojobera Cement Plant, Jharkhand. Joydeep Chatterjee, Chief of CSR at Nuvoco, said, "Our aim is to instill the importance of education, bring that change in mindset so that the children are able to think of a better future. Sustainable growth and development is Nuvoco's vision".

New fund from ICICI Pru MF

Hyderabad: ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund launched NFO ICICI Prudential Alpha Low Vol 30 ETF. The new fund offer opened for subscription on August 3 and will close on August 10, 2020. It is an open-ended index exchange traded fund tracking Nifty Alpha Low Volatility 30 Index. The fund provides investors a choice to take exposure to multiple factors through a single index product. It intends to counter the cyclical theory of single factor index structure strategy. The index provides exposure to a portfolio of stocks from various sectors, based on top combination of alpha and low volatility. Nimesh Shah, MD & CEO, ICICI Prudential AMC, said, "the new fund is a multifactor smart beta strategy".

Covid spread hits GDP revival

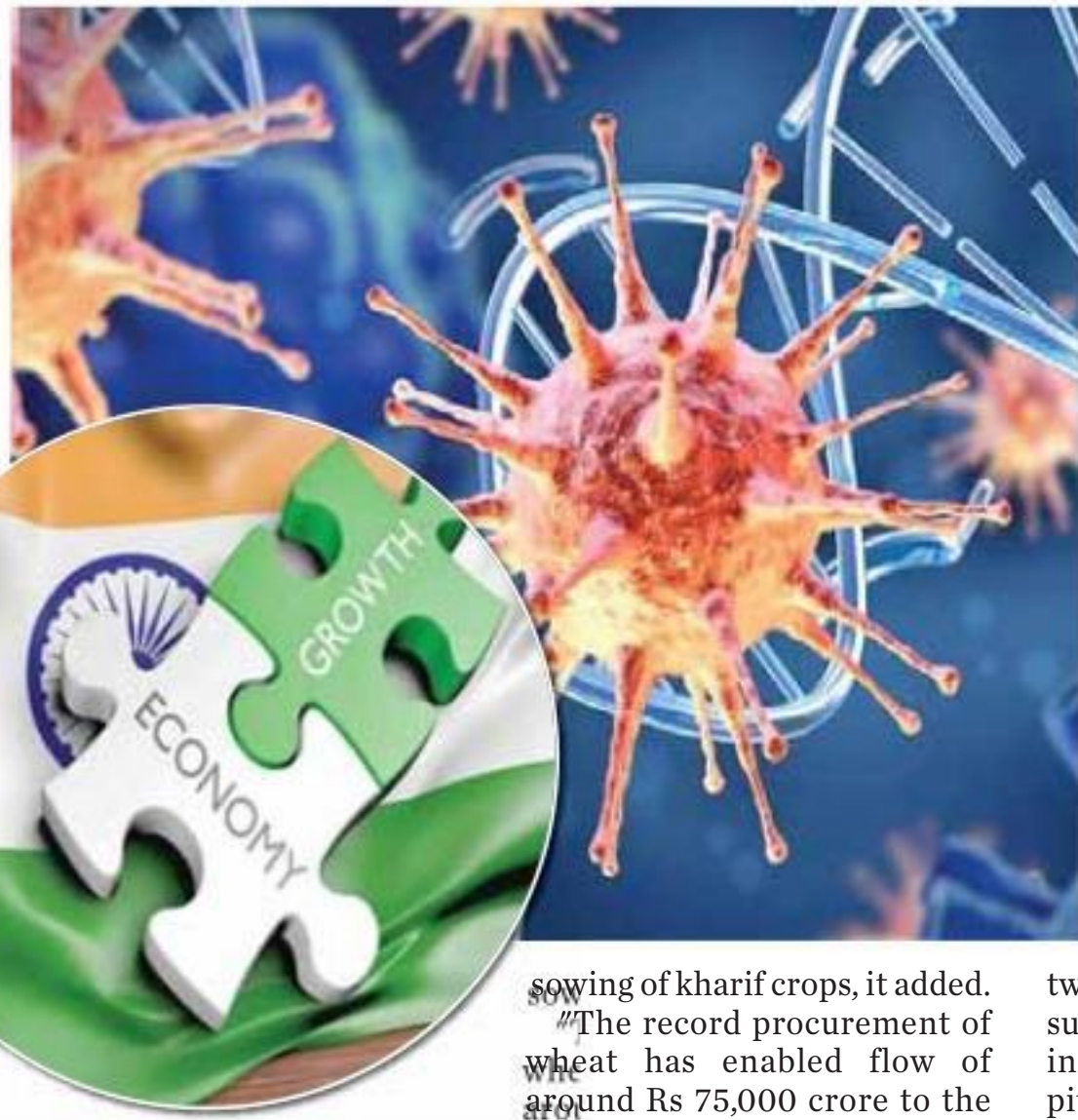
Finance Ministry's report says agriculture likely to cushion shock of pandemic on GDP

New Delhi: The prospects of economic recovery have become fragile in the wake of rise in coronavirus cases and the intermittent lockdowns, according to a Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) report, released here on Tuesday.

The monthly economic report by Finance Ministry's DEA for July said although India was on the path to recovery on the back of support from the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), constant and dynamic monitoring of the situation was required to maintain the momentum.

"The increase in Covid-19 cases and subsequent intermittent lockdowns make the recovery prospects fragile and call for constant and dynamic monitoring," it said.

With major indicators showing improvement, the worst for the economy seemed to be over, it said. According to the report, the push for growth in the coming months will come from rural India. With the forecast of a normal monsoon, agriculture was likely to cushion the shock of the pandemic on the Indian economy in the current financial year (2020-21), it said.



The increase in Covid-19 cases and subsequent intermittent lockdowns make the recovery prospects fragile and call for constant and dynamic monitoring – FinMin's July report on economy

The 'timely and proactive' exemptions from Covid-induced lockdowns to the farm sector facilitated uninterrupted harvesting of rabi crops and enhanced

sowing of kharif crops, it added. "The record procurement of wheat has enabled flow of around Rs 75,000 crore to the farmers, which will boost private consumption in rural areas. Since September 2019, the terms of trade have moved in favour of agriculture and reinforced rural demand," the report said.

It had manifested in an increase in rural core inflation be-

tween March and June. As a result, the push for growth in coming months appears to be pitched in rural India, said the monthly economic report.

Pointing at the recent landmark reforms announced in the agricultural sector, it said the deregulated and liberalised the agricultural sector, further, empower the farmers to become a bigger and more stable partici-

pant in India's growth journey.

Talking about some parameters showing improvement, the report said, contraction in industrial activity, measured by Index of Industrial Production (IIP) and eight-core industries, has eased in May as compared to April. Industrial output increased across all sectors and sub-sectors within IIP in May as against April.

"Signs of further recovery were witnessed in June with India's Manufacturing PMI improving from 30.8 in May 2020 to 47.2 in June 2020 with output and new orders contracting at much softer rates than seen in April and May," it said.

Services PMI recovered from 12.6 in May 2020 to 33.7 in June 2020, owing to some stabilisation in output levels with around 59 per cent of firms reporting no change in output, 4 per cent reporting growth and 37 per cent reporting reduction since May, it added.

There was also an uptick in infrastructure and construction activities in the unlocking phase, it said, adding, contraction in the production of finished domestic steel recovered from 41 per cent in May to 31.1 per cent in June 2020.



Credai Hyd urges buyers to go for RERA projects

HANS BUSINESS

Hyderabad: The Confederation of Real Estate Developers Association of India (Credai), Hyderabad, on Tuesday cautioned people against purchasing undivided share of land and urged them to buy properties in RERA-registered projects to avoid future complications.

The realty body launched a campaign to caution customers purchasing the undivided share of land, terming such transactions as risky. "Credai stands for the interests of both the property buyer and developer to ensure collaborative, ethical, transparent, and winning outcome for all. Although the cost-benefit of the Undivided Share of Land (UdSL) purchase may seem irresistible, it comes with high risks and financial liabilities. A RERA approved purchase of apartment/commercial space is the best and safe way," it said in a statement.

It is aiming at creating awareness among the homebuyers to purchase the property through credible developers.

Non-life insurers get 80,900 Covid claims

Chennai: The Indian general insurance industry received around 80,900 Covid-19 claims involving Rs 1,290 crore as on July 31, said an industry official. "Around 80,900 Covid-19 claims have been registered by the general insurers with an estimated claim of Rs 1,290 crore. The average claim amount works out to be Rs 159,456," an industry official said.

The number of Covid-19 cases in the country by the same date was around 16.38 lakh. The number of claims settled by insurers as on July 31 is 52,880 and the claim amount paid, around Rs 490 crore. Thus, the average is Rs 92,660 per claim.

According to the industry official, the initial claim estimate is always different from the final settlement. "The initial estimates and the actual claims settled always vary," said the official.

At 35,200, Maharashtra accounts for the largest number of claims with an estimated claim amount of Rs 442 crore.

Banking, blue-chip stocks lift markets

Mumbai: Healthy buying in the banking sector as well as in the auto sector pushed the Indian equity market higher on Tuesday. The market ended sharply higher on Tuesday after four sessions of losses.

Even though the two key indices opened on a shaky note, buying at lower levels stabilised and pushed the market's trajectory higher.

Index-wise, the NSE Nifty50 closed at 11,095.25, up by 203.65 points or 1.87 per cent from its previous close. The Sensex closed at 37,687.91, higher by 748.31 points or 2.03 per cent from the previous close of 36,939.60. It had opened at 37,092.86 and touched an intra-day high of 37,745.60 and a low of 36,987.73 points.

Sectorally, the top gainers were the BSE Realty, Bankex, Auto, Healthcare and Metal indices, whereas BSE IT index lost some ground. Major Asian markets had closed on a positive note. "Technically, with the Nifty

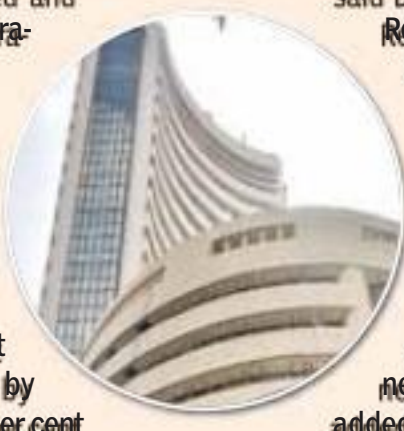
Sensex up 748 points while Nifty adds 203 points

bouncing back sharply after finding support at the 200 day SMA, the bulls seem to have made a comeback," said Deepak Jasani, Head of

Retail Research at HDFC Securities.

Further upsides are likely once the immediate resistance of 11,150 is taken out. Crucial supports to watch for resumption of weakness are at 11,000, he added. According to Vinod

Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services: "Indian benchmark indices ended the day with gains with positivity emerging post the RBI decision to approve the new CEO for HDFC Bank. Private banks and RIL supported the gains in the benchmark indices. Global cues were also mostly positive, and aided the markets, following better US manufacturing data".



NITI Aayog suggests ways to boost demand

Mumbai: With the economy going through a slowdown, the NITI Aayog is of the view that India's GDP may contract around 5.1 per cent in the current fiscal. In a recent presentation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Finance Ministry, it has suggested ways to boost demand, specifically in the key sectors of automobiles and real estate. As per NITI Aayog, the long-awaited scrap-purchase policy should be brought in to help the automobile sector. It has also recommended removal of cess on automobiles.

In a bid to revive demand in the realty sector, it has suggested reinstatement of the subvention scheme which was disallowed last year. Further, the think tank has also recommended government spending as private expenditure and investment is likely to take a backseat in the current scenario.

NITI Aayog, in its presentation, also noted that manufacturing sector growth and capacity utilisation was severely low even before the nationwide lockdown was implemented.

NMDC sees 13% jump in production in July

HANS BUSINESS

Hyderabad: NMDC, the leading iron-ore producer, registered 13 per cent jump in total production and seven per cent increase in total sales during July this year compared to the same month a year ago.

Despite the current uncertain situation due to Covid-19, NMDC saw its production increase by 13 per cent to 2.19 million tonnes and its sales up by seven per cent to 2.57 MT over the corresponding period last year.

In July 2020, the corporation's Chhattisgarh Projects registered a production of 1.56 million tonnes as compared to 1.16 million tonnes in the corresponding month of July last year, an increase of 35 per cent. NMDC also achieved record sales in July 2020 by selling 1.90 MT of iron

ore against 1.60 MT in July 2019, a growth of 20 per cent.

Sumit Deb, CMD, NMDC, said: "The last few months have been quite challenging for the entire industry due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation impacting



the performance of all major producers. However, this challenge was treated as an opportunity by us to accelerate our efforts towards stabilizing the production and continuously improving our production processes".

Going forward, NMDC will strive to maximize cost efficiencies to improve its bottom line, he added.

Solar sector imports down 83% even before govt checks begin

Centre looking at various initiatives to check imports from China

New Delhi: The Covid-19 pandemic has dealt a severe blow to India's solar equipment imports from China, even before various government initiatives to check imports and boost domestic manufacturing set in.

As per Commerce Ministry data, Indian imports declined by 83 per cent in the April-June quarter of current fiscal, totalling \$69 million (Rs 515 crore) as compared to \$399 million (Rs 2,970 crore) during the same period last year.

These months saw the maximum impact of Covid-19 with lockdowns in several parts of the country and economic activity coming to a grinding halt. On a quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) basis, Indian solar imports fell by 54 per cent in April-June quarter, from \$150.5 million (Rs 1,120 crore) in the January-March period.

According to renewable energy consultancy and communication firm Mercom, the slowdown in the imports is primarily due to the lockdown that has stalled project devel-



opment activity in many parts of the country as the labour shortage continues.

According to the government data, a significant portion of Q1 imports in the solar sector continued from China as it still accounted for 77 per cent of the total imports in the April-June period. China is followed by Thailand at 7 per cent, Vietnam at 5 per cent, Singapore at 3.5 per cent and Cambodia at 3 per cent.

China's presence in Indian solar projects has remained strong despite actual imports falling on account of Covid-19. During the January-March period as well, China

accounted for 79 per cent of the total imports to India.

The government is looking at various initiatives to reduce import content in solar projects, primarily to check imports from China with which its relations have nose-dived recently following the violent border clashes in Ladakh.

The Finance Ministry has already notified extension of safeguard duty on import of solar cells and module by another year that will impact countries such as China, Thailand and Vietnam. The duty will be levied at 14.9 per cent from July 30 to January 29, 2021, and 14.5 per cent from January 30, 2021, to July 29, 2021.

There is also a plan to levy a basic customs duty (BCD) on solar cells and modules. The Power Ministry has proposed a BCD of 20-25 per cent on solar modules that rises to 40 per cent in the second year and 15-20 per cent duty on solar cells, with this also increasing to 35-40 per cent in the second year.

Sashidhar to replace Puri as HDFC Bank MD

Mumbai: Sashidhar Jagdishan will be the next MD and CEO of HDFC Bank with effect from October 27. He is currently the Group Head of Finance, Human Resources, Legal & Secretarial, Administration, Infrastructure, Corporate Communications, Corporate Social Responsibility & the Strategic Change Agent of the bank. The bank said in a regulatory filing on Tuesday, that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved Jagdishan's appointment as the next MD and CEO.

"The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) vide its communication dated August 3, 2020, has approved the appointment of Sashidhar Jagdishan as Managing Director & CEO of the Bank for a period of three years w.e.f. his date of taking charge, i.e. October 27, 2020, under Section 35B of the Banking Regulation Act 1949," it said.

Further, it said that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the bank will be convened in due course to approve the appoint-



ment of Jagdishan in place of Aditya Puri, who is due to retire as Managing Director of the bank on October 26, 2020.

Jagdishan joined HDFC Bank in the year 1996 as a Manager in the Finance function and became business head, Finance in 1999. He was appointed as Chief Financial Officer in the year 2008. He has an overall experience of 30 years. Prior to joining HDFC Bank, Sashi was a Senior Officer in the Country Financial Control Division of Deutsche Bank, AG, Mumbai.

He completed his graduation in Science with specialization in Physics, and is a Chartered Accountant. He also holds a Master's degree in Economics of Money, Banking & Finance from the University of Sheffield, UK.

SpiceJet to operate flights to UK from Sept 1

New Delhi: Airline major SpiceJet has secured slots at Heathrow Airport, London, to operate flights from September 1.

The current arrangement, under the bubble arrangement between India and the UK, would remain effective up to October 23, the end of summer schedule, the airline said on Tuesday. It could be extended on the resumption of regular services, it added.

"The company is also in advance discussion to secure slots for the winter schedule for regular operations," SpiceJet said.

"London is one of the busiest long-haul destinations from India and this is a huge milestone for SpiceJet. Providing non-stop connectivity from India to different parts of the world, which in turn strengthens our own airport hubs, is a dream that we have long cherished and this is a small step in that direction," said Ajay Singh, Chairman & Managing Director of SpiceJet.

"The identical arrival and departure slots that we have secured at Heathrow should suit the convenience of our passengers perfectly," Singh remarked.



A worker sprays disinfectants on gym equipments after authorities allowed opening of gym and yoga centres, during Unlock 3, in Bengaluru on Tuesday

Siddaramaiah tests positive

Bengaluru: Former Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday said he has tested positive for COVID-19 and has been admitted to the hospital on the advice of doctors. The 71-year-old leader of opposition in the state assembly has requested all those who have come into contact with him to quarantine themselves. "I have been tested positive for #Covid19 & also been admitted to the hospital on the advice of doctors as a precaution. I request all those who had come in contact with me to check out for symptoms & to quarantine themselves," Siddaramaiah tweeted. Siddaramaiah's son Dr Yathindra Siddaramaiah said his father had a fever since Monday morning and was admitted to hospital in the night.



Patient escapes from care centre

Shimla (PTI): A coronavirus patient, who was admitted to a dedicated COVID care centre in Himachal Pradesh's Shimla district, has escaped, police said on Tuesday. A resident of Kashmir, the COVID-19 patient was admitted to the centre in Mashobra, around 10 km from Shimla, on July 14, they said. According to police, the patient escaped on Sunday night and reached Jammu on Monday, they said. The Jammu and Kashmir authorities were informed and a first information report (FIR) was registered against the man at Shimla's Dhalli Police Station under relevant sections, they added.

250k job loss in Melbourne

Melbourne (PTI): The impact of the second lockdown across Melbourne City could result in almost 250,000 job losses, Victorian premier Daniel Andrews has said as he announced new restrictions to contain the spread of the coronavirus outbreak in the country's second largest State. Andrews on Monday announced shutting up thousands of businesses in the city as of Thursday under the tougher measures to enforce the stage 4 lockdown for the next six weeks period. Under the latest restrictions in Melbourne, hairdressers, call centres and many retail businesses will have to shut down while only supermarkets, food stores, liquor shops, petrol stations, pharmacies, convenience stores, newsagents, post offices and outlets selling disability and maternity supplies are allowed to remain open.

Pak reports 432 new cases

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan has reported 432 new cases of coronavirus in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of infections in the nation to 280,461, the health ministry said on Tuesday. The Ministry of National Health Services also said a total of 15 patients suffering from coronavirus succumbed to the infection. "Pakistan has reported 432 new cases of coronavirus and now the total infections stand at 280,461," the ministry said in a statement. Till now 249,397 people have recovered fully from the disease while 1,013 are still in critical condition.

2 jailed ex-Ministers infected

Ranchi (IANS): Jailed former Ministers Enos Ekka and Raja Peter along with 52 other inmates of Birs Munda central jail here have tested positive for coronavirus, officials said on Tuesday. Officials said that Chief Minister Hemant Soren and his wife Kalpana underwent a COVID-19 test for the second time on Tuesday after 17 members of his staff tested positive for the disease. The Chief Minister's Private Secretary has also tested positive for COVID-19. Ekka and Peter were jailed in separate murder cases. In the last 24 hours, more than 800 Covid cases have been registered in the state, pushing the total tally to 13,700. Three fatalities were reported from East Singhbhum district, taking the overall toll to 125 in the state. The mortality rate has increased to 0.93 per cent.

Kolkata airport to remain shut

Kolkata: Authorities of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport on Tuesday announced that flight operations at the airport will remain suspended on all the revised seven days of total lockdown in West Bengal this month starting from August 5. The airport had suspended flight operations on July 25 and 29 due to total lockdown announced by the state government. "As per the state government order dated 03.08.2020, flight operations at #KolkataAirport will remain suspended on the revised lockdown days: 5th, 8th, 20th, 21st, 27th, 28th & 31st August 2020," the Kolkata airport said in a tweet. The West Bengal government had earlier decided to impose a biweekly complete lockdown in the state to break the chain of COVID-19 transmission.

Britain faces a second wave

London: Britain faces a second wave of COVID-19 this winter twice as widespread as the initial outbreak if it reopens schools without a more effective test-and-trace system in place, according to a study. Researchers from University College London and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine modelled the impact of reopening schools either on a full- or part-time basis, thus allowing parents to return to work, on the potential spread of the virus. Meanwhile, Germany is already contending with a second wave of the coronavirus and risks squandering its early success by flouting social distancing rules, the head of the German doctors' union said.

Man held for misbehaving with cops

Mumbai (PTI): A 53-year-old man arrested for allegedly misbehaving with police officials has tested positive for coronavirus, an official said on Tuesday. The man was arrested alongwith his daughter and her fiance last week. During his medical examination he tested positive for the virus. However, his daughter and her boyfriend as well as the police personnel who had come in contact with them tested negative for the infection, the official said.

US scientists find potential therapeutic treatment

Washington (PTI): Scientists in the US have found a potential therapeutic treatment for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and other coronaviruses. Pathogenic coronaviruses are a major threat to global public health, as shown by the SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV, and the newly emerged SARS-CoV-2.

The study, published in the journal Science Translational Medicine, has found that small molecule protease inhibitors show potency



against human coronaviruses.

These coronavirus 3C-like proteases, known as 3CLpro, are strong therapeutic targets because they play vital roles in coronavirus replication, the researchers said.

"Vaccine developments and treatments are the biggest targets in COVID-19 research, and treatment is really key," said Kyeong-Ok Chang, a professor at Kansas State University in the US.

"This paper describes protease inhibitors targeting coronavirus

3CLpro, which is a well-known therapeutic target," Chang said.

The study demonstrates that this series of optimised coronavirus 3CLpro inhibitors blocked replication of the human coronaviruses MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV-2 in cultured cells and in a mouse model for MERS, the researchers said.

These findings suggest that this series of compounds should be investigated further as a potential therapeutic for human coronavirus infection, they said.

2 cr tests done so far

New Delhi: More than 2 crore COVID-19 tests have been conducted, including more than 6.6 lakh tests in the last 24 hours. Recovered cases are now double of the active cases. The case fatality rate is lowest since the first lockdown.

Many states have increased their testing capacity, both RT-PCR & Rapid Antigen tests. 28 states & union territories performing more than 140 tests per day per million population. Goa, Delhi, Tripura, & Tamil Nadu have increased their testing capacity.

Cumulative positivity of India is 8.89%. States with positivity less than 10% are Punjab, Rajasthan, MP, UP, Haryana, Assam, West Bengal and Karnataka. Last week's positivity of India was 11% which means a few states are showing rise in COVID-19 cases.

This is the first time after the first lockdown that the fatality rate is at the lowest, at 2.10%. Fatality rate has seen a progressive decline and it is continuing, which is a good sign.

Oxford vaccine, being manufactured by Serum Institute of India got approval for phase 2 and 3 clinical trials, which are starting within a week at 17 sites.



No death reported in LNJP

New Delhi (PTI): LNJP Hospital, the Delhi government's biggest COVID-19 treatment facility, did not report any death due to the disease in the last two days, signalling improvement in the pandemic situation.

The 2,000-bed hospital's medical director Suresh Kumar said on Tuesday the number of people on ventilator at the facility has come down by nearly 25 per cent, compared to the figure a month ago.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted on July 28 that LNJP Hospital had not reported any death on July 27, a feat, doctors said, recorded for the first time in the last couple of months.

"After that day, on two more days, our hospital saw no death from COVID-19... It is definitely a good sign for all of us who are fighting this situation," Kumar told PTI.

Delhi recorded 805 fresh coronavirus cases on Monday, taking the tally in the city to over 1.38 lakh, while the death toll from the disease climbed to 4,021, authorities said. Seventeen new fatalities were recorded, according to the Delhi health department bulletin released on Monday.

The active cases tally stood at 10,207, down from 10,356, on Sunday.

India's death toll nears 39,000

New Delhi: India's COVID-19 tally increased to 18,55,745 with 52,050 people testing positive for coronavirus infection in a day, while the recoveries crossed the 12-lakh mark on Tuesday, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The death toll due to COVID-19 climbed to 38,938 with 803 fresh fatalities being reported in 24-hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

A total of 12,30,509 people have recovered, while there are 5,86,298 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country presently. The recovery rate among COVID-19 patients has risen to 66.31 per cent, while the fatality rate has further dropped to 2.10 pc, the data stated. The total number of confirmed cases also includes foreigners. This is the sixth consecutive day that COVID-19 cases have increased by more than 50,000 According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 2,08,64,750 samples have been tested up to August 2 with 6,61,892 samples being tested on Monday, the highest done in a day so far, Scientist and media coordinator at ICMR, Dr Lokesh Sharma, said. "A total of 1,05,32,074 tests for detection of coronavirus infection have been performed with per day average of 3,39,744 tests in July, the highest number of tests conducted in a month so far," Sharma said. There are 917 labs in the government sector and 439 labs in the private sector for conducting COVID-19 tests.



Cases in UP cross 1 lakh-mark

Lucknow (PTI): The total number of coronavirus cases in Uttar Pradesh crossed the one lakh mark as the state recorded 2,948 fresh cases on Tuesday, an official statement said. A total of 41 fatalities were recorded in the state in the past 24 hours, taking the death toll due to the disease to 1,817. There are 41,222 active coronavirus cases in the state and 57,271 people have recovered and discharged from hospitals, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad said. The state's infection tally stands at 1,00,310, he said. According to the statement, the maximum number of deaths in the past 24 hours was reported from Kanpur Nagar (8) followed by four each in Lucknow and Gorakhpur, and three each in Allahabad, Moradabad, Saharanpur and Azamgarh among others. The state capital Lucknow reported the maximum fresh cases (611) followed by Kanpur with 259 cases, it said. However, the state government, in the statement said 2,983 fresh cases have been reported in the past 24 hours.



3 K'taka Dy CMs among 75 told to self-isolate

Bengaluru: The Covid-19 positive results of some top leaders in Karnataka have sent the state into a tizzy with fears of several government employees contracting the infection. A rigorous testing is being conducted since chief minister BS Yediyurappa was found to be positive. As many as six workers of BSY have already found infected, while 75 of his primary contacts have been identified, tested and asked to home isolate till all the results are out. These include the CM's family, close friends, house-keepers, security personnel

and drivers. The six staffers who have been found infected were among the first batch of 30 workers who were tested. Test results of another 45 odd staffers are awaited. Yediyurappa had met with the three deputy CMs, the governor, seven ministers from his

cabinet as well as 10 MLAs in the last one week. He had also interacted with 10 senior officers, and had greeted the new Bengaluru City Police Commissioner Kamal Pant on taking charge of his post. All of them have been asked to go for self-isolation. Former ISRO sci-



entist K Kasturirangan was another dignitary the CM met in order to congratulate him for his contribution towards the new National Education Policy (NEP) that he helped draft.

World facing 'generational catastrophe' on edu: UN

United Nations: U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned on Tuesday that the world faces a "generational catastrophe" because of school closures amid the coronavirus pandemic and said that getting students safely back to the classroom must be "a top priority."

Guterres said that as of mid-July schools were closed in some 160 countries, affecting more than 1 billion students, while at least 40 million children have missed out on pre-school.

This came on top of more than 250 million children already being out of school before the pan-

dem and only a quarter of secondary school students in developing countries leaving with basic skills, he said in a video statement.

"Now we face a generational catastrophe that could waste untold human potential, undermine decades of progress, and exacerbate entrenched inequalities," said Guterres as he launched a U.N. "Save our Future" campaign.

"Once local transmission of COVID-19 is under control, getting students back into schools and learning institutions as safely as possible must be a top priority," he said. "Consultation



with parents, carers, teachers and young people is fundamental." The U.N. recommendations for getting global education back

on track come as U.S. President Donald Trump pushes for schools to reopen in the face of opposition from some teachers

and parents while COVID-19 is surging in many parts of the country.

The coronavirus, which first appeared in China late last year, has infected 4.6 million people in the United States and killed more than 155,000 Americans since February, according to a Reuters tally. Deaths rose by over 25,000 in July and cases doubled in 19 states during the month.

Globally the coronavirus has infected at least 18.1 million people and there have been more than 689,000 known deaths worldwide, according to the Reuters tally.

VIVO PULLS OUT AS IPL TITLE SPONSOR

New Delhi: VIVO has pulled out as the title sponsor of the Indian Premier League (IPL) for this year's edition, following backlash on social media a NDTV report said. VIVO had paid Rs 2,199 crore for a five-year contract in 2018.

The BCCI on Sunday had announced that all sponsors were being retained, but VIVO pulled out following criticism on social media in the backdrop of the clashes between Indian and Chinese troops in Ladakh in June. The Indian cricket board on Sunday had announced that the 2020 season will be played from September 19 to November 10 in the United Arab Emirates.

Speaking to PTI, an IPL Governing Council member on Sunday said that all sponsors had been retained for IPL 2020.

"All I can say is that all our sponsors are with us. Hopefully you can read between the lines," he told PTI on conditions of



anonymity after Sunday's meeting. The IPL 2020 will be held at three venues in the UAE -- Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi -- subject to government approval.

"The Indian Premier League Governing Council (IPL GC) met today via video-conference to decide on the issues concerning the

VIVO IPL 2020 edition. Taking note of the prevailing COVID-19 situation in India, the IPL GC decided to stage the tournament in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the matches will be played in Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi subject to necessary clearances from the Government of India,"

BCCI had said in a press release.

"IPL 2020 will be played from 19th September and the final will be played on 10th November 2020. The 53-day tournament will witness 10-afternoon matches starting at 15:30 IST while the evening matches will start at 19:30 IST."



Legendary Spain and Real goalkeeper Casillas retires

Madrid (IANS): Spain's World Cup-winning captain and goalkeeper Iker Casillas has announced his retirement from football at the age of 39.

Casillas, a Real Madrid legend, suffered a heart attack during a training session last year and has not played any competitive football since April, 2019.

He recovered to rejoin the ranks at Porto and was named in their squad for the 2019-20 campaign. Casillas, who led Spain to their first World Cup in 2010 and helped his country win the 2008

and 2012 European championships, had a low-key farewell from the club he joined in 2015 after spending 25 years at Real Madrid.

"The most important thing is the path you travel and the people who accompany you, not the destination that it takes you," Casillas wrote on his Twitter account in Spanish.

"I think I can say, without hesitation, that this has been the right path and the dream destination. Thanks."

With 167 international caps,

Casillas has the second-most appearances for the Spanish national team, making him the joint tenth-most capped footballer of all time.

Casillas burst onto the scene as a teenager at Real Madrid and went on to make 725 appearances for the Spanish giants -- helping them win five LaLiga titles and three Champions League crowns.

Casillas said in February that he is keen on running for election as President of the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF).

2020-21 Serie A season to begin from Sept 19

Rome (IANS): The 2020/21 season of the Italian Serie A will kick off from September 19 this year and will end on May 23, 2021.

"The LegaSerie A have confirmed the dates for the new league season, which begins on September 19, 2020 and end May 21, 2021," read a statement on the Serie A website. The decision satisfies "the preference already expressed ... by the majority of the clubs in a meeting dedicated to this topic," the statement added. The 2019-20 season of the Serie A concluded last Sunday with Juventus winning the ninth consecutive Scudetto while Inter Milan finished second.



ENGLAND vs PAK 1ST TEST

Root and Co. look to continue winning run

Manchester (IANS): England will be wary of the unpredictable Pakistan side when the two teams clash in the first Test of the three-match series at the Old Trafford beginning Wednesday.

This will be the visitors' first appearance in an international match since coronavirus stoppage while for the hosts, they will look to bring their form and confidence over from the recently-concluded three-Test series against West Indies.

In the World Test Championship (WTC) points table, England moved up to third position following a 2-1 series win over Jason Holder's troops. The hosts have a chance to leapfrog Australia to second place, while Pakistan can overtake New Zealand to fourth position.

For this series, England have named the same squad that clinched them the Wisden Trophy and it will once be interesting to see what will be their bowling combination for the first Test.

A lot has been said about veteran fast-bowlers Stuart Broad and James Anderson playing together. They started just one of three matches in the last series together and showed in the final Test why they remain England's best bet in home conditions.

"Jimmy and Broady go together like Morecambe and Wise or Bonnie and Clyde," former England spinner Graeme

Swann was quoted as saying by mirror.co.uk.

"They have formed one of the most successful bowling double acts Test cricket has known. Why would you want to chuck it out before its sell-by date?"

"I can understand the attraction of 90mph pace, and both Jofra and Woody are huge assets. But I'm sorry, you don't discard blokes with 500 Test wickets lightly," he added.

Not to forget talismanic all-rounder Ben Stokes, who recently displaced West Indies captain Jason Holder from the top of the ICC all-rounders' list. He will once again have a huge say in the outcome of the series.

As for the visitors, they lack proper match practice going into the first Test but head coach Misbah-ul-Haq has stated players have done well to acclimatise themselves with the tough English conditions.

"When you play after a long gap there is bound to be some sort of nervousness but that is natural. As soon as the players step on the field, it will go away," Misbah said. "The players are fresh and anxiously waiting for the series to begin."

Pakistan will also be pinning their hopes on young fast-bowling duo Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah to shine in the bowler-friendly conditions of England. Not to forget they could also unleash spinners at the Old Trafford.

"We will keep an eye on the pitch and the weather conditions, today and tomorrow, before taking a decision on whether to play two spinners or not," Misbah said. "It is a possibility and an encouraging sign for us."

"The pitch and weather conditions might be favouring us at the moment but you still have to execute your plans properly to win," he added.

Pakistan will also take confidence from the fact that they have done well in the last two Test series in the England. The 2018 series ended in a 1-1 draw while the 2016 series also ended with both teams sharing spoils after the conclusion of four-Test series (2-2).

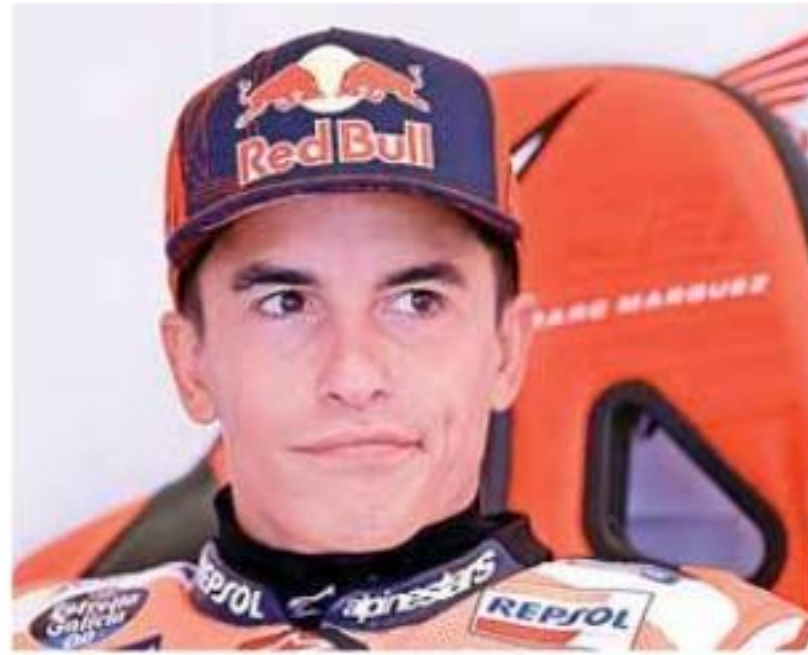
Squads: England: Joe Root (C), James

Anderson, Jofra Archer, Dominic Bess, Stuart Broad, Rory Burns, Jos Buttler, Zak Crawley, Sam Curran, Ollie Pope, Dom Sibley, Ben Stokes, Chris Woakes, Mark Wood, James Bracey, Ben Foakes, Jack Leach, Dan Lawrence.

Pakistan: Azhar Ali (C), Babar Azam, Abid Ali, Asad Shafiq, Fawad Alam, Imam ulhaq, Imran Khan, Kashif Bhatti, Mohammad Abbas, Mohammad Rizwan, Naseem Shah, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Shadab Khan, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shan Masood, Sohail Khan, Usman Shinwari, Wahab Riaz, Yasir Shah.

Marquez ruled out of Czech GP due to broken arm

Barcelona (IANS): Reigning World MotoGP champion Marc Marquez will miss Sunday's Czech Grand Prix after having a second operation on a broken arm, his Repsol Honda Team confirmed on Tuesday. Test rider Stefan Bradl will replace him for the race. After a heroic return just four days after surgery in Jerez, Marc Marquez will miss the Brno race with Stefan Bradl joining the Repsol Honda Team alongside Alex Marquez, "the Repsol Honda Team said in a statement on their official website." After undergoing a second operation on his injured right arm, Marc Marquez and HRC have decided



that the World Champion will not ride in the Czech Republic in order for him to recover more," the statement added.

Earlier, Dr Xavier Mir and his team at the Hospital Universitari Dexeus replaced the titanium plate on Monday and Marquez now has to stay in hospital for 48 hours before being discharged, a statement on MotoGP's official website said. Bradl has bagged three top 10 finishes at Brno from his seven starts in the MotoGP class and only once missed out on points, the team added.

The Czech Grand Prix is in Brno where Petronas Yamaha's French rider Fabio Quartararo will go for a third win in three races.

'Nobody wants to see Oly held behind closed doors'

Tokyo (IANS): Tokyo 2020 spokesman Masa Takaya on Tuesday did not rule out the possibility of hosting the postponed Olympic Games behind closed doors while insisting that nobody wants to see the games without spectators.

Japan's JIJI Press last week quoted an unnamed Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) executive, who is "close" to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, as saying that the games "should definitely take place, even without spectators".

Takaya told reporters at a news conference that "such a topic related to the counter-measures of COVID-19 has to be addressed after thorough discussions among the key parties -- the national government, the Tokyo metropolitan government and Tokyo 2020 organising committee", reports Xinhua news agency.

"This autumn onwards, we will have a meeting body attended by these three parties, so we will see the outcome of this meeting body," IOC President Thomas Bach said in July that the IOC is opposed to staging events without fans.

Mumbai (IANS): The finest clubs across Europe are gearing up to battle it out to be crowned as continental champions as governing body UEFA is all set to resume the competitions.

Sony Pictures Sports Network (SPSN), the official broadcaster of UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League in India, is all set to broadcast the return of top-tier European football tournaments.

The resumption of 2019/20 UEFA Champions League and Europa League brings along some of the anticipated matches of the season and for the first time in the history of these tournaments, the matches from the quarter-finals to the finals will be played as a straight knockout tournament.

Fans can catch the biggest Europeans teams battle for the ultimate football throne, live, from August 5 on SONY TEN 1 and SONY TEN 2 channels and the quarter-final stages for the Champions League matches will be aired with hindi commentary on SONY TEN 3 channels.

The resumption of 2019/20 UEFA Champions League will



start with the remaining Round of 16 second-leg matches and will have Manchester City take on Real Madrid; Barcelona face Napoli; Bayern Munich welcome Chelsea to the Allianz Arena and Juventus host Lyon for the four pending spots in the quarter-finals. Clubs such as Atalanta BC, Paris Saint-Germain FC, RB Leipzig and Atletico Madrid have

already paved their ways into the quarter-finals of the Champions League.

UEFA will also return with Europa League as top football clubs like Manchester United, F.C. Copenhagen, Sevilla FC among others will go head-to-head against each other for a spot in the quarter finals and to get one step closer to the second elite trophy in Europe.

Rajesh Kaul, Chief Revenue Officer, Distribution and Head - Sports Business, Sony Pictures Networks India said: "It is our privilege to be the premier destination for maximum live global sporting events in India whether it is cricket or football. Sony Pictures Sports Network is home to the best footballing clubs in Europe with

Utd stars to wear new home kit against LASK

Manchester (IANS): Premier League giants Manchester United on Tuesday unveiled their new home kit for the 2020/21 season. Top stars like Bruno Fernandes and Marcus Rashford among others were pictured modelling for their latest jersey.

United also announced that players will wear the latest kit in their Europa League Round of 16 second leg clash against Austrian football club LASK at Old Trafford.

A post on club's Twitter handle read: "The full kit will be worn for the first time on Wednesday in our #UEL last-16 second leg tie against LASK." United won the first leg 5-0 away from home before coronavirus stoppage in March and are just 90 minutes away from securing a place in the next round.



UEFA Champions League and Europa League.

"Football followers in India have felt the absence of these two tournaments and we are excited to bring back the live coverage of both

these competitions in what will now be a power-pack fortnight of the best European footballing action, along with hindi commentary, for the last leg of the Champions League games," he added.