



PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION



ENGLAND TO LIFT ALL COVID RESTRICTIONS



RAJINI SAYS NO TO POLITICS



BEIJING STRUGGLES TO OVERHAUL ITS IMAGE

DJOKOVIC UNDECIDED ABOUT OLYMPICS PARTICIPATION



Generally cloudy sky with light rain/thundershowers. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 33 and 25 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 83% Min: 51%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 37.7°C (+2) Min: 27.0°C (0)

SUN RISES

05:33 hrs

MOON RISES

09:22 hrs

SUN SETS

19:22 hrs

MOON SETS

21:59 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Dark clouds hover over the Golden Temple in Amritsar on Monday.

AGENCIES

Monsoon reaches Jaisalmer, eludes Delhi: Southwest Monsoon rains reached the desert district of Jaisalmer and Gangapur, its last outposts, on Monday, but gave Delhi and parts of Haryana a miss. It rained in the periphery of Delhi-Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh and Karnal in Haryana — but clouds hovered over New Delhi, without giving any relief from the heat. (P5)

NEET exam postponed to 12 September

Medical entrance exam NEET, scheduled for 1 August, will now be conducted on 12 September, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan announced on Monday. "The NEET-UG 2021, will be held on 12th September across the country following Covid-19 protocols. The application process will begin from 5 pm tomorrow through the NTA website," Pradhan tweeted.

Sensex, Nifty erase gains to end flat: Equity benchmarks the Sensex and the Nifty on Monday slipped from the day's highs in the closing hours to end flat as profit-taking in mainly IT and metals shares outweighed hectic buying in banking counters. (P8)

Opp flays UP govt over population draft Bill, calls it 'poll propaganda'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LUCKNOW, 12 JULY

Opposition parties have hit out at the Uttar Pradesh government over the proposed draft Bill on population control, with the Samajwadi Party terming it as an "poll propaganda".

The remarks come a day after the Uttar Pradesh Population Policy 2021-2030 was unveiled by chief minister Yogi Adityanath to steady the growing population in the state and reduce maternal and infant deaths in a time-bound manner.

Terminating the Bill as a part of the BJP's "election propaganda" ahead of Assembly polls, SP MP from Samjhana, Shafiqur Rahman Barq said the state government

The 40-page policy document mentions that "attempts would be made to ensure there is a population balance among various communities. Campaigns would be run in communities, groups, and areas where fertility rates are higher."

should ban marriages if it wants to stabilise rising population.

"It is an electoral propaganda. They (BJP) look at everything from a political angle. They just want to win elections and don't take any decision in the interest of the people. Since Assembly election is coming, they are concerned about it," Barq said.

Congress leader Salman Khurshid said, "before making

the law government should tell how many legitimate and illegitimate children their ministers have.

"Politicians should declare how many children they have. I will also declare how many I have and then it should be discussed," he told reporters on Sunday.

Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly, Ram Govind Chowdhury charged that the state government had failed on all fronts be it law and order or providing employment.

Meanwhile, BJP MPs will introduce private members' bills on population control and uniform civil code in the upcoming Monsoon session of Parliament, according to information from the secretariats of both Houses.

and 144 CrPC.

A multi-layer security ring was put in place to ensure smooth conduct of the festival while CCTV cameras were installed at various locations.

Descending from the Ratna Sinhasana, the bejewelled throne, the three deities were taken out of the temple in an elaborate royal ritual called "Pahandi".

The deities moved forward step by step to the accompaniment of beating of "ghantas" and "khalis", and blowing of conch shells in rhythmic movement in their journey to the world outside.

Ready to carry the deities for their annual nine-day sojourn to the Gundicha temple, about three km away down the Grand Road, the three majestic wooden chariots waited outside draped in

Monsoon session: Over 300 MPs fully vaccinated

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla today appealed to political parties not to disrupt proceedings of the House during its coming monsoon session for which elaborate arrangements are being made in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Interacting with the media after inspecting the arrangements, the Speaker said three of the current Lok Sabha's five sessions have already been held during the pandemic.

The sessions achieved record productivity of work compared with previous Lok Sabha Birla said.

He said there should be no need for members to rush to the well of the House or raise noise when they have opportunity to argue their case. The Government will reply. Parliament is a place for discussion and dialogue, he said.

The coming session will have 19 sittings from 19 July to 13 August. The House will follow its normal working hours from 11 am. While 280 members will sit in the Lok Sabha chamber, 259 others will sit in the galleries, which were meant for visitors before the Covid-19 pandemic.

As many as 441 members of the House have taken at least one Covid vaccination, and 311 have taken their second one

The Monsoon session will have 19 sittings from 19 July to 13 August.

► While 280 members will sit in the Lok Sabha chamber, 259 others will sit in the visitors galleries

► As many as 441 members of the House have taken at least one Covid vaccination, and 311 have taken their second one also

also. Those who have not taken any vaccination for any reason will be required to take RT-PCR tests, the Speaker said.

Birla said to make the Parliamentary debates meaningful, norms are being enforced to see that issues of public importance raised by MPs under Rule 377 will get response from the Government within a month. For the members' Zero Hour submissions, a similar system is being developed.

To help members get background on important issues, the Parliament Library and Research wing will work round the clock. A meeting of the floor leaders of different parties will take place on 18 July and issues to be discussed will be decided at the Business Advisory Committee meetings, he said.

An App is being developed which can provide live proceedings of the House, as also all information like questions and answers during a day.

The Speaker said Parliamentary debates from the 10th to the 16th Lok Sabha were digitally available. Parliament will try to put every record of its debates, even council meets since 1854.

Birla said the new building of Parliament is expected to be completed by October, 2022 and the winter session that year can be held in the new building in November, 2022.

Dominica court grants medical bail to Choksi

NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

Fugitive jeweller Mehul Choksi, arrested and jailed in Dominica since 23 May for illegal entry, was today granted bail by a court there on medical grounds. He had gone missing from Antigua and Barbuda, where he had been living since 2018 following his escape from India.

The 62-year-old diamantaire is wanted in India in connection with the ₹ 13,500-crore Punjab National Bank fraud case.

The bail was granted today strictly for medical treatment in neighbouring Antigua and Barbuda, of which he is a citizen now. The interim bail was granted till he's certified fit to travel, after that he has to return to Dominica. PTI

Nepal SC orders prez to appoint Congress leader Deuba as PM

KATHMANDU, 12 JULY

In a landmark verdict, Nepal's Supreme Court on Monday directed President Bidya Devi Bhandari to appoint Nepali Congress chief Sher Bahadur Deuba as Prime Minister by Tuesday and reinstated the House of Representatives for a second time in five months.

A five-member Constitutional Bench led by Chief Justice Shumsher Rana issued the verdict stating that President Bhandari's decision to dissolve the lower house upon a recommendation of PMP K P Sharma Oli was an unconstitutional act, delivering a major blow to the Communist leader who was preparing for snap polls. PTI

Details on Pg 9

Puri Rath Yatra: Sea of humanity missing, not fervour

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

BHUBANESWAR, 12 JULY

With the second wave of the pandemic yet to fully subside in Odisha, the sea of humanity that the world famous Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath attracts every year was conspicuous by its absence for the second year in a row, but not the spiritual fervour, passionate faith in divinity at the abode of Lord Jagannath.

The annual ritual of Lord Jagannath and his divine siblings-Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra in the pilgrim town of Puri was again marked by devotee-less affair as the authorities of the 12th century Jagannath temple prohibited public participation for the pulling of the three chariots. The town was sealed with a combination of curfew

and 144 CrPC. A multi-layer security ring was put in place to ensure smooth conduct of the festival while CCTV cameras were installed at various locations.

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The deities moved forward step by step to the accompaniment of beating of "ghantas" and "khalis", and blowing of conch shells in rhythmic movement in their journey to the world outside.

Ready to carry the deities for their annual nine-day sojourn to the Gundicha temple, about three km away down the Grand Road, the three majestic wooden chariots waited outside draped in

who tested negative for Covid-19 and fully vaccinated were allowed to participate in pulling of the chariots. Like last year, the festival has been made a devotee-less affair.

The Shankaracharya of Puri Govardhana Peeth Swami Nischalananda Saraswati had a darshan of the deities on the chariots along with his seven discipiles in view of restrictions.

Since time immemorial, three deities are taken out in a chariot procession every year covering three km along the Grand Road connecting the Shree Jagannath Temple and Maus Maa Temple.

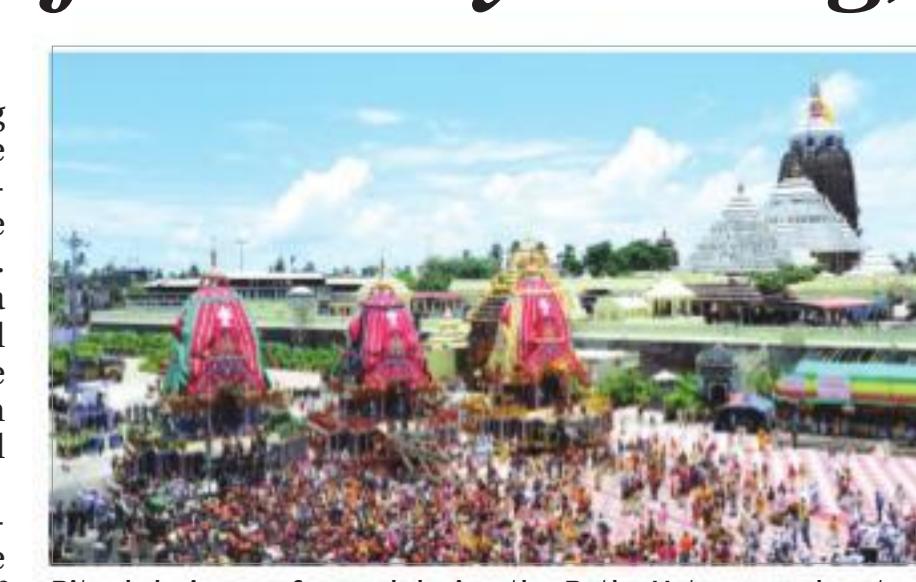
There was no breach of security and it was successfully conducted with servitors, police and fire brigade personnel. No VIP including the Governor, CM, Ministers were at Puri to witness the event.

are eyewitnesses who lost their family in the carnage. None of the accused disputed the date, time, place and manner of occurrence but still stand acquitted on a misreading of the law and evidence.

The findings of the HC are contrary to the evidence placed on record and the law declared by this Court on various principles of law.

The high court had allowed the appeal of the accused, setting aside the trial court orders passed in November, 2016 by which they were convicted and awarded varying punishments for their roles in the carnage at Senari village.

Total 34 were hacked to death on 19 March, 1999 by members of the outlawed Maoist Communist Centre.



Rituals being performed during the Ratha Yatra sans devotees amidst Covid-19 lockdown restrictions in Puri on Monday. SNS

Senari massacre: SC to hear Bihar's plea against acquittals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to hear Bihar government's appeal against the acquittal of 14 people by the Patna High Court in a two-decade old Senari massacre in which 34 people were killed allegedly by Maoist groups.

A bench comprising Justices Abdul Nazeer and Krishna Murari issued notices to all those who were acquitted by the high court in the case.

The Bihar government, through advocate Abhinav Mukherji, has challenged the 21 May high court order saying the testimonies of eye-witnesses were not considered.

The case of the prosecution is supported by a total of 23 witnesses out of which 13



Gorkhaland is possible if there is a political will with the government

ROSHAN GIRI, LEADER, GORKHA JAN MUKTI MORCHA (BIMAL GURUNG CAMP)

ON HOW HE SAID THE CENTRE WAS NOT IN FAVOUR OF A SEPARATE STATE FOR THE GORKHAS

Traders' body writes to LG, says market associations have no authority to control crowds

PTI
NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

A traders' body wrote to Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal on Monday objecting to the Delhi Disaster Management Authority's (DDMA) orders putting the onus for controlling crowds in markets on their respective associations.

The Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI) said market associations could not be held responsible for maintaining law and order when they didn't have any legal authority. This was the responsibility of the police and the district administration.

In recent weeks, several markets in Delhi have been shut by the DDMA due to the violation of Covid norms like maintaining social distancing.

In its orders, the DDMA has said that it is the responsibility of the respective market associations to take all measures to ensure that Covid-appropriate behaviour is followed.

In a statement, CTI chairman Brijesh Goyal said shopkeepers could only be held responsible for their shops and godowns.

He said, "It (DDMA order) states that it is the responsibility of the mar-

ket welfare association to control the crowd in markets and (ensure that people) follow Covid-appropriate behaviour. How can a market association handle the crowd and enforce law and order without having any legal authority?"

Goyal said the CTI requested Baijal, who is also the DDMA chairman, to withdraw the line from its orders putting the onus for controlling crowds in markets on market associations.

The responsibility of ensuring that Covid guidelines are followed in public places lies with municipal bodies, police and district administration, he said.

"The markets are being made soft targets," he added.

Delhi was under a lockdown from April 19 to May 30 during the second wave of the Covid pandemic. Markets were allowed to open from June 7 under a phased reopening plan of the city government.

The Delhi government ordered the closure of Janpath market for the violation of Covid protocols on Monday. Earlier, markets in Lajpat Nagar, Laxmi Nagar, Kamla Nagar, Sarojini Nagar and parts of Sadar Bazar and Karol Bagh were shut by the DDMA.

BJP demands CBI probe into 'scam' in DTC bus procurement

PTI
NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

BJP MLA Vijender Gupta on Monday wrote to Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal demanding a CBI inquiry into the alleged scam involving procurement of 1,000 low floor buses by the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC).

A three-member committee that probed the matter has recommended scrapping the ten-

der of the AMC (annual maintenance contract) of buses finding various "lapses" he said.

There has been "irrefutable evidence of irregularities and violations in the AMC bid," he said, alleging "criminal conspiracy and connivance" was responsible for it. "The committee underlined the need to take special measures to ensure that there is competition in the tendering process to avoid monopoly pricing. However, it found that such

concerns were not addressed when the DTC floated a tender for the purchase of the AMC," Gupta wrote.

The three-member committee, including transport commissioner and vigilance secretary of the Delhi government, was formed by Baijal last month. The committee in its report stated there was no "infirmity" in procurement of buses but pointed to various "procedural lapses" in the AMC.

Classified

LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI (Testamentary Intestate Jurisdiction)
Citation U/S 283, Indian Succession Act, 1925
In the matter of Test Case No. 46/2021

Vishal Gupta — Petitioner Versus Government of NCT of Delhi & Ors.

— Respondents

To, All Concerned

In the matter of estate of Late Raj Kumar, r/o 21, Sunder Nagar, New Delhi-110003.

Whereas Vishal Gupta, s/o Late Raj Kumar, r/o 21, Sunder Nagar, New Delhi-110003, has filed a petition under Section 200 read with Section 276 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 for the grant of Probate of the valid and legal Will dated 30-07-2020 which was duly and validly signed and executed Late Raj Kumar, deceased.

And whereas the aforesaid case is fixed for hearing on 01-09-2021 at 10:30 a.m. before the Hon'ble Court. This citation is issued, in terms of Section 283 of the said Act to all persons claiming to have any interest in the prop-

erties of the said deceased to come to this Court, file objections, if any and take part in the proceedings on the date specified above for the grant of Probate.

Given under my hand and the Seal of this Court, in terms of the order dated 25th day of May, 2021.

Assistant Registrar for Registrar General Seal of the Court

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

COURT NOTICE (U/o 5 Rule 20 CPC) IN THE COURT OF Sh. Sanjay Kumar Sharma Additional District and Sessions Judge Gurugram CNR No. HRGR01-003834-2021

Next Date: 13-08-2021 Neera Rajya Laxmi Rana Versus General Public Publication Issued to: Defendant No. 1 General Public

Whereas Ashish Gupta, s/o Late Shyam Sunder, r/o 21, Sunder Nagar, Delhi-110003, has filed a petition under Section 207 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 for grant of Probate of the valid and legal Will dated 10-02-2021 which was duly and validly signed and executed by his/her Testator.

And whereas the aforesaid case is fixed for hearing on 17-08-2021 at 10:30 a.m. before the Hon'ble Court. This citation is issued, in terms of Section 283 of the said Act to all persons claiming to have any interest in the prop-

erty of the said deceased to come to this Court, file objections, if any and take part in the proceedings on the date specified above for the grant of Probate.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court, this 12-07-2021.

Sanjay Bhattacharya Advocate Mobile No. 9810497338

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients Raj Kumar, s/o Late Vedprakash and Sunita Sharma, r/o Block No. 7, Near Hanuman Mandir Govt. Colony, Vishwan Bagh, Sangali, Maharashtra 416415, has disowned their son Shwetank and his wife Tanya, from their movable and immovable properties. If any body deals with them shall do so at their own risk. My clients and other family members shall not be responsible in any manner.

Take notice that in default of his/her appearance on the date before mentioned the aforesaid cases will be heard and determined in his/her absence according to law.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court, this 12-07-2021.

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Warm wishes to all on the auspicious occasion of #RathYatra! I pray to Lord Jagannath for the safety and well-being of all my brothers & sisters. Jai Jagannath.

TWEETING AS ISKCON TEMPLES IN THE CITY AND MAYAPUR MARKED LOW-KEY RATH YATRA

1 dead, 6 feared buried in Kangra after heavy rains

Himachal met dept issues orange alert for heavy rains, snowfall; flash flood hits Dharamshala

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 12 JULY

One woman was killed while 6 persons were feared to have been buried under debris of a landslide in Boh valley of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh after the district was lashed by heavy rains among other parts of the state since Sunday night.

The high altitude Rulegarh village in Boh valley in Shahpur sub-division of Kangra had recorded 264 mm till 5.30 pm on Monday, according to the state meteorological department.

"The road connectivity to Boh village had been affected due to landslides owing to heavy rains and a landslide had damaged six houses in which 11 persons have been reported missing."

The administration had sent rescue teams which had recovered the body of a woman and had rescued four other persons while a search and res-



cue operation for other missing persons was on," a police officer said.

Meanwhile, heavy damage to property was reported in Bhagsunag near

McLeodganj in Dharamshala on Monday morning due to flash flood that was triggered by heavy rains since Sunday night.

Around 10 cars belonging

to tourists and one house was swept away in flash flood as a nearby nullah got choked with debris and changed its course towards the road in a local in Bhagsunag.

The Kangra deputy commissioner said 82 persons have been rescued from Triund peak who were stranded amid heavy rains and had been evacuated to safe places.

One person along with two cattle was reported to have been washed away in strong current in Samipur Chakbar area of Kangra and efforts were on to locate him, he added.

Three national highways of Pathankot-Mandi, Chandigarh-Manali, Shimla-Kinnaur and many interior roads had been blocked owing to landslides that were triggered by heavy rains.

The state meteorological department had issued an orange alert for heavy rains for the next two days while the higher reaches may experience a fresh spell of snow.

Shahpur had recorded the highest 264 mm rainfall, followed by Dharamshala with 211 mm, Palampur 162 mm, Kangra 148 mm, Dalhousie 50 mm, Kufri 31 mm and Shimla 27 mm.

Union home minister Amit Shah has also expressed concern over the losses and said he had spoken with CM Jai Ram Thakur about the natural disaster due to heavy rains.

"NDRF teams are reaching out for relief work and the Union home ministry is regularly monitoring the situation. The Centre will provide all possible help to Himachal," he added.

HP CM Thakur has expressed concern over the losses due to heavy rains and directed the administrations of various districts to ensure speedy relief and rescue operation in the affected areas.

He also urged the local people and tourists to refrain from going near the river banks to avoid any untoward incident.

Take stern action against teachers involved in abuse of students: Jai Ram to officials

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 12 JULY

Himachal Pradesh chief minister Jai Ram Thakur on Monday called for taking strict action against the teachers involved in abuse of the students and said there is the need for creating awareness among girls on their rights besides socio-economic empowerment.

After a meeting of the Saksham Gudiya Board, Thakur said the government was committed to provide safe and secure environment for women and girls in the state.

Saksham Gudiya Board was constituted in the year 2018 with an objective to ensure empowerment of women and girls, making recommendations on Acts, rules, policy and programmes related to safety and security of the girl child.

It also aims to review implementation of various programmes being run by departments for upliftment



and empowerment of the girl child in the state, the CM said.

He stated that the board also envisages making recommendations for qualitative improvement in health and nutritional aspects of girl child.

"The state government has initiated several schemes to ensure empowerment of women and girl child and 'Shagun' scheme has been launched under which Rs 31,000 is provided as grant to girls from BPL families at the time of marriage.

Besides, the state gov-

ernment has started Swaran Jayanti Naari Sambal Yojna to provide social security cover to eligible elderly women in the age group of 65-69 years.

A social security pension of Rs 1,000 per month was being provided to over 60,000 elderly women of this age group," he stated.

He further stated that after the BJP came into power in Himachal, Gudiya helpline was launched to provide immediate assistance to girls at the time of distress on which about 6400 complaints were received till date.

Besides, the state gov-

The main objective of the state government was to provide a fearless and best environment to the girl child so that they could excel in the desired field.

He called on the board to come forward and give suggestions regarding steps needed to be taken to ensure safety and security of the women and girls.

The CM said the state government was also committed to strengthen the board and called for organizing regular meetings to monitor the schemes initiated for upliftment of women and girl child.

In addition, a special awareness campaign must be launched to sensitize the masses about the safety and security of women, he added.

State social justice and empowerment minister Sarveen Chaudhary, board's vice chairperson Roopa Sharma, Rakhi Kahlon, director, women and child development were present on the occasion among others.

Guv-designate arrives in Shimla

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 12 JULY

Himachal Pradesh Governor (designate) Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar was accorded a rousing welcome on his arrival at Shimla on Monday evening.

HP chief minister Jai Ram

Thakur, urban development minister Suresh Bhardwaj, social justice and empowerment minister Sarveen Chaudhary, board's vice chairperson Roopa Sharma, Rakhi Kahlon, director, women and child development welcomed him at Raj Bhawan.

Arlekar will be sworn-in as the 28th Governor of Himachal on 13 July at 10 am.

Thakur, urban development minister Suresh Bhardwaj, social justice and empowerment minister Sarveen Chaudhary, board's vice chairperson Roopa Sharma, Rakhi Kahlon, director, women and child development welcomed him at Raj Bhawan.

Arlekar will be sworn-in as the 28th Governor of Himachal on 13 July at 10 am.

IIT Mandi develops model to detect diseases in potato crop

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 12 JULY

Scientists at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi have developed a computational model for automated disease detection in potato crops using photographs of its leaves.

IIT Mandi assistant professor Dr Srinikant Srinivasan along with research scholars and Dr Vijay Kumar Dua, Dr Sanjeev Sharma and Dr Jagdev Sharma of Central Potato Research Institute, Shimla had made the development.

The scientists had used Artificial Intelligence (AI) techniques to highlight the diseased portions of the leaf and analysis of the detection performance indicates an overall precision of 98 percent on leaf images in field environments.

"In India, as with most developing countries, the detection and identification of blight are performed manually by trained personnel who scout the field

and visually inspect potato foliage.

This process, as expected, is tedious and often impractical, especially for remote areas, because it requires the expertise of a horticultural specialist who may not be physically accessible.

But automated disease detection can help, given the extensive proliferation of mobile phones across the country," Dr Srinivasan said, adding smartphones can be a useful tool in this regard.

The computational tool developed by the IIT Mandi scientists can detect blight in potato plants using AI tool called mask region-based convolutional neural network architecture and can accurately highlight the diseased portions of the leaf amid a complex background of plants and soil matter.

In order to develop a robust model, healthy and diseased leaf

data were collected from fields across Punjab, UP and Himachal Pradesh.

It was important that the model developed should have portability across the nation.

It is worth mentioning here that blight is a common disease of the potato plant that starts as uneven light green lesions near the tip and the margins of the leaf.

And then spreads into large brown to purplish-black necrotic patches that eventually leads to rotting of the plant. If left undetected and unchecked, blight could destroy the entire crop within a week in conducive conditions. But with the new tech, when a farmer will photograph the leaf which appears unhealthy, the application will confirm in real-time if the leaf is infected or not.

This timely knowledge can help farmers to know exactly when to spray the field, saving his produce and minimising costs associated with unnecessary use of fungicides.

HC seeks NBSA reply on plea against malicious content on UP woman converting to Islam

PTI
NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

The Delhi High Court on Monday sought News Broadcasting Standards Authority's (NBSA) reply on a plea alleging publication of malicious content over a 32-year-old Hindu woman from Uttar Pradesh converting to Islam.

Justice Rekha Palli issued notice on the petition and also sought response from Zee Media and Navbharat Times.

The court also took on record Delhi Police's assurance that protection would be extended to the woman, presently residing in Delhi, within its jurisdiction following her apprehension of being taken away to Uttar Pradesh by its agencies by force or coercion.

Owing to her conversion of religion she and her family is being targeted and malicious content about her is being published in the media every day which seeks to be immediately stopped, the woman stated in her petition filed through advocates Kamlesh Kumar Mishra and Nitin Nayak states.

Several news reports appeared in the small-time newspapers and news portals in UP with regard to the conversion of the petitioner giving completely absurd and imaginary details, the petition reads.

ment, threat or coercion and has been practicing the same since then.

After she received her conversion certificate this year and published an advertisement in newspapers regarding change of name and religion, she started receiving threats and media reports were also published revealing her name and identity, Agarwal informed the court.

Advocate Tanya Agarwal, representing the woman, said that she had converted to Islam in 2012 on her own free will and without any induce-

IMA Uttarakhand urges CM not to allow Kanwar Yatra

PTI
DEHRADUN, 12 JULY

The Indian Medical Association's Uttarakhand chapter has written to Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami requesting him to cancel the Kanwar Yatra this year for public safety in view of a possible third wave of COVID-19.

Drawing the Chief minister's attention to the warnings of medical experts about a third wave of the pandemic in a letter, the IMA's state secretary Amit Khanna asked him to not allow the proposed Kanwar Yatra to go ahead.

The fortnight-long yatra that begins with the onset of the month of Shravna around July 25 and goes on till the first week of August sees crores of Kanwaries from neighbouring states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Delhi and Himachal Pradesh gathering in Haridwar to collect the holy waters of the Ganga.

The yatra had been can-

celled last year too due to the first wave of COVID-19.

"We request you to disallow the proposed Kanwar Yatra in July-August, 2021, as the third wave of Covid pandemic is ready to knock on the doors of this country according to several specialists," Khanna said on behalf of the IMA in the letter.

Dhami, who met central ministers including PM Modi in Delhi over the past few days, has already said that though the Kanwar Yatra is connected with the religious sentiments of people saving lives is the state government's topmost priority.

"Even the gods will not want people to die. The priority at the moment is saving lives," he told reporters in Delhi on Sunday when asked whether or not the yatra will be held.

However, a final decision on giving go-ahead will be taken in consultation with neighbouring states including UP, Haryana and others, Dhami had said.

Punjab govt relaxes power use curbs for industries with immediate effect

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 12 JULY

guidelines would be reviewed once again after three days to make a fresh decision.

Due to unprecedent

rise in demand for power, the PSPCL had as a temporary measure ordered restrictions on industrial consumers of the state in order to provide continuous power supply to domestic consumers and eight hours power supply to the agriculture sector for paddy operations. Continuous process industries, as of now, have been asked to operate at 50 per cent of continuous process load, a department spokesperson said.

The department, despite

high demand for consumption, had not imposed any restrictions on small and medium supply industrial consumers, rice shellers, cattle feed units, call centres, mushroom farms, food processing units and other essential industries/services from the beginning, the spokesperson further revealed.

Punjab has 99,834 small power industrial consumers

besides 30,176 medium power consumers upon whom no usage restriction has been levied at all despite rising demand for power across the domestic sector.

Siromoni Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal had on Wednesday demanded the Congress government in Punjab offer a financial package to the state industry for the losses suffered by it due to the current forced lockdown on account of power supply mismanagement.

In a statement, the SAD president had said after suffering huge losses due to the Covid lockdown since the last one and a half years, the industrial sector was presentedly in the grip of a power lockdown with the government imposing a three-day compulsory off for the industrial sector besides closing down large scale industries for five days and reducing contracted power load of continuous supply to industry by fifty per cent.

HP Cong seeks govt nod for Virbhadra statue in Shimla

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 12 JULY

"It is clear from the crowd gathered at his funeral that Singh was a popular leader of the masses.

In a democracy, govern-

ments of any political party come and go but only few leaders leave an indelible mark in the hearts of the people," he added.

Rathore stated that it was

the desire of the state Congress committee that a memorial should be built in the memory of six-time CM of Himachal

at the historic Ridge ground in Shimla.

"Therefore, the state Congress has urged the CM that a suitable place should be made available to the Ridge so that it can install the statue of the architect of modern Himachal, Virbhadra Singh," he added.

He also urged the CM that the government should name a big government institution after Singh, for this will be a true tribute to him.

Conman, who gets book released by U'khand CM, dupes jeweller's wife of ₹1.75 cr

PTI
RISHIKESH (UTTARAKHAND), 12 JULY

A conman who recently got his book released by Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has been arrested for allegedly duping a jeweller's wife of cash and jewellery worth Rs 1.75 crore, officials said on Monday.

Mahendra Rode alias Yogi

spiritual and moral values, released by Uttarakhand Chief Minister Dhami at the Bijapur guest house in Dehradun on July 9, according to an official release.

A release from the Chief Minister's Office had also shared with the media a photograph of Dhami holding a copy of the book. Dhami could be seen flanked by Animesh in the picture.

112 number launched in H'yana for all emergency services

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 12 JULY



Anyone in distress in Haryana can now dial 112, unified toll-free number, for all kinds of emergency services like 100 (police), 101 (fire), and 108 (ambulance). This round



We suggest UP govt to remove one-child norm from its draft population control Bill.

VHP WORKING PRESIDENT ALOK KUMAR

SEEKING REMOVAL OF ANOMALY OF REWARDING OR PUNISHING CHILD INSTEAD OF PARENTS

India

THUMBNAILS



People at a crowded market as authorities ease Covid-induced lockdown relaxation in Bengaluru, on Monday.

AGENCY

BTR accord promise: Former NDFB cadres, who had surrendered following the signing of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Peace Accord, have urged the government to fulfil immediately their demands ~ release of NDFB chief Ranjan Daimary and other cadres still behind bars, rehabilitation, ex-gratia to family members of killed cadres ~ as mentioned in the peace accord.

Appointment row: Appointment of Poornima Mohan, wife of R Mohan who is serving as special duty officer at Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan's office, as editor of Malayalam lexicon at the Kerala University has kicked up a row. Save University Campaign Committee has submitted a complaint to governor Arif Mohammed Khan stating Poornima flouted qualification norms.

SNS

Rajinikanth disbands 'Mandram'

Shuts door to politics; functionaries will work under fans forum aiming at activities for people's welfare

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 12 JULY



The secretaries, associates, deputy secretaries and executive committee members in the RMM will continue, for the time being, he said.

a statement reiterating his 'no to politics' stand.

"I had thought of starting a political party and getting involved in politics. But the timing was such that it was not possible. I have no intention of getting involved in politics in the future, so I inform you that the Rajini Makkal Mandram will function as a

Andhra Pradesh govt to vaccinate teachers first

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 12 JULY

minister has already ordered a second fever survey citing rising cases in neighbouring states.

Congress, under its new president A Revanth Reddy, today held large protest rallies against fuel price hike across the state with party cadres riding cycles and bullock carts but choosing to ignore Covid-19 protocols of wearing masks and maintaining social distancing.

A senior Congress leader, Damodar Rajanarinsimha, even fell while standing on a bullock cart to address the gathering. Yesterday, while kicking off the local religious festival Bonalu many of the Telangana ministers chose not to wear masks even with the

threat of the third wave looming large.

State minister of animal husbandry and a powerful local leader Talasani Srinivas who had issued strict orders to follow Covid protocols while reviewing arrangements a few days ago was himself seen going without mask while carrying the first offering to the deity Jagadamba atop the historic Golconda.

Meanwhile Andhra Pradesh government has relaxed curfew during the day but night curfew will continue from 10 pm till next day 6 am. To ensure people continue to wear masks the CM has said a fine of Rs 100 will be imposed of anybody not wearing masks in public.

Mehbooba slams Centre for sacking Salauuddin's sons

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 12 JULY

Criticising termination of 11 employees, including two sons of Pakistan-based global terrorist Syed Salauuddin by the government on the charges of terror links, former chief minister and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti on Monday described the action "illegal" as "you can't hold a child responsible for actions of his father unless and until you have proof".

Mehbooba, who was interacting with media persons here (in photo), said these are not 11 people, they've sacked 20 to 25 during the current year.

When some newsmen pointed out that the Hizbul Mujahideen terror outfit founder Salauuddin was responsible for bloodshed in Kashmir, Mehbooba said she was not supporting anyone but children cannot be punished for the crime done by their

father. Moreover, cases of alleged terror links against his two sons were yet to be proved in the court.

She said that people of Jammu and Kashmir were still suffering because of the division of the country at the hands of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Hitting out at the BJP she said they are now trying to sharpen the divide between Hindus and Muslims in villages and towns. She complimented the people of Jammu for resisting such moves and maintaining brotherhood with Muslims, Gujjars and other communities.

She said it was unfortunate that witch-hunting and criminalization of dissent is taking the country backwards. Invoking former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, she said you can capture a man but not an idea. You've to address the idea, as Vajpayee ji did.

Replying to questions about

her demand for initiating dialogue with Pakistan, Mehbooba said that Vajpayee, who was a BJP stalwart, believed in dialogue with neighbours and used to say that you can change friends but not your neighbours.

She said asking for dialogue was not a crime. The borders of J&K have been witnessing peace since February when India and Pakistan decided to strictly implement the ceasefire that was ordered during the regime of Vajpayee in 2003.

Targeting the BJP government, she said there's no policy, unemployment and inflation is rising. Earlier they used to say that J&K is backward, but we're ahead on several indices. But if their onslaught over the economy continues, our situation will become worse than Gujarat as far as poverty is concerned. People from outside are being given top positions in the

Chenab valley power projects and our water and electricity are sent out.

She alleged that instead of development, the government has turned Jammu that is known as the city of temples into a city of liquor shops.

She ruled out contesting the assembly elections until the special status of J&K was restored and whatever was taken away on 5 August 2019 returned.

Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church head Baselios Marthoma Paulose II passes away



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 12 JULY

Baselios Marthoma Paulose II, the supreme head of Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church of India, passed away at StGregorios Hospital, Parumala in Thiruvalla, in the early hours of Monday. He was 74.

Baselios Marthoma Paulose II was the eighth Catholicos of the East in Malankara and 91st primate on the Apostolic Throne of St Thomas. Popularly known as Catholicos Bava, he was enthroned as the Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan in November 2010. The Catholicos was under treatment for lung cancer since December 2019. Though the senior priest had recovered from Covid in February this year, he was affected with post Covid health issues and the end came while undergoing treatment for post-Covid-19 complications.

A charismatic personality who steadfastly defended his faith and beliefs throughout his life, the Bishop was an epitome of patience and fortitude. Despite many health ailments, he steered the course for the Church, amidst many crises, particularly the simmering tensions with Jacobite Church. Born on 30 August 1946, in a village called Mangad near Kunnamkulam in Thrissur to late Kollannur Iype and late Pulikkottil Kunjeetty and named KI Paul, Paulose II was ordained as a priest in 1973. Taking to Twitter, Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the supreme head's death and said he leaves behind a rich legacy of service and compassion. Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan remembered him as a humble man who lived among the common people.



We suggest UP govt to remove one-child norm from its draft population control Bill.

VHP WORKING PRESIDENT ALOK KUMAR

SEEKING REMOVAL OF ANOMALY OF REWARDING OR PUNISHING CHILD INSTEAD OF PARENTS

Tamil Nadu Assembly Elections, Rajinikanth had laid to rest speculation about his big political entry when he announced he would not enter politics citing health reasons.

Rajinikanth had been hospitalised in Hyderabad briefly last year as there were fluctuations in his blood pressure. He had opted out of contesting elections and at that time, he had said that he will try to serve the people without entering politics.

Rajinikanth's political entry for almost three years before he announced that he would not be entering politics.

The secretaries, associates, deputy secretaries and executive committee members in the RMM will continue, for the time being, he said.

a statement reiterating his 'no to politics' stand.

"I had thought of starting a political party and getting involved in politics. But the timing was such that it was not possible. I have no intention of getting involved in politics in the future, so I inform you that the Rajini Makkal Mandram will function as a

fan charity forum for the benefit of the people," Rajinikanth said in the statement.

The top star informed his decision to the media after he came back from the USA, where he went for treatment.

There had been tremendous speculations and dramatic turnarounds over Ra-

jinikanth's political entry for almost three years before he announced that he would not be entering politics.

It was on New Year's Eve in 2017 that Rajinikanth had announced he would be joining politics. Since then, his party has been in the making and soon, his fan clubs were reorganised as the Rajini Makkal Mandram, considered precursor to the party.

However, there was no update till December 2020,

which is when Rajinikanth

announced that his party will be launched in January 2021 and that he will contest the 2021 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections.

He was expected to make an alliance with BJP, which slowly started distancing from the AIADMK, its natural ally during the build-up days to the Assembly elections. Since then, several functionaries had joined political parties, including the DMK.

However, on 29 December, 2020, months ahead of the Ta-

TENDER

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Short terms tenders on form 6&8 are hereby invited by the Executive Engineer Bangana Division HP.PWD Bangana on behalf of the Governor of H.P. for the following works from the approved and eligible contractors/firms of appropriate class enlisted in HPPWD as per latest instructions so as to reach and open in his office as per time schedule given below. The offer of the tender will be kept open for 120 days from the date of opening of the tenders. The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons.

- 1.Date of receipt of applications for the tender Form a/w requisite documents: -
2. Date of issue /sale of tender forms against Cash payment (Non-refundable)-
3. Date of receipt of tenders: -
4. Date of opening of tenders: -

30.07.2021 upto 5.00 PM.
31.07.2021 upto 4.00 PM.
02.08.2021 upto 10.30 AM.
02.08.2021 at 11.00 AM.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	EMD	Time Limit	Cost of Tender	Eligible class of Contractor
1.	C/O CHC Building at Thana Kalam in Distt: Una (Newly Upgraded)(SH:- Site Development)	485639	9800	Two months	350/-	Class-D
2.	C/O CHC Building at Thana Kalam in Distt: Una (Newly Upgraded)(SH:- C/O R/Wall at 0/000 to 0/036)	497083	10000	Two months	350/-	Class-D
3.	C/O CHC Building at Thana Kalam in Distt: Una (Newly Upgraded)(SH:- C/O R/Wall at 0/036 to 0/080)	499845	10000	Two months	350/-	Class-D
4.	Working Estimate of Balance Work of construction of Multipurpose Cultural Centre at Samoor Kalan Distt: Una (H.P.)(SH:- Marble Flooring in Front of Stairs)	494756	10000	Two months	350/-	Class-D
5.	Working Estimate of Balance Work of construction of Multipurpose Cultural Centre at Samoor Kalan Distt: Una (H.P.)(SH:- Paver block flooring in Parking Area)	479280	9800	Two months	350/-	Class-D
6.	Working Estimate of Balance Work of construction of Multipurpose Cultural Centre at Samoor Kalan Distt: Una (H.P.)(SH:- Unistone brick cladding)	462802	9300	Two months	350/-	Class-D
7.	Working Estimate of Balance Work of construction of Multipurpose Cultural Centre at Samoor Kalan Distt: Una (H.P.)(SH:- C/O Boundary Wall)	493750	10000	Two months	350/-	Class-D
8.	C/O Link road Harizen Basti Gheor km: 0/000 to 5/096 (SH:- C/O C.C. Pavement at RD:- 3/140 to 3/340)	499500	10000	Two months	350/-	Class-D
9.	C/O Link road Harizen Basti Gheor km: 0/000 to 5/096 (SH:- C/O C.C. Pavement at RD:- 3/140 to 3/340)	499500	10000	Two months	350/-	Class-D
10.	C/O Bridge at Village Kadaha via Pipili Jogiapanga road km: 0/000 to 3/500 (SH:- C/O Wing wall on village side approaches at RD: 0/000 to 0/015 U.S Side)	497241	10000	Two months	350/-	Class-D
11.	C/O Bridge at Village Kadaha via Pipili Jogiapanga road km: 0/000 to 3/500 (SH:- C/O Wing wall on village side approaches at RD: 0/000 to 0/015 U.S Side)	497241	10000	Two months	350/-	Class-D

The Earnest money in the shape of National Saving certificate/Time deposit/Saving account of any post office or FDR of Nationalized Bank duly pledged in the name of undersigned must be accompanied with each tender. The conditional tender and tender not accompanying the earnest money in the proper mode of deposit will summarily be rejected.

The Tender documents to be sent should have invariably be waxed in sealed cover and in failure of that those will not be entertained.

The Copy of valid entitlement, GST Registration No., Income Tax PAN No & EPF No. must be attached with application.

SPECIAL CONDITION:-

1. The tender form will be issued to those contractors who have relevant machinery and equipment, the list of which may be attached with their applications.(The proof of ownership of machinery/legal tieup arrangement).
2. The tender form will not be issued to those contractors who have already two works in hand.The earnest money for the above work should be submitted with the application for the purchase of the tender forms. The application received without earnest money shall summarily be rejected.
3. The conditional/ambiguous/telegraphic tenders or tender by fax shall not entertained/considered in any case.

2286/2021-2022 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK

HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG *SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER*

Sealed item rate basis tender on forms 6 & 8 is hereby invited on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh from the approved/ enlisted contractors in Jal Shakti Vibhag for execution of following jobs so as to reach in the office of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division Tissa at Bhanjra on or before 17.07.2021 upto 11.00 AM .The tenders will be opened on the same day at 11.30 AM in the presence of contractors or their authorized representative who may wish to be present. The tenders documents can be had from the office of the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division Tissa at any time in working days upto 3:00 PM on dated 16.07.2021 on cash payment of cost of tender form (Non-refundable) as mentioned against work. The tender's document should accompany earnest money in the shape of saving instruments, bankers/cheque/demand draft or fixed deposit, duly pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division Tissa". The tender without earnest money will be summarily rejected. The offer shall remain valid upto 120 days. The undersigned shall have the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason.-

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earnest money in Rs.	Cost of tender in Rs.	Time.
1.	Strengthening of Sub-Divisional Water testing laboratory at Jal Shakti Sub Division Koti under Jal Shakti Division Tissa in tehsil Churah Distt. Chamba (HP) :- Supply & Installation of chemical & instrument)	396866.00	79		



UNION MINISTER MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI

HAILING THE CENTRE'S PERFORMANCE IN THE LAST SEVEN YEARS

THUMBNAILS



Traffic jam during rush hour at Noida Sector-16 on Monday.

AGENCIES

Kalyan Singh's health condition improves: The health condition of former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Kalyan Singh, who is admitted to the hospital in Lucknow, is better and he is showing signs of improvement, the hospital said on Monday. He admitted to the ICU of the hospital on 4 July due to an infection and reduced consciousness level.

PTI

9 arrested for illegal sale of meat: Nine persons were caught red-handed while illegally selling meat in a dilapidated house in Mathura, police said. Acting on a tip off, arrests were made from the house near Madina Masjid in Bhuteswar area and 30 kg of meat was recovered. One axe, two gandasas (large blades used at slaughterhouse), two tarazus (balance machines) and weights were also seized, police said.

PTI

Navi Mumbai int'l airport name row: Panvel Municipal Corporation deputy Mayor Jagdish Gaikwad on Monday said villagers will launch protests again if the Maharashtra government doesn't name the upcoming Navi Mumbai international airport after the leader of the project affected people late D B Patil.

PTI

7 prisoners escape from AP jail: Seven undertrial prisoners escaped from a jail in Arunachal Pradesh by throwing chilli, pepper powder and salt at the guards manning the jail, a police said on Monday. Five guards of the Pasighat jail were injured in the incident which took place on Sunday evening when the jail lock-up was opened for serving dinner to the prisoners.

PTI

PM: Farm sector needs post-harvest revolution

Says govt's focus is to encourage youth and promote startups associated with agricultural sector



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New farm laws to boost competition: CEA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI, 12 JULY

New farm laws will ultimately help farmers get better returns as the legislations provide for competition by allowing them to sell their produce to even corporates like Reliance and ITC for good prices, Chief Economic Advisor K Subramanian said on Monday.

The farm laws were cleared by Parliament last year but the Supreme Court, in January 2021, suspended their implementation amid

protests by farmers.

The farm laws is a step towards improving the incomes of small and marginal farmers, Subramanian said.

Critics of the laws have been questioning the manner in which the bills were passed and alleged that the reform will help big businesses by corporatising farm activities.

Subramanian said the insistence on selling goods only at Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) markets dented

solution and value addition," Modi said in a message to commemorate the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development's foundation day, which was read out at an event hosted by the state-run lender.

"We are striving relentlessly to intensify our speed and scale to achieve this. We have been taking comprehensive steps to get a complete solution, from irrigation to sowing, harvesting and earnings that are technology enabled," he added.

Last year, the union government passed three new farm laws but its implementation has been postponed amid farmers' protest. However, in January this year, the Supreme Court had stayed the implementation of the three laws till further orders and appointed a four-member panel to resolve the impasse.

Modi had also promised to double farmers' incomes by 2022. The Prime Minister said the government's focus is to encourage youth and pro-

farmers' realisations because the buyer who acted as an intermediary had an upper hand in the trade due to factors like it being a perishable commodity or the costs involved in coming to the market again.

The farm Bill provides for competition so that the small and marginal farmer can go to the intermediary and say if you are not going to provide a good price, I can go and sell it to someone else. That someone else could be ITC, Reliance or Farm Fresh, he added.

mote startups associated with the agricultural sector.

"We are giving the impetus to create a scientific ecosystem, speed up development according to the wishes and expectations of the villages and transform the agricultural sector of the economy through holistic approach," he added.

The PM said a self-reliant rural economy is necessary for 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' or self-reliant India, and added that the government has taken concrete measures over the last seven years for the same.

'Farmers' hard work made allied sectors resilient to Covid'

MUMBAI, 12 JULY

The agriculture and allied sectors remained strong during the pandemic, registering a growth of 3.5 per cent in 2020-21, mainly due to the hard work of farmers, skills of scientists and government's farmer friendly policies, said Union minister Narendra Singh Tomar.

"Our agriculture and rural sector, which has been showing strength for years, has stood strong even during this pandemic and has contributed to the Indian economy. The tireless hard work of the farmers, the skill of the scientists and the farmer friendly policies of the government and the resolve of the progress of the villages showed a new ray of hope in the Corona crisis," the agriculture minister said.

Despite the constraints, he said, there was no shortfall in the food supply in the country and the agriculture and allied sector registered a growth rate of about 3.5 per cent in the last financial year.

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI

4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

OA NO. 314/2020

PUNJAB & SIND BANK

Date : 21.06.2021

M/S SIMAR ENTERPRISES & ORS.

VERSUS

RESPONDENT

To, DEFENDANT
(1) M/s Simar Enterprises (Borrower) the proprietor Sh. Deepinder Singh 1/92/2, Street No. 5, West Rohna Nagar Shahdara Delhi-110032 (2) Mr. Deepinder Singh Prop. M/s Simar Enterprises R/o 1/92/2, Street No. 5, West Rohna Nagar Shahdara Delhi-110032 (3) Mr. Ranbir Singh S/o Shri Anup Singh (Guarantor) 1/92/2, Street No. 5, West Rohna Nagar Shahdara Delhi-110032 (4) Smt. Hira Chugh w/o Sh. Deepinder Singh (Guarantor) 1/92/2, Street No. 5, West Rohna Nagar Shahdara Delhi-110032

Whereas the above named applicant (s) have instituted a case for recovery of Ra. 44,62,922/- (Rupee Forty Lakh Sixty Two Thousand Nine Hundred and Twenty Two Only) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 13.08.2021 at 10.30 A.M.

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

By Order of the Tribunal

Assistant Registrar

DRT-II, Delhi

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI

4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

OA NO. 313/2020

PUNJAB & SIND BANK

Date : 21.06.2021

M/S SAHIB INTERNATIONAL & ORS.

VERSUS

RESPONDENT

To, DEFENDANT
(1) M/s Sahib International (Borrower) The Proprietor Sh. Mandeep Singh 22-B, Shephur Jat, New Delhi-110032 (2) Mr. Mandeep Singh R/o 1/92/2 Street No. 5 West Rohna Nagar Shahdara Delhi-110032 (3) Mr. Ranbir Singh S/o Shri Anup Singh, 1/92/2, Street No. 5, West Rohna Nagar Shahdara Delhi-110032 (4) Ms. Haminderjeet Kaur W/o Sh. Mandeep Singh R/o 1/92/2, Street No. 5, West Rohna Nagar Shahdara Delhi-110032

Whereas the above named applicant (s) have instituted a case for recovery of Ra. 35,41,166/- (Rupee Thirty Five Lakh Forty One Thousand One Hundred and Sixty Six Only) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 13.08.2021 at 10.30 A.M.

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

By Order of the Tribunal

Assistant Registrar

DRT-II, Delhi

SEARCH FOR MISSING

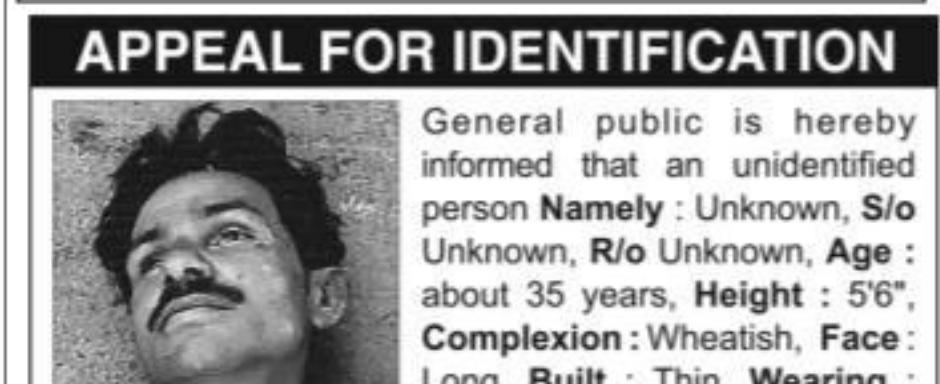


General Public is hereby informed that a boy named **Abhishek Panday, S/o Anil Panday, R/o H.No. 59, Gali No. 2, West Karawal Nagar, Delhi, Age: 21 years, Built: Medium, Height: 5'2", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Long, Wearing: Brown colour T-Shirt-Lower and Slipper in his feet has been missing from his house since 29.06.2021. In this regard a vide case DD No. 50-A dated 30.06.2021 has been registered at P.S. Karawal Nagar, Delhi.**

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing boy but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this boy please inform undersigned.

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639
DP/892/NE/2021

SHO
P.S. Karawal Nagar, Delhi
Ph.: 22932232, 22932231,
8750870728



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person **Name: Unknown, S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown, Age: about 35 years, Height: 5'6", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing: Grey colour lower has been found dead at 2nd Pusta Wine shop ke samne, Delhi on 08.07.2021. In this regard a case vide DD No. 68-A dated 08.07.2021 has been lodged at P.S. New Usmanpur, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved in G.T.B. Hospital, Mortuary, Delhi.**

Any person having any information or clue about this found dead person may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO
P.S. New Usmanpur, Delhi North-East Distt., Delhi
Ph. No. 011-22175468, 22172410

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person **Name: Unknown, S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown, Age: about 35 years, Height: 5'6", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing: Grey colour lower has been found dead at 2nd Pusta Wine shop ke samne, Delhi on 08.07.2021. In this regard a case vide DD No. 68-A dated 08.07.2021 has been lodged at P.S. New Usmanpur, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved in G.T.B. Hospital, Mortuary, Delhi.**

Any person having any information or clue about this found dead person may kindly inform to the following:-

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Website: http://cbi.nic.in
Fax: 24368639,
Tel.: 24368638/24368641

SHO - P.S. Jafrabad, Delhi
Tel. No. : 011-22560191,
22560192

SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED GIRL



General public is hereby informed that this girl named **Iram D/o Sajid R/o H.No. 1179, Gali No. 38, Jafrabad, Delhi Age : 15 years, Height : 5', Face : Round, Build : Normal, Complexion : Wheatish, wearing yellow colour kurta, black colour jeans and hawai chappal in feet, has been kidnapped since 21.06.2021 from her house. In this regard FIR No. 241/21 dated 26.06.2021 u/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Jafrabad, Delhi.**

Any person having any information or clue about this kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following:-

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Website: http://cbi.nic.in
Fax: 24368639,
Tel.: 24368638/24368641

SHO - P.S. Jafrabad, Delhi
Tel. No. : 011-22560191,
22560192

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed that two boys (1) **Armaan S/o Javed R/o Bareli Near Kila Thana, UP, and (2) Deepak S/o Kallu Mandal R/o Sonkar Bhagalpur, Bihar** has been missing since 01.06.2021 from Prayagraj Open Shelter, Sarai Pipal Thala, Azadpur, Delhi at 6 AM. In this regard, FIR No. 617/21 dated 03.06.2021 u/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Mahendra Park, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing boys but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing boys is as under:

Name: Armaan: Male, Age: 10 years, Height: 4'4", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Built: Thin, Wearing: Blue colour t-shirt and blue colour jeans.

Name: Deepak, Male, Age: 13 years, Height: 5'2", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Built: Thin, Wearing: White colour t-shirt, blue colour jeans.

If anyone has any information regarding these missing boys, kindly inform SHO/Mahendra Park, Delhi.

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639
DP/884/NW/2021

SHO
P.S. Mahendra Park, Delhi.
Ph. No. 011-27632501, 27632502

ASHA RAMACHANDRAN

NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

At a time when educationists across the country are debating over assessment of school-leaving children, a set of students is silently dropping out of the education system - girls from the economically weaker segment of society.

With education going almost completely digital following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, government has an opportunity to bridge the gender gap but ground realities present a different picture. Contrary to what was expected, the number of girls attending online classes has seen a huge fall, according to reports by global and domestic organisations, including the UNESCO and the World Bank, who have all advocated policies that would swiftly bridge this gender gap before it becomes a grave social issue. Due to Covid e-learning and online classes became the norm as virtual classrooms ensured students' education was not halted.

Meanwhile, over the years, despite an aggressive campaign for girl child education, the primary reasons for a high rate of school drop-out among girls particularly in rural India, are distantly located secondary and high schools as well as safety aspects.

With classes going online these hurdles should have been overcome and one would infer that a larger number of girls would be enrolled. However, there is a significantly lower number of girls accessing digital education, says a report by the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

A major reason for this is the limited or no access to computers or mobile phones by young girls.



Experts and educationists have called upon policy-makers to put in place measures to promote girls' education as this has long-term impacts, including poverty alleviation. In this context, the National Education Policy of India (NEP) 2020 has addressed several issues pertaining to access to education by girls. The policy also promotes digital access for women and girls to ensure that the gap created by the lack of mobility is bridged to a large extent.

Non-government organisations (NGOs) also have a major role to play in this, experts point out. One such initiative is by a Gurugram-based rural development NGO in rural Nuh, Haryana, helping girls with digital and life skills training. Known as the Transform Lives, the NGO, Sehgal Foundation, targets one school at

Entry-level exam

Neither the academic circuit nor the students will readily concur with the West Bengal Education Minister, Bratya Basu's announcement to scrap admission tests and interviews this year for entry to under-graduate courses. Students will instead be admitted on the basis of the marks obtained in the run-up to the Class 10 and 12 exams that have been cancelled by various boards both at the national and state levels. Even interviews have been barred. The admission process, therefore, verges on the ludicrous, indeed one that offers little scope for evaluation of merit. While Jadavpur University, a centre of excellence, is yet to take a call on the praxis, the autonomous St Xavier's University has been explicit on the point that it will go ahead with tests. This is how it should be. "The government's decision is for state-run universities. We are going ahead with our admissions on the scheduled dates," was the response of the Vice-Chancellor, Fr Felix Raj. Hopefully, the robust and exceptionally talented admissions committee of JU will abide by the conventional system. On closer reflection, this is perfectly rational not the least because by doing away with entry-level tests, the state is attempting to put in place a one size-fits-all formula at the vital transition stage from school to college. Presidency University, going by the statement issued by Vice-Chancellor Anuradha Lohia, is awaiting advice from the West Bengal Joint Entrance Examinations Board that conducts the entrance exam. It would be pertinent to recall that even toppers in school-leaving exams, had to appear in admission tests, pre-eminently in English, Economics and History for entering Presidency College. (An exception was of course made in 1971 in the wake of Naxalite violence on the campus, the closure of the hallowed Main building, and the conversion of the college to a CRPF camp). Admission tests have never been more imperative than this year given the need to screen candidates post the cancellation of the ICSE, ISC and Higher Secondary exams. The boards have cancelled the exams that are held on the basis of varying degrees of instruction.

The minister's formulaic prescription will doubtless militate against uniformity in the admission/selection process. Not to put too fine a point on it, the quality of the students is bound to suffer in the contrived absence of agreeable criteria. With a stroke of the ministerial pen, Mr Basu may have denuded standards, if unwittingly. An admission test is invariably preceded by what they call "study at home", and does not entail classroom lectures. Coaching centres represent a different - and commercial - proposition altogether. While the provisions of the minister's roadmap seem fairly comprehensive from the government's perspective, there can be no compromise on intrinsic merit. The cancellation of ISC, ICSE and Higher Secondary exams has precluded a level playing field as students gear up for the next stage of learning. The careers of hundreds of thousands are at stake.

Verdict in Ethiopia

Will democracy be rooted in embattled Ethiopia post the elections and months of civil war? It would be premature to hazard a guess though the Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity Party has won a landslide victory, securing 410 of the 436 contested seats in the embattled country's federal parliament. Despite the repression on a section of the populace, the Prosperity Party has won the most seats in the country's election, a victory that assures Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed a second five-year term in office. In a statement posted on Twitter, Abiy hailed the June 21 vote as a historically inclusive election. And so it was. "Our party is also happy that it has been chosen by the will of the people to administer the country," he added.

The election marked the first time Abiy faced voters since he was appointed as Prime Minister in 2018 following several years of anti-government protests. But there were red herrings across the trail in a swathe of Africa, notably an opposition boycott, war in the northern region of Tigray, ethnic violence and logistical challenges in some areas. These were the factors that overshadowed the poll. Indeed, there was no voting in three of Ethiopia's 10 regions. Despite the pronounced disaffection in such volatile regions as Tigray, the Prosperity Party won 410 seats, according to results issued by the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) which said there would be a rerun in 10 constituencies. The leader of the main opposition Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice party, Birhanu Nega, lost while the opposition parties - Eritrea and the National Movement of Amhara (NAMA) - each won less than 10 seats. More accurately, the landslide triumph of the Prosperity Party came as "no surprise". Abiy's party was from the start in an advantageous position. The outcome has reaffirmed the decimation of the Opposition. Much will be expected of Mr Abiy as his party now boasts a brute majority and the Opposition has been reduced to irrelevance. But the landslide will mean that it will become that much tougher to hold the government to account. Opposition demonstrations outside the House could be more frequent than within. In Abiy's native Oromia region, Ethiopia's largest, two of the most prominent opposition parties - the Oromo Federalist Congress and the Oromo Liberation Front - pulled out entirely, saying their candidates had been arrested and offices vandalised. Thus did the governing party contest alone in several dozen constituencies. No date has been set for voting in Tigray, where the military has been battling forces loyal to the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the region's former governing party, since November. The fighting has displaced two million people, and the United Nations has warned of famine conditions in parts of the region. While any democratic process is cause for cheer, Ethiopia's election has left several questions unanswered.

Stimuli Revisited

In economic terms, the stimulus could be said to be based on a traditional approach i.e., managing the pace of economic growth by reining in inflation and adjusting the cost of private borrowing rather than by spending public money. The Government's liquidity enhancing measures stabilised the financial system but household incomes fell



On 24 March 2020, as soon as the Covid-19 pandemic started to manifest itself in India, Prime Minister Modi announced a pan-India, three week long total lockdown, which was extended to a record sixty-eight days. A Nit Aayog member claimed that the lockdown would end the Coronavirus pandemic by 15 May 2020. Sadly, the prophecy was not fulfilled; rather, the lockdown had a disastrous impact on the economy. Also, since lockdown measures forced all shops and factories to close down, jobless migrant workers started trudging home; traversing the length and breadth of the country, on foot, on bicycles, on rickshaws, and even cramming themselves in tankers, dumpers and cement mixers. In an effort to stem the exodus, the Government announced a food security scheme for 80 crore beneficiaries. However, lacking an effective delivery mechanism, food aid did not reach migrant workers, and their movement continued unabated.

To rejuvenate the moribund economy, the PM announced a financial stimulus package of Rs 20 lakh crore on 12 May 2020. Elucidating the Prime Minister's declaration, the Finance Minister announced five sets of relief measures. The first set of measures were aimed at pumping in additional liquidity of almost Rs 6 lakh crore, mostly in the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector. The second tranche of the stimulus, worth Rs 3.10 lakh crore, included Rs 2 lakh crore for Kisan Credit Cards and Rs 3,500 crore for free food grain supply to migrant workers. A One Nation One Ration Card Scheme, allowing beneficiaries to draw rations from any public distribution unit in the country was also announced. The third tranche, aimed at the agricultural sector was worth Rs 1.5 lakh crore. The fourth and fifth tranches focused on reform in several sectors, and had a financial outlay of Rs 48,100 crore, out of which, Rs 40,000 crore was additional MNREGA allocation.

For people who found that the sum of the five tranches did not add up to Rs 20 lakh crores, the Finance Minister clarified that the stimulus package included Rs 1.92 lakh crore worth subsidised food grain and cooking gas to the poor and PM-Kisan payments of March 2020, as also Rs 8.01 lakh crore of liquidity enhancing measures aimed at banks and States, announced earlier by the RBI. Thus, accord-

ing to the FM, the stimulus totalled Rs 20.97 lakh crore. Later on, another stimulus package of Rs 2.65 lakh crore was announced in November 2020, the main component of which was a Production Linked Incentive of Rs 1.46 lakh crore for ten sectors.

The relief package involved a very small amount of direct government spending. Rather, most of the proposals were credit-focused, with the Government providing guarantees for loans by banks and NBFCs to MSMEs and small businesses. Many of these initiatives had timelines going beyond the financial year, making the Government's contribution dependent upon the Government's own pace of implementation. Excepting PM-Kisan, there was no scheme of direct cash transfer in the relief package. Thus, the package failed to ameliorate the immediate distress of the vulnerable sections of society e.g., migrants, daily workers and street vendors.

In economic terms, the stimulus could be said to be based on a traditional approach i.e., managing the pace of economic growth by reining in inflation and adjusting the cost of private borrowing rather than by spending public money. The Government's liquidity enhancing measures stabilised the financial system but household incomes fell, and according to research by SBI, household indebtedness increased by 5 per cent during the pandemic. In a marked change from the strategy adopted in 2008, while dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, Western countries, particularly the US, discarded the orthodox top-down approach, preferring fiscal policy to monetary policy. The US Government distributed cash directly to households and businesses without being overly selective about the beneficiaries, devising policies to ensure that help reached the most needy. For example, after announcing a stimulus of \$2.2 trillion on 27 March 2020 under the CARES Act, the US launched another stimulus in March 2021, committing \$1.9 trillion to Covid-19 relief encompassing five major cash-transfer programmes, including \$1,400 to Americans earning up to \$75,000, an additional \$300 a week in unemployment benefits up to 6 September 2021 and

An additional sum of Rs 1.5 lakh crores has been allotted for MSMEs in the stimulus package of Rs 6.28 lakh crore announced on 28 June 2021, even though 10 per cent of the Rs 3 lakh crore earmarked for MSMEs in May 2020 had not been utilised. There

assistance for rent and health care and a child allowance of \$250 to \$300 a month per child. The Fed wholeheartedly supported the Government's initiatives by buying Government debt and keeping borrowing costs low. Even the International Monetary Fund, a die-hard votary of fiscal prudence, endorsed Government stimulus measures.

The aftermath of the stimulus for the US economy surprised traditionalists. Right from the second quarter of 2020, at the time when the US GDP shrank by 34.3 per cent and Covid-19 infections were on an upward trajectory, U.S. household incomes, which were already higher by 60 per cent than average European incomes, actually increased. The US economy grew by 6.4 per cent in the third quarter of 2021, and is poised to grow by a record-breaking 7 per cent in fiscal year 2021 (which ends on 30 September). The mood in the US is one of optimism; the US stock market has risen by 250 per cent in the last one year.

On the other hand, an ultra-conservative approach has impeded the recovery of the Indian economy, which shrank by 7.3 per cent in FY 2020-21. Household incomes went down in India; our per capita GDP is now less than that of Bangladesh. The distress is most at the lowest level; while India added 40 more billionaires last year, more than 23 crore people have been pushed back into poverty. Also, poor implementation has marred the implementation of the fiscal stimulus. For example, during the second wave of Coronavirus infections, a large number of migrant labour could not get the rations intended for them, because the much hyped One Nation One Ration Card Scheme had not been implemented, even after one year. Then, there were not many takers for the loans offered by the Government; the overall credit growth has been only 5.7 per cent, while credit growth for MSMEs was a meagre 3.8 per cent.

Stabilising our population is crucial if we have to meet our developmental goals. Similar action may not be relevant for most Southern states as well as Punjab, Maharashtra and West Bengal as they have met the national policy goals of lower fertility rates.

Yours, etc., HN Ramakrishna, Bengaluru, 11 July.

BENEFICIARIES
SIR, This refers to the article 'Effectual Dirigisme' (11 July) by Arindam Ghosh Dastidar. The noticeable feature in the presentation of the budget is that the government has announced new schemes for direct cash transfer to

is also some evidence that the liberalised definition of MSMEs, combined with a reluctance of institutions to lend to the really needy, enabled bigger players to corner most of the loans meant for their smaller brethren.

Moreover, in some instances, creditworthy borrowers renewed old loans at lower rates. Also, the latest stimulus package is fully credit based; the major part of the package, Rs 3.03 lakh crore is for DISCOMS, which had been provided Rs 90,000 crores in the 2020 stimulus. Probably, more than credit, major reforms are needed in the power sector.

Then, Rs 30,000 crores is earmarked for 25 lakh beneficiaries, who would be able to borrow up to Rs 1.25 lakh through micro-finance institutions (MFIs). The usefulness of this scheme is doubtful as MFIs typically lend at an interest rate of 30-35 per cent.

Certain questions come to mind vis-à-vis the financial stimulus. Firstly, whether loans or guarantees, so liberally doled out by the FM, can really be classified as 'stimulus', because loans add to the liability of the recipients. Secondly, automatic loans to farmers through Kisan Credit Cards, at a time when the agricultural sector is not under distress, would increase rural indebtedness, the biggest problem of village society. Thirdly, almost all measures announced in the stimulus would boost the economy in the medium-term, while the distress of the unemployed and migrant labour demands immediate succour. Fourthly, whether a supply-side monetarist approach is the best way to reboot our economy? Looking to the experience of other countries in dealing with the pandemic induced economic slowdown, cash transfers to vulnerable sections would have addressed the misery of the poor better. One also wishes that instead of concentrating on the supply side, the Government could have tried to boost demand by spending a part of the stimulus amount on rural infrastructure building so as to employ workers rendered jobless due to the pandemic, in activities like reforestation and soil reclamation that can retrieve millions of hectares of overused soil from erosion and devastation. Then, the Government could start projects in villages and small towns, aimed at building schools, connecting and internal roads, bridges, hospitals, waterworks, sewers etc. that would create much-needed infrastructure and provide employment at the same time.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIA NEWS NETWORK

ASIAN VOICES

Protect press freedom

The ruling Democratic Party of Korea is pushing for a bill that would make media outlets pay punitive damages for false reports. The party convened a meeting of the bill deliberation subcommittee of the parliamentary Culture, Sports and Tourism Committee on Tuesday and tabled a number of bills. These included one to revise the Act on Press Arbitration and Remedies for Damage Caused by Press Reports. The main opposition People Power Party condemned the ruling party for convening the subcommittee meeting unilaterally, without prior consultations. People Power Party lawmakers did not attend the meeting in protest. The proposal primarily aims to multiply, up to five-fold, the level of damages that courts could award in cases where someone is harmed by a deliberately false news report or one where gross negligence leads to a falsehood. If a news media outlet publishes a false report, it should assume responsibility. Be that as it may, those in power must not use a misreport as an excuse to scare the media out of making critical reports. That appears to be the aim of the Democratic Party's bill.

Punitive damages are usually awarded after serious industrial accidents. It seems out of step with common sense to apply them to the area of media reporting, which is expected to serve the public interest by satisfying people's right to know. One of the biggest problems is that such monetary sanctions would very likely be used to suppress press freedom. The penalties would likely trigger a flood

H The Korea Herald

of litigation. Lawsuits by groups with grudges against certain media outlets could increase, too. The problem of false news is currently covered by existing civil and criminal laws, which make it possible to seek damages and criminal punishment for defamation and insult. To add punitive damages would be excessive. Remedies for victims, such as corrections printed after a false report, are already available through the Press Arbitration Commission. Besides, most fake news comes from social media platforms, which the bill excludes. It targets major media. If the ruling party is truly worried about damage caused by fake news, it might first try to find some way of preventing politicians and officials from covering up suspicions. On numerous occasions, the presidential office, government officials and lawmakers have denied allegations raised by news media, offering counterarguments based on insufficient evidence and window-dressed data. For example, even though the state-assessed values of apartments in Seoul have soared more than 80 percent over the past four years, the presidential office said housing prices had risen just 17 percent. It has likewise varnished over statistics on employment and income distribution.

The ruling party suffered a crushing defeat in the April 7 by-elections. Angered by its double standards and failed real estate policies, voters turned their backs on the current regime. And yet it did not reflect on its faults but blamed the press. It must stop trying to gag critical media. Another bill that would impact the news media seeks to revise a law on government advertising. It would introduce a "media voucher" system under which people would be asked if they "liked" or "disliked" certain newspapers. The government would assess the influence of particular media based on their popularity and would allocate its advertisement budget accordingly.



CO-INHERITORS

SIR, Your report that 35 per cent of tiger ranges are out of protected areas is a cause for concern. In such a scenario, man-animal conflicts are bound to keep on increasing.

The government with its obsession with a development model that entails destruction of natural resources for building does not seem to care about its wild life. Development has to be sustainable and man must not forget that other living things are co-inheritors of the earth.

The film 'Sherali' now streaming on an OTT platform gives a glimpse of the enormity of the problem. Let us hope the new Minister in charge of forests would give us some good news on this front.

Yours, etc., Anthony Henriques, Mumbai, 10 July.

bank accounts of beneficiaries. But there has not been any proper thought applied to its implementation, or the assessment of eligibility of beneficiaries.

There should be a definite criteria for a beneficiary to get such a facility. The government should aim to remove poverty in

the rural areas. But the system of economic doles like Lakshmir bhabander and daure ration to all haves and have-nots would complicate the implementation of the schemes announced in the budget.

Yours, etc., Dilip Kumar Dutta, Midnapore, 12 July.

Coercion will not work

SIR, This refers to your report 'Yogi Adityanath unveils new population policy for UP'. At the national level, India is on the verge of reaching replacement levels of population which is good news.

It is well known that States that are more developed have a higher per-capita income and better access to healthcare, education, employment and a host of other benefits due to lower total fertility rate and religion has no role in this.

States like UP, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have fertil-



BENEFICIARIES

SIR, This refers to the article 'Effectual Dirigisme' (11 July) by Arindam Ghosh Dastidar. The noticeable feature in the presentation of the budget is that the government has announced new schemes for direct cash transfer to

HARSHA KAKAR

A media report stated that in the past six months, the Chinese state-owned newspaper, China Daily, spent millions of dollars in an attempt to purchase media influence in the West. According to inputs, Time magazine, Financial Times, Foreign Policy and Los Angeles Times were amongst the major recipients of Chinese funds. In India, there are Chinese supporters, possibly on their payroll, whose writing defends Beijing's viewpoints. China is struggling to improve its global image, even if it involves purchasing positive media coverage.

During the CCP's centenary celebrations, Chinese president Xi Jinping attempted to project an image of power and determination. He stated during his address, "Anyone who would attempt to do so (bully, oppress or enslave) will find themselves on a collision course with a great wall of steel forged by over 1.4 billion Chinese people." This may have been aimed at impressing his domestic audience; however across the world, China is at the receiving end, with nations questioning its behaviour and crossing its red lines.

Addressing the world political parties' summit last week, Xi requested political parties worldwide to oppose politicising the Covid pandemic or attaching a geographical label to the virus. His statement comes after demands for a probe into the origins of the virus have intensified. China remains the nation blamed for intentionally leaking the virus. Demands for the probe rose sharply after Chinese wolf warrior diplomats sought to suggest that the virus originated in other countries.

President Xi, realising the global damage his wolf warrior diplomacy was causing, mentioned, "It is necessary to make friends, unite and win over the majority, and constantly expand the circle of friends (when it comes to) international public opinion." These words were too little and too late. The Chinese image has taken a beating and is unlikely to recover soon. Its offensive and bullying tactics are enhancing negativity about China. While its few allies and indebted states maintain silence, their views, too, are changing.

China's blood-sucking Belt Road Initiative has begun taking control of vital national assets in return for non-payment of dues. China's image is of a country grabbing iconic assets, degrading and humiliating indebted economically weaker nations. While governments may be compelled to part with assets as an alternative to repayment, the Chinese image of a blood-

Beijing struggles to overhaul its image

sucker grows. In Myanmar, Chinese factories are burnt, while in Africa, Chinese citizens rarely venture out, fearing local anger and retribution. In Pakistan, Chinese companies mention shifting offices outside the country, fearing that their image would enhance insecurities and invite terrorist attacks.

The level of distrust against China has risen to the extent that the US, amongst others, has reduced issue of education visas to Chinese students. Those currently studying are being investigated, and if found to have ties to the PLA or CCP they are being deported. The belief gaining ground is that Chinese students are spies, sent to gain technical knowledge, and should therefore not be permitted in critical research fields. Demands for global investigation into claims of genocide in Xinjiang are gaining ground, despite China insisting it is an internal matter.

Apart from nations that are indebted financially to China, most others have condemned its human rights record. EU, which almost signed the trade deal of the century with China, backed away amidst a diplomatic row over Xinjiang. Despite pressures, nations are crossing Chinese red lines at will.

China's offensive approach against its smaller neighbours in the South China Sea (SCS) has drawn European nations into the fray. Germany, France and shortly the UK, will, alongside the QUAD, participate in Freedom of Navigation Operations in the SCS. The EU, which was tilting towards China, has drifted back into the US fold.

Beijing's offensive intentions in the region pushed India and the US closer, adding to Chinese security concerns. The QUAD is gaining power, despite China criticising it. India, which till recently refused to be drawn into the SCS dispute, as it sought to maintain the Mahabali-puram spirit, is now advocating an open Indo-Pacific. This fear compelled China to threaten regional nations like Bangladesh on supporting the QUAD.

China losing its power became evident when India, which sought to avoid diplomatic clashes, changed its tune. The Indian leadership ignored the Chinese CCP centenary, as also for the first time in decades, an Indian PM publicly



wished the Dalai Lama on his birthday. This displayed Indian intentions of not normalising ties with China amidst the unresolved border crisis, and in case China escalates militarily, India is prepared.

Global support for the Tibetan succession issue is increasing. This is an open challenge to China, which has repeatedly stated that it alone possesses the authority to nominate the next Dalai Lama. Sometime in the future, this subject would pit China versus the rest. Indian support to either side would be critical as the Tibetan government in exile resides here.

China sought to present its autocratic single-party rule as an alternative to democracy. It intend-

ed to project democratic nations as being incapable of meeting aspirations of their citizens. It attempted to exploit its dramatic economic and military growth to highlight success of single-party rule. This collapsed as Chinese refusal to adhere to global norms and its bullying of weaker neighbours damaged its image.

The West successfully utilised cognitive warfare, severely denting any positive outlook China attempted to project. The Western perception remains of China being a global pariah. China partially insulated its population from external influence by banning global social media networks at home; however, its citizens abroad are being influenced and the reality reaches home.

Chinese spokespersons devote greater time in defending accusations and accuse other nations of bias. While China continues to falsely display an image of bravado and little concern for global opinions, the realities are different. China, which should have been dominating global decision-making, is finding itself increasingly isolated, compelled to shore up its image.

It is for this reason that China is forced to purchase goodwill and positive reviews in global newspapers. It is possibly the only country purchasing respect rather than deserving it.

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

Covid impact on human trafficking



PATRICK MOSTYN

Large social and economic crises are usually followed by increases in human trafficking and exploitation. There is no reason to believe that the Covid-19 pandemic will be any different in Bangladesh. There are already clear signs of growing vulnerability in communities. Taking informed action now could disrupt trafficking patterns before borders and movement return to normal later in 2021.

Before the onset of the pandemic in 2020, Bangladesh and West Bengal were already growing hubs for human trafficking. West Bengal

accounted for some 55 per cent of reported cases of trafficking in India in 2016, and over 50,000 Bangladeshi children and women are trafficked to India every year, largely into West Bengal, primarily for sexual exploitation. In addition, the Bangladesh-India border is 4,000 km long and often unfenced. This situation is likely to be worsened by the pandemic.

The Ebola epidemic of 2013-2016 in West Africa saw a correlation between families broken up by the impacts of the virus and an uptick in the exploitation of women and girls. In Bangladesh, the impact of Covid-19 has led to a significant rise in vulnerability in poor communities through 2020. In 2018-19, the poverty rate was 20.5 per cent; this increased to 29.5 per cent by June 2020. Those who were already vulnerable before the pandemic are now being joined by the "newly vulnerable", people whose livelihoods and income have been damaged by the pandemic. An increase in vulnerability will lead to an increase in risk taking.

As a recent BRAC research paper reminds us, "if the need and poverty are great enough, and not addressed, people will ... migrate no matter the risks, known or unknown." For the poorest, severe economic shocks lead to scarcity of jobs, food, and money, and push people into irregular

migration and related forms of exploitation.

BRAC is undertaking a pilot project in Jashore (on the western Bangladesh border with India) to test interventions focused on reducing the trafficking of children especially girls and women aged 12-30 in vulnerable communities. There have been a number of key findings about the damaging impacts of Covid-19 on communities.

During the lockdown, there were significant job losses, particularly for those in the informal sector (day labourers, rickshaw pullers, small business owners). As the economy reopens, there has been growing competition for available work; many migrant workers who were previously working overseas have now returned to Bangladesh - The Daily Star reported that over 500,000 migrants had returned by March 2021. There has also been a trend of internal migration from urban to rural areas as people return to their villages after losing their jobs. BRAC said they have observed a significant rise in gender-based violence, particularly during the lockdown. It also draws links between lockdown, frustration, anxiety, and a wider increase in violence in the country. At the local level, a number of important services have been disrupted.

The closure of courts from March to September in 2020 has

increased the backlog of cases (a backlog that already stood at 3.5 million pending cases). There is also less oversight at the local level, and important local bodies such as Counter-Trafficking Committees (CTCs) are not necessarily carrying out their duties due to the lockdown.

These issues are all likely to increase the chances of people being trafficked; adults without income or support or experiencing violence are more likely to pursue dangerous or unreliable job offers themselves or to send their children into risky and unsafe work. Equally, children with fewer supports are more vulnerable to traffickers, especially when many schools have been closed, particularly girls aged 14-16 who are ordinarily vulnerable to school dropout and trafficking.

Evidence points to ongoing trafficking activities, possibly preparatory work to identify victims for a later date when cross-border movement becomes easier. Middlemen have reportedly been very active lately in communities. Since the border is closed between Bangladesh and India to all but international trade, it is very hard to secure visas for crossings into West Bengal (a common way to "legally" transport trafficking victims into India). Much trafficking activity will likely have been driven out to

the unfenced border or online. Recent reports point to a growth in the use of social media platforms like TikTok in the recruitment and grooming of victims.

Most experts think that we are in a moment of uncertainty. There is limited data, and the impacts of the pandemic on trafficking patterns are yet to be observed. But they all agree that a surge in vulnerability will lead to a large growth in trafficking in the coming months.

There are also new and emerging patterns of trafficking. An official from Stop the Traffik, a campaign coalition fighting to prevent human trafficking worldwide, sees a growth of trafficking of Bangladeshi and the Rohingya into Malaysia, and BRAC warns of growing internal trafficking in Bangladesh. BRAC's findings in Jashore are representative of wider growth, evolution and change in trafficking and exploitation of vulnerable and minority groups across South Asia. While responsible organisations will continue to remain vigilant and respond to the changing context, communities, law enforcement and the government in Bangladesh and India, as well as the international community, will all need to cooperate if they are to disrupt new trafficking patterns and minimise the adverse effects of Covid-19 on cross-border trafficking in South Asia.

The Daily Star/ANN.

NO 28971

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

DISGRACE	COMMON
THE	RE
EGREGIOUS	SIN
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DETEST	DEPORTEE

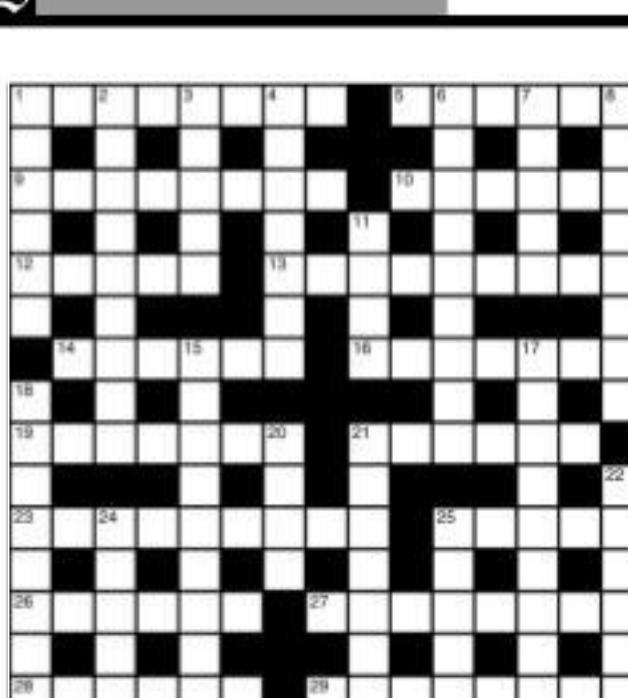
ACROSS

- 1 Dull part of cricket pitch (8)
- 2 Functional Uniform with fur (6)
- 9 Embraced sixth sense love employed (8)
- 10 American directors on ship (6)
- 12 Fine, limp fringe (5)
- 13 Exploit Oscar during unusual free trip (9)
- 14 One suspended in hot incense (6)
- 16 Endlessly lucky Ken rolled joint (7)
- 19 Demanding individual run out by you and I (7)
- 21 A small platter is out of place (6)
- 23 Profanities as naughty child draws across middle of frieze (9)
- 25 Golf shot starts to spin hard after
- 26 Emphatic type with male mice hearts (6)
- 27 Manipulate mechanic? (8)
- 28 Elegant and witty, eases oddly inside (6)
- 29 Pressing item is dull and inflexible (8)
- 30 Regarding enemy rising loudly and unmatched (3-3)
- 31 Seaplane crashed across end of Southwold promenade (9)
- 32 Shy laugh the French dismissed (5)
- 33 Secret agent skins up with little sign of hesitation (7)
- 34 Leapt around in coat (5)
- 35 Bores quit changing nickname (9)

- 7 Sword turned up in pedal bin (5)
- 8 Approved of final section by journalist written about Old Republican (8)
- 11 Heartless cook behind house wine (4)
- 15 Supplies reportedly more disgusting diners regularly (9)
- 17 Stand after knock out in the manner of Australian native (5,4)
- 18 Dim Fox'd routed changed (8)
- 20 Part of nourishing piece of beef (4)
- 21 Club succeeded in promotion of street artist (7)
- 22 Pelt across right bend in piste (3,3)
- 24 Avoid drink in street (5)

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

CROSSWORD



07

The Statesman

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 13 JULY 2021

100 YEARS AGO

OPTIONAL NOTE

Our mail telegram shows that there is a prospect of another boom in the eastward passenger traffic during the coming autumn, the sequel to which must be a corresponding rush for return passages during the following spring. So far as India is concerned, the hope of a visit by the Prince of Wales in the cold weather might alone be enough to explain the increased demand for passages, and this would be no more than anyone might expect. It appears, however, that bookings for the Far East are about as heavy as those for Calcutta and Bombay, for which ports most vessels due to sail in October are booked up already; and we are told that heavy globe-trotting has started again in earnest. Messrs. Thomas Cook and Sons report a large increase in the number of round-the-world trips; and there are said to be signs that world-wide sight-seeing will become more popular each year and that pre-war records will be surpassed. They ought to be surpassed if the arrears of ordinary progress in tourist traffic are to be made up. The prospect of the boom in ocean travel is to be welcomed as evidence that there is a fair amount of prosperity in the world, despite the depressing influences which loom so largely in the industrial sky. They have not been idle in the task of strengthening their fleets.

NEWS ITEMS

DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION

Mr. Manley C. Kemp, one of the best known masters of Harrow is retiring after nearly half a century's experience of that school. Dealing with educational changes since the old days he said that practically no distinction was now made between the Classical and Modern sides. Greek was almost totally extinct and the standard of Latin had gone down, but the teaching of science, art and music had been immensely advanced. Boys had not the same freedom as formerly, but school life generally had improved. Boys now were generally kindly and well disposed and there was no "ragging" or roughness unless a boy invited it. The quality of school cricket had declined because the masters who used to teach cricket now golfd in their spare time.

NAGPUR CONTEMPT OF COURT CASE

In the case in which Mr. Pohirkar is charged with contempt of court, Messrs. Rajarampant Deshpande and G.B. Lothe, retired first class magistrates, gave evidence for the defence and stated that in the written statement filed by the accused in Mr. Siraj Ahmed's court there was nothing insulting to the presiding magistrate, and it did not convey nor read in any way as a direct or intentional insult to an individual magistrate. Mr. Chotelal Varma, First Class Magistrate, delivered judgment sentencing Pohirkar to one month's simple imprisonment. In awarding the sentence, the court held that the accused directly questioned the authority of Siraj Ahmed's court to decide the case against him. The magistrate said he felt convinced that the accused made an insulting statement in a spirit of bravado.

FATE OF BRITISH AIRSHIPS

The Parliamentary Air Committee, representing 150 members of both Houses, met yesterday to consider the fate of Government airships which up to the present no commercial companies have offered to take over. A resolution was passed urging Government to maintain the personnel and designing staff of the airship department, and also sufficient airships to secure continuous development of the science of navigation of lighter-than-air craft. The resolution emphasised the possibilities of airships acting in conjunction with the fleet, and securing rapid communication between the Empire and the rest of the world. The Premier and the Secretary for Air have been requested to receive a deputation on the subject.

AMROHA RAILWAY ACCIDENT

In accordance with instructions given by Sir Thomas Holland during his inspection, on July 4, of the scene of the Amroha Railway accident, a Committee has now been assembled to consider technical questions connected with the failure of the railway bridge. The Committee consists of Mr. G. Richards, chief engineer, Railways Board, Mr. C.E. Hall, superintending engineer, Irrigation Branch, Public Works Department, lent by the United Provinces Government, and Rai Bahadur Rala Ram, chief engineer of Patiala State. A pumping plant has already been installed, and great efforts are being made to empty the pit in which the locomotive, carriages, and bridge wreckage now lie immersed?

IMPERIAL CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS

The first part of today's sitting of the Imperial Conference was devoted to Egypt, and Lord Curzon made a statement upon the questions shortly to be discussed with the Egyptian delegation. All Overseas members of the Conference endorsed the line which he proposed to take, and the discussion then turned to the need and practicability of closer and more continuous consultation regarding foreign affairs. The first sitting tomorrow will be devoted to the Dominion Ministers' suggestions for improvements in the practice and machinery of consultation between the Dominions and the British Government.





The Prime Minister is giving the highest priority to the North-east and road infrastructure will contribute in development of Manipur.

UNION MINISTER NITIN GADKARI

AFTER INAUGURATING 16 NATIONAL HIGHWAY PROJECTS IN MANIPUR

THUMBNAILS

Paytm public offer: Digital payments and financial services firm Paytm on Monday received approval of shareholders for the country's biggest public offer of Rs 16,600 crore, according to a source aware of the EGM outcome. The shareholders have approved raising of Rs 12,000 crore during the initial public offering, and sale of secondary shares will take the total amount to Rs 16,600 crore. PTI

Max Bupa-Axis pact: Max Bupa has embarked on a corporate agency partnership with Axis Bank to provide comprehensive and best-in-class health insurance solutions to its customers. The tie-up will enable millions of Axis Bank customers across 4,500 plus branches to gain access to quality healthcare solutions through a range of health insurance products offered by Max Bupa, said a joint statement. SNS

JK Cement: JK Cement Ltd on Monday announced that it has tripled its market capitalisation to \$3 billion in the last financial year, reaffirming its position as one of the fastest growing companies in the cement industry. The company also registered highest-ever EBITDA in Q3 and Q4 of financial year 2020-21, according to a media statement. SNS

Bajaj cuts Dominar price: Two-wheeler major Bajaj Auto has announced an aggressive price of Rs 1,54,176 for its Dominar 250, giving riding enthusiasts a fresh impetus to enter the world of touring. Dominar 250 now costs Rs 16,800 less than its previously listed price, said a Press release issued by the company. SNS

ICEMA: "Strengthening the Indian Construction Equipment Manufacturers Association (ICEMA) secretariat by way of setting up of a new office space in New Delhi is an integral step towards achieving the industry's Vision Plan 2030: Building the Nation," said IEMA president Sandeep Singh while inaugurating a new office. This office is a part of the Association's expansion plan going forward, said a Press release. SNS

Mi growth: Smartphone maker Mi India on Monday announced that it has recorded strong and speedy growth in the premium smartphone segment. As per the May 2021 tracker by CounterPoint, the company captured 14 per cent market share in the 20K-45K category, said a Press release from the company. SNS

WF grants: Wadhwan Foundation (WF) on Monday announced the next phase of its \$1 million in grants to charities and NGOs to help alleviate the devastating impact of the Covid-19 outbreak in India. These grants support the rapid delivery of medical resources and support to Covid-19 patients and their families, according to a Press release. SNS

Flipkart raises \$3.6 billion in funding from investors

The funding round values Flipkart Group at \$37.6 billion (about ₹2.79 lakh crore) post-money

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

Flipkart Group today said it has raised \$3.6 billion (about ₹2.79 lakh crore) in funding led by Singapore's sovereign wealth fund GIC, CPP Investments, SoftBank Vision Fund 2 and Walmart, valuing the e-commerce giant at \$37.6 billion.



"This (latest) investment by leading global investors reflects the promise of digital commerce in India and their belief in Flipkart's capabilities to maximise this potential for all stakeholders. As we serve our consumers, we will focus on accelerating growth for millions of small and medium Indian businesses, including kiranas," Flipkart Group chief executive officer Kalyan Krishnamurthy said.

KALYAN KRISHNAMURTHY
FLIPKART GROUP CEO

The company, which competes with Amazon, Reliance Industries' JioMart and others in the burgeoning Indian e-commerce market, said it will continue to make deeper investments across people, technology, supply chain and infrastructure to address the requirements of a rapidly growing consumer base in the country.

While details about the investment made by these entities individually were not disclosed, sources said Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPP Investments) infused about ₹750-800 million, while SoftBank has pumped about ₹500 million.

The current funding round has also seen participation from sovereign funds DisruptAD, Qatar Investment Authority, Khazanah Nasional Berhad as well as marquee investors Tencent, Willoughby Capital, Antara Capital, Franklin Templeton and Tiger Global, Flipkart said in a statement.

The funding round values Flipkart Group at ₹37.6 billion (about ₹2.79 lakh crore) post-money, it added.

With this deal, SoftBank is re-entering Flipkart's cap table.

SoftBank had sold its approximately 20 per cent share when Walmart bought a 77 per cent stake in Flipkart for \$16 billion in 2018.

In July last year, Flipkart had announced a \$1.2 billion (about ₹9,048 crore) fundraising led by its majority shareholder Walmart that had valued the Bengaluru-based company at ₹24.9 billion (about ₹1.87 lakh crore).

"This (latest) investment by leading global investors reflects the promise of digital commerce in India and their belief in the country over the past few years. The

in Flipkart's capabilities to maximise this potential for all stakeholders. As we serve our consumers, we will focus on accelerating growth for millions of small and medium Indian businesses, including kiranas," Flipkart Group chief executive officer Kalyan Krishnamurthy said.

Flipkart will continue to invest in new categories and leverage made-in-India technology to transform consumer experiences and develop a world-class supply chain, he added.

Post this round, Flipkart now ranks among the top 10 global e-commerce companies in terms of market cap. This list includes names like Amazon, Alibaba and Shopify, among others.

Founded in 2007, the Flipkart Group includes Flipkart, fashion specialty site Myntra and Ekart (logistics and supply chain arm). The group is also a majority shareholder in the digital payments platform PhonePe.

E-commerce has witnessed massive growth in the country over the past few years. The

pandemic has further bolstered growth as containment measures introduced millions to the convenience of online shopping while prompting seasoned online shoppers to buy more.

Social distancing compulsions, massive smartphone base and reliable broadband have galvanised e-commerce uptake beyond the metros, deep into smaller cities and towns. E-commerce platforms are ramping up capacities and hiring aggressively to cater to the growth in orders.

Flipkart is reportedly working towards an initial public offering (IPO), even though the company has not revealed a specific timeline for the same.

The development comes at a time when the government is proposing stricter guidelines for e-commerce players. Ban on fraudulent flash sales, mis-selling and appointment of chief compliance officer/grievance redressal officer are among key amendments proposed to the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020.

Retail inflation eases marginally



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

cent in June from 5.01 per cent a month ago, mainly on account of higher prices of edible oils and fats.

On annual basis, the inflation in the "oils and fats" segment was 34.78 per cent in June. While the rate of price rise in fruits basket was 11.82 per cent, it contracted in vegetables (-0.7 per cent). Inflation in "fuel and light" segment was 12.68 per cent.

The RBI has been mandated by the government to keep consumer inflation at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on the either side. The central bank factors in the CPI inflation while arriving at its bi-monthly policy.

Birla case: SC refuses to interfere with HC order

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

The Supreme Court today refused to interfere with the Calcutta High Court order dismissing contempt petitions filed against Harsh Vardhan Lodha for continuing as a director and chairman in companies of the M P Birla Group.

A Bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and Hrishikesh Roy said it was not inclined to interfere with the high court order of 22 April, as appeals are still pending there.

The apex court directed the high court to make an endeavour to dispose of the bunch of pending appeals as expeditiously as possible and in any event on or before 31 March 2022.

The group companies headed by Lodha are Birla Corporation, Universal Cables, Vindhya Telelinks and Birla Cable.

Appearing for the Birlas and petitioner Arvind Kumar Newar, a battery of senior lawyers Kapil Sibal, P Chidambaram, KV Vishwanathan and Janak Dwarkadas, said the high court is completely wrong in dismissing the contempt petitions.

The high court said that he has to comply with its order but he has not complied with directions. I am not interested in contempt or sending him to jail but I want him to be removed, Sibal said.

Senior advocate Shyam Divan and advocate Sumeer Sodhi, appearing for Vindhya Telelinks Ltd, said a direction

be issued that all the pending appeals before the high court are heard in four weeks.

Divan said that there were several contempt petitions filed and opposite party has selectively chosen one contempt petition and they have been repeatedly writing letters to the company.

He said that they have no registered share in the company and since the last two years the actions of the two of the three administrators have constantly been to interfere with the affairs of the companies under the guise of an unwarranted/ illegal control by the committee, not only over the estate but also over third-party trusts, societies and publicly-held companies which are part of the MP Birla Group.

Industry production rises by 29.3%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

Industrial production surged 29.3 per cent in May, mainly due to low-base effect and good performance by manufacturing, mining and power sectors, but remained below the pre-pandemic level.

The manufacturing sector - which constitutes 77.63 per cent of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) - grew by 34.5 per cent in May this year, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) today.

The mining sector output rose by 23.3 per cent in May while power generation increased by 7.5 per cent during the same month.

In May 2021, the IIP stood at 116.6 points compared to 90.2 points in the same month last year. The index was at 135.4 points in May 2019 as per the NSO data.

STILL BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC LEVEL

► In May 2021, the IIP stood at 116.6 points compared to 90.2 points in the same month last year. The index was at 135.4 points in May 2019 as per the NSO data.

► The data showed that industrial production recovered, but was still below the pre-pandemic level in May 2019.

that industrial production recovered, but was still below the pre-pandemic level in May 2019.

The IIP had contracted 33.4 per cent in May 2020.

"The IIP for May at 29.3 per cent... suggests the supply chains have adopted over the last year to dampen the impact of second wave. This points to a robust Q1 considering the high frequency parameters for June are also positive,"

Shravan Shetty, MD, Primus Partners, said.

Industrial production had plunged by 18.7 per cent in March last year following the Covid-19 outbreak and remained in the negative zone till August 2020.

With the resumption of economic activities, factory output rose by one per cent in September. The IIP had grown by 4.5 per cent in October.

In November 2020, the fac-

tory output fell by 1.6 per cent and then entered the positive territory by growing 2.2 per cent in December 2020.

The IIP had recorded a contraction of 0.6 per cent in January and 3.2 per cent in February this year. In March, it grew by 24.1 per cent. For the month of April, the NSO held back the release of complete IIP data.

The second wave of the pandemic started in the middle of April this year and many states imposed restrictions to curb the spread of coronavirus infections.

The growth rates over corresponding period of previous year are to be interpreted considering the unusual circumstances on account of Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020," NSO said in a statement.

The government had imposed a nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of coronavirus infections on 25 March 2020.

Move to promote gold jewellery

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 12 JULY

The World Gold Council and Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) have signed an agreement to promote gold jewellery in India this year, according to a statement.

Under the terms of the agreement, both the partners will jointly fund a multi-media marketing campaign that would aim to increase awareness, relevance and adoption of gold jewellery among Indian consumers, especially millennials and the new generation.

Citing a report, it said although young women are active gold jewellery consumers, their future purchase intent could be higher. This is especially true in the urban areas and could be achieved if the gold jewellery trade

could tap into consumers' desire for self-expression and prestige, the council said.

"This finding presents an opportunity for the gold industry to work collectively to make gold jewellery more relevant and contemporary, leading to a consequential shift.

This joint partnership will work to make gold jewellery more relevant and desirable through an evocative multimedia campaign," it added.

Somasundaram PR, regional CEO, India, World Gold Council, said both the bodies will work together on a campaign that amplifies a universal message about gold in one's life whilst positioning Indian hand-made jewellery in a modern context.

Colin Shah, chairman, GJEPC, said the objective is to develop a sustainable model for an industry-led initiative to drive growth for gold jewellery.

Jana Small Finance Bank, which filed preliminary IPO papers with Sebi in April, obtained its observations on 9 July, an update with Sebi showed today.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India's observations are necessary for any company to launch public issues like IPO, follow-on public offer (FPO) and rights issue.

According to merchant banking sources, the IPO is expected to fetch Rs 1,100 crore.

Going by the draft papers, the small finance bank proposed to utilise the net proceeds from the fresh issue towards augmenting its tier-1 capital base to meet future capital requirements.

Further, the proceeds will also be used for meeting the expenses in relation to the

offer. Jana Small Finance Bank may also consider a pre-IPO placement of an aggregate amount not exceeding Rs 500 crore, including by way of a proposed further issue to its promoters for an amount aggregating up to Rs 400 crore.

The pre-IPO placement, if undertaken, will be completed prior to filing of the red herring prospectus with the Registrar of Companies (RoC). In case the pre-IPO placement is undertaken, the amount raised will be reduced from the fresh issue.

The lender serves underbanked customers through various products, including zero balance savings accounts, fixed deposits with attractive interest rates, collateral-free loans and affordable housing loan schemes.

margin is being collected towards peak margin.

This will further increase to 100 per cent from September onwards.

The Association of National Exchanges Members of India (Anmi) said it has been receiving representation from its members to take up with Sebi rationalisation of peak margin and to collect the margin associated with risk.

To ensure that there is more than adequate risk coverage of all the market participants, Anmi suggested the regulator that the peak margin can be reduced to a maximum of 50 per cent from the current 75 per cent level.

The peak margin concept was introduced from December 2020 onwards, wherein members were required to collect 25 per cent of the applicable margin from the clients which was increased to 50 per cent and at present 75 per cent of the applicable

inflows related to an upcoming IPO.

At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened at 74.49, and hit an intra-day high of 74.40 and a low of 74.59. It finally finished at 74.58, higher by 6 paise over its last close.

On Friday, the rupee had settled at 74.64 against the US dollar.

"Indian rupee remained under pressure as traders remained vigilant ahead of macroeconomic data. India CPI data is likely to show that inflation accelerated in June 2021 compared to preceding month and remained above the RBI's target range of 2-6 per cent for the second consecutive month," said Saif Mukadam, research analyst, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.</



Nowhere is the rules-based maritime order under greater threat than in the South China Sea.

US SECRETARY OF STATE ANTONY BLINKEN
COMMENTS AGAINST CHINA'S SOUTH CHINA SEA CLAIMS

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 13 JULY 2021

09

Nepal top court directs prez to appoint Deuba as PM

Oli's supporters took to the streets to protest against the apex court's verdict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KATHMANDU, 12 JULY

In a landmark verdict, Nepal's Supreme Court on Monday directed President Bidya Devi Bhandari to appoint Nepali Congress chief Sher Bahadur Deuba (in photo) as prime minister by Tuesday and reinstated the House of Representatives for a second time in five months.



A five-member Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Cholendra Shumsher Rana issued the verdict stating that President Bhandari's decision to dissolve the lower house upon a recommendation of PM K P Sharma Oli was an unconstitutional act, delivering a major blow to the veteran Communist leader who was preparing for snap polls. Deuba, 74, has served as the

prime minister on four occasions: first from 1995 to 1997, then from 2001 to 2002, again from 2004 to 2005, and from 2017 to 2018. Currently, he is the Leader of the Opposition in the House. The court also ordered summoning a new session of the House of Representatives at 5 PM on July 18.

Chief Justice Rana also said that the bench has concluded that party whip does

not apply when lawmakers take part in the voting to elect new PM as per Article 76(5) of the Constitution.

The bench comprising four other senior most justices -- Dipak Kumar Karki, Mira Khadka, Ishwar Prasad Khatiwada and Dr Ananda Mohan Bhattarai -- had concluded hearings in the case last week.

President Bhandari had dissolved the 275-member

lower house for the second time in five months on 22 May at the recommendation of PM Oli and announced snap elections on 12 November and 19 November. Last week, the Election Commission had announced the schedule for mid-term elections despite the uncertainty over polls. Welcoming the apex court verdict, senior leader of the Nepal Communist Party-UML Madhav Kumar Nepal said that the judgement was commendable. "The Supreme Court has done a commendable job. This has saved the political system that is in place. Since the court has directly asked to appoint Deuba as new prime minister, we have no role to play now," he said.

Under Madhav Nepal's leadership, 23 lawmakers of UML had put their signature in favour of Deuba's claim to the prime ministership.

Madhav Nepal also said that Parliament will now take all the decisions. "Parliament has been reinstated. We will now go to Parliament. All the decisions will be taken from Parliament now," he said. "The court's verdict has also raised moral questions on Oli's actions." Meanwhile, PM Oli's supporters, including youths and students affiliated to the ruling CPN-UML, took to streets here to protest against the apex court's verdict against the 69-year-old Communist leader.

Cadres of the National Youth Force affiliated to CPN-UML gathered in Maitighar Mandir near the court premises chanting slogans against the verdict.

"We are not bound to accept all the orders passed by the Supreme Court, beware!" read a banner carried by the demonstrators.

Two Jordanians sentenced to 15 years over alleged royal plot



ASSOCIATED PRESS
AMMAN (JORDAN), 12 JULY

A Jordanian state security court on Monday sentenced two former officials to serve 15 years in prison over an alleged plot against the Western-allied monarchy involving the half-brother of King Abdullah II.

Bassem Awadallah, who has U.S. citizenship and once served as a top aide to King Abdullah II, and Sharif Hassan bin Zaid, a member of the royal family, were found guilty of sedition and incitement charges.

They are alleged to have conspired with Prince Hamzah, the king's half-brother, and to have sought foreign assistance. They denied the charges, and Alaa al-Khawneh, a lawyer for Sharif, said they would appeal the verdict. He declined to comment further.

They two men were swept up in a wave of arrests in April and Hamzah was placed under house arrest. The rare public rift at the highest levels of the monarchy sent jitters across the region, with countries racing to express support for Abdullah.

Hamzah denied the allegations in video statements released in April after he was placed under house arrest, saying he was being silenced for speaking out against corruption and poor governance by the ruling system. The palace drama exposed deep-

rooted economic and social challenges in the country, which has long been seen as a bastion of stability in a volatile region. The royal family says it resolved the dispute with Hamzah, whose exact status is unknown but was never formally charged. Awadallah's U.S. lawyer says his client alleged he was tortured in Jordanian detention and fears for his life. Abdullah is expected in Washington on July 19, when he will be the first Arab leader to meet with President Joe Biden at the White House. Jordan is a close U.S. ally in the Middle East and is seen as a key partner in eventually reviving the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Lt. Col. Muwafaq al-Masaeed, a military judge, announced the verdict following a closed-door trial that consisted of just six hearings. The two were sentenced to 15 years for each of two felonies, but the judge said only one sentence would be imposed on them.

Nepal receives 1.5 million vaccine doses from US

KATHMANDU, 12 JULY

Nepal on Monday received over 1.5 million doses of Johnson & Johnson vaccine from the United States at the time when the country is facing a severe shortage of the jabs.

This is the first consignment of the single-shot vaccine Nepal has received.

The US provided 1,534,850 doses to Nepal through the COVAX scheme, the global Covid vaccine equity scheme.

US Ambassador Randy Berry handed over the vaccines to Health Minister Krishna Gopal Shrestha on Monday.

Pak monitoring changing situation in Afghanistan: Information minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD, 12 JULY

Pakistan said on Monday that it was monitoring the changing situation in Afghanistan and assured its people that it would not allow the looming chaos in the war-torn nation to spillover borders to cause any kind of disturbance in the country.

Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry's remarks came in the midst of Taliban militants seizing dozens of districts in recent weeks and now claiming that they control 85 per cent of territory in Afghanistan through a peaceful regime based on the sug-

gestions from all (stakeholders). Even if this (effort) fails, we will not let the unrest spillover to Pakistan, Chaudhry said in a tweet in Urdu.

He assured the people who are worried over the news of continuous fighting in Afghanistan that Pakistan was prepared to deal with any fallout. "Our Afghan policy will be in the interests of Pakistan, he said.

Chaudhry recalled in another tweet that Prime Minister Imran Khan had already clarified that Pakistan could be partners with the US in peace, but not in conflict.

"(We are) monitoring the changing situation in Afghanistan and trying our best for a way forward in Afghanistan through a peaceful regime based on the sug-

Pak may call in Army to implement SOPs as covid cases rise

ISLAMABAD, 12 JULY

Pakistan on Monday said that Army may be called in to implement coronavirus standard operating procedures to deal with the latest spike in Covid-19 cases.

All efforts were being made to control the spread of the contagion by ensuring compliance with non-pharmaceutical interventions, Special Assistant on Health Dr Faisal Sultan said.

It will be for the second time if the Army is called in to help the civil administration in implementing the SOPs.

Hong Kong cops arrest five more for alleged conspiracy

ASSOCIATED PRESS
HONG KONG, 12 JULY

Hong Kong's national security police on Monday arrested five more people in relation to an alleged bomb plot, as political tensions rise amid Beijing's tightening control over the city.

All efforts were being made to control the spread of the contagion by ensuring compliance with non-pharmaceutical interventions, Special Assistant on Health Dr Faisal Sultan said.

It will be for the second time if the Army is called in to help the civil administration in implementing the SOPs.

mainland.

Last week, police arrested nine people, including six students, accused of planning to manufacture and plant explosives around the city, including in courts, cross-harbor tunnels and trash cans.

Police said that they found chemicals in a makeshift laboratory for the manufacture of the explosive triacetone triperoxide, or TATP, which has been widely used in bombings in Europe and elsewhere.

Hong Kong authorities have used the national security law, enacted in response to anti-government protests

that rocked the city in 2019, to arrest many of the city's prominent pro-democracy activists. Others have fled abroad.

Since the 2019 protests, Hong Kong police have arrested several people in connection with alleged bomb plots and manufacture of TATP, including 17 detained that year in raids that also seized explosives and chemicals. The arrests come as China is increasing its control over Hong Kong, despite a promise to protect the city's civil liberties for 50 years after its 1997 handover from Britain.

Four tourists ordered to leave Bali for violating Covid curbs

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DENPASAR, 12 JULY

Indonesia on Monday ordered four foreign tourists to leave the resort island of Bali after violating health protocols as the country endures a devastating wave of COVID-19 illnesses and deaths.

A Russian who tested positive for the coronavirus upon her arrival in Bali last Thursday was recaptured that night after she escaped mandatory isolation at an appointed hotel, said Jamaruli Manihuruk, who heads the Bali regional office for the Justice and Human Rights Ministry.

Three others were accused of defying mask mandates in public after being found unmasked in a raid last Thursday in the Kuta tourist area to enforce health protocols and prevent more infections, he said. The travellers from the United States, Ireland and Russia were placed in a detention room at the immigration office while waiting for their flights to their countries later Monday.

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MANILA, 12 JULY

Swarms of Chinese vessels have dumped human waste and wastewater for years in a disputed area of the South China Sea, causing algae blooms that have damaged coral reefs and threatened fish in an unfolding catastrophe, a US-based expert said Monday.

Satellite images over the last five years show how human waste, sewage and wastewater have accumulated and caused algae in a cluster of reefs in the Spratlys region where hundreds of Chinese fishing ships have anchored in batch-

es, said Liz Derr, who heads Simularity Inc, a software company creating artificial intelligence technologies for satellite imagery analysis.

At least 236 ships were spotted in the atoll, internationally known as Union Banks, on 17 June alone, she said at a Philippine online news forum on China's actions in the South China Sea, which Beijing has claimed virtually in its entirety. When the ships don't move, the poop piles up, Derr said. The hundreds of ships that are anchored in the Spratlys are dumping raw sewage onto the reefs they are occupying.

Chinese officials did not

immediately react to Derr's assessment of the environmental damage, but have said in the past that they have taken steps to protect the fisheries stock and the environment in the South China Sea.

Aside from the Chinese,

Vietnamese forces have also occupied some coral outcrops in Union Banks, which is also claimed by the Philippines, although it has no presence in the vast atoll.

Department of Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary Eduardo Menez in Manila

said the findings would have to be assessed and validated by Philippine authorities before a decision on whether to lodge a protest against China could be made.

This is a catastrophe of epic proportions and we are close to the point of no return, Derr said.

She warned that schools of fish, including migratory tuna, breed in the reefs that are being damaged and could cause fish stocks to considerably decline in an offshore area that is a key regional food source.

Separately, China's military said it chased a US warship out of another disputed area of the

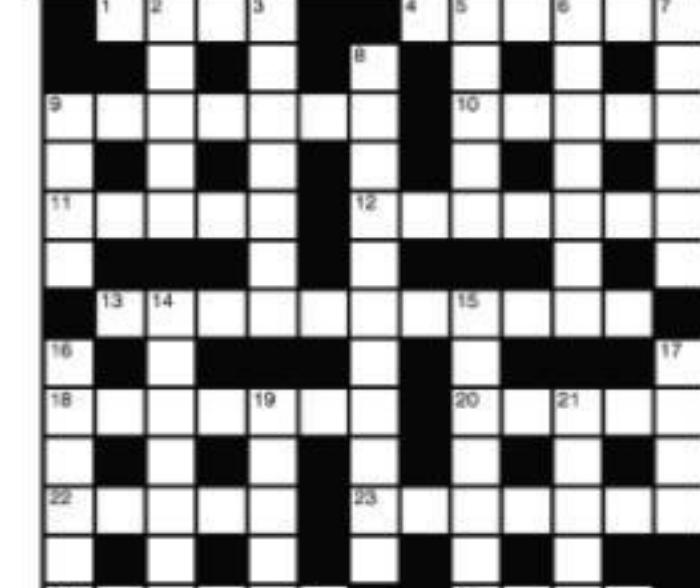
South China Sea on Monday after Washington warned an attack on the Philippines might activate a mutual defense treaty.

Beijing affirmed its claims to portions of the sea that also are claimed by Southeast Asia governments. It rejected the Biden administration's declaration of support Sunday for an 2016 international tribunal ruling in favor of the Philippines that threw out most of them.

China is increasingly assertive about pressing its territorial claims, which are fueling tension with neighbors including Japan, India, Vietnam and the Philippines.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



CROSS
1 Bill (4)
4 Injured (6)
9 Wart (7)
10 Time off (5)
11 Impudence (5)
12 Interlace (7)
13 Weather science (11)
18 Narcotic drugs (7)
20 Pour fat over (5)
22 Shout of approval (5)
23 Heartfelt (7)
24 Snake (6)
25 Shout (4)

DOWN
2 Weird (5)
3 Finger joint (7)
5 Distribute (5)
6 Import (7)
7 Considered (6)
8 Uninvited guest (11)
9 Evil habit (4)
14 Apparent (7)
15 Freedom (7)
16 Boot part (6)
17 Following (4)
19 Trunk (5)
21 Take unlawfully (5)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD
ACROSS 14 Occult, 17 Blackmail, 19 Gap, 20 Resuscitate-ed, 22 Yielded, 23 Eats, 25 Stereotype, 9 Blackberry.
DOWN 2 In ruins, 3 Haversack, 4 Dangle, 5 Fur, 6 Ponch, 7 Stereotype, 9 Blackberry.

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

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

- AIIMS 26588500, 26588900
- Moolchand Medcity (formerly Hospital) 42000000 & 24-hour Chemist Shop 42000447
- Vidyasagar Institute for Mental and Neuro-Sciences 26924300, 26924304
- Bastra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280, 29958747
- Deen Dayal Upadhyay 25496320, 25494403
- Guru Tegh Bahadur 23717473, 23325320

RAILWAY INQUIRY

- General Inquiry 139
- Toll Free Nos. 180012511
- SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 5676747

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

- ISBT (General Inquiry): 23868836, 23865181
- INDIGO AIRLINES 23466262 (City) 09910383333, 180018038338, Reservation 43513186; Indigo Airlines 23717473, 23325320

FLIGHT INQUIRY

- AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 18001801407
- INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi City Office 43513185, Call Centre 09910383333, 180018038338, Reservation 43513186; Indigo Airlines 23717473, 23325320

SCRABBLE BRAND



Research could not find a single example of a state that has comprehensively reckoned with its past or accounted for its impacts on the lives of people of African descent

UN HUMAN RIGHTS CHIEF MICHELLE BACHELET

URGING COUNTRIES TO FULLY FUND AND TAKE A WIDE RANGE OF REPARATION MEASURES OVER RACISM

WEATHER

CITY	MAX	MIN
SINGAPORE	30°C	28°C
HONG KONG	26°C	20°C
TOKYO	18°C	12°C
LONDON	17°C	9°C
DUBAI	31°C	27°C
SAN FRANCISCO	13°C	04°C
NEW YORK	16°C	08°C
MOSCOW	15°C	05°C

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

THUMBNAILS



Markus Soeder, Minister President of Bavaria, poses with a model of an ArianeGroup rocket at the inauguration of the new faculty building of the Technical University of Munich (TUM) for Aeronautics, Astronautics and Geodesy. AP

WhatsApp faces complaint: Facebook's WhatsApp faces a complaint from European Union consumer groups who say the chat service has been unfairly pressuring users to accept a new privacy update in what it calls a breach of the bloc's regulations. The European Consumer Organisation, or BEUC, filed a complaint Monday over the way WhatsApp has brought in changes to its terms of service and privacy policy, saying they aren't transparent or easily understood by users. AP

UK's Daily Mail: The founding family of Britain's *Daily Mail* is considering making a bid worth \$10 million to bring the parent company behind the country's biggest-selling newspaper back into private hands after 90 years on the stock market. AP

China COVAX deal: China's two major Covid-19 vaccine makers have signed agreements to provide up to 550 million doses to COVAX, the UN-backed program that aims to deliver vaccines to poor countries. AP

EU puts on hold digital levy plans in face of US criticism

BRUSSELS, 12 JULY

The European Union has put on hold work on plans for a digital levy for the moment to concentrate on finalizing the historic tax decision endorsed by the Group of 20 nations over the weekend, officials said Monday.

In the face of US criticism, the European Commission said its work on the levy that would hit American technology companies would go on ice to allow for smooth cooperation on the political and technical hurdles that still need to be addressed on the G-20 tax decision before the end of October.

Successfully concluding this will require a final effort, a final push from all parties. And the (EU) Commission is committed to focusing on that effort, EU spokesman Dan Ferrie said. For this reason, we have decided to put on hold our work on a proposal for a digital levy as a new EU resource during this period.

Finance ministers from the G-20 major economies endorsed a global minimum corporate tax of at least 15 per cent, a measure aimed at putting a floor under tax rates and discouraging companies from using low-rate countries as tax havens.

The global minimum proposal faces political and technical hurdles before it would take effect. Details are to be ironed out in coming weeks at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris, followed by a final endorsement by G-20 presidents and prime ministers at an October 30-31 meeting in Rome. AP

UK health chief: England will lift all lockdown restrictions

Britain will lift face masks & all social distancing measures in England on 19 July

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON, 12 JULY

All remaining lockdown restrictions in England will be lifted in a week despite a sharp rise in coronavirus cases, Britain's health secretary said Monday, adding it's the right time to allow Britons a chance to return to normal life.

Sajid Javid told Parliament that Britain's successful vaccine rollout means that nine out of 10 adults in the UK now have antibodies against the virus. The government is on track to meet its target of offering all adults a first vaccine dose by 19 July, the day when all remaining lockdown restrictions, including mandatory mask-wearing, are set to be lifted.

As of Monday, 87 per cent of the UK's adult population have had their first dose, and 66 per cent have had both doses.

Javid said while new infections could reach 1,00,000 a day later in the summer, driven by the more transmissible delta variant, two doses of the vaccine offer effective protection against serious illness from the virus and officials believe the surge in cases will not put "unsustainable pressure" on hospitals. Waiting any longer to lift restrictions will risk having the virus spread in the winter, when hospitals are most likely to be overwhelmed, he added.

"There will never be a perfect time to take this step, because we simply cannot eradicate this virus - whether we like it or not, coronavirus is not going away," he said.

The UK as a whole has seen infections soar in recent weeks as a result of the delta variant, first found in India.

Daily infection levels are running at over 30,000, their highest rates since January. Most



France's Macron tries to slow delta variant, boost vaccines

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PARIS, 12 JULY

Is France's summer over already? Just three days ago, the country threw open its nightclubs for the first time in 16 months, completing a protracted national effort at returning to a pre-pandemic normal just in time for summer vacation. But with the delta variant now driving resurgent infections across Europe, potential new restrictions loom.

President Emmanuel Macron is hosting a top-level virus security meeting Monday morning and then giving a televised speech in the evening, the kind of solemn speech he's given at each turning point in France's virus epidemic.

This time, he's expected

infections have largely occurred among younger people, many of whom have

to announce plans for a law requiring health care workers to get vaccinated, and may require special Covid-19 passes for restaurants or other day-to-day activities.

Elsewhere would be unusual in Europe, where most governments have shied away from vaccine requirements.

Italy made the coronavirus vaccination obligatory for health care workers and pharmacists, and those who opt out risk suspension from their jobs or a salary cut. In Denmark, restaurants and public events require a digital pass showing you've been fully vaccinated or have a recent negative test.

Some German states require the same for restaurants, though suggestions of making vaccines obligatory have prompted widespread unease.

For France, Macron may also announce other measures: A return to limits on the number of people allowed in public venues that just reawakened in May after one of the world's longest shutdowns. Or an announcement that France could start charging money for some virus tests, which up to now have been free for everyone on French territory.

Any new measures will be relatively mild, but aimed at reminding the French that the pandemic isn't over yet.

We have to live with the virus, Europe minister Clement Beaune said Sunday.

Living with the virus means we don't re-close everything. The government's main weapon, and main worry, is vaccinations.

The British government

yet to receive a first dose of vaccine.

The British government

hopes that the vaccine rollout has severely disrupted the link between infections and

those needing hospitalization. However, both the number of people requiring hospitalization and dying from Covid-19 have been edging up in recent days, though not at the same rate as infections.

Still, concerns over the rapid increase in cases has piled pressure on the government to take more cautious approach over lifting restrictions. Authorities are expected to recommend that people continue to wear face masks in enclosed places, such as on public transport and in shops. Public health officials and scientists have been voicing their concerns, saying ditching masks and social distancing altogether could be dangerous.

Professor Peter Openshaw,

a member of a group that advises the government on new and emerging respiratory viruses, said it was vital to keep some protective measures in place, such as wearing masks.

"I really don't see why people are reluctant to wear face coverings, it is quite clear that they do greatly reduce transmission," he told BBC radio.

"Vaccines are fantastic but you have to give them time to work. And in the meantime, keeping up all those measures which we have learned to reduce the transmission is to me really vital."

The British government, which enforced one of the longest lockdowns in the world, has lifted restrictions for England in a series of steps that began with reopening schools in March. The fourth and final stage was delayed last month to provide time for more people to be vaccinated amid the rapid spread of the delta variant.

Other parts of the UK-Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland- are following their own, broadly similar, road maps out of lockdown.

Top US commander in Afghanistan hands over command



ASSOCIATED PRESS
KABUL, 12 JULY

istan.

The Taliban control more than one-third of Afghanistan's 421 districts and district centers. A Taliban claim that they control 85 per cent of the districts is widely seen as exaggerated.

After Miller's departure, a two-star admiral based at the US Embassy in Kabul will oversee the US military's role in securing the American diplomatic presence in Kabul, including defending the Kabul airport.

Miller's departure does not reduce the scope of the US military mission in Afghanistan, since McKenzie will assume the authorities now held by Miller to conduct airstrikes in defense of Afghan government forces under certain circumstances.

The conditions under which such strikes might be used are not clear, nor is it known for how long McKenzie will keep the strike authority. A deal the US struck with the Taliban in February 2020 included a promise from the insurgent movement not to attack US and NATO troops, a commitment it appears they have largely kept.

While Washington is not saying how many troops remain in Afghanistan, a CENTCOM statement more than a week ago said the withdrawal was 90 per cent complete.

President Joe Biden has reiterated that the US will remain engaged in Afghanistan with humanitarian assistance. The US also is committed to spending USD 4.4 billion annually to fund Afghanistan's security forces until 2024.

Pfizer to discuss Covid-19 vaccine booster with US officials

WASHINGTON, 12 JULY

Pfizer says it plans to meet with top US health officials Monday to discuss the drugmaker's request for federal authorization of a third dose of its Covid-19 vaccine as President Joe Biden's chief medical adviser acknowledged that "it is entirely conceivable, maybe likely" that booster shots will be needed within 12 months.

Pfizer's Dr. Mikael Dolsten told The Associated Press last week that early data from the company's booster study suggests people's antibody levels jump five- to 10-fold after a third dose, compared to their second dose months earlier - evidence it believes supports the need for a booster.

On Sunday, Dr. Anthony Fauci didn't rule out the possibility but said it was too soon for the government to recommend another shot. He said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the FDA did the right thing last week by pushing back against Pfizer's assertion with their statement that they did not view booster shots as necessary "at this time."

Fauci said clinical studies and laboratory data have yet to fully bear out the need for a booster to the current two-shot Pfizer and Moderna vaccines or the one-shot Johnson & Johnson regimen.

"Right now, given the data and the information we have, we do not need to give people a third shot," he said. "That doesn't mean we stop there. ... There are studies being done now ongoing as we speak about looking at the feasibility about if and when we should be boosting people."

He said it was quite possible in the coming months "as data evolves" that the government may urge a booster.

Listen up: Biden speaks volumes in a whisper to make a point



ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 12 JULY

whispering is just this veteran politician's old-school way of trying to make a connection while emphasising a point.

Biden's critics on the right as well as some late-night TV talk show hosts say the whispers are creepy and weird." Conservatives use the dramatic soft talk to fuel the narrative that the Democratic president is unfit for the job, and comedians deploy it to generate laughs.

"It's an intimate form of communication," said Vanessa Beasley, associate professor of communication studies at Vanderbilt University.

Biden whispered some of his answers to reporters' questions during an impromptu White House news conference last month after he and a group of Senate Republicans announced they had reached a deal to spend \$973 billion on rebuilding the nation's infrastructure.

As he stood in the East Room, Biden was questioned about his timeline for providing additional financial help to families. He leaned in, eyes wide, and whispered: "I got them \$1.9 trillion in relief so far. They're going to be getting checks in the mail that are consequential."

During a lengthy response to a separate question, he whispered, I wrote the bill, before bending down to get closer to the microphone and adding, on the environment.

On the subject of employers' hiring difficulties, Biden leaned into the mic again, arms resting on the lectern and said softly that the solution is to give them more.

Beasley said the use of whispering by Biden, who was a US senator and vice president for a total of more than 40 years, is a throwback to a long-ago time of chumming relations between lawmakers and members of the Washington press corps.

"I think it's a symbolic gesture to a kind of intimacy and familiarity," she said.

Beasley and others noted the contrast between Biden and former President Donald Trump, who often spoke loudly and angrily. "One of the things that Trump never did was whisper," said Robin Lakoff, professor emerita of linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley.

Public speakers lawmakers, celebrities, corporate executives often raise or lower their voices for dramatic effect or tell jokes to keep their audiences following along instead of falling asleep.

Beasley

said the tone of political discourse these days seems set to loud so that it sort of sets everybody back a little bit when you see someone going in a different direction and reducing their volume".

Lakoff

said what Biden does isn't really whispering because his vocal chords

vibrate and make sound.

A true whisper is something you wouldn't be able to hear very well, she said, comparing what Biden does to a stage whisper in which an actor in a play steps out of character to share a secret with the audience or preview some action that's about to happen.

The White House defended Biden, saying conservatives who criticise the way he speaks, including his stuttering, do so because they don't have a better agenda to offer voters.

Under Biden's leadership, Covid cases have plunged by over 90 per cent, we've achieved an historic level of job creation, the economy is growing at its highest rate in 40 years, and we've achieved a breakthrough on the world stage to stop the offshoring of American jobs," deputy press secretary Andrew Bates said.

UN: World hunger was dramatically worse in pandemic year

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ROME, 12 JULY

before the pandemic, hunger was spreading; progress on malnutrition lagged."

The United Nations on Monday lamented what it called a "dramatic worsening" of world hunger last year, saying much of that is likely connected to the pandemic.

A report issued jointly by five UN agencies said hunger outpaced population growth in 2020, with nearly 10 per cent of all people estimated to be undernourished.

It said the sharpest rise in hunger came in Africa, where 21 per cent of the people are estimated to be undernourished. Children paid a high price, with 149 million of those younger than five estimated to have stunted growth since they are too short for their age. More than 45 million children are too thin for their height.

"A full 3 billion adults and children remain locked out of healthy diets, largely due to excessive costs," the UN agencies said. In many parts of the world, the pandemic has triggered brutal recessions and jeopardised access to food," the UN said in a summary of its findings. "Yet even

Campus & Career

Forever relevant

Basic science is fundamental to all its new-generation, applied branches



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

Basic science courses are often looked at with disdain by both students and parents alike. Many feel that there is no future for courses like botany, zoology, chemistry, physics and mathematics. Even schoolteachers advise students to take new-generation courses such as biotechnology, bio-nanotechnology, bioinformatics, forensic science, food science and technology, etc for their graduation.

Such an attitude drives away many prospective students, who have real interest in taxonomy, anatomy or ecology, to shift to other so-called "applied branches". Guardians and students look for courses that would fetch them a job soon after their graduation or post-graduation.

Today, in science, there is nothing called basic or applied as all its subjects are considered one. A major part of what one studies as basic science is applicable in daily life. Even the development of vaccines for Covid-19 is the result of tireless efforts of many scientists whose subject was basic science.

A student of botany should be able to understand the basic concepts

of chemistry and physics. Many physics and chemistry analysts are looking at plant science to widen their research base. Even studies on language and philosophy are important.

Unfortunately, the syllabi of many state universities fail to provide insight into those concepts, mainly because of the teaching community's lackluster attitude. The syllabi of most state government-managed universities are developed focusing on the workload of teachers. This attitude has to change. Universities should only focus on improving the quality of students by incorporating latest developments in the coursework.

The under-graduate and post-graduate courses offered by national institutions, like Indian Institute of Science Education and Research or the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, have flexibility in updating the syllabus as and when required. The world is moving towards a trans-disciplinary culture. If a student has to understand taxonomy he/she should be well versed in molecular biology, physics, biostatistics, mathematics, biochemistry, ecology, geology, geography, etc.

Unfortunately, in most universities, taxonomy is still taught as an

esoteric art. Tracing the history of science, one can find that many eminent scientists followed the trans-disciplinary culture; be it Jagadish Chandra Bose or Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman, they made significant contributions in life science as well as in physical science. But later, for some reasons, we lost that culture and became compartmentalised.

Nowadays, it's not degree certificates but one's passion and skill that fetch jobs. That, in turn, is related to the upgradation of the subject. Science is growing every day. The concepts that one studied in the early 2000s have become obsolete now. Unfortunately, most textbooks followed by many colleges were published during the 1970s or 80s. If one learns the science of those decades, how can they get a job in 2021? Provided one is passionate about the field they have chosen, it is necessary to read on its latest developments as that will open a plethora of avenues.

There is a common notion that if one takes basic science courses they will land up either as a school or college teacher. On the contrary, many new-generation courses provide immediate job options soon after

graduation. There are many institutions giving 100 per cent placement for some new-age Bachelor of science courses.

That is in fact a myth. Jobs are there and everyone will get one. Institutions provide some business process outsourcing or medical transcription jobs, which one could have obtained even without taking high-profile courses. At present, science graduates have equal work opportunities, whether it's basic or applied. Gone are the days when people were employed on the basis of their certificates. Now, it's the skill that matters. If one is competent, one will get a preferred job irrespective of degrees.

If one's priority is getting some job, then they may acquire a degree without investing much money into it. After that, one can opt for clearing the Union Public Service Commission, Staff Selection Commission or the State Public Service Commission examination. For private sector jobs, it is better to obtain those soon after BSc as most such companies prefer newly graduated students. The reason being post-graduate students generally have higher aspirations whereas a graduate will stick to the

company for a longer period.

Normally, if one aims for high-profile jobs in science, a post-graduate and doctoral degree is important. For those passionate about science, it's always better to take a basic science course at the graduation level. It will help in understanding the fundamentals of science. After completing graduation, one can go for specialised courses of choice.

That route has two advantages for students. First, they will be eligible for conventional jobs notified by government agencies like schoolteachers, technical assistants or clerical roles. Second, being a basic science student one will have umpteen options ahead for post-graduation. Institutes like IISER and IISc conduct integrated programmes, which have high demand because of the quality they impart.

Irrespective of the field of specialisation, post-graduate students of science need to clear any one of the national level tests like the Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-University Grants Commission National Eligibility Test, or Indian Council of Agricultural Research's NET. They have become the basic requirement for getting a science-based job in the government sector. Even after obtaining a PhD, when applying for a post in, say, the National Institutes of Technology, they will ask whether one has qualified the national-level examinations.

It's always better to take a doctoral degree soon after post-graduation, if aiming for higher posts. Otherwise, the entry level in a research field is junior research fellow, followed by senior research fellowships and research assistant, based on experience. Most of those project positions have an age bar, within which one has to find a good, permanent job in the field, either in the private or government sector.

Of course, research is not meant for people who are focusing only on jobs but for those who are passionate about one's field of interest. There is no correlation between passion and getting a job. Success stories of distinguished scientists and Nobel laureates have shown that only people with passion do well in science. All the laureates worked in basic science, proving that it will stay forever, even if new courses evolve from them. There won't be any space science research without a strong footing in physics. Similar is the case with every branch of basic science.

All the so-called new-generation courses are simply offshoots of the basics and have a limited period of existence. Basic science will stay till humankind survives. It is the pillar on which all other branches of science and even technology stand.

The writer is a science communicator and can be contacted at bijudharmapalan@gmail.com

PLUS POINTS

Speaking well



British Council has recently launched a new Spoken English online course for adults to learn how to communicate with confidence.

From basic and personal communication to workplace and public speaking, the course has been specifically designed to improve language and critical thinking skills for a wide range of situations. It provides flexible learning options where one can select the number of learning hours and duration of the course based on their own needs. For details, check out <https://www.britishcouncil.in/english/courses-adults/online-spoken-english>

New course



Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology-Delhi announced the launch of a new post-graduate diploma programme in computer science and artificial intelligence, in collaboration with Great Learning. The programme will be delivered online and includes a combination of live classes by IIIT-Delhi's faculty, hands-on tutorials, and project-based learning sessions.

The 12-month online programme has been designed to fit into the schedules of both working professionals and students. Upon successful completion of all requirements of the programme, participants will earn a post-graduate diploma from IIIT-Delhi as well as acquire an alumni status of the institute.

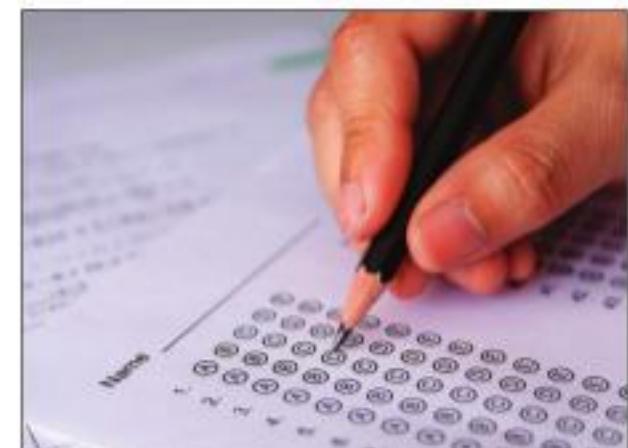
Focus on hiring



Nucleus Software, a provider of lending and transaction banking solutions to global financial leaders, has set itself a target to hire 500 fresh young engineers from non-metro cities and towns across India till December 2021.

It will be undertaken through its tie-ups with engineering colleges in Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka as well as through direct hiring. Nucleus already has over 50 tie-ups in place and this year, it will have another 20 colleges being on-boarded. The young graduates will then be trained in an intensive six to 12 week programme by Nucleus School of Banking Technology on cutting edge technology for the global financial sector to make them industry ready. For details, check out www.nucleussoftware.com

Effective learning



To further enhance the chances for students to qualify their government exam, Khabris, an audio-based knowledge platform in a local language, has now launched audio courses in Hindi. Through them, the platform envisions helping more than 50 million students across India.

The courses have been prepared by eminent teachers from around the country's Hindi-speaking belt such as Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat, Delhi/National Capital Region, Jammu and Kashmir, and more. The newly launched audio courses have been designed for top government competitive exams. They will be available in various formats like complete courses, short courses, crash courses, topic courses, and revision courses. Prices range from Rs 49 to Rs 299.

MAKING THE MOST OF TECHNOLOGY

The promotion of electronic research to stimulate a comprehensive national growth is imperative

KUNAL KISLAY

least in the world.

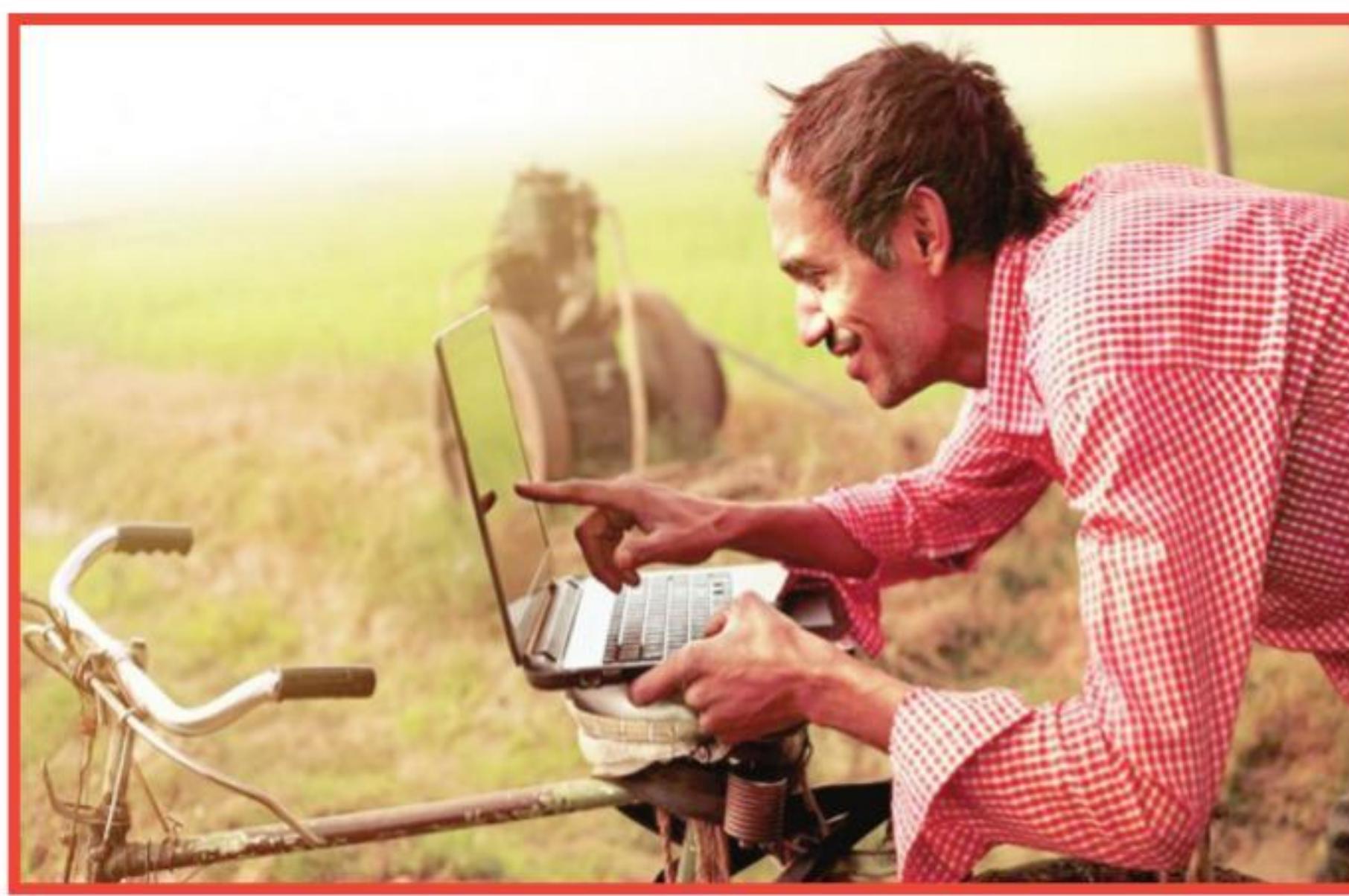
The ranking depicts where the government facilitation with investment stands. While the road to implementation is rocky, there exists an inequitable share of resources at ground level. It might restrict ideas and innovations for a nation where the average age is 29 years. Systematic research paves the way to smooth functioning and boosts a country's development. The following aspects in India can not only benefit, but also contribute to a better future.

E-COMMERCE

Introducing automated delivery can transform the e-commerce sector. A faster, safer and contactless option, online delivery was universally appreciated amid the lockdown. While everyone was in the comfort of their homes, essential workers risked their lives to ensure that our necessities were delivered. Despite stemming from a crisis, India's growing reliance on online deliveries can increase the efficiency of future services. In due course, worthy training programmes aimed to relocate delivery partners into another sector/stream can be created.

ENVIRONMENT

The pandemic taught the entire nation the importance of good health. Air pollution is one of the major health risks in India. According to the latest World Air Quality Index Ranking, 22 Indian cities come under the most polluted ones of the world. Transportation, biomass burning for cooking, electricity generation, industrial pollution, construction, waste burning, and episodic agricul-



tural burning are the major causes of air pollution in the country.

Solutions in these sectors will lower the burden of mal-effects and improve both personal and community health. India's gradual adoption of electric vehicles is a great initiative that is opening doors for exploring tech intermediation.

EDUCATION

Looking for low-cost technology, easy accessibility and maintenance is imperative to close the social gap. The pandemic led to a move from offline to online entities for all. The demand for equipment with advanced and efficient technological updates surged. At ground zero, online education -- as lucrative and accessible as it seems -- has largely remained a privilege. There is a dire need to work on low-cost digital setups for penetrability. Also, with more "sign-ups", it becomes critical to make the World Wide Web a secure place.

TECHNOLOGY

Today, cybersecurity is a major global concern. The Government of

India has introduced the protection of data policy and other surveillance regulations, but the fight to make the Internet a safe space for all has only just started.

Another way forward in research is to introduce blockchain systems into banking. Not only does it boost transparency, but also reduces the transaction cost borne by people. It will create a decentralised ledger, remove discrepancies easily and identify frauds. The fintech subsidiary of the technology sector is an impeccable example of blockchain systems employment.

The Science, Technology and Innovation Policy drafted by the government in January, envisions the socio-economic growth of India. It captures pertinent pain points of the Indian system and intends to create an ecosystem of development in the nation. Critical aspects of the policy include capacity development, skill building and setting up infrastructure.

Some major goals with respect to the policy are inculcating research to reduce social differences within the country. Technology can potentially

remove language barriers in India, and provide easy and affordable products and services for everyone, alongside becoming a specially abled people-friendly apparatus.

Employing distributed computing to systems is another area of development that needs to be considered. Work from home and online learning is the new norm. Distributed computing makes sure that data and Internet access is not compromised even if there are other unavoidable factors to obstruct operations. Cloud computing successfully runs on this model.

India has spent a sweet time as a developing nation, with technology touching every national discourse one way or another. The promotion of technological research to stimulate a comprehensive national growth is imperative. Equitable access to technology is the first step, but the gift of privacy, sustainability and secure tech usability is the key to a reconstructed digital era.

The writer is chief executive officer and co-founder, Integration Wizards Solutions, Bengaluru



Portugal forward Cristiano Ronaldo (*in photo*) finished as the top scorer at the European Championship with five goals. Ronaldo had the same number of goals as Czech Republic forward Patrik Schick but the Portuguese great will get the award because he had an assist. Portugal was eliminated from the tournament after losing to Belgium 1-0 in the round of 16.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Player of the month award: England spinner Sophie Ecclestone edged out India's teen batting sensation Shafali Verma and all-rounder Sneh Rana to become the ICC Player of the Month for June, while New Zealand opener Devon Conway bagged the honour in the men's category. Left-arm spinner Ecclestone thus became the second English female to win the award after Tammy Beaumont, who was crowned in February.

Handscomb positive for COVID-19: Out of favour Australia batsman Peter Handscomb was forced to miss his county match against Leicestershire in England after testing positive for COVID-19. The 30-year-old, who has been captain of Middlesex this season, couldn't play their Championship Group Two game on Sunday after being forced into isolation following a positive test result.

ODI abandoned: Ireland's opening one-day international against South Africa ended in a no-result after persistent rain. The match was abandoned shortly after 5:10 p.m. with not enough time for the visitors to be set a shortened target at The Village on Sunday. South Africa won the toss and chose to field with Ireland reaching 195-4 off 40.2 overs.

Hyderabad FC sign Garcia: Indian Super League side Hyderabad FC has completed the signing of Spanish player Eduardo Edu Garcia ahead of the 2020-21 season, the club announced on Monday. The experienced attacking midfielder, who can operate in multiple roles, joins Manolo Marquez's side from last season's runners-up ATK Mohun Bagan. "I promise to give my best and help the club grow with my experience and my work," said Garcia after penning a one-year deal with Hyderabad FC.

Sportswear giant signs 18 Indian athletes: Sportswear giant signs 18 Indian athletes: Puma India, part of the global sportswear giant, has signed 15 Olympic-bound Indian athletes and three para athletes for the upcoming national and international tournaments. The move is part of the company's quest to "push boundaries and celebrate diversity in sports".

IOA partnership: The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on Monday announced partnership with Dhyana, the meditation-tracking start up, to work for the mental well-being of the country's Olympic-bound athletes. The IOA said it has acquired smart Dhyana rings and Dhyana's health management services for the entire Indian contingent for the Tokyo Olympics and is working to prioritise mental wellness and improve focus of the players amidst the ongoing pandemic.

'Sindhu will be more cautious'



And there will be so many boys and girls from our country in the Games Village. They are all required to obey certain rules for their own safety. Sindhu will be one among them. It is quite all right. I shall tell her to be additionally cautious because of the new development," the former volleyball player said.

Asked if he was expecting any specific medal of his daughter, Raman was quite firmly unequivocal with his answer, making it clear that any one of the three would be welcome. But he added: "You have to take into account the fact that an alarming rise in infections.

PULAKESH MUKHOPADHYAY
KOLKATA, 12 JULY

The whole of the Tokyo Olympics having been decided to be held in the midst of yet another coronavirus emergency in Japan's capital city, India's medal aspirant in badminton, PV Sindhu (*in photo*), will be additionally cautious, her father told The Statesman today from Hyderabad in a telephone conversation.

"I understand what you mean but I'm sure Tokyo will have a safe and reliably controlled environment for all Olympic participants and India too have their own Covid-19 protocols and all our athletes are aware of how they must shield themselves," PV Raman said.

Though he conceded that it was singularly unfortunate for the global pandemic to coincide with the Olympic Games, causing it to be postponed last year, he said no when asked if he was scared as a parent.

"The Olympics happen to imply a collective enterprise.

Portugal forward Cristiano Ronaldo (*in photo*) finished as the top scorer at the European Championship with five goals. Ronaldo had the same number of goals as Czech Republic forward Patrik Schick but the Portuguese great will get the award because he had an assist. Portugal was eliminated from the tournament after losing to Belgium 1-0 in the round of 16.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

Southgate takes responsibility for England's Euro final loss

AGENCIES
LONDON, 12 JULY



England manager Gareth Southgate (*in photo*) took the full blame for England's agonising loss in the Euro final against Italy, leaving the whole of England heartbroken. Having taken a second-minute lead courtesy of Luke Shaw, England were forced into extra time following a penalty shootout as Leonardo Bonucci levelled on Sunday.

Harry Kane and Harry Maguire scored England's first two penalties. But Marcus Rashford and Jadon Sancho failed to convert. Bukayo Saka's decisive spot-kick was saved by Italian goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma, giving Italy the title at Wembley Stadium.

"They've been tight throughout and that's how it is today. In the end we weren't quite able to see the game through in the normal, regulation time. Italy showed what an absolutely outstanding side they are. But our players have done themselves proud. Every one of them has been exceptional. We're obviously unbelievably disappointed not to go that one step further," said Southgate.

"It's an amazing experience but to lead your country in these tournaments takes its toll and I need a break now," Southgate said.

Southgate has led England to the semi-finals of the 2018 World Cup and Nations League a year later, plus the final of the Euro 2020.

"I don't want to commit to anything longer than I should and I never want to outstay my welcome. So all of those things need consideration before I even think about sitting down and talking. But as I sit here today, I would want to be taking the team to Qatar."

"I feel that we have made progress over the four years (since he took over full-time), we've had a fourth place, a third place and a second place."

"It's probably as good as any other team in Europe bar those that have won the tournaments themselves, for consistency it's right up there."

Racist abuse targets 3 English players who missed penalties

AGENCIES
LONDON, 12 JULY



Three Black players who missed penalty kicks for England in the decisive European Championship shootout against Italy were subjected to racist abuse online, prompting the English Football Association to issue a statement condemning the language used against the players. Bukayo Saka, at 19 one of the youngest players on the England squad, missed the penalty that gave the title to Italy and denied England its first international trophy since the 1966 World Cup.

It was England's third straight failure from the penalty spot in the shootout, with Marcus Rashford and Jadon Sancho also missing.

The FA said in a statement: "We will continue to do everything we can to stamp discrimination out of the game, but we implore government to

Gareth Southgate made two late changes, bringing on Rashford and Sancho for the

act quickly and bring in the appropriate legislation so this abuse has real-life consequences. London's Metropolitan Police also said it was investigating offensive and racist messages on social media.

British PM condemns racism

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Monday condemned the racist abuse directed at three Black England players who missed their penalties in the team's shootout loss to Italy in the final of the European Championship. Johnson tweeted that those responsible for this appalling abuse should be ashamed of themselves.

England's former star cricketer Kevin Pietersen on Monday condemned the racial abuse of three Black players on social media after their loss in the Euro final and wondered if the country should host the 2030 FIFA World Cup. The cricketer joined British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Football Association (FA) in slamming those who abused the three players of colour after they failed to score in the shootout. "The walk I took with Dylan to get our car home last night was scary absolutely HORRENDOUS! This behaviour in 2021? The abuse of the players who gave us so much joy?" "Do we actually deserve the 2030 World Cup?" Pietersen tweeted.

penalties, but the move backfired as neither scored their spot kick.

I find it easy to handle match situations: Deepti Sharma

AGENCIES
HOVE, 12 JULY



Architect of India's eight-run win over England in the second women T20I, talented all-rounder Deepti Sharma (*in photo*) says she has got better in reading and handling difficult match situations and enjoys playing under pressure.

During the meeting chaired by Thakur, various issues, including the provision of world class training facilities for the Olympic-bound athletes were discussed. "It was a normal review meeting of the high-level committee which has been going on for long.

In these meetings, we take stock of Indian athletes' preparation for the Olympics, to see if everything was on track or anything is pending which needs to be addressed," an official source told PTI.

Besides, Thakur also discussed with the officers the progress of #Cheer4India campaign and the preparations for the interaction of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Olympic-bound athletes on Tuesday.

"It was a crucial over and crucial wicket. Earlier also we had taken a DRS but we were unlucky. Next, when I bowled, it was umpire's call and it was hitting the stumps, it gave us a lot of confidence.

"We bounced back after that and then the run-out helped us to pull out the match."

The 23-year-old from Uttar Pradesh also contributed with the bat, scoring 24 off 27 balls as India posted 148 for four. Star opener Shafali Verma (48) and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (31) were the other contributors. "When I was batting, I was looking forward to building a partnership and also score 6 to 7 runs per over. That was the mindset but we couldn't score as much as we wanted," she said.

"We had got a good start, we thought we can score 160 but the 140 total wasn't bad because we knew as a bowling unit, we bowl in partnerships and we were supporting each other and we could defend the total."

Djokovic undecided about Olympic participation

AGENCIES
LONDON, 12 JULY



Serbia's world No. 1 Novak Djokovic (*in photo*) said he is still undecided about his participation at the Tokyo Olympic Games, adding that it was "50-50" thing as there are going to be "a lot of restrictions within the (Games) Village".

Djokovic, who bagged the singles bronze at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, defeated Italy's Matteo Berrettini in the final on Sunday to clinch his sixth Wimbledon title and 20th Grand Slam crown overall. By winning the title, the Serb joined Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, the other two members of the Big Three, as the players with the most number of Grand Slam singles titles in the Open Era.

"My plan was always to go to Olympic Games, but right now I'm a little bit divided. I also hear that there's going to be a lot of restrictions within the Village. Possibly you would not be able to see other athletes per-

form live. I can't even have my stringer that is very important part of my team. I can't have a stringer. I'm limited with the amount of people I can take in my team as well," said Djokovic during the post-match press conference.

"It's kind of 50-50 because of what I heard in the last couple days (about the ban on spectators)," added Djokovic.

I consider myself (the) best and I believe that I am the best, otherwise I wouldn't be talking confidently about winning Slams and making his-

Djokovic qualifies for ATP Finals after Wimbledon win

AGENCIES
LONDON: 12 JULY

Novak Djokovic became the first player to qualify for this year's ATP Finals after the world number one tied Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal's record with his 20th major at Wimbledon on Sunday.

Djokovic defeated Italy's Matteo Berrettini 6-7(4) 6-4 6-3 in the final to seal a sixth Wimbledon title and qualify for the Nov. 14-21 ATP Finals in Turin. "I am happy to have qualified for Turin so early," Djokovic, who will play in his 14th ATP Finals, said in a statement.

"Italian fans are very much into tennis so I am sure it will be a great event with a fantastic atmosphere."

The Serbian will look to win the season finale for the sixth time, aiming to match Swiss ace Federer's record at the event. The 34-year-old, who is on course to finish the year as the top-ranked player for a record-breaking seventh time, has won 34 out of 37 matches this year.

Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas, the 2019 ATP Finals champion, is next in line to qualify in the second position for the Turin event, followed by local favourite Berrettini, Rafa Nadal, Daniil Medvedev, Andre Rublev, Alexander Zverev and Jannik Sinner all feature in the Top 12 with four months remaining in the regular ATP Tour season.

ficult to compare the eras of tennis. But I am extremely honoured to definitely be part of the conversation."

'Sindhu will be more cautious'

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KOLKATA, 12 JULY

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