



KANGANA RUFFLES
MAHARASHTRA
FEATHERS



'SONIA, RAHUL
HAVE LED
FROM FRONT'

P4

P7



NATO AGREES
NOVICHOK USED
ON NAVALNY

P10



OLYMPIC BAN
LIKELY IF
USA PLAY UP

P12

PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION

WEATHER

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

RAINFALL: 0.00.8 mm

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 86% Min: 67%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 35.0°C (+1) Min: 26.3°C (+1)
SUN RISES 06:01 hrs SUN SETS 18:38 hrs
MOON RISES 20:37 hrs MOON SETS 09:21 hrs

THUMBNAILS



A slum located alongside railway tracks in Delhi. The Supreme Court has ordered the removal of slum clusters along railway tracks in the city ■ SNS

Harbhajan Singh withdraws from IPL: Senior off-spinner Harbhajan Singh on Friday became the second high-profile name to pull out of this year's Indian Premier League (IPL) owing to "personal reasons", saying he has informed the Chennai Super Kings team management about his decision. The 40-year-old, who has been a part of CSK during the past two seasons is currently in Jalandhar, Punjab with his family and requested privacy. The IPL starts on September 19 in the UAE after being moved out of India due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

SC denies bail to Sajjan in '84 riots case: The Supreme Court on Friday declined to grant bail to former Congress leader Sajjan Kumar in a 1984 anti-Sikh riots case. A bench of Chief Justice S.A. Bobde and Justices A.S. Bopanna and V. Ramasubramanian said the appeal against conviction will be heard after the top court resumes physical hearing. "This isn't a small case," observed the bench, as it rejected Kumar's bail plea citing medical grounds. The top court also declined to allow him to remain in hospital.

No Question Hour during Bengal Assembly session

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, 4 SEPTEMBER



There will be no Question Hour during the upcoming two-day Monsoon session of the West Bengal Assembly due to "paucity of time and the Covid-19 situation", Speaker Biman Banerjee said on Friday.

The BJP has termed it a "double standard" of the Trinamul Congress, which had earlier called the decision to not have Question Hour during the upcoming Parliament session a "murder of democracy". Other major opposition parties in the state, the Congress and the CPI-M, however, said they will comment on the decision only after they are officially informed about it.

"We have decided that there will be no Question

Hour during the two-day monsoon session, scheduled to begin on September 9, due to paucity of time and the Covid-19 situation.

"Having Question Hour will mean prolonging the session for which the MLAs will have to stay back for a longer period. We do not want that during this pandemic situation," Banerjee told PTI.

Senior Congress leader Abdul Mannan, also the leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, said he will comment only after he is officially informed about it.

BJP Legislative Party leader Manoj Tiggia said the decision reflects the "double standard of the TMC". "The TMC is demanding Question Hour during the upcoming Parliament session, scheduled to be held from September 14 to October 1, but it has decided not to include it in the Assembly proceedings in West Bengal. This is nothing but double standard of the party," he said.

The Speaker had earlier announced that the monsoon session of the Assembly will be held from September 9 in strict compliance with the ICMR's guidelines and every person entering the premises during the period, including lawmakers, journalists and House staffers, will have to undergo Covid-19 tests.

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Kejri assures traders, industrialists about move to ensure relief on fixed power charges

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has met traders and industrial associations over the last few days and assured them that adequate steps will be taken to provide relief vis-a-vis fixed power charges that the commercial and industrial units are obliged to pay despite economic losses due to the coronavirus pandemic.

A Delhi government official said that many trader associations and industrial associations have requested Kejriwal to intervene in this regard and provide relief to them. Over the last few days, Kejriwal has met several associations, clarifying that the revenue situation of the Delhi government has taken a hit owing to the complete shutdown of businesses and the economy due to the pandemic. He said that while the decision to impose a complete lockdown earlier was essential, Delhi has now decided to lift the lockdown and it will take time to cover the economic shortfall now that businesses and industries have resumed their operations. A few days back, Kejriwal had announced that Delhi's revenue has fallen from ₹3,500 crore in April month of the previous years



to ₹300 crore this year.

Kejriwal assured the representatives of the traders and industrial associations that steps to ease fixed power charges for owners of commercial and industrial units will be taken by the Delhi government as soon as possible.

Various stakeholders and representatives of these units have been meeting the CM and requesting his intervention, as most of the units had remained closed due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

Following the Unlock guidelines of the Centre, the Delhi government has allowed several economic activities in the national capital.

At several stages, Kejriwal has announced various measures to revive the economy of Delhi. Recently, the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission had announced no power tariff hike for the 6th year in a row in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The bulletins said the death toll from coronavirus infection has risen to 4,513 in the city and the total number of cases has climbed to 1,85,220 so far. The number of recovered Covid patients was 1,61,865 while the recovery rate dipped to 87.39 per cent.

The last week of August saw a 35 per cent increase in coronavirus cases as compared to the previous week, with 30 to 40 per cent of the new cases coming from the same family, according to an analysis done by the Delhi government's health department. The health department analysed the cases in August, which saw a spike, and found that the infections were spilling over to rural and middle-class pockets and there were increasing incidence of cases in migrant habitations.

The government's analysis also found that there is a lack of adherence with coronavirus appropriate behaviour by the public which might be responsible for the spike.

The other reasons it listed for the spike were the festive

season, late testing by Covid suspects, cross-infection, return of migrants and unlock measures.

Fresh and active cases have shown an increase over the last few weeks, with chief minister Arvind Kejriwal announcing last month that Covid tests in Delhi will be doubled to 40,000 per day within a week as there has been an increase in the number of cases.

In the last week of August, Kejriwal had warned people against complacency and said that more and more people should get themselves tested if they observe coronavirus symptoms.

"Due to overconfidence, some people think they will recover even after they have symptoms. They do not realise that if they do not get tested in time, they end up infecting many people around them eventually. People can avail testing for free in any government hospital or government dispensary," he said. He asked people to get themselves tested, wear masks, and practise social distancing. Even health experts pointed out that the fear of contracting coronavirus has reduced among patients and that they were seeing lower footfall in hospitals.

'4,500 beds occupied by Covid patients in Delhi hospitals, 33 pc by people from outside'

PTI
NOIDA (UP), 4 SEPTEMBER

Out of the over 14,000 beds for COVID-19 patients at various hospitals in Delhi, around 4,500 are occupied by people, 33 per cent of whom are from outside the city, according to government sources.

As per the latest health bulletin issued by the Delhi health department on Thursday, the total occupancy rate of beds at COVID-19 hospitals stands at 31 per cent.

Out of 14,140 total beds, 4,477 are occupied and 9,663 are vacant, it said.

"Close to 70 per cent of beds in Delhi hospitals are still vacant. Out of 14,000 beds, around 4,500 are occupied of which 1,500 (33 per cent) are occupied by those patients who are from outside Delhi," an government source said. Only three out of the 131 COVID-19 hospitals (private and government-run) are fully occupied, he said.

"There's no shortage of beds right now. But increasing number of patients from outside Delhi coming to city hospitals for treatment is a cause of concern," the source said. ICU beds at a few top private hospitals like Max Hospital Saket; Max Hospital, Patparganj; Indraprastha Apollo Hospital; Fortis Hospital, Vasant Kunj are all occupied, he said, adding that over 70

percent of these patients are from places outside Delhi. Delhi has been seeing a surge in fresh COVID-19 cases in the last several days and on Thursday, the city recorded 2,737 fresh COVID-19 cases, the highest single-day spike here in 67 days, taking the tally to over 1.82 lakh, while the death toll mounted to 4,500. This was the third successive day in September when over 2,000 fresh COVID-19 cases have been reported in a day.

On September 2, the daily cases count was 2,509 and on September 1, the count stood at 2,312. The active cases tally on Thursday rose to 17,692 from 16,502 the previous day.

Dr B L Sherwal, Director, Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital, a dedicated COVID-19 facility, said a large number of patients are now coming to Delhi after seeing the COVID-19 management by the city government, especially in July. "Many of the new patients admitted at our hospital are from the neighbouring cities," he said.

On June 23, the national capital had reported the highest single-day spike of 3,947 COVID-19 cases, till date. In June, when the city was seeing a sharp rise in COVID-19 cases, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had said, "Providing treatment for people coming from all over the country during a pandemic is a big challenge."

Delhi airport sets up Covid testing facility for select arriving international passengers

PTI
NOIDA (UP), 4 SEPTEMBER

Delhi airport has set up a COVID-19 testing facility at the multi-level car parking area of its Terminal 3 for arriving international passengers who have to take connecting domestic flights, its operator DIAL said on Friday.

It will be operational within a few days.

The testing facility has been established by the Delhi Airport International Limited (DIAL) in collaboration with Genestrings Diagnostic Centre, which is currently associated with the Delhi government to test COVID-19 samples.

The Civil Aviation Ministry had on Wednesday said that international passengers who have to take connecting domestic flights after landing in India will have the option of getting themselves tested for COVID-19 at the entry airports.

If the RT-PCR test result is negative, the international passenger will be allowed to board his or her connecting domestic flight and he or she will not need to under-

go any institutional quarantine, the ministry's order said. The DIAL's press release said, "Results of samples collected at the laboratory will be declared within 4-6 hours to the incoming passengers. Until the results are confirmed, passengers will be isolated at the waiting lounge or may opt to stay in a hotel."

"Constructed in 3,500 square meter area at multi-level car parking (MLCP) of Terminal 3, this is the first such arrangement among Indian airports," it noted.

An international passenger who does not have a

COVID-negative result certificate from a test done not more than 96 hours prior to the journey, and does not opt for an on-arrival testing facility at the entry airport, will have to compulsorily undergo seven-day institutional quarantine followed by seven-day home quarantine.

On August 2, the Union Health Ministry had said if an international passenger has a negative result from an RT-PCR test done 96 hours prior to the journey, he or she will not need to undergo institutional quarantine in India.



According to an order issued last week, PWD's superintendents and traffic police officers will conduct such inspections in their respective jurisdictions in a coordinated manner. During the inspection, officials will identify such road stretches where signage are required to be installed so that motorists get proper guidance, an official said. The official said that steps would also be taken to identify faulty signage so that they do not lead to road accidents. In 2017, a study on 14 major stretches had found that faulty signage may actually be behind traffic violations and the resulting accidents. Nearly 70 per cent of such signs are wrongly designed and placed, it had also found. In the national capital, the Delhi PWD, which maintains around 1,260-km roads, is responsible for roads over 60-metre in width while roads less than 60-metre wide broadly fall under the jurisdictions of civic bodies.

The government has asked the PWD and traffic police to conduct joint inspections to gauge the need for new signage and other measures to prevent road accidents in the city.

The government's home department has directed the public works department and the traffic police to submit a consolidated report within a month.

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According to an order issued last week, PWD's superintendents and traffic police officers will conduct such inspections in their respective jurisdictions in a coordinated manner. During the inspection, officials will identify such road stretches where signage are required to be installed so that motorists get proper guidance, an official said. The official said that steps would also be taken to identify faulty signage so that they do not lead to road accidents. In 2017, a study on 14 major stretches had found that faulty signage may actually be behind traffic violations and the resulting accidents. Nearly 70 per cent of such signs are wrongly designed and placed, it had also found. In the national capital, the Delhi PWD, which maintains around 1,260-km roads, is responsible for roads over 60-metre in width while roads less than 60-metre wide broadly fall under the jurisdictions of civic bodies.

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The government's home department has directed the public works department and the traffic police



While the decision to impose a complete lockdown was essential earlier, Delhi has now decided to lift the lockdown and it will take time to cover the economic shortfall now that businesses and industries have finally resumed.

ARVIND KEJRIWAL
DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

The Statesman

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 05 SEPTEMBER 2020

03

Covid: No more affixing of posters for home isolation patients in Pb

The move is aimed at minimising stigma resulting from affixing of such posters to the front doors of Covid patients' houses, which will also negate the fear of testing, says CM Amarinder Singh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 4 SEPTEMBER

The coronavirus (Covid-19) patients under home isolation in Punjab will no longer have to suffer the fear and stigma of social isolation resulting from posters affixed to the entrance of their homes.

For mitigating such stigma attached to the Covid pandemic, Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Friday rescinded his government's earlier decision of putting posters outside the houses of Covid patients under home isolation or quarantine.

The CM also directed that such posters may be removed from those places where they have already been put.



The move is aimed at minimising the stigma resulting from the affixing of such posters to the front doors of Covid patients' houses, which will also negate the fear of testing, said Capt Amarinder, even as he again appealed to the people to come out for

early testing, diagnosis and treatment of Covid.

The psychological trauma which patients were seen suffering as a result of these posters, which were meant to protect neighbours and others from such patients, was defeating the very purpose,

he said, adding that these posters were actually found scaring people away from testing. The "undesirable and unintended consequences" of these posters included social isolation and stigma, leading to anxiety and prejudices against the Covid patients. People would refrain from getting tested to avoid this stigma instead of extending support and community to the patients and their families, which had prompted a rethink on the decision of affixing posters, said Capt Amarinder.

The CM urged the people to continue taking all necessary precautions and follow all applicable guidelines for home isolation notwithstanding the removal of the posters. The violation of these guidelines is a punishable offence under the Disaster

Management Act, the Epidemic Diseases Act and the IPC, he said.

The Punjab government had recently allowed home isolation for asymptomatic and mildly symptomatic Covid patients, who did not suffer from any co-morbidities.

As the number of cases in the state continued to rise, home isolation for these patients was actively advocated and facilitated, with constant monitoring by local health authorities.

In an apparent bid to "make the community aware and act as a check" on possible violations of the home isolation guidelines by a Covid patient, posters declaring that a coronavirus positive patient was under home isolation were being affixed to the front door of his house.

HP to explore avenues for setting up forest-based industry in Shimla

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 4 SEPTEMBER

Himachal Pradesh Forest Minister Rakesh Pathania on Friday directed officials to explore the avenues for setting up the forest-based industry in Shimla. After a meeting of the Forest department, Pathania said that to generate revenues and provide employment opportunities to the local people, multifarious activities need to be set up in the state.

State Forest Minister emphasised on establishing forest based industry for promotion of forest based flower, fruits, dry fruits, herbs, etc and also stressed on the need for setting up of pine unit in the state.

Rakesh Pathania added



HP Forest Minister Rakesh Pathania presiding over a meeting of the forest department.

informed that a provision of investment subsidy of 50 percent of the capital cost for establishing pine needle based industry was being provided by the Department and machinery, building, equipment, etc would only be covered.

It was informed that as per the amendments in HP Forest Produce Transit Rules 1978 during 2006, the pine needles are treated in the list of Minor Forest Produce and export permit fee has been fixed for Rs 5 per quintal," a government official said. Additional Chief Secretary, Forest, Sanjay Gupta, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest Dr Savita Sharma and other senior officers of the Department were also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, it was

Schools in Delhi closed till Sept 30

PTI
NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

All schools in Delhi will continue to remain closed till September 30 in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, but students of senior classes will be allowed to visit their institutions for taking guidance from teachers from September 21, the Directorate of Education (DoE) said on Friday.

The directorate has said that up to 50 per cent of teaching and non-teaching staff can be called to schools outside COVID-19 containment zones for online teaching, tele-counselling and related work.

"All schools shall continue to remain closed for students till September 30 in view of COVID-19 pandemic," the DoE said in an official order.

Covid: Registration of people entering Himachal to continue till 15 Sept

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 4 SEPTEMBER

The Himachal Pradesh government on Friday decided to continue with registration of people entering the state amid the Covid pandemic till 15 September while big temples religious places of worship will reopen in the state by 10 September.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting held here today under the Chairmanship of Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur.

A government official said Language, Art and Culture department will prepare Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for opening of big temples/religious places.

"The Cabinet decided that the quarantine requirement would be reduced from 14 days to 10 days," he said, adding the

NIM scales 3 'unconquered' peaks in U'khand Himalayas

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 4 SEPTEMBER

India's apex adventure sports institute, Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM), used the period during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic to scale three unconquered peaks in Uttarakhand Himalayas. The Uttarkashi-based institute "conquered" the Naga peak (4,790 metres), Ku (5,871 mts) and an unnamed peak (5616 mts) in record six days.

All the three peaks are located in the Neling valley (Uttarkashi), which was open for tourists after a 53-year long gap in 2015. Leaving troops of Indo-Tibetan Border Police and army, who are stationed there, and occasional visit of shepherds, the area remains out of bound for the common public from 1962 to 2015.

NIM Principal Colonel Amit Bisht said, "We scaled the peaks in alpine style in which a climber carries his own food,



A NIM team scaling the Naga peak in Uttarkashi.

tent and equipment. It is different from expedition style in which you use porters and other facilities like fixed lines. We have collected vital data of the three peaks."

The three-member Nehru Institute of Mountaineering has compiled data about suitable places for establishing

camp, difficulty, route, distance, etc. This information will provide help to mountaineers in climbing the Naga, Ku and the unnamed peaks in the future. NIM began the expedition on 27 August and completed on 1 September. The team returned to Uttarkashi on Thursday evening.

Rural schoolchildren in Nuh tune in to radio for education amid the pandemic



ASHA RAMACHANDRAN
NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

A community radio in Nuh district in the Mewat region of Haryana has been helping schoolchildren in their studies during the current Coronavirus pandemic. The "Radio School" programme, started by community radio Alfaz-e-Mewat, has been the only source of information for a number of children in the villages of this district.

"Radio lessons have proven useful in these times," says Ravinder, a resident of village Shikrawa and a listener of Alfaz-e-Mewat. "Since charity begins at home, a few radio reporters, whose kids are studying in private schools resorted to radio programmes produced at the station to fill the gap."

Affirming this, Fakat Husain, a senior reporter at the community radio Alfaz-e-Mewat FM 107.8, an initiative of S M Sehgal Foundation—a rural development NGO working in areas of agriculture, water, governance, and transforming schools—said, "I had to rely on the radio programmes we produced at our community radio station for teaching my children." The programme "Radio School"

on the community radio came in handy at a time the community needed it the most, he added.

The "Radio School" programme was started about seven years back with the objective to provide tutorial sessions through subject teachers to students, who cannot afford private tuitions, and also to reach out to community people who have never seen inside of a school classroom, explained Pooja O Murada, a representative of Alfaz-e-Mewat FM 107.8 and SM Sehgal Foundation director.

"With changing time and needs, the programme has adopted different methodology to share knowledge, but our aim has remained the same ~ to spread education to all those who seek for it in our broadcast area," Murada added.

The programme has episodes on the subjects of Maths, English and Science from primary and secondary classes. The government school teachers gave their recordings as part of Das-tak-e-taaleem campaign facilitated by the State Education Department a few years back, along with educational content that the station received from Sesame Street,

NCERT and contributions made by several volunteers and interns, Murada said. All these form the content for the radio station, which is being broadcast regularly during the pandemic to make up for the educational loss of schoolchildren.

Mohd. Safi, a government school-teacher from Government Middle School, village Santhawadi in Nuh, shares how his day looks like amid the pandemic with schools shut for students. While following the preventive norms, he conducts a mohalla paathshala (neighbourhood school) in his village daily with 12 students in one group. He says, "We have two groups in place when there are more students and there is no barrier here, the child can be from any school; government or private. Ashiksha doot, graduate from the same village, helps us to coordinate the classes when the teachers are in school preparing for the assignments to be sent."

Safi further adds that assignments are sent on WhatsApp groups for students. His optimistic view makes him believe that students who do not have smartphones, around 50 per cent, keep in touch with their friends to know what is being taught.

online classes started for many private schools, rural schoolchildren had to be satisfied with whatever little came their way through mohalla classes or erratic flow of assignments for schoolchildren.

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Beware of Frauds!

Tips to safeguard from SIM Swap Fraud

- Remember, callers offering to swap your 2G/3G SIM to 4G may be cheats.
- Never forward SMS sent by such callers to your telecom operator. That will deactivate your SIM and issue e-SIM to the fraudster.
- Never share your Bank or Card details with such callers.
- Never click on any link or download any mobile App on caller's directions.
- In case of SIM deactivation, immediately contact your bank to secure your linked bank account.
- Secure your phone as it may be hacked by the downloaded App.

Tips to safeguard from Cyber Frauds

- Always treat unsolicited callers/emails with suspicion.
- Never share credit/debit card details with anyone claiming to be bank official or customer care executive.
- Never enter card details in online form sent by the caller. Your credentials might be stolen.
- Do not download remote access Apps as fraudster will get access to all your messages and emails.
- Never click on links in Phishing messages/emails appearing to come from government organizations, officials, banks, etc. They install malware/spyware on your device.
- Be cautious while scanning a QR code sent for receiving payment. You may lose money from your account.
- Be careful of fake customer care numbers appearing in web search.
- Use two-factor authentication (Password + OTP) for all online accounts.

Immediately report on <https://cybercrime.gov.in>

Email to CP, Delhi at: cp.snsrivastava@delhipolice.gov.in | Write to CP, Delhi at P.O. Box No. 171, GPO, New Delhi

FOR IMMEDIATE POLICE HELP CALL 112 | TO SHARE INFORMATION CALL 1090



Not a word from AAP on the fake news videos, which appear to have emanated from Pak, to spread fear among the people of Punjab on Covid

PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER AMARINDER SINGH

IN A HARD-HITTING REACTION TO THE PRESS AND VIDEO STATEMENTS OF SOME AAP PUNJAB LEADERS

7 women killed
in blast in TN
firecracker unit

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Seven women, including the firecracker unit licensee and her kin were killed and two workers critically injured in an explosion at a fireworks factory in Kattumannarkoil here on Friday, police said.

While one of the injured people has been admitted to the local government hospital, two others who are critical have been referred to another medical centre.

Cuddalore Superintendent of police M Sree Abhinav says that, "Six people have died so far and three others are injured."

We are yet to identify the exact cause of the explosion. The radius of the explosion is also not ascertained as of now.

We are investigating the matter."

Visuals from the site show a temporary shelter collapsed on the ground. According to reports, the unit was owned by a woman named Gandhimadhi who was present at the spot with her daughter.

"Hearing the news about the death of seven women in the blast is distressing."

I express my heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the bereaved families," chief minister Palaniswami said and announced a solatium of Rs two lakh each to the affected families.

He said he had directed Industries minister M C Sampath and the district collector to ensure appropriate treatment to the injured and also visit the grieving families and console them.

Help J&K youth: PM asks women police

Addressing the 2018 batch of IPS probationers at SVPNPA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, 4 SEPTEMBER



Modi said. He was apparently referring to youngsters being radicalised and made to join terror groups in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Prime Minister also stressed on constabulary intelligence for effective policing.

Nowadays technology plays an important role in crime detection, be it CCTV footage, mobile tracking... it helps you in a big way. But, the same technology is also responsible for suspension of police personnel nowadays..., Modi warned.

The way technology is helpful is also becoming a cause of misbar (difficulty)...and police are subjected to it more, he added.

He further said the police officials need to train people to see how technology can be used to its maximum and in a positive way as big data and artificial intelligence, social media were the new age technologies which can be

used as weapons for better policing. The 'humane' side of the police force in the country came to fore during the coronavirus pandemic and the security personnel did a commendable job.

During coronavirus times, Police used to sing songs to create awareness, used to feed the poor and take patients. These scenes were witnessed by people...

During the coronavirus, humanity worked through Khaki uniform, he said. He also counselled the new officers -- not to be influenced by films like "Singham" that portrayed supercops, saying some police personnel want to first show-off but miss out on main aspects of policing.

He also noted that yoga and pranayama were great ways to beat the stress. Police stations should be kept clean and neat and also made centres of social trust, Modi said.

Bihar poll: JD-U seeks more seats, BJP says can form govt on its own

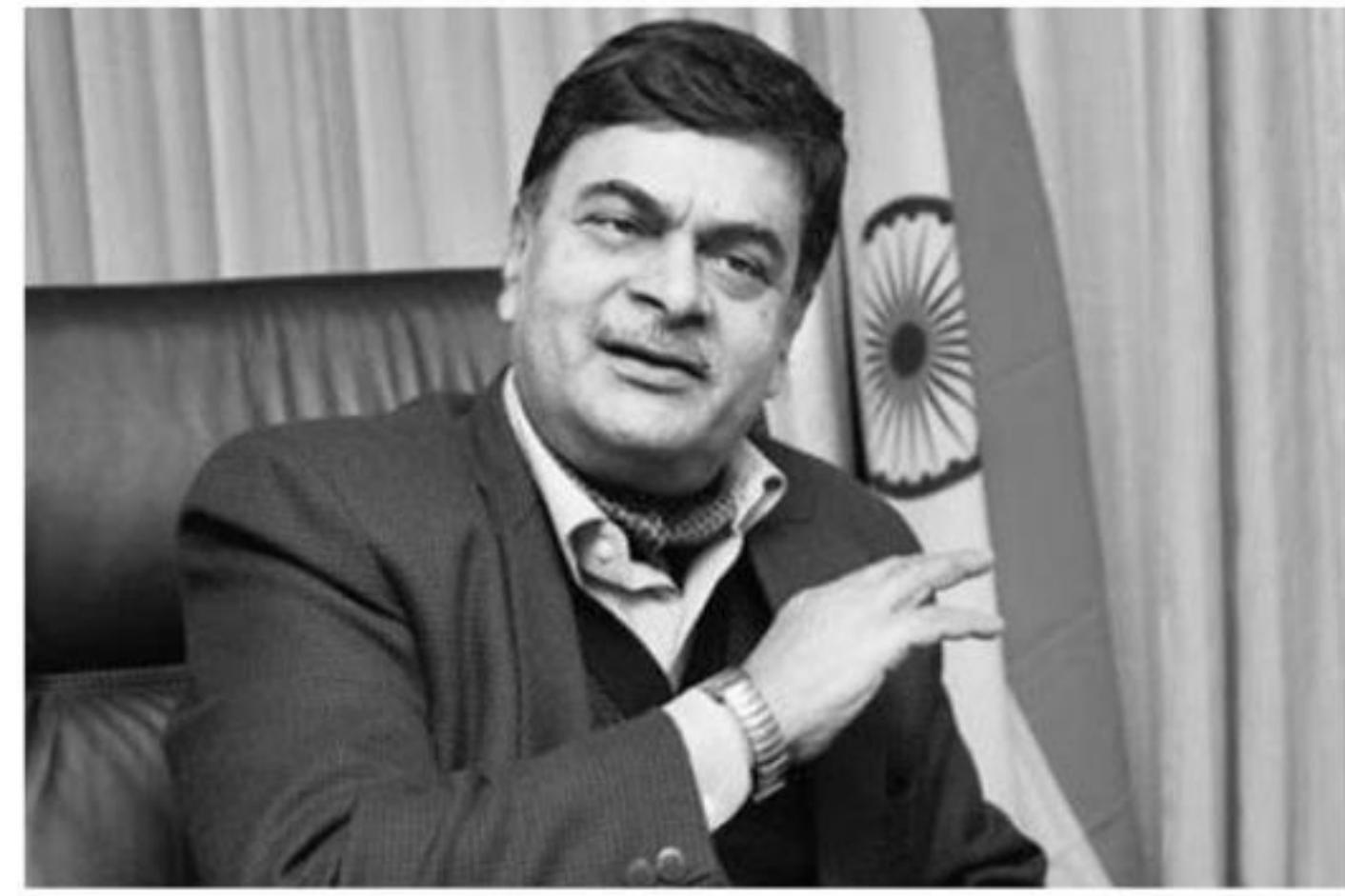
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

PATNA, 4 SEPTEMBER

Even as the ruling JD-U goes on pressing for more seats under the seat-sharing arrangements, the BJP has dropped a bombshell by stating that it is in a position to form government on its own and the last year's LS poll results have amply explained the party's base support base. The next assembly elections in Bihar are due in October/November for which poll preparations are already on though the Election Commission has not announced the dates for polling.

"We can form a government on our own in Bihar and there's no doubt in it. But, we've been in partnership with the JDU since 1996 and we do not want to break it, neither do they. We don't leave our friends," Union Power Minister and BJP parliamentarian from Ara, RK Singh told the media today.

He added there were no differences among the NDA partners over seat-sharing and claimed it would be completed smoothly. "Lok Sabha Poll results have clearly displayed the vote base of BJP and PM Modi. Hence, the seat division should be based on that only"



"**Lok Sabha Poll results have clearly displayed the vote base of BJP and PM Modi. Hence, the seat division should be based on that only**"

the heels of some BJP MPs expressing concerns over the way that JD-U had been staking claims for more seats.

What has annoyed the BJP further is the way the JD-U has gone on inducting outsiders to the JD-U and even lured Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) president Jitan Ram Manjhi to the party ahead of polls. The JD-U has so far inducted 12 RJD legislators.

Incidentally, all had emerged victorious after defeating the

BJP candidates in the last 2015 assembly polls when JD-U fought the elections in alliance with the RJD. It's obvious now, they would stake claims on sitting seats. If that is not enough, Manjhi too has staked claims on some 10 seats and, most of these seats too happen to be the BJP's traditional bastions.

The continuing developments have, thus, caused bitterness in relations between BJP and JD-U, and it is to be seen now how things unfold in days to come. JD(U) leader and Information and Public Relations Minister Neeraj Kumar also welcomed Manjhi to the NDA fold, saying it was in the state's interest and result in the RJD-U alliance getting wiped out in the assembly polls. The RJD had drawn a blank in the last Lok Sabha elections.

With dalits constituting a significant chunk of the electorate, Manjhi has often clashed with Paswan's party. The two had bickered even before the 2014 general elections for a larger share of tickets. Manjhi was then a part of the NDA and the JD(U) a constituent of the grand alliance.

HAM(S) has support among 'Mushar' voters. They are a 'Mahadalit' community, which has a substantial population in the state where 'Paswans' are numerically strongest and the most influential among a plethora of dalit castes. The LJP believes Kumar wooed back Manjhi to counterbalance Paswan's party.

The BJP has so far kept itself away from the feud, and insisted the alliance will contest the polls as a cohesive unit.

T'gana govt faces HC ire over poor tackling of Covid

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 4 SEPTEMBER

another Rs 4.57 crore on medicines.

However, with the rising number of cases the Andhra government has been facing attacks from Opposition TDP which has questioned the veracity of the state government's claims that increased testing has led to the rise in number of cases. TDP has pointed out that testing was not causing the cases to rise but the virus is just spreading faster.

It said this is evident from the state's 17 per cent positivity rate. "A positivity rate of more than 10 per cent indicates testing is inadequate," said the party. Meanwhile Telangana High Court has once again questioned the statistics on Covid-19 released by the health department in its daily bulletin.

TENDER

THE PATH



A man and a boy walk along Pattinapakkam beach in Chennai on Friday.

AFP

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

Dy. CSTE/C/CW/Northern Railway, DRM office, 2nd floor, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender from experienced & established contractors having sufficient experience in similar nature of work and satisfying minimum eligibility criteria on the prescribed form for the following work:

Name of work	'S&T' work (Indoor & Outdoor) for provision of Distributed Electronic Interlocking at Rosa Jn. station alongwith addition & alteration in existing Distributed Et of Baratra (Kyusen make) including block working and associated telecom work i.e. doubling between Rosa-Stalpur city section of Moradabad division of Northern Railway'.
Approximate cost of the work	Rs. 1336.00 Lakhs (Approx.)
Earnest money	Rs. 8, 18,000/- (Rupees Eight Lakh eighteen thousand only)
Completion period	10 (Ten) months
Date, Time & Place for submission and opening of tender	Tender will be available on www.ireps.gov.in website from 07.09.2020 to 11.30 Hrs on 30.09.2020 and will be opened on 30.09.2020 after 11.30 hrs. Tender can be uploaded from 16.09.2020 to 11.30 hrs on 30.09.2020 and will be opened on 30.09.2020 after 11.30 hrs.
Address from where tender form can be purchased	The detailed e-tender notice and document will be available on Northern Railway web site i.e. on www.ireps.gov.in from 07.09.2020 to 30.09.2020, bidders are advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which, they would require to, obtain class III digital certificate (if already not obtained) issued by CCA under IT Act 2000. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document.

No. 178-Sig/CW/32/94. Pt-I Dated: 04.09.2020 1933/2020

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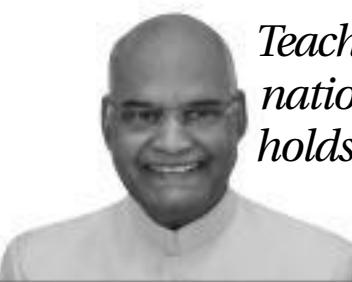
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Teachers are the guiding force for students and true builders of our nation. This is the precise reason why the 'Guru-Shishya' tradition holds special reverence in Indian culture

PRESIDENT RAM NATH KOVIND
ON THE EVE OF TEACHERS' DAY.

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 05 SEPTEMBER 2020

05

Family of five end lives in Gujarat town

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BENGALURU, 4 SEPTEMBER

AHMEDABAD, 4 SEPTEMBER
Continuing the trend of suicides and murders over apparently trivial issues, a five-member Bohra family committed suicide in Dahod district of eastern Gujarat on Thursday night.

Unlike other Muslims in Gujarat and other Indian states, Dawoodi Bohra Muslims are well off business community and stay clear off any controversial activities.

SNS

Bengaluru riots 'pre-planned', 'communally motivated': Fact finding report

"reducing the faith of common people in the state".

Citizens for Democracy is a platform of responsible citizens that claims to be committed to democratic values, safety and security of the citizens of India.

Started in 2011, it has conducted various seminars, campaigns on topics of national and social importance.

Citizens for Democracy in a statement said the fact finding committee comprising prominent representatives of the society was formed to look into recent violence, as it is imperative to survey the

incident neutrally without any bias or vested political interests with a sole commitment towards truth.

The fact finding panel headed by retired District Judge Srikanth D Babaladi, had retired IAS officer Madan Gopal, retired IFS officer R Raju among others which include retired bureaucrats, journalists, advocates, professors and social workers.

Committee members led by Madan Gopal submitted the report to Yediyurappa today.

Noting that it is estimated that nearly 36 government vehicles, nearly 300 private

vehicles and many houses were destroyed in the violence, the committee has said the damage could be estimated to be nearly Rs 10 to 15

crores. It could be seen from the FIRs and certain interactions with the victims, that local people were also involved in carrying out this riot, the committee said, "it is of the opinion that the locals were not only involved in execution but were also aware about it in advance."

"Despite attempts being made to project the same as political rivalry, it was undoubtedly communally motivated."

The panel is of the opinion that based on the kind of houses and people targeted, the motive of the riots could also be fear mongering so as

many police and private vehicles afire, and looted the belongings of the legislator and his sister. More than 300 people have been arrested in connection with the violence and investigation is on. Also retired judge Justice H S Kempanna has been appointed as the "Claim Commissioner" for assessment of damages caused during violence and to recover the costs from the culprits.

All the costs that have been incurred by the state and individuals have to be recovered by attaching the property of the rioters, the committee in its recommendations said.

Won't supply arms to Pak, Russia reassures India

Russia would engage with India to ensure the success of the 'Make in India' programme

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Indian Navy holds naval drill with Russia in Bay of Bengal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Russia has reassured India that it would not supply arms to Pakistan while promising to accord priority to meeting India needs for advanced military systems, according to defence sources.

Russia would also engage actively with India to ensure the success of the 'Make in India' programme and participate in a big way in the Aero India Exhibition to be held in February next year, Russian defence minister Gen Sergei Shoigu told defence minister Rajnath Singh during bilateral talks in Moscow on the margins of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) defence ministers' meeting.

Singh also extended an invitation for General Shoigu to visit India for the next meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission for Technical & Military Cooperation which is expected to be held towards the end of this year.

The one-hour meeting was marked by the traditional warmth and friendship, characteristic of the special and privileged partnership between the two countries with the two sides focusing on intensifying military technical cooperation and military-to-military cooperation, the Defence Ministry said.

The two ministers covered a broad range of areas of cooperation between their

time when India is engaged in a bitter border row with China in eastern Ladakh.

The Indian Navy has significantly expanded its deployment in the Indian Ocean Region, deploying a plethora of warships and submarines following the border row to send across a message to Beijing. The maritime space around the Malacca Strait is very critical for China's supply chain through sea routes.

"The exercise is aimed at enhancing interoperability, improving understanding and imbibing best practices between the two navies. It epitomises the long-term strategic relationship between

the two navies' Indian Navy Spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said.

He said the exercise has matured over years with increase in scope, complexity of operations, and level of participation. The Indian Navy is represented by guided missile destroyer Ranvijay, indigenous frigate Sahyadri and fleet tanker Shakti, along with their integral helicopters.

The assets deployed in the exercise by the Russian Navy include destroyer Admiral Vinogradov, destroyer Admiral Tributs and fleet tanker Boris Butoma of the Pacific Fleet which are normally based at Vladivostok.

two countries. It was noted that this meeting coincides with the Indra Naval Exercises to be conducted by the Indian and Russia navies off the Straits of Malacca over the next two days.

Singh noted that these exercises demonstrated the common interests of both countries in maritime security in the Indian Ocean region. There was a substantial commonality in positions with respect to challenges at the regional and international levels in the areas of peace and security, reflective of the deep

trust and confidence that both sides enjoy.

The Indian minister appreciated the steadfast support provided by Russia consistent with the defence and security needs of India, and in this context, particularly noted the timely manner in which Moscow had responded to requests for procurement of particular weapon systems. Both sides would continue to maintain contacts to ensure the timely delivery.

The two ministers welcomed the advance stage of discussions for the establishment in India of an India-Russian Joint Venture for the production of AK203 assault rifles which are considered one of the most modern weapons available for infantry forces. This provides a very positive basis for further engagement of the Russian defence industry in the 'Make in India' programme.

The meeting comes at a key point when Indian and PLA soldiers continue to engage in provocative actions in Eastern Ladakh along the Line of Actual Control, the border

between India and China.

Sushant case: NCB raids Showik, Miranda premises; summons them for questioning

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 4 SEPTEMBER



The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Friday conducted searches at the premises of Showik Chakraborty, brother of main accused Rhea Chakraborty, and Samuel Miranda in connection with the drugs probe linked to the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, officials said.

A team of NCB sleuths accompanied by police officials raided the residence of Showik in Santa Cruz (west) area and Miranda's house in the western metropolis from 6:30 am. Showik lives with Rhea.

The search teams included some women officials and they were seen wearing masks and gloves and using multiple vehicles. NCB Deputy Director (operations) KPS Malhotra, who is heading the

probe team of the agency, was seen leading the search and he told media persons on the ground that the houses of Showik and Miranda were being searched and that this is a "procedural" action.

Another senior official said the agency is looking to gather additional evidence through this action and some documents have been seized by the search teams.

They said both Showik and Miranda, house manager of Rajput, were handed over summonses to join the investigation during the search.

"They have intended to

No interim bail for Sajjan: SC

NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

The Supreme Court Friday dismissed the plea of former Congress leader Sajjan Kumar, who is serving life imprisonment in an 1984 anti-Sikh riots case, seeking interim bail on health grounds.

Sorry. We are not inclined. Dismissed, a bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde said. Senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for Kumar, argued that interim bail should be granted to Kumar on health grounds as he has been in jail for 20 months, has lost 16 kg weight and needs to recover from past ailments.

Singh said Kumar would abide by all the conditions which would be imposed by the court. Senior advocate H S Phoolka, who has been appearing for some of the riot victims, opposed the plea and said the required treatment is already being given to Kumar at hospital.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Depti Gupta, D/o Lalan Gupta, R/o H.No.15 Gali No.05 M-1, Sangam Vihar, Delhi** has been missing since 28.05.2020 In this regard a DD No. 30A dated 29.05.2020 has been registered at PS, Neb Sarai, New Delhi. The description of missing girl is as under:

Name: Depti Gupta, Father's Name : Lalan Gupta, Age : 24 years, Height : 5', Complexion : Fair, Face : Round, Wearing: Yellow T-Shirt & Black Jeans.

If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned at following phone numbers.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>
e-mail : cicb@cbi.nic.in
Fax : 011-230111334
Ph. : 011-23014046, 30115229, 23015218, Extn. 210
DP/182/SD/2020

SHO
P.S., Neb Sarai, New Delhi
Ph.: 011-29551326
29551597

BSF seizes Hilsa fish worth ₹2.4 lakh near B'desh border

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, 4 SEPTEMBER

The Border Security Force (BSF) on Friday seized 200 kg of the prized Hilsa fish while being smuggled into India from Bangladesh through the border in West Bengal, an official said.

A BSF patrol team, on noticing that four-five persons were trying to wade through a water body with loads on their heads towards India from Bangladesh in the Kalyani border outpost area, tried to stop them, the official said.

They managed to flee the spot leaving behind their belongings, the BSF official said, adding that the team recovered four big plastic containers hidden under water hyacinth.

Total 200 kg Hilsa, worth around Rs 2,40,000 in the Indian market, was found in the containers, he said. The seized fish was handed over to the customs office at Petrapole, the official said. The BSF has seized 2,800 kg of Hilsa fish so far this year while being smuggled into India from Bangladesh, he said.

2 ambulances used for transporting terrorists seized in J&K

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 4 SEPTEMBER

The Srinagar police have seized two ambulances that were used to transport terrorists for attacking security forces personnel and snatching their weapons in Kashmir.

Police has arrested 5 uncategorised terrorists of the Islam-

talian in a terror attack in Pandach in south Kashmir on 20 May. The terror attack case has been solved, said the police.

During investigation, 4 vehicles were detained which include 2 private ambulances functioning at SKIMS, a bike and a scooter. The vehicles were used for transporting terrorists from Bijbehara to Pandach, Srinagar.

Bikeno JK01AH2989 and Scooty no JK01V8288 were used to carry out the attack and escape after looting weapons. Ambulance JK01AF9417 was used to transport the terrorists back to Bijbehara from Srinagar.

Six terrorists involved in attacks at BSF, CRPF and police personnel were killed in three separate encounters.

POSSESSION NOTICE Under Rule- 8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002				
Notice is hereby given under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with Rule- 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, The Bank issued demand notices on the date mentioned against account and amount stated hereinafter calling upon them to repay the amount within sixty days from the date of receipt of said notices. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers, guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the said Rules on the dates mentioned against account and amount below. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (B) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrower and guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of Punjab & Sind Bank, Pallavpuram, Meerut for the amount and interest thereon. Detail of Property where Symbolic possession has been taken is as follow:-				
Name of Account/ Borrower	Description of Immovable Property	Am't o/s (as mentioned in the Notice u/s 13(12))	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession
Borrower : Sh. Pradeep Kumar S/o Sh. Jai Bhagwan	All the part and parcel of residential house measuring 99.64 Sq. Mts. bearing Plot No. 12 Khasra No. 107/1 Anoop Nagar Fazalpur, Rohta Road, Meerut in name of Sh. Pradeep Kumar S/o Sh. Jai Bhagwan	R s. 8, 88, 972.50 (amount inclusive of interest charged up to 30.11.2019) with future interest and incidental charges.	27.12.2019	01.09.2020
	Property Bounded as : North : 26 ft 9 inch thereafter raasta 25 ft wide West : 44 ft thereafter house of Yadav Ji East : 44 ft thereafter house of other South : 22 ft thereafter plot of other			
			PLACE : MEERUT	Sd/- AUTHORISED OFFICER, PUNJAB & SIND BANK

STATEMENT OF CONSOLIDATED AND STANDALONE AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER & YEAR ENDED 31.03.2020				
(Rs. in lacs)				
Sl. No.	Particulars	CONSOLIDATED		Year Ended
		31.03.2020 (Audited)	31.12.2019 (Unaudited)	
1	Total Income from Operations	8,309	7,117	8,978
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(2,664)	(1,377)	(1,528)
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)			

Navalny & Novichok

The Kremlin and Vladimir Putin have their backs to the wall with Angela Merkel's revelation that Russian opposition leader, Aleksei Navalny, was poisoned with a nerve agent from the same Novichok class that had been used in a 2018 attack in Britain on an ex-Soviet spy, Sergei V. Skripal. The German Chancellor has been remarkably bold in demanding answers from Moscow, indeed a diplomatic offensive and one that could lead to the souring of relations between Russia and western Europe. Already, the German government has briefed its allies in the European Union and NATO, and plans to provide information about its findings to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the world's chemical weapons watchdog. Western governments have swiftly issued condemnations of Russia, with the United States raising the possibility of imposing financial sanctions on those involved. Navalny is currently in a hospital in Berlin. The poison, the German doctors suspected, was something far more dangerous and required the attention of the Army's chemical weapons specialists. From Britain to Russia, from an ex-Soviet spy to a present-day opposition leader, there is a hideously sinister pattern in the killings. And President Putin cannot evade responsibility for the extermination of dissenters.

Though the Kremlin has readily binned Germany's claim, Ms Merkel has doubtless taken the lid off a pretty kettle of fish. The degree of the calculated malevolence can be assessed from the fact that when Navalny's private plane touched down in Berlin, he was said to be in a medically induced coma. On Wednesday, the German government confirmed the doctors' fears - Navalny (44) had been poisoned with a military-grade nerve agent from the Novichok "family", a potent chemical weapon, developed by the Soviet Union, that was used at least once before in recent years in an attack on a Kremlin enemy.

The Novichok revelation, which the German government said was based on "unequivocal evidence," provided the strongest indication yet that the Kremlin, which has denied involvement, was behind the poisoning. Western intelligence agencies have assessed that only the Russian government was in a position to have access to such a dangerous weapon. Chancellor Merkel, who over the years has taken pains to preserve Germany's diplomatic relations with the Kremlin, took the unusual step on Wednesday of publicly calling Russia out. "Mr Navalny has been the victim of a crime," she said. "It raises very serious questions that only the Russian government can and must answer." Russia is unlikely to provide such answers, however. It is as yet unclear what Western governments can do to curtail such behaviour. Despite years of escalating sanctions, expulsions of diplomats and international isolation, the Kremlin, according to Western intelligence agencies, continues to undermine American and European institutions and violate international norms. The parable of the tragedy must be that extermination of dissenters remains integral to State policy three decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Pandemic Poverty

The UN's prognosis is direly distressing for women and child development entities in South Asia. The world body's report, released on Wednesday, assumes greater significance as it has been crafted in the context of the coronavirus pandemic. It is still more significant for India, where the scenario is more forbidding than in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, countries that have contained the virus better. The striking feature is the UN's projection that the female poverty rate seems poised to increase in 2021 because of the pandemic; going by fresh data, more women than men in the 25-34 age group will be poorer in the next decade. Quite total, therefore, will be the gender inequality in societal and economic terms should decades of progress be stalled. The UN Women and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) have underlined the fear that the pandemic will "disproportionately affect women and push 47 million more women and girls into extreme poverty by 2021". A greater responsibility devolves on the authorities in India not the least because of the influx of migrants into the subaltern belt, notably Ganjam in Odisha, arguably the most acutely affected district in the country. Women and children in other parts of the India have reportedly been driven to penury in parallel to the pandemic.

The report has made it pretty obvious that governments of the affected countries have a crucial role to play. The gender-poverty gap will worsen further still in South Asia, Central and Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa - "home to 87 per cent of the world's extreme poor". Livelihood is at stake in a vast swathe of Asia and Africa. The report has dwelt not so much on the incidence of the dreaded disease, but on the dire threat to livelihoods and the resultant economic blight. The forbidding phenomenon, indeed the grim fallout of the pandemic, exposes the vulnerability of women and girls. Development of both segments has hit the reefs, and this must be no less tragic than the mortal spread with millions of the afflicted languishing in quarantine centres. The pre-pandemic female poverty rate in South Asia was projected to be ten per cent in 2021; it is now expected to reach 13 per cent. The resurgence of poverty due to the pandemic "threatens to deepen gender poverty groups". The impact on the demographic construct is bound to be severe in the countries under focus. If 47 million women are "pushed to poverty", the occasionally proud boast of GDP means little or nothing in tangible terms. Poverty is a concomitant phenomenon of the pandemic. Both lives and livelihood are at stake.

Devil in the Details

Lofty futuristic goals no doubt, with tectonic potential to transform India from an educationally laggard country into a self-reliant knowledge superpower - only if sincere implementation can be ensured which would need enormous resources, and it is here that the NEP disappoints. The total combined public expenditure on education by the Centre and the states, currently at only about 4 per cent of GDP, falls way behind the target of 6 per cent envisaged in all previous Education Policies



It is said that we do not have any education system in India. We only have a system of examinations and an inefficient one at that, one which relies heavily on rote learning at the cost of creativity and inquiry. The New Education Policy 2020 (NEP) aspires to change all that and transform education to produce "good, thoughtful, well-rounded, and creative individuals" with "character, ethical and Constitutional values, intellectual curiosity, scientific temper, creativity, spirit of service", etc., definitely needed for 21st century India.

The weighty adjectives, however, are incompatible with the lack of a specific implementation roadmap, except specifying certain targets. Indeed, re-designating the Ministry of Human Resource Development as the Ministry of Education was the easiest of its recommendations to implement, but that may not suffice to "bring the focus back on education and learning". Most of our 800+ universities presently churn out millions of unemployable graduates and postgraduates every year with very little knowledge and skill. To completely overhaul the system would need a careful strategy, possibly incorporating some out-of-box solutions, with continuous monitoring all the way.

Since it is impossible to cover all aspects of the NEP in a single article, let me focus only on the higher education landscape. As the NEP has correctly identified, the higher education scenario in the country has been beset with many problems, including a severely fragmented ecosystem and a rigid separation of disciplines with little emphasis on cognitive skills, learning outcomes or quality research, limited institutional autonomy and ineffective regulatory and governance systems leading to poor leadership of Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs).

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education being a paltry 26 per cent compared to 58 per cent in Senior Secondary and 79 per cent in Secondary schooling, most students are driven away from higher education because of these debilitating deficiencies. The NEP promises to correct this by focusing on multidisciplinarity, flexibility, emphasis on skill acquisition and quality research. Education being a concurrent list subject, both the Central and the state governments must work together to ensure that the promises do not turn into hollow platitudes.

To recall the premises of the NEP as far as higher education is concerned, there shall no more be any rigid separations between

arts and sciences, or curricular and extra-curricular activities, or vocational and academic streams. Students will select subjects of their choosing across all streams to excel wherever they can, and discover their aptitude and potential, a birth-right that was so far denied to generations of students. Undergraduate degree courses will be of either 3 or 4-year duration with multiple exit options like a certificate after completing one year, a diploma after two years and a Bachelor's degree after 3 years. The Fourth year will be exclusively for research after which one can pursue a one-year Masters' degree.

Thus, one can always come back at an opportune time even after exiting at an intermediate stage to pursue further education, saving precious time, energy and resources both for the learner and the institution. The courses will be credit-based with an Academic Bank of Credit being established for digitally storing academic credits earned from different HEIs so that these can be transferred and counted towards the final degree earned. M.Phil. courses will be junked. A new overarching body called the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be established for all higher education, excluding medical and legal studies, replacing the existing regulatory bodies like UGC, AICTE or NCTE. HECI's four independent verticals will be responsible for regulation (National Higher Education Regulatory Council), accreditation (National Accreditation Council), funding (Higher Education Grants Council) and learning outcomes (General Economic Council, GEC), ending the multiple conflicts of interests that afflict the present regulatory architecture.

GEC will frame a National Higher Education Qualification Framework in sync with the National Skills Qualifications Framework to facilitate the integration of vocational education into higher education. There are also other forward-looking proposals like setting up National Professional Standards for Teachers to make the recruitment of teachers more transparent. Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities and a National Research Foundation to "seed, grow, and facilitate research at academic institutions", and a National Educational Technology Forum to promote the use of technology in higher education. It assures

that educationists will be appointed on the Board of Governance of HEIs and to depoliticise them. Given the present vicious stranglehold of retired bureaucrats and politicians who are deeply entrenched in such institutions and their traditional stubborn objections to any reform, they would be extremely unlikely to yield any space to academicians. Since de-bureaucratisation and depoliticisation are most crucial for success of NEP and its full implementation by 2040 as envisaged, it would be interesting to see how their dominance over the HEIs could be diminished.

But the most revolutionary part of the NEP is perhaps its single-minded focus on multi-disciplinarity by creating large multidisciplinary universities and HEI clusters and ending the present system of affiliation of colleges. All universities have to provide emphasis on significant quality research, even though they can be teaching-intensive or research-intensive, while undergraduate

education would be provided by autonomous degree-granting colleges which will be large multidisciplinary institutions of higher learning. To help the existing colleges transform into such institutions, they have to be monitored, supported and incentivised to develop their capacities, so that there would be no affiliate college after 15 years.

By 2040, all HEIs would become multidisciplinary institutions with thousands of students in their rolls "for optimal use of infrastructure and resources, and for the creation of vibrant multidisciplinary communities". Single-stream HEIs will become a thing of the past and all HEIs would impart and "encourage high-quality multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary teaching and research across fields", boosting the higher educational GER to 50 percent. Lofty futuristic goals no doubt, with tectonic potential to transform India from an educationally laggard country into a self-reliant knowledge superpower - only if sincere implementation can be ensured which would need enormous resources, and it is here that the NEP disappoints. The total combined public expenditure on education by the Centre and the states, currently at only about 4 per cent of GDP, falls way behind the target of 6 per cent envisaged in all previous Education Policies. Consequently, our expenditure on

research remains a pitiable 0.69 per cent of GDP. Without investment, neither the infrastructure nor the standards required for the NEP would be achieved. But the NEP only paid some lip-service to this crucial element - to reiterate the wishful thinking that the Centre and the States will work together to raise expenditure to 6 per cent of GDP which it recognises as essential for "progress and growth" but stops short of recommending that a law should be enacted to enforce the same. Thus, there is neither any commitment nor an accountability structure built into the NEP to ensure implementation. Maybe it felt restrained due to the budgetary stress caused by the pandemic, which may further curtail educational expenditure. The budgetary stress would be over some day, but the future will not wait. Meanwhile Universities can think of stopping to operate from their individual silos and form provincial and regional consortiums to explore and exploit the existing synergies, map their educational resources and plan to use these interchangeably and optimally between different institutions so that all students can get access to the best facilities like laboratories and other resources, especially in critical times like this with restrictions on movement and assembly.

Identification of the weaknesses and strengths of different institutions can help optimise investment and specialisation. Technology and digital learning must then be leveraged to the maximum to disseminate specialised knowledge and enhance the learning outcomes of students while ensuring their access to technology. Investments may be optimised by increasing the existing capacities of institutions in their respective specialised areas. The mantra should be to give access of quality learning to all who desire to learn.

Our current stereotyped westernised system of education has all along ignored the abundant traditional knowledge and inter-generational expertise available indigenously across regions and to use such knowledge for addressing local needs and problems. Any holistic system of education must integrate such knowledge not only to improve local livelihood but also to teach important cultural, societal and humanistic values to youth. Knowledge must be free and free-flowing to prevent fragmentation of the world so that the spirit of human inquiry would not lose "its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit" and the mind would be led forward into "ever-widening thought and action" which is the ultimate aim of any holistic education.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN VOICES

Use budget efficiently

South Korea's economic situation is worsening. Last week the Bank of Korea revised its economic growth for this year down sharply to negative 1.3 percent.

It is true that the government's fiscal role has become important in kick-starting the pandemic-hit economy. But equally important is the efficient use of its budget. If it splurges on non-essential or populist programs under the pretext of reviving the economy, growth momentum will vanish.

In this context, the "expansionary fiscal position" for next year, agreed upon last week by the government and the ruling party, is concerning. Based on the position, the 2021 government budget is likely to be the largest ever. But there are no policies in sight to deal with the adverse effects of a super-large budget expected to swell to 560 trillion won (\$47.3 billion) from 512 trillion this year. Considering the negative growth projection, the government will not be able to fund the budget with tax revenue alone. Heavy borrowing will be inevitable once again. Korea's national debt is already piling up with vertiginous rapidity. This is a result of the expansionary fiscal policy pursued by the administration under President Moon Jae-in. It has expanded its budget sharply each year. When tax revenue was insufficient, it did not hesitate to borrow through bond issuance.

Its fiscal deficit widened to a record 110.5 trillion won in the first six months of the year. The figure is poised to surge from 660 trillion won in 2017 to 840 trillion won this year, and surpass 1,000 trillion in two years.

Korea's government debt-to-GDP ratio, a measure of fiscal soundness, is

H The Korea Herald

a close call. The ratio is projected to rise from 39.8 percent early this year to 43.5 percent at the end of this year. Global credit appraiser Fitch Ratings warned that if the ratio goes up to 46 percent in 2023, it could exert more meaningful pressure on Korea's sovereign rating. There is a view that Korea is still fiscally sound compared with other countries. But simple comparisons, particularly with key currency countries, can be misleading. Korea is heavily dependent on international trade, so it is likely to post a current account deficit easily due to volatile external variables. More than that, if debt held by many public institutions and enterprises were factored into the equation, the ratio would surpass 100 percent, according to the Korea Economic Research Institute. Korea's national debt is never an issue to take lightly. When the economy is in trouble, it is right to assist the economically vulnerable as a high priority. But if a budget is too lopsided toward welfare or spends money inefficiently, it may stunt economic recovery and growth.

Some items do not look indispensable at this challenging time. Among them is a plan to make high school education free for all, starting next year, a year earlier than previously arranged. Critics question whether the government and the ruling party expedited this plan because of the presidential election in early 2022. This does not look so unfamiliar. Ahead of the general elections this year, they exempted regional infrastructure projects from preliminary feasibility tests despite criticism that doing so might lead to the wasteful use of taxes. Given economic difficulty and decreasing tax revenue, it is necessary to review a controversial plan to extend unemployment insurance coverage to about 470,000 freelancers. They are not required to have insurance against unemployment. Of course, they will welcome this measure, but there is controversy over whether they will be able to keep paying premiums as certainly and regularly as salaried employees. There are concerns that this plan may quickly drain the reserves.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

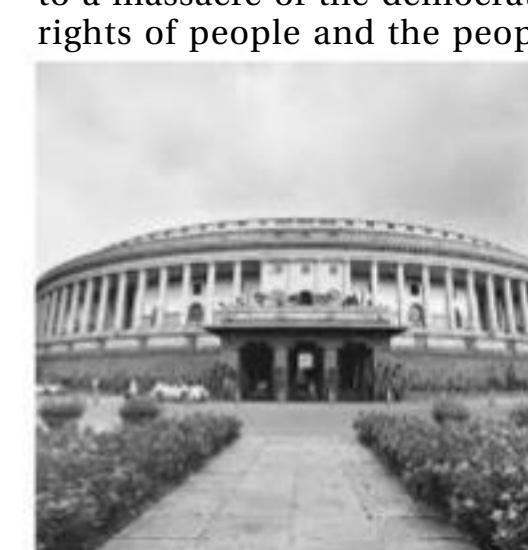
editor@thestatesman.com

Assault on democratic right

SIR, The Modi government's suspension of Question Hour during the entire monsoon session is a step that fundamentally uproots democracy itself. The 'pandemic' has now become a convenient excuse whenever the government faces anything unpalatable. In the monsoon session, people want to know from the horse's mouth about the migrants' crisis; unemployment crisis; the economic slide to unprecedented negative levels; authentic information on the Chinese incursions and the GST compensation issue. The step exposes the government to the justifiable charge that the country is moving towards authoritarianism of an elected autocracy.

The blatant attempt amounts

to a massacre of the democratic rights of people and the people



who represent them. The ruling party appears to be celebrating the triumph of its victory over a truncated and helpless Opposition. Be it the cancelling of Question Hour,

the curtailment of Zero Hour or the Speaker's stern reiteration of the sub judice rule - these are disquieting portents for an institution that needs to make its presence felt more in a crisis, not less.

Yours, etc., SS Paul,

Nadia, 4 September.

CHINESE APPS

SIR, This refers to the news, 'Govt bans 118 more mobile apps with Chinese links, including PUBG' (*The Statesman*, 3 September). China has been dominating gaming apps on social media for a long time. Kudos to the Modi government which has again fired another shot. It's the right time to close down Chinese apps which are psychologically exploiting our virtual world and playing with people's feelings and destroying youngsters' minds. China's bosses should

understand that messing with India can get expensive. With the uplift of science and technology in our country, we should come up

CAN'T HIDE FROM AUDIT

SIR, The news of the death of Pranab Mukherjee on 31 August revived one memory. He had addressed officers of Indian Audit and Accounts department on 11 December 2003 at a training programme in the annexe building of Parliament, in which I too was a participant. The topic of discussion was "Preparation of budget, its passage in Parliament, preparation of Audit report and role of the Public Accounts Committee". The duration of the lecture was one and half hours. The late President came dot on time without any paper in his hand. He delivered his lecture extempore for ninety minutes to the bewilderment of the participants. After the lecture was over, he invited questions from the participants, which he answered at ease and without any thinking. Such was his knowledge and depth on finance and Government accounts and audit. After the conclusion of the lecture when some lady officers from the southern states wished him "happy birthday" he smiled and said: "Nobody can hide anything from Audit".

Yours, etc., Shyamal Mukhopadhyay, Bhadrak, 2 September.

'Sonia, Rahul have led from front'

ASHA KUMARI is an accomplished Congress leader from Himachal Pradesh. She has been All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge of Punjab from the time the Congress was in Opposition there. A former minister, Asha is a six-time MLA from Dalhousie. Her mother was a politician in Madhya Pradesh. A founder member of the NSUI, Asha learnt the ropes in politics from Congress stalwarts like ex-Madhya Pradesh chief minister Arjun Singh and former HP CM Virbhadr Singh. In HP she was once known as a "crisis manager" for six-time CM Virbhadr Singh. Asha came into the spotlight when she, as in-charge of Punjab affairs, helped Capt Amarinder Singh steer the party to a spectacular victory in the 2017 Assembly polls. A gritty politician and an impressive orator, Asha has faced ups and downs in her political career, but has always displayed remarkable political acumen and fighting spirit. In a free-wheeling interview with ARCHANA PHULL, she candidly speaks her mind on a wide range of issues.

Excerpts:

Q. How difficult it is for a woman to survive in politics?

A. It is easy to survive in any profession, if you are actually working. Whatever handicaps women face in any other profession, they face the same in politics too. But unlike in other fields, there are few women in the Legislative Assembly. When I was elected (to the HP Assembly) for the first time, we were three women MLAs from the Congress, the other two being Vidya Stokes and Viplove Thakur. Currently, I am the only woman MLA from the Congress. I agree there is a tendency to overlook women till they prove their worth.

Q. Why did your political relations with Virbhadr Singh get strained?

A. In politics, the situation can change anytime. I don't blame him for this. Maybe because of the stands he took. But whatever be the politics, our personal relations have never changed. He has always been a father-figure to me.



Q. You have traversed a long journey in politics. Did you get your due?

A. Right from the beginning, I have been an organisation person and have contributed to the Congress in whatever capacity the party wanted me in. I am happy that while I was primary education minister in the 1990s, we brought many reforms and opened so many schools, which paved the way for robust primary schooling in Himachal. I was made AICC secretary in 2011 as co-incharge of Jharkhand. In 2016, I was elevated and was made AICC in-charge of Punjab. Punjab has been my most satisfying assignment, whether about winning Assembly polls or Parliament polls there. Capt Amarinder Singh has been able to do a lot of good work despite challenges like terrorism, drug issues, liquor mafia etc. Still there is room for improvement.

Q. What about the Congress affairs in Himachal Pradesh?

A. For any party, there is always scope for improvement. For Congress, there is a sudden vacuum in leadership.

ship in Himachal as Virbhadr Singh dominated the party for long. Before him, former CMs Thakur Ram Lal and Dr Y Parmar, were there. There were mass leaders like Sant Ram, Sat Mahajan, Thakur Karam Singh and Guman Singh. In those times, there was no direct threat for Congress from any other party. Now it is a challenging task.

Q. Why is the second-line Congress leadership missing in HP?

A. There is second-line leadership, but it has to develop and come out of the shadows. Right now, none matches even 25 per cent of leaders like Virbhadr Singh. In the minds of people, Singh has a huge imprint. It is a transition phase.

Q. Congress has been in turmoil since 23 of its top leaders sent a joint letter to Sonia Gandhi last month, seeking sweeping reforms in the party. How do you look at it?

A. The matter was taken up in the Congress Working Committee, of which I am a member. It passed the

resolution and approved the process to elect the president. In Covid time, AICC sessions can't be held, with 4,000 members, until safety protocols allow it. Sonia Gandhi graciously addressed the colleagues.

Q. They called for full time and effective leadership, which is both visible and effective on the ground. Don't you think if 23 senior Congress leaders flag such deficiencies the crisis facing your party must be staggering and unprecedented?

A. I have not read the letter. It's only in bits and pieces that we have heard the contents of the letter. We are only picking up words from here and there to show the crisis. The Congress party is fully united under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi and is working in the field. I can say there is no crisis. Some voiced their opinion as we are a democratic party. Congress workers have full faith in the leadership and they continue to fight fascist and non-secular forces in the country.

Q. There were complaints later that the CWC did not really discuss and address the concerns and suggestions expressed by the 'group of 23'. Your comments?

A. All members of CWC, including me and the ones who wrote the letter, participated in the meeting. After everybody spoke, a resolution was adopted. We are not a fascist party like others.

Q. Do you think a non-Gandhi can and should also become president of the Indian National Congress?

A. Whoever is chosen by Congress delegates will become the president. When election takes place, their choice will prevail. Out of over 100 Congress presidents so far, only four were Gandhis. If Congress delegates and workers feel that the right person to lead is a Gandhi, it will be a Gandhi. Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi have led from the front. Today, Rahul Gandhi has been raising issues which turn out to be all correct, including Covid-19 crisis, China conflict, unemployment or migrant workers problems.

Q. Since 2014, the Congress party has been grappling with an existential crisis, losing two back-to-back general elections and state after state. What is your take on this critical issue?

A. We need to introspect in the states where we lost. Not that Congress is weak. Maybe we were not able to project our agenda with that much force in the states. We were winners in MP, Karnataka, Goa, Meghalaya, but the BJP used foul means to topple the governments. It's not Congress which is losing, but the BJP has managed to come into power by any means. There was unethical use of social media by BJP in Parliament polls. There are international reports that swayed Indian minds. Managing EVMs is another reason. I see no reason why we don't go back to the ballot, when all the developed countries have switched from EVMs to ballot. In 2024, Congress will certainly perform much better if ballot is used.

OCCASIONAL NOTE

Both the great parties in America have steered judiciously clear of the Irish question. The Irish "plank" of the Democratic platform while expressing general sympathy with what is called the "Irish cause," suggests that the League of Nations should furnish a remedy for the situation. This may seem absurd, but a second thought will show that it is really an adroit move, for, while it commits the Democratic party to nothing, it makes a bid for the Irish-American vote in support of the League of Nations and the party by which the League is championed. In expressing sympathy with the aspirations of the Irish people for self-government, the Democratic party are going no further than British political parties have gone, and are merely expressing in words what British parties have expressed in deeds over and over again by the proffer of Home Rule Bills and every conceivable arrangement short of absolute separation, which is disconcerted by both the American parties. A proposal to include in the Democratic platform a plank urging recognition of an Irish Republic was rejected by the Convention, as it was bound to be. The principle at stake is that which the United States settled for itself in 1861-65. Americans cannot deny in the case of Great Britain the same right which they maintained at all costs for themselves. The Democratic party is pledged to "such action as is consistent with international usage."

NEWS ITEMS

RAILWAY WORKMEN'S ASSOCIATION

A big meeting of the Railway Workmen's Association was held in the grounds of the Clem Browne Institute, Sealdah. Mr. J. Meadowcroft, President of the Calcutta Branch, Eastern Bengal Railway, took the chair. The president said, we are met here under the auspices of the Railway Workmen's Association - an organisation which has come into existence to usher in a new era of peace and contentment to those who follow the railway profession. The Association has not celebrated the first anniversary of its birth and yet, thank God, thousands of railway men all over India have added their names as members on the rolls. This is the first occasion on which the employees of the Eastern Bengal Railway have convened a mass meeting, as members of the Association.

DACOITY PREVENTED

Before Mr. P. Sen, Sudder Sub-divisional Magistrate of Alipore, Mr. M.N. Dutt, Deputy Court Superintendent prosecuted three men for attempting to commit dacoity in a house at Bundal within the police station Tollygunge. Information was received at the Tollygunge Sudder Police station that a gang of dacoits was making preparations to commit dacoity in the house of a rich man at Bundal. At the sight of the police the gang took to fight and entered into a vacant house. The police thereupon surrounded the house, and while attempting to arrest them, a free fight ensued between the parties, in the course of which one constable was dealt a blow with a dagger and some others were less wounded. The police succeeded in arresting the three accused, and the others made good their escape. The trial is proceeding.

INDIAN ARMY

In the House of Commons, replying to Viscount Curzon, Mr. Montagu stated that in December, 1919, out of 148 Sandhurst Cadets there were 22 candidates for 24 Indian Army commissions as compared with 68 out of 198 for 25 Indian army commissions in December, 1913. This seemed to imply a serious falling-off in the competition for the Indian Army. He pointed out, however, that these cadets entered Sandhurst by an examination at which nearly a hundred appointments were made to the Indian Cadet College, Wellington, all of whom entered the Indian Army. It was, therefore, reasonable to presume that the competition for Sandhurst would have been much keener had Sandhurst been the only channel for admission to the Indian Army. It was too early to say how recruitment in the Indian Army would be affected.

NILE IRRIGATION WORKS

The Consular Court has committed Sir William Willcocks and Lieutenant-Colonel Ralston Kennedy for trial on a charge of criminal and seditions libel. Bail was fixed at £500. The proceedings were initiated by Sir Murdoch M. Macdonald, Adviser and Under Secretary of State for Public Works in Egypt, against whom Sir W. Willcocks and Colonel Kennedy had brought charges questioning the trustworthiness of official data with reference to the Nile irrigation works and impugning Sir M. Macdonald's conduct. These charges were dismissed by the Nile Projects Commission after examination.

Why Indians abroad pull ahead



OWEN BENNETT-JONES

economics student and civil rights leader, Donald Harris. Her choice of partner was consistent with her family's political traditions: back in India, Gopalan's mother, Rajam, was an outspoken community organiser and husband, PV. Gopalan, a progressive Indian diplomat involved in resettling some of those who fled the 1971 conflict in East Pakistan.

While Americans assess Harris, Brits are getting used to having three government ministers with an Indian heritage. As chancellor of the exchequer, Rishi Sunak, has won praise for his liberal distribution of cash to

counter Covid-19. Dishy Rishi, as he has become known, is within the globalised elite, having studied at Oxford and Stanford before marrying the daughter of an Indian billionaire.

Another senior minister, hard-right Home Secretary Priti Patel, went to less glamorous universities but she also completed postgraduate studies. Like Sunak, her family moved from India to East Africa before reaching the UK. The trio of Indian-origin heavy hitters is completed by Business Minister Alok Sharma who moved to the UK from Agra at the age of five.

By comparison, British Pakistanis

have the mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and just one junior minister — Lord Tariq Ahmed in the Foreign Office.

Indian and Pakistani diplomats in London like it when they have a minister with links to their country in power. Conspiracy theories abound. They wonder whether it is a coincidence that Priti Patel's new immigration policy favours applicants with PhDs in science and technology — something achieved by many more Indians than Pakistanis. The merging of the British Department for International Development into the Foreign Office could also have negative consequences for Pakistan. With the aid budget now controlled by diplomats, the UK is likely to demand more quid pro quo from Pakistan in return for funds.

But why are British Indians wielding more power than British Pakistanis? There are many explanations. British Indians such as Sunak and Patel, who reached the UK from East Africa enjoy two advantages: generally their families reached the UK not only relatively early but also with several generations worth of trading, education and worldliness behind them. Many Pakistanis by contrast came from undeveloped rural areas such as Mirpur where they picked up little experience of the outside world and even less education. While many British Indians now aspire to be accountants, many British Pakistanis have lower expectations, often ending up in relatively menial jobs; 15.4 per cent of British Indians are in higher managerial and professional occupations compared with 6.6 per cent of British Pakistanis.

Researchers in the UK are compiling increasing amounts of data

about how different ethnic and religious groups are faring in the country and drawing tentative conclusions as to what is happening. It is now clear, for example, that Chinese and Indian pupils tend to make the most progress in primary school, with Indian pupils from lower socioeconomic backgrounds making the fastest progress.

Pakistani and Bangladeshi young people do well between the ages of 11 and 16 but then their results taper off between the ages of 16 and 18. One study suggests that effect is especially marked in places where pupils are living in areas with a high concentration of their ethnic group.

It is hard to reach firm conclusions, but it does seem clear that socioeconomic outcomes are shaped not just by ethnicity but also other factors. Some research looking at religion as well suggests that, all other things being equal, British Hindus fare better than British Muslims. It is striking that, within the British Indian community, Sikhs and Muslims remain almost twice as likely to be unemployed as Hindus. Having said that, Indian Muslims generally enjoy better outcomes than Pakistani Muslims, a finding which is consistent with research that suggests that factors such as gender are more important than someone's faith.

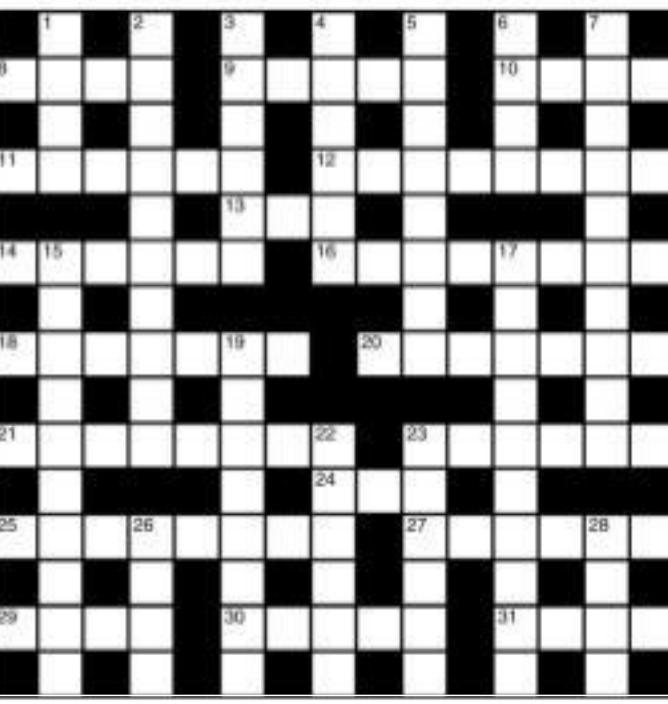
Taken as a whole, the research suggests that for more people with Pakistani heritage to break through to positions of power in Western countries, there will need to be broader social changes affecting their community.

No doubt Rishi, Patel, Sharma and Harris think they climbed to the top through their own efforts. To some extent they did, but they are also the product of socioeconomic trends beyond their control.

Dawn/ANN.

NO 28064

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

WINTER JOURNEY
TIGER LIBIDINAL
HURDYGURDY MYNA
OUTWITHIT FLOOD
DARED DIALECTIC
POST FRIENDSHIP
AH JISIET GOODNIGHT
ELF H Y REDCOAT
JOURNEY
LIBIDINAL
MYNA
FLOOD
DIALECTIC
FRIENDSHIP
GOODNIGHT
REDCOAT
FROZEN

SOLUTION FOR 29 AUGUST

Y GUGM
CHARLIE PARKER
RRIAHUS
BIRD VERVE DUCK
SEAGA
TITFER INVEIGLE
SICCAN ORNITHOLOGY
WHATEVER BEYOND
EFEI DIAL THROB ALTO
FOIAO LOVE
HEROIN REPLIED
RGAS

ACROSS

- 8 Sheets on early in the day (4)
- 9 Nothing good postponed (2,3)
- 10 Print whole of section (4)
- 11 Financial arrangement protecting Charlie's not so good in retirement (6)
- 12 Perk up again — briefly back with a street Lothario (8)
- 13 California's sporting icon (3)
- 14 That woman's back, extremely sensible — why most people don't believe this! (6)
- 16 Good point about The Real Slim Shady? Writer may use it (8)
- 18 Fancies deranged from the start — isn't the sharpest tool in the box? (7)
- 20 Mare panicking on ship — keep back! (7)
- 21 Virtual people carrying costly
- 23 Rest to apply again — I'm leaving (6)
- 24 Metal container's yellow with handle on right (3)
- 25 Draw foal worrying another animal (8)
- 27 I, for one, listened to declaration (6)
- 29 Without room to wriggle (4)
- 30 Take care of announcing third and second in series (3,2)
- 31 Darling, promise of marriage's a little late (4)

DOWN

- 1 Fish fingers with no starter (4)
- 2 Earl became criminal liable to incur fine (10)
- 3 Reluctant to admit Swann's content playing far less effective spinner (6)
- 4 Shout to young woman climbing platform (3,3)
- 5 Evan's abroad — it's OK in Bordeaux where the claret flows (4,4)
- 6 Island location army conceals (4)
- 7 Needs brute to loosen bonds (10)
- 15 I'm struggling with oriental heat (10)
- 17 It's funny about cleaner's endless prejudice ... such as this? (10)
- 19 Animal raced round it? So unlikely (8)
- 22 Cushion beginning to sag regularly (6)
- 23 Think capital offence does require beheading (6)
- 26 Broad raised stupid point (4)
- 28 Mainly greeting a very successful Olympian? (4)

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



The Covid-19 pandemic has warranted a relook at the timelines of some future regulations like fuel efficiency norms and 'BS VI phase II'

VIKRAM KIRLOSKAR
VICE CHAIRMAN OF TOYOTA KIRLOSKAR MOTOR

THUMBNAILS

Cooking gas subsidy: Cooking gas customers may continue receiving subsidy into their bank accounts post-privatisation of PSU oil refiner and retailer Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), with the government clarifying to potential investors that the present system would not be changed post the change of management in the company. Sources said several potential bidders for BPCL in their query have raised the issue of subsidy on cooking gas, whether such subsidy would be borne by the new owners post the sale of government stake.

IANS

Route Mobile IPO: Route Mobile, cloud communications service provider, on Friday fixed price band of Rs 345-350 a share for its initial share-sale offer that will open for public subscription on September 9. The public offer comprises a fresh issue worth Rs 240 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of Rs 360 crore by promoters - Y Sandeep Kumar Gupta and Rajdip Kumar Gupta, Route Mobile said in a statement.

SNS

Training programme: In the wake of the global pandemic affecting the livelihood of millions, Kan-sai Nerolac Paints Ltd. (KNPL) extended its painter skilling pro-gramme under Atmanirbhav painting contractor to Delhi and NCR. Nerolac will facilitate training of around 500 painters & 100 women in the first month from Delhi in fumi-gation and sanitization services, to support them in acquiring new skills, according to a Press release.

SNS

Agri-tech startup: Agri-tech startup Alibono has raised \$ 2 million (about Rs 15 crore) from investors to fund expansion plan and growth of the business, its founder Vivek Rajkumar said on Friday. The Bengaluru based firm is an end-to-end aggregator platform that connects premium perishable vegetables from farm to fork.

IANS

ITC says near-term outlook uncertain, localised lockdowns impacting recovery

ITC chairman said company will continue to closely monitor the situation and respond with agility to strengthen its market standing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Diversified group ITC Ltd's chairman Sanjiv Puri on Friday said the near-term outlook remains "uncertain" amid constantly evolving consumer trends and industry dynamics given the "yet unfolding impact" of COVID-19.

Also, he said the spate of localised lockdowns is further impacting the recovery momentum.

Puri, however, said that other than the hotels' segment and Cigarettes, Education and Stationery Products (ESPB), progressive normalisation was witnessed in the latter part of the first quarter across all operating segments.

"The near-term outlook remains uncertain as consumer trends and industry dynamics constantly evolve in the backdrop of the yet unfolding impact of the pandemic and shape of economic recovery," the chairman said while addressing the company's shareholders at the annual general meeting.

Puri added that black swan

Puri said the company will continue to closely monitor the situation and respond with agility to strengthen its market standing while sharply focusing on cost reduction measures.

Discretionary spends in the market are down and there is evidence of value-seeking behaviour with a shift to larger basket purchases, large value packs with infrequent shopping frequency, he added.

The estimates for the Indian economy indicate a substantial contraction in 2020-21, with several sectors experiencing severe demand destruction, he said, adding "this is likely to shrink livelihood opportunities considerably causing severe stress on consumer spends."

Such a situation, he stressed, calls for a strategic response focusing on the vigorous pursuit of "value-accretive opportunities leveraging the company's institutional strengths on the one hand whilst driving thrift, cost optimisation and conservation of cash on the other".

Puri added that black swan

"There is no doubt that the task ahead will be daunting. Though the Indian economy will face multi-dimensional challenges in the short term

SANJIV PURI
ITC Ltd's chairman

events like this pandemic also brings opportunities like never before and unleash forces of innovation and creativity to shape a more sustainable and inclusive future.

"There is no doubt that the task ahead will be daunting. Though the Indian economy will face multi-dimensional challenges in the short term, it is certainly reassuring that our country remains one of the major economies in the world with huge potential," he said.

According to Puri, the future will belong to purposeful enterprises, which will constantly build competitiveness with agility and innovation to

respond quickly to external shocks and emerge even stronger from the crisis.

Responding with agility to emerging consumer needs, ITC had fast-tracked the design, development and go-to-market strategy of innovative products and services, he said.

ITC had leveraged its innovation engine and had rapidly introduced over 40 first-to-market products and variants during the pandemic to meet emerging consumer demand, Puri said.

While these science-led innovations witnessed encouraging consumer response, he

said a surge in demand in food and hygiene products required a substantive scale-up in capacity.

The company ramped up production of its hygiene products like Savlon sanitisers 275 times to cater to the surge in demand, he said.

Over 180 factories manufacturing essential products in Foods, Personal Care and Hygiene, as well as Paperboards and Packaging, were progressively made operational, the chairman said.

Moreover, after lockdown digital shopping surged exponentially even as neighbourhood grocery stores emerged

as the lifeline for essential supplies, he noted.

ITC, he said, was the first company to move in collaborations with several online food aggregators such as Dominos, Swiggy, Zomato, Dunzo and direct selling firm Amway to leverage their direct to home reach.

According to Puri, reports suggest an increase in demand for products and services that focus on health, wellness, safety and hygiene and consumers continue to prefer trusted brands.

"Quite expectedly, the demand for essential products in the food and hygiene segments witnessed a surge, he said.

During the April-June quarter, the nationwide lockdowns had impacted ITC's performance, particularly in segments such as hotels, cigarettes, education and stationery products, paperboards and packaging businesses.

ITC, which sources over 3 million tonnes of agri-products from 22 states said, it is well poised to expand its horizons in the agricultural sec-

"It is stepping up farmer engagement in wheat, potato, chillies and fruits and vegetables through a crop value chain cluster model to connect small farmers to markets. "We are now ready to implement e-Choupal 4.0 at scale and bring the benefits of the digital revolution to empower farmers even more effectively," he said.

This digital platform, designed as a crop agnostic integrated solution framework, will synergistically aggregate technologies like remote sensing, precision farming, drone-based services, quality assaying, e-marketplace and many others, he said.

"In fact ITC's vision to empower 10 million farmers in India multiplying livelihoods that will benefit over 50 million people," he added.

While talking about sustainability goals, Puri said: ITC aspires to meet 50 per cent of its total energy consumption from renewable sources by 2030.

In FY 2019-20, it had a revenue of Rs 46,807.34 crore.

RBI revises priority sector lending norms, raises credit limits

INDO- ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, 4 SEPTEMBER



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday released its revised priority sector lending guidelines wherein the credit limits have been raised for farmer producer organisations, renewable energy and for health infrastructure.

As announced by the RBI Governor, startups have been brought under the ambit of priority sector lending. Bank finance of up to Rs 50 crore has been included as a fresh category under priority sector, an RBI statement said.

The RBI statement said that a higher credit limit has been specified for Farmers Producers Organisations (FPOs) or Farmers Producers Companies (FPCs) undertaking farming with assured mar-

keting of their produce at a predetermined price.

Further, "loan limits for renewable energy have been increased (doubled)" and "credit limit for health infrastructure (including those under 'Ayushman Bharat') has been doubled".

Apart from startups, loans to farmers for installation of solar power plants for solarisation of grid connected agri-

culture pumps and loans for setting up Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plants have been included as fresh categories eligible for finance under priority sector.

"Reserve Bank of India has comprehensively reviewed the Priority Sector Lending (PSL) Guidelines to align it with emerging national priorities and bring a sharper focus on inclusive development, after

having wide-ranging discussions with all stakeholders," it said.

As per the central bank, the revised guidelines will enable better credit penetration to credit deficient areas, increase the lending to small and marginal farmers and weaker sections, boost credit to renewable energy, and health infrastructure.

The guidelines aim to address regional disparities in the flow of priority sector credit, higher weightage has been assigned to incremental priority sector credit in 'identified districts' where priority sector credit flow is comparatively low and the targets prescribed for "small and marginal farmers" and "weaker sections" are being increased in a phased manner, as per the RBI statement.

Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises Prakash Javadekar on Friday assured the automobile industry that he would take up the industry's demand for a cut in goods and services tax (GST) for the sector with the Finance Minister and the Prime Minister.

Speaking at the virtual Annual Convention of the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), the minister said that the industry would get some concessions going ahead to boost demand, especially the festive demand.

He noted that any decision on GST cut would require the GST Council to take into account the socio-econom-

ic impact of the decision. Citing the ongoing issue of the GST compensation, which Centre has been unable to pay to the states, he said that as already revenues are very low, such decisions on rate cut would have to be thoroughly looked into. "I hope you will get some good news soon," he said.

As the pandemic has worsened the demand scenario of India's automobile segment, which was already going through a slowdown in the past year or so, industry players have been seeking support from the government to push demand in the form of tax cuts. Recently, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also said that the GST Council would look into the proposal of lowering the GST on two-wheelers, which neither come under luxury nor sin goods.

which was already going through a slowdown in the past year or so, industry players have been seeking support from the government to push demand in the form of tax cuts. Recently, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also said that the GST Council would look into the proposal of lowering the GST on two-wheelers, which neither come under luxury nor sin goods.

Fintech way forward for Indian banking, payment system: SBI MD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Going forward, he said, branches are going to become nothing but distribution points like what has happened in Europe and other places.

This is where the big opportunities lie, he said adding, "I am sure as we evolve, and we will evolve very very fast. Fintech is the way forward as far as the Indian banking system is concerned and the payment system is concerned."

Fintech refers to companies or services that use technology to offer financial services to businesses or consumers.

Bandhan Bank managing director Chandra Shekhar Ghosh said: "Banks and Fintech will co-exist to drive the ecology of money."

There are benefits that Fintech brings in that banks do not inherently have and vice-versa. A combination of both is what brings the

best value for customers.

"It is not about UX (user experience) but about CX (customer experiences). Best consumer experiences come from a combination of traditional banking and Fintech... both will thrive and together drive growth for themselves and for the reason of their existence -- the customers. Customers are the first priority."

Observing that India is not one market but a sum of various small markets, Ghosh said Fintech companies have to develop products for each segment rather than jumping in the same space.

Pointing out that consumer behaviour has undergone change during the lockdown and COVID period, Ghosh said digital payment has seen significant growth and is going to stay even after COVID-19 is over, he added.

'Indian auto industry facing one of the toughest times in history'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

The Indian auto industry is facing one of the toughest times in history and needs government support through reduction of GST and incentive-based scrappage policy, Maruti Suzuki India Managing Director and CEO Kenichi Ayukawa said on Friday.

Ayukawa, who is the president-elect of auto industry body SIAM, said the sector has been "set back by many years" by a combination of the coronavirus pandemic and the slowdown that has been going on since last fiscal.

As the global health crisis broke out, he said, the auto industry in India also played its part by getting into manufacturing of ventilators, Personal Protective Equipment



(PPEs) and importing testing kits from abroad to fight the virus although sales have been hit hard.

"In August we can say we just came back on our feet to achieve performance comparable to last year. Also, last year is not a good compari-

son as the industry saw negative growth of 15-25 per cent. This negative growth has set back the industry by many years," Ayukawa said at the 60th annual convention of Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) conducted online.

Reiterating the long pending demand of the auto industry to reduce Goods and Services Tax (GST) on automobiles by 10 per cent, Ayukawa said, "we are facing one of the toughest times in history. The industry needs your support."

"We are eagerly waiting for the GST reduction and scrappage incentive scheme. We believe that taxes on the increasing turnover will be more than the government expenditure on the scrappage scheme and GST reduction," he said.

He thanked heavy industries minister Prakash Javadekar, who assured the gathering that he will take up the matter of GST reduction with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Auto sector needs to go in for smarter pricing: Goyal

NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Friday asked the auto sector to go in for 'smarter pricing' and offer 'innovative financing' terms for buyers to shore up their sales.

Goyal spoke at the 60th SIAM Annual Convention which was held virtually. In connection with the industry's demand for a reduction in GST taxation, Goyal asked the JV auto companies based in India to also ask for a royalty reduction from their parent companies to tide over these testing times. He also asked the JV companies to seek permission from their parent companies to allow them to export more from India to other countries.

Besides, the Union Minister acknowledged that some sub-segments of the industry have almost reached pre-Covid-levels in August and the overall trend has improved.

According to the minister, the shift towards personal mobility due to the Covid-19 outbreak will give a push to the industry's off-take.

He also mentioned the Centre's resolve to support the industry during these times.

Furthermore, the minister urged the industry to look at a higher percentage of import substitution and to increase exports. He pointed out that the committee for the 'Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products' (RoDTEP) scheme might be approached to allow the auto sector get reimbursement of certain taxes to make it more price competitive.

The scheme which is being rolled out in a phased manner allows reimbursement of duties and certain taxes to sectors which have high export potential.

'Auto industry can't make further investments for new norms'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Rajan Wadhwa said while speaking at the industry body's annual convention here.

So, the industry does not have the ability to invest further into the implementation of new regulations like Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE) norms from 2022 onwards, he noted.

Wadhwa also said that there should not be an over-dose of regulations as India's emission standards are already at par with the strictest in the world.

Seeking government support to offer some form of demand boosters, Wadhwa said:

"We feel that whatever we are talking on reviving demand will provide the required push to consumers to come to dealerships."

He noted that demand stimulus for the industry is a must to achieve targets listed in AMP 2026.

AMP 2026 is the collective vision of the government of India and the automotive industry on where the various segments of the automotive and auto component industry need to be by 2026 in terms of size and contribution to the overall Indian economy.

The plan envisages taking the auto industry's gross domestic product (GDP) contribution to 12 per cent from current 7 per cent as also generating 6.5 crore additional jobs over the 3.7 crore jobs that are already there.

It also targets to enhance vehicle production to 6.6 crore units by 2026.

"We were almost on course

ongoing slowdown in auto industry. The domestic auto industry was already undergoing great stress before the pandemic, he said.

The demand had slowed down due to the various factors like liquidity crisis, increase in ownership cost and also introduction of axle load norms for heavy commercial vehicle segment, Wadhwa said. "The passenger vehicle segment witnessed the longest slowdown in the past two decades spanning nine quarters. Similarly, commercial vehicles faced second-longest slowdown in the last 15 years that spanned five quarters," he added. The two-wheeler segment also saw continuous slowdown for six quarters, Wadhwa said.

In the first quarter of



ON THE ARREST OF BJP CADRES WHO HAD GONE TO DM OFFICES IN DARJEELING AND KALIMPONG TO SUBMIT MEMORANDUMS

DARJEELING MP RAJU BISTA

NEW DELHI SATURDAY 05 SEPTEMBER 2020

Odisha: Oppn and ruling BJD hit the streets over Universities Act

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 SEPTEMBER

Opposition political parties and the ruling BJD took to the streets and traded charges today over the proposed amendments to the Odisha Universities Act, 1989.

Student and Youth wings of the BJD as well as the Congress staged protests separately. Many activists raised slogans and burnt effigies in front of the Utkal University gates and the national highway.

The ruling BJD too hit back with its youth wing holding placards in support of the amendment in front of the varsity.

Earlier yesterday, the ABVP had opposed the move of the government while smaller parties like the Samajwadi Party had also demanded

restoration of the autonomy of varsities.

Addressing a press conference, state BJP vice president Prithviraj Harichandan, lawyer Pitambar Acharya described the amendments as an assault on the autonomy of universities in the state.

They described the repealing of the Ravenshaw University act, 2005 as 'shameful' and undemocratic.

It is amply clear that the government wants 'bureaucratic control' over varsities. The recruitment of lecturers, non-teaching staff and the Vice Chancellors will be controlled by the bureaucrats, alleged the BJD.

The amendment is aimed at destroying the autonomy of universities and converting them to agencies of the government. It is also against the

spirit of the NEP, they said.

Raising another aspect, the BJD said the abolition of the Senate which is mandated to review accounts and performance is despicable.

Placing of annual reports in the state Assembly has also been done away by the amendment, they decried.

The Congress too hit out at the amendment and called for restoration of autonomy of universities and educational institutions.

Forcefully countering all the allegations, the ruling BJD spokesperson and MP Dr Sasmrit Patra said the move was reformist and progressive.

Odisha BJD's obstructionist, anti-student agenda stands exposed, he said.

The major University reforms brought about by the State Cabinet two days back was to

make the University administration more effective and transparent. These reforms will lead to better academics and research on University campuses, he maintained.

Across India, all academicians are aware that the Syndicate has a greater role in effective University administration and strengthening it is strengthening the University itself.

University financial details were earlier placed in the State Legislative Assembly which was not accessible by all. Now the students, parents and teachers would be more aware about the University's finances and expenditure as it will be posted in the varsity website.

People of Odisha have seen how the Odisha BJD has been trying to create similar obstructions in other developmental

issues also, he said.

Significant to note that the BJD trained its guns on "Odisha BJD" clearly making a distinction with the national BJD leadership.

It may be noted here that the Odisha cabinet had, on 2 September, approved amendments to the Odisha Universities Act, 1989 seeking to bring all public universities under it with changes in the recruitment process, tenure and selection of Vice Chancellors and abolition of Senate.

The Ravenshaw University Act, 2005 is to be repealed and the Senate of all universities abolished.

Recruitment of teachers in universities is to be done centrally by the Odisha Public Service Commission and that of non-teaching employees by the State Selection Board.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 SEPTEMBER

Covid rise continues, Bhubaneswar worst hit

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 SEPTEMBER

The COVID graph in Odisha and particularly in the state capital Bhubaneswar continues to rise and even health officials hinted that the trend may continue till end of the month.

The situation will improve within the next 45 days, said the Directorate of Medical Education and Training (DMET) Dr CBK Mohanty.

Odisha's recovery rate of 74.86% is good as compared to other states. And the fatality rate is also less, he added.

On plasma therapy, Dr Mohanty said so far 565 patients have been given the therapy, of whom 114 have recovered while the condition of remaining patients is stable.

"Odisha's fatality rate stands

at 0.45 per cent. We have been trying to further reduce it," said Additional Chief Secretary Health and Family Welfare P K Mohapatra.

The state now has 28,743 active cases. 19,50,591 samples have been tested so far, he added.

Odisha's COVID-19 tally rose to 1,16,678 on Friday as 3,267 more people tested positive with a sharp rise in Bhubaneswar.

Nine fresh fatalities pushed the state's coronavirus death toll to 531.

Khurda district which encompasses Bhubaneswar accounted for the maximum number of fresh cases at 859 of which 550 were from the state capital itself.

The fact that the second round of serological survey

in Bhubaneswar has recorded antibody prevalence rate of 5.15 per cent, indicates that majority of the population remains vulnerable. The case count in the city is 12,403 of whom 7523 have recovered.

Khurda district which tops the state COVID chart has a count of 19,740 cases.

The deaths were reported from five districts Bolangir, Cuttack, Ganjam and Khurda districts registered eight fatalities, while one patient succumbed to the virus in Rayagada.

Ganjam district has so far accounted for 199 deaths, followed by Khurda (72).

Of the fresh cases, 1,961 were reported from quarantine centres, and 1,306 people tested positive during contact-tracing.

BJP MLA arrested, gets bail

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BARIPADA, 4 SEPTEMBER

Tension run high on the grand road in front of the Baripada town police station as the hundreds of BJP workers staged a protest, blocked the road for eight hours following the arrest of local MLA Prakash Soren today.

They raised slogans against the BJD government and the police while paralysing vehic-

ular traffic.

Earlier, Baripada town police had arrested the BJP MLA Soren on charges of assaulting Ganapati Jena, an assistant executive engineer. He was later granted bail by the SDJM court.

Soren denied the charge saying he had called the engineer to expedite files pertaining the MLALAD work. I did not touch him said Soren.

UP police nabs Odisha man for hate message against PM & UP CM

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 SEPTEMBER

Uttar Pradesh police have arrested a 42-year-old petty trader from Cuttack district for allegedly posting hate messages targeting the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on social media platforms.

The UP police later secured four-day remand of the accused identified as Sayyed Hassan Ahmed, a native of Kushambi village under Salipur police limits. A local court in Salepur granted UP's police plea for Sayyed's remand for furthering the probe of the case.

does not have any sort of background in crime. He has hardly used any provocative words," said a relative of the accused.

"We extended the cooperation to UP counterparts.

The accused has been booked under 504, 507, 153 and 124 (A) sections of IPC, including Section 124A (Sedition).

"Sayyed is innocent. He

is the UP police later secured four-day remand of the accused identified as Sayyed Hassan Ahmed, a native of Kushambi village under Salipur police limits. A local court in Salepur granted UP's police plea for Sayyed's remand for furthering the probe of the case.

More than 30 diarrhoea cases have been reported from flood hit Dasarathpur area in Jajpur district. Sahimali village is said to be the worst affected and over the last two days incidence of diarrhoea has been reported. Most of the affected persons have been admitted to the Mangalpur Community Health Centre in the district.

"Due to high flood in our areas caused by the Baitarani river all our wells and tube wells got submerged. With no option left, we are forced to use contaminated floodwater," said Bikash Nayak, a villager.

A temporary health camp has been set up in the village. The situation is under control, a district health official said. Disinfecting water bodies, bleaching powder, halogen tablets and ORS are being distributed to check the outbreak.

Bulk Drug Park to come up in Odisha

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 SEPTEMBER

Odisha government initiated steps for setting up of a Bulk Drug Park in the Tata SEZ, Gopalpur at an estimated cost of Rs 1500 crore.

Principal secretary Industries department, Hemant Sharma said the proposed park will have advanced infrastructure facilities including central affluent treatment plant, solid waste management, dedicated power, warehousing, intellectual property rights services etc.

The proposal was presented and its feasibility discussed with Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy, Development Commissioner S C Mohapatra, top bureaucrats Ashok Meena, B P Sethi and Nitin Jawale.

Tripathy asked officials concerned to send the proposal to the central government by 25 September.

It was decided in the meeting that a SPV will be formed involving IDCO as lead promoter and TSSZEL (Tata Group) and co-promoter to carry forward the project proposal.

The land parcel of around 1000 acre required for the park is available at the TATA SEZ, Gopalpur.

Sharma informed that it will create employment opportunity for around 5000 people.

18 lawmakers test positive in Odisha

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 SEPTEMBER

Eighteen lawmakers, including three ministers, and three parliamentarians from Odisha have so far contracted the novel coronavirus.

Today an MP and two MLAs tested positive for the pandemic, pushing the tally of infected legislators to 18 with

15 of them being MLAs.

The LSMP of Nawarangpur, Ramesh Chandra Majhi today tested positive becoming the third MP from Odisha to contract the infection.

Meanwhile, Basudevpur MLA Bishnubrat Rout and Prasanta Moduli of Jagatsinghpur also tested positive.

The Minister for Handlooms and Textiles, Mr Padma

Dian had earlier yesterday tested positive for Covid-19. Earlier two ministers Arun Sahoo and Susant Singh were infected.

The MPs infected by the virus are Manjulata Mandal, Suresh Pujari and Ramesh Majhi. Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who is from Odisha, had earlier tested positive and has recovered.

Sexual harassment charge against sub-collector

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BOLANGIR, 4 SEPTEMBER

Bolangir district collector Arindam Daku has formed a three member committee headed by a lady officer to probe into an alleged case of sexual harassment by sub-collector Sanjaya Mishra.

Mishra who has earned a reputation of being a strict officer ever since he cracked down on illegal encroachments is now in a tight spot with a woman staff alleging that he had outraged her modesty.

The woman in the question, a widow, is working as a subordinate in Mishra's office.

In her written complaint she

woman staff has alleged that on that fateful day the sub collector has outraged her modesty in the office when they were alone. She had lodged her complaint to the district collector last week and demanded justice.

The woman who is mother of two children has also threatened to immolate herself if not justice is not done.

The district collector has transferred the woman from the office of the sub-collector.

At three member panelled by a woman officer is investigating the matter.

Sub collector Mishra has, however, remained silent and not reacted to the charges.

'Lift MGNREGA ban in coffee plantation'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KORAPUT, 4 SEPTEMBER

The decision of the central government not to include labour engaged in coffee plantations under the MGNREGA has sparked strong reactions here as Koraput happens to be the only district in the state which cultivates coffee.

Being the only district in Odisha to cultivate coffee in large quantities, efforts have been taken in the past to promote it by involving both the private and government agencies.

Convergence has been the buzz work dovetailing such activity with MGNREGA.

While thousands of labourers find work in these coffee plantations, it is the tribal workforce that benefits at Koraput, Nandapur and Lamtaput blocks of the district.

The district administration with the support of Coffee Board, Koraput coffee development trust and TDCC had come up with mega plans for the tribal farmers in the coming years and had launched Koraput coffee by selling the coffee powder across the nation.

Being a manual work ori-

ented plantation, the district had the opportunity to engage at least a section of workers in convergence with MGNREGA. Any restriction on use of MGNREGA funds for the purpose will be a dampener and adversely affect the tribals, said Bhabani Shankar Kalo, project director of Watershed.

The district administration had appealed to the government to lift the ban, he added. Further as coffee plantations were trying to offer employment to the locals preventing them from migrating to other places in search of wages, the gov-

ernment should rethink,

Ajit Kumar Rout, senior Liason officer of Coffee Board of India at Koraput said.

At a time when the state was facing a great challenge in providing employment to the labour workforce which has returned from other states due to the pandemic, it is surprising to see that the government was banning use of MGNREGA for facilitating employment in coffee plantation work remarked Sarat Kumar Patnaik, secretary of Koraput Farmers Association.

Angry mob lays siege to hospital

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
PHULBANI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Irate people blocked the main road in front of sub divisional hospital at Balliguda and virtually gheraoed the doctors since this morning alleging negligence in treatment had led to the death of one Vijay Kumar Sahu, 38.

Sahu a local youth serving at the block office, Daringbadi was suffering from fever over the last four days and was prescribed medicine by the doctor on duty who had also asked him to rest at home.

Today Sahu turned serious and was rushed to the hospital. It is alleged that there was

not a single doctor available to attend to the patient and he died. Youths like Amaranth Sahu, Adikanda Patnaik, Biswajeet Patra and others hurled accusations against the hospital doctors and staff.

The agitating youths have demanded a probe and stringent action against the erring doctors.

They have also demanded filling up the 20 vacant posts of doctors in the sub divisional hospital, ex-gratia to the bereaved family.

When contacted Dr. Rajarsi Patnaik the CDMO, Kandhamal, said "we are looking into the incident".

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Exclamation (US) (3)
- 3 Garden statue (5)
- 4 Meat retailer (7)
- 5 Spicy sauce (5)
- 6 Fabric made from flax (5)
- 7 Entertainer (7)
- 13 Blue pigment (11)
- 16 Fortified wine (7)
- 18 Relating to birth (5)
- 19 Based on truth (5)
- 21 Communication and contact (7)
- 22 US state (5)
<li



You don't choose one part of France. You choose France....The Republic will never allow any separatist adventure.

FRENCH PRESIDENT EMMANUEL MACRON

WEATHER

CITY	MAX (°C)	MIN (°C)
SINGAPORE	29	26 H
HONG KONG	29	26 CL
TOKYO	31	25 R
LONDON	19	9 CL
DUBAI	41	29 S
SAN FRANCISCO	23	15 CL
NEW YORK	28	18 S
MOSCOW	22	13 CL

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

THUMBNAILS

Japan ship sinks: Rescuers found the second crew member and multiple dead cows in Japan waters where a livestock ship capsized during stormy weather on Wednesday. AP

Ex-Italian PM infected: Former Italian premier Silvio Berlusconi, who has history of heart and other medical problems, was admitted to a Milan hospital early Friday as a precaution to monitor his coronavirus infection. AP

Feds kill Portland shooting suspect

Reinoehl was the prime suspect in the killing of 39-year-old Aaron 'Jay' Danielson, supporter of a right-wing group

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, 4 SEPTEMBER



Investigators work the scene at Tanglewilde Terrace where law enforcement shot and killed a man who is reportedly Michael Forest Reinoehl on Thursday in Lacey, Washington. AP

after a warrant was issued for his arrest, and Reinoehl pulled a gun during the encounter, the official said. The official wasn't authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

A U.S. Marshals Service statement later said the fugitive task force "attempted to peacefully" approach him. "Initial reports indicate the suspect produced a firearm, threatening the lives of law enforcement officers. Task force members responded to the threat and struck the suspect who was pronounced dead at the scene," the statement said.

The U.S. Marshals Service fugitive task forces, comprised of deputy marshals, other federal agents and local law enforcement officers from a variety of agencies, are responsible for apprehending violent felons and other wanted suspects. Thurston County Sheriff's Lt. Ray Brady said four task force members fired their weapons, including two Pierce County Sheriff's deputies, an officer from the Lakewood Police Department and an officer from the Washington State Department of Corrections. Brady said investigators haven't yet determined how many rounds were fired.

The suspect was alone at the time of the shooting, Brady said, with no children or other people present.

Brady said he doesn't think the suspect lived at the address where he was shot, and it's not clear what brought him to Lacey. "We don't know that specifically yet," Brady said. "I do not believe that was his residence."

Reinoehl had described himself in a social media post as "100% ANTIFA." A regular presence at anti-racism demonstrations in Portland, he suggested the tactics of counter-protesters amounted to "warfare," and had been shot at one protest and cited for having a gun at another.

Police cited Reinoehl on July 5 on allegations of possessing a loaded gun in a public place, resisting arrest and interfering with police.

On July 26, Reinoehl was shot near his elbow after he got involved in a scuffle between an armed white man and a group of young people of color. The man who was carrying that gun, Aaron Scott Collins, told The Oregonian/OregonLive that he and a friend had just left a bar when they saw the group harassing an older Black man. His friend began filming them with a phone, and the group confronted them, calling them Nazis, he said.

Reinoehl later that day spoke to an AP videographer. His arm was wrapped in a bloody bandage; he said he was on his way to meet protest medics so they could change it. He said he didn't know what had started the altercation between Collins and the group, but that several people had decided to intervene when they saw Collins fighting with minors.

"As soon as the adults jumped in, he pulled out a gun," Reinoehl said. "I jumped in there and pulled the gun away from people's heads, avoided being shot in the stomach and I got shot in the

'US confronting original sin'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

KENOSHA (WI), 4 SEPTEMBER

Joe Biden told residents of Kenosha, Wisconsin, that recent turmoil following the police shooting of Jacob Blake, a Black man, could help Americans confront centuries of systemic racism, drawing a sharp contrast with President Donald Trump amid a reckoning that has galvanized the nation.

We're finally now getting to the point where we're going to be addressing the original sin of this country, 400 years old slavery and all the vestiges of it, Biden said at Grace Lutheran Church,

where he met with community leaders after a private session with Blake and his family.

The visit marked the former president's first trip to the battleground state of Wisconsin as the Democratic presidential nominee and was a vivid illustration of the contrast he offers to Trump. While Biden spent more than an hour with

arm."

Reinoehl also was wanted on a warrant out of Baker County in Eastern Oregon, where court records show he skipped a hearing related to a June case in which he has been charged with driving under the influence of controlled substances, reckless driving,reckless endangerment and unlawful possession of a firearm.

Police said he drove on an interstate at up to 111 mph (179 kph), with his daughter in the car, while racing his 17-year-old son, who was in a different vehicle.

Protests have erupted daily in the Pacific Northwest city since the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. With unruly demonstrations in Portland nearing the 100-day mark, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown and other Democratic leaders on Thursday called for an end to violence, even as federal agents were continuing to arrest protesters who allegedly assaulted law enforcement officers. "The violence must stop," Brown wrote. "There is no place for white supremacy or vigilantism in Oregon. All who

Trump denies calling US war dead 'losers,' 'suckers'



WASHINGTON, 4 SEPTEMBER

President Donald Trump defended himself on Friday against accusations that he mocked American war dead as his Democratic rival, Joe Biden, intensified efforts to frame the election as a referendum on the president's character.

The allegations, sourced anonymously in *The Atlantic*, describe multiple offensive comments by the president toward fallen and captured US-service-members, including calling World War I dead at an American military cemetery in France as "losers" and "suckers" in 2018.

The reported comments, are shining a fresh light on Trump's previous public disparaging of American troops and military families and opening a new political vulnerability for the president less than two months from Election Day.

"This is more made up Fake News given by disgusting & jealous failures in a disgraceful attempt to influence the 2020 Election!" Trump tweeted late Thursday, as aides mounted a concerted defense of the president, with Trump's campaign and allies taking to social media and broadcast interviews to denounce the report.

"I've done more for the military than almost anyone else," he added.

The president was alleged to have made the comments as he was set to visit the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery during a trip to France in 2018. The White House said the visit was scrubbed because foggy weather.

TENDER

Government of Jammu and Kashmir. Office of the Executive Engineer, PHE, Ground Water Divn., Bagh Ali Mardaan Nowshera, Srinagar Kashmir.

Gist of e-Tender.

NIT No:- PHE/GWDS 24 of 09/2020 Dated:- 03-09-2020

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders are invited in **02 Cover System** for Construction production tube well at the following location/site from registered water well drillers/contractors as per the details given in tender document.

S. No 1. Site :- Construction of Production Tube Well W.S.S Ongam, District Bandipora

Cost of Tender Document :- Rs.1000/-, Cost of EMD :- Rs. 54000/-, Estimated Cost :- Rs.27.00 lacs, Time of completion :- 30 Days, Validity of Rates :- 180 Days, Programme :- NABARD

S. No 2. Site :- Construction of Production Tube Well W.S.S Ajas Matipora District Bandipora.

Cost of Tender Document :- Rs.1000/-, Cost of EMD :- Rs. 54000/-, Estimated Cost :- Rs.27.00 lacs, Time of completion :- 30 Days, Validity of Rates :- 180 Days, Programme :- NABARD

Position of Funds:- Available. AAA: Accepted

Critical Dates/Information.

1. Publishing Date:- 05-09-2020

2. Period of Downloading of Bids :- 05.09.2020 (9:00 A.M) to 14.09.2020 (4:00 P.M)

3. Period of Submission of bids :- 05.09.2020 (9:00 A.M) to 14.09.2020 (4:00 P.M)

4. Date of opening of Tender :- 15-09-2020 at (11:00 A.M)

5. Tender Receiving Authority: Executive Engineer PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar.

6. Document Cost : Rs 1000/- (One thousand only) (Non-Refundable) in the shape of Treasury Challan/receipt deposited to Account Head 0215 in favour of Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Department PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar (at Saddar Treasury Srinagar) on account of (The firm shall specify the name of work for which apply)

7. Earnest Money: for an amount shown in Gist of NIT against each well tender in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar 190011.

8. Bid Validity Period: 180 Days

**No.DPK-5086/20
Dated: 04-09-2020**

**Sd/- Executive Engineer,
PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar.**

NORTHERN RAILWAY

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/Coaching, Northern Railway, Delhi Division, New Delhi invites online e-tender through website <https://ireps.gov.in> for the parking contracts, for the period of 3 (Three) years, to be closed on 28.09.2020 at 15:00 hrs, at the following stations/locations:

SN	Name of work with its location / Railway Station	Advertise value/Reserve Price of one year in (Rs.)	Cost of Tender document & 16% GST (in Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (in Rs.)	Website particulars where complete details of tender document can be seen
1	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Panipat Railway Station (PNP), 2nd entry "A" Category, with measuring an area of 390 sq mtrs.	11,68,380	3,540	70,200	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_69-2020
2	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Kunukshetra Railway Station (KKDE), 1st Entry "B" Category, with measuring an area of 648 sq mtrs	11,23,000	3,540	67,400	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_70-2020
3	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Kunukshetra Railway Station (KKDE), 2nd Entry "B" Category, with measuring an area of 353 sq mtrs	4,29,960	2,360	25,800	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_71-2020
4	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter-Car at New Delhi Railway Station (NDLS) Pahar Ganj, "A-1" Category, with measuring an area of 3429.19 sq mtrs.	1,75,24,544	11,800	10,51,500	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_72-2020
5	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Shahabad Markanda Railway Station (SHDM), "D" Category, with measuring an area of 375 sq mtrs.	4,84,560	2,360	29,100	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_73-2020
6	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter-Car at Meerut City Railway Station (MTC), "A" Category, with measuring an area of 2054.80 sq mtrs.	34,94,620	5,900	2,09,700	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_74-2020
7	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Panipat Railway Station (PNP), 1st Entry "A" Category, with measuring an area of 804.70 sq mtrs.	17,43,759.66	5,900	1,04,700	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_75-2020
8	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Ghaziabad Railway Station (GZB), City Side "A" Category, with measuring an area of 2551.59 sq mtrs.	48,28,929.33	5,900	2,89,800	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_76-2020
9	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter-Car at Hazrat Phizazuddin Railway station (HNZM), "A-1" Category, with measuring an area of 4061.87 sq mtrs.	1,26,23,844	11,800	7,57,500	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_77-2020
10	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter-Car at Delhi Cant Railway Station (DEC), "A" Category, with measuring an area of 709 sq mtrs.	31,94,664	5,900	1,91,700	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_78-2020
11	Parking contract of Cycles-Scooter at Jind Railway Station (JH), "B" Category, with measuring an area of 393.39 sq mtrs.	5,34,374	2,360	32,100	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_79-2020
12	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Subzi Mandi Railway Station (SZM), "B" Category, with measuring an area of 1525.37 sq mtrs.	14,95,268	3,540	89,800	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_80-2020
13	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter-Car at Nangli Railway Station (NN), "B" Category, with measuring an area of 610 sq mtrs.	16,25,012	3,540	97,600	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_81-2020
14	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter-Car-Bus-Truck-Tempa at Adarsh Nagar Railway Station (ANDIPRS), Shalimar Bagh Side "A" Category, with measuring an area of 396.86 sq mtrs.	3,79,316	2,360	22,800	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_82-2020
15	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Palam Railway Station (PM), "D" Category, with measuring an area of 414.70 sq mtrs.	8,25,348	3,540	49,600	https://ireps.gov.in/tender/no:Parking_83-2020
16</td					



REAL PROBLEM

Gareth Bale (in photo, left) has hit out at Real Madrid for making his life "difficult." Bale has fallen out of favour at Spanish giants Madrid under boss Zinedine Zidane and he has made just two appearances for the Bernabeu outfit since football returned from lockdown.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Rafiq probe: Yorkshire have confirmed that they will launch an investigation into charges of "institutional racism" made by their former spinner Azeem Rafiq, who said the abuse he suffered left him close to committing suicide as the club ignored his complaints.

Pak future: Pakistan bowling coach Waqar Younis is confident that the future of country's "trademark" fast bowling is in safe hands after overseeing the latest generation of quicks during their tour of England. Naseem Shah and Shaheen Afridi were impressive.

Virus pause: The Bangladesh Cricket Board has decided to pause training for three days after quite a few members of the support staff exhibited coronavirus-like symptoms. Members of the team have been undergoing individual training since before Eid-ul-Azha.

Camp crisis: Three wrestlers having tested positive for the coronavirus at the Sports Authority of India centre in Sonepat, the Wrestling Federation of India faces calls to postpone the men's national camp. Some have said starting the camp could backfire.

Positive tests: Striker Diego Costa and defender Santiago Arias have both tested positive for Covid-19, Atletico Madrid said on Thursday. Before the resumption of training on Friday, the entire first team squad underwent tests except for Costa and Arias.

Huge hole: The Premier League has ended its £490m contract with Chinese streaming service PPTV, ending their right to show live coverage of English top-flight games with immediate effect. The decision leaves a huge hole in the Premier League's finances.

Football trade: The owners of Premier League side Manchester City have acquired a majority share in French second-tier team Esperance Sportive Troyes Aube Champagne, City Football Group said on Thursday. Their network now encompasses 10 teams.

New view: Mauricio Pochettino has backed off on his earlier statement that it would be "impossible" for him to manage Barcelona. He used to play and coach at Espanyol and suggested that link made it unrealistic to ever consider the switch.

Formula One: Claire Williams, Formula One's only female team boss, will step down after Sunday's Italian Grand Prix and following the sale to US-based Dorilton Capital. Williams is deputy to her 78-year-old father Frank who no longer attends races and is also leaving.

Qatar invited: Asian Cup champions Qatar have been invited to the Concacaf Gold Cup, becoming the first side from West Asia to take part in the tournament following a joint agreement between the two confederations. Qatar host the next men's World Cup finals.

Training app: Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju on Friday launched Bhairung Bhutia Football Schools' app, 'enjogo', to enable youngsters continue training amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Launching the app, Rijiju said it has the potential to revolutionise how football training is done virtually in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. "Technology can revolutionise grassroots sports in India. The football training app enjogo' from BBFS will enable young footballers across India to get access to proper online coaching to train remotely," he said.

Ending Wada funding could leave Americans banned from Olympics

AGENCIES

TORONTO, 4 SEPTEMBER

America's top athletes could be banned from the Olympics and other major international sporting events if the USA follows through on its threat to withdraw funding from the World Anti-Doping Agency, anti-doping leaders said.

The US threat has sent shockwaves through the anti-doping community and prompted several governments to urge Wada to introduce legislation that would find the US non-compliant with the Wada Code, effectively barring American athletes from international competition. "The consequences of a withdrawal of Wada fund-

ing by the US could be more severe and far-reaching for American athletes," Wada president Witold Banka (in photo) said. "We have been approached by a number of governments of the world that were shocked by the threats from the US government supported by Usada (United States Anti-Doping Agency)." These governments want us to consider an amendment to the compliance standard meaning that non-payment by a government of its Wada contribution could lead directly to that country's Nado (National Anti-Doping Organisation) being declared non-compliant with the World Anti-Doping Code.

"Inevitably this could have

serious repercussions for athletes from that country including their participation in major international sporting events."

The Tokyo Olympics have been delayed by a year until July 23 to 8 August, 2021, because of the coronavirus pandemic.

International Olympic Committee rules stipulate there needs to be Wada compliance to allow Games participation.

All Olympic Games participants must comply with the IOC Executive Board's entry process, including the signing of the entry form, which includes an obligation to comply with the Olympic Charter and World Anti-Doping Code and submit disputes to the Court of Arbitration for Sport's jurisdiction,



Usada president Travis Tygart fired back by labelling the Wada threat empty and illegal.

"To threaten one country's athletes over Wada's failed governance model is pretty remarkable and disappointing," Tygart said. "Wada is very threatened and rattled but to illegally threaten

US athletes is shameful.

"They ought to spend the time trying to fix and make Wada what the world wants it to be, which is a strong independent Wada. There's something wrong when the global regulator attacks one of its key partners that is doing everything to uphold the rules, yet they turn a blind eye to a country like Russia that runs a state-sponsored doping programme."

"The hypocrisy here is insidious."

Russian authorities have always denied the existence of state-backed doping in the country. A report by the White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), presented to the US Congress in June and seen by Reuters, was

highly critical of Wada demanding that it implement immediate reforms. The report also suggested that the US withhold funding unless it was given greater representation on Wada boards and committees and "a proportionate voice in decision-making." The US is the largest single contributor to Wada, paying over US\$2.7 million (\$S3.7 million) into the 2020 budget of US\$37.4 million, half of which comes from the IOC.

If the US government was to cut funding it would also lose its spot on the Wada Foundation Board and seats on all committees, Wada says.

"It's surprising Wada would threaten illegal retaliation against the US," said Tygart. "There is

no rule. "If the US government stops paying the only consequence specified in the Wada rules and Unesco treaty is that the US could no longer sit on any Wada committees. You can trust the federal government looked at the legal ramifications in the event they stopped paying. "When they realised all it meant was they were off the Foundation board, they went big deal." That means nothing to us, it has no power, it is ceremonial. "There is anti-American bias." Even without an amendment to Wada rules, an unprecedented move by the US to cut funding could trigger a messy non-compliance issue and leave American athletes in limbo.

US Open: Djokovic rolls on

AGENCIES

NEW YORK, 4 SEPTEMBER

Top-seeded Novak Djokovic (in photo) puts his undefeated record in 2020 on the line in a third-round match on Day 5 against No. 28 Jan-Lennard Struff while

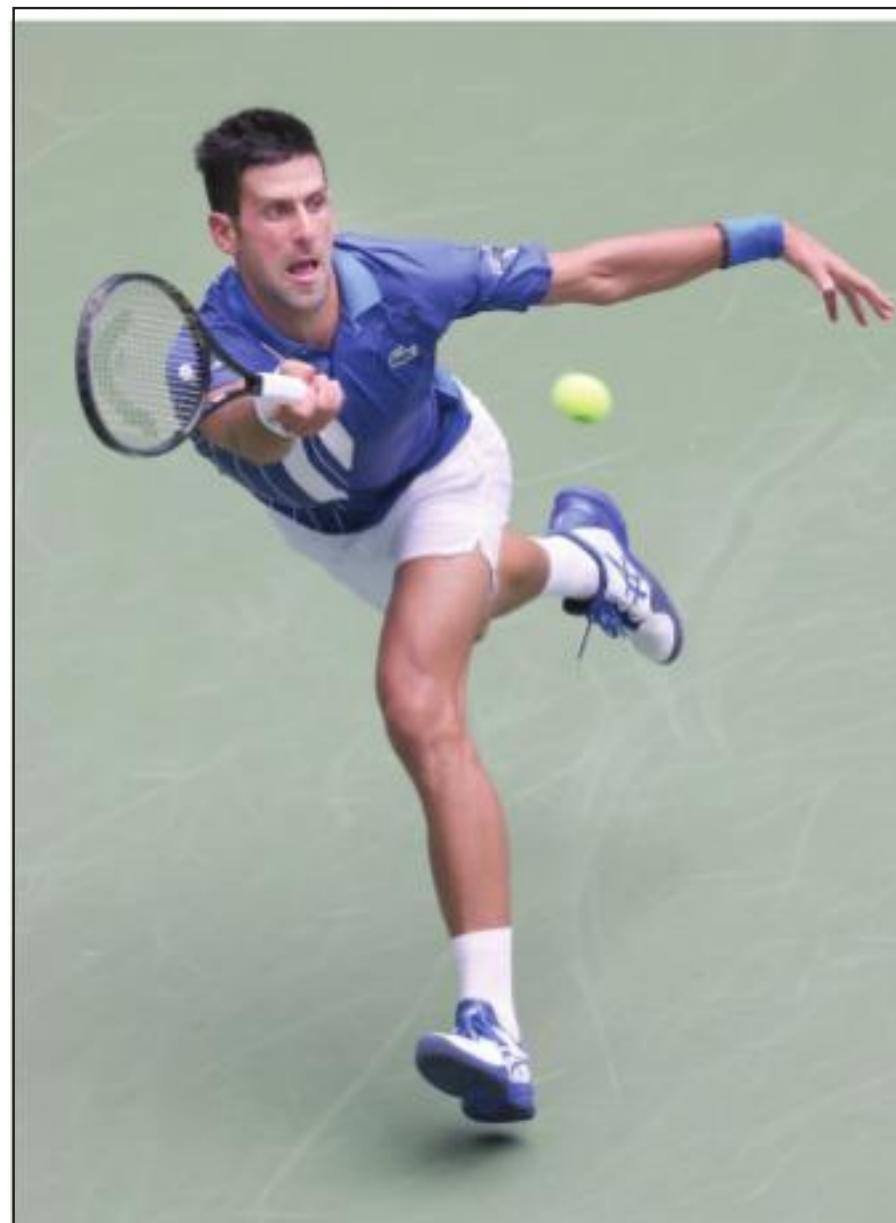
It's a rematch: Djokovic beat Struff 6-3, 6-1 last week at the Western & Southern Open, part of the 17-time Grand Slam champion's 25-0 start to the season.

In other men's play Friday, No. 4 seed Stefanos Tsitsipas faces No. 27 Borna Coric, and No. 5 Alexander Zverev faces No. 32 Adrian Mannarino.

In a matchup between players who won 2015 junior titles at Flushing Meadows, No. 19 Taylor Fritz, a 22-year-old American, will play No. 12 Dennis Shapovalov, a 21-year-old Canadian.

Five years ago, Fritz was the boys champ in singles, Shapovalov in doubles. On the women's side, 2018 champion Naomi Osaka plays Marta Kostyuk, while 63rd-ranked Jessica Pegula's debut in the third round of a Grand Slam tournament comes against two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova. "Honestly, I don't even think I'm playing that great. I'm figuring it out," Pegula said.

"Maybe before, I would have gotten more easily frus-



tated or not played as smart. I'm staying tough in the really tough moments."

Serena sets up showdown vs. Sloane

Yes, Serena Williams won in straight sets again. And yes,

she moved into an all-American showdown at the US Open against Sloane Stephens. Still, this victory did not quite go according to plan.

Her serve only so-so at times, her footwork a bit off, Williams got by and got through Thursday night

against an opponent ranked just 117th, beating Margarita Gasparyan 6-2, 6-4 and letting out a cry of "Yes!" at the end that reverberated in a nearly empty Arthur Ashe Stadium.

It sounded more like relief than excitement.

"The only thing holding me back is that I get frustrated," said Williams, who has won six of her 23 Grand Slam singles titles at Flushing Meadows and was the runner-up the past two years.

"But I'm out here, I'm fighting. It was just a minor setback. If anything, it could help me know what not to do next time."

That'll be Saturday against Stephens, the 2017 U.S. Open champion.

It is their seventh matchup; Williams leads 5-1, including victories in the past four meetings in a row, but they last played at the 2015 French Open. Stephens' lone head-to-head victory came all the way back at the 2013 Australian Open. This calibre of contest certainly doesn't feel as if it belongs in merely the third round at a Slam, but that's the luck of the draw this time.

What will also be odd: the quiet. All spectators were banned from Flushing Meadows this year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"I know if there were fans

it would be so lit, and I'm kind of sad that we're not playing in front of fans, because it would be so fun," said the 26th-seeded Stephens, who advanced Thursday by defeating Olga Govortsova 6-2, 6-2.

"The atmosphere won't be as big, but obviously a big opportunity to play against the greatest player in the world. So, yeah, unfortunate but still fortunate."

Both have compared the setting to their days as juniors, playing at age 10 or 12. Williams turns 39 this month and expended a lot of energy lately. All five matches she played during the resumption from the tour's COVID-19 hiatus and before the start of the U.S. Open went the full three sets; her record was 3-2 in those.

Her two U.S. Open wins were in straight sets, at least.

But things weren't as easy as they might have been against Gasparyan, who hits flat with a one-handed backhand and whose only trip to the fourth round at a major ended with a loss to Williams at the 2016 Australian Open. Williams served for the first set at 5-1 and got broken.

She went up 4-2 in the second set and got broken, dropped 8 of 10 points in one stretch and found herself at 4-all. In all, she put only 58% of her first serves in and was broken three times.

India will be among top 10 by 2028 Olympics, predicts Kiren Rijiju

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 4 SEPTEMBER

India will be amongst the top 10 medal winning countries by the 2028 Olympic Games, Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju predicted on Friday.

"By 2028 Olympics, India will be in the top 10 medal list. Without setting an ambitious target, you cannot achieve the goal. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created an Olympic task force and we are making certain preparations," he said.

Rijiju said that the Central government was leaving no stone unturned in a bid to nurture talents that could bring India laurels in the 2028 Olympic. We have now identified talented athletes for the Junior TOP Scheme and they will be given a monthly stipend of Rs.25,000 each.

These junior players will train for free and the Rs.25,000 they will get is like a salary they earn for their

families," said Rijiju.

The sports minister also acknowledged that he had received harsh comments from some sections on his ambitious projection. "I know many people wonder how it would happen, many people gave comments...not so nice. But it is a democratic country, people will have their own views and we do not think we should respond to those comments," he said.

"Our job is to focus on what we want to achieve. We have to set targets, set the bar higher and focus on what we can do. I feel the target [of being in top 10 in 2028] is achievable," he said.

To a question, the minister said the COVID-19 pandemic situation has made it difficult to say when the crowds will return to the stadiums. "I will not be able to make a call on that. I don't know what will be the situation in the coming months," he said.

CSK finally hit the nets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DUBAI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni and all other Chennai Super Kings players, except for the COVID-19 afflicted duo of Deepak Chahar and Ruturaj Gaikwad, finally hit the nets on Friday after clearing their way to start training.

"All others, apart from the 13, tested negative for the third time. Those who tested positive will only be tested after the isolation period (two weeks) is over," CSK CEO KS Viswanathan told PTI.

The results were a major relief to the franchise, which was hit by 13 positive cases along with 11 members of the CSK contingent, the team was forced to delay its training plan after completing the six-day quarantine, including three tests, upon arrival on

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Singh pulls out of IPL

CHENNAI, 4 SEPTEMBER

Spain's Gaya nets late goal to snatch draw with Germany

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PARIS, 4 SEPTEMBER



- all going to plan - in June and July next year.

Elsewhere on Thursday in the same group, Manchester City's Oleksandr Zinchenko scored a fine goal to give Ukraine a 2-1 win over Switzerland in Lviv. Andriy Yarmolenko of West Ham United had put Ukraine ahead with a backheel effort, before Haris Seferovic

equalised. In League B, Artem Dzyuba netted a brace as Russia beat Serbia 3-1 in Moscow, while in the same Group 3, Hungary were surprise 1-0 winners away in Turkey.

In Group 4, out-of-favour Real Madrid star Gareth Bale started for Wales but was taken off at half-time in their 1-0 victory over Finland in Helsinki. Kieffer Moore scored the winner 10 minutes from time.

"Gareth Bale has had no football at all," Wales coach Ryan Giggs told Sky Sports.

"It was a real juggling act,

picking the team. Gareth has had the least football out of everyone and I thought, ahead of Sunday, it would be best to take him off."

On Sunday Wales host Bulgaria, who were held to a 1-1 draw by the Republic of Ireland in Sofia. Bozhidar Kraev put Bulgaria ahead only for recent Celtic loan signing Shane Duffy to head in a stoppage-time equaliser for Ireland in their first game under new manager Stephen Kenny.

Messi reluctantly staying at Barcelona after all

AGENCIES

BARCELONA, 4 SEPTEMBER



allowed this in any way and I will STAY at the club so as not to get into a legal dispute," he was quoted as saying by Goal.com.

"The management of the club led by (president Josep Maria) Bartomeu is a disaster.

"I told the club, the president in particular, that I wanted to leave. They knew this since the start of the past season. I told them during all (of the) last 12 months. But I will stay here because I don't want to start a legal war."

In doing so, however, the Argentine forward took a big swipe at the club's hierarchy.

"I wasn't happy and I wanted to leave. I have not been

able to leave without a transfer fee.

Earlier on Friday, Messi's father and representative Jorge had insisted in a letter to La Liga that a 700 million euros (\$828.03 million) release clause in the player's contract was not valid and his son could leave for free.

Argentine pay TV station TYC Sports, which has close links with Messi, had reported earlier on Friday that Messi was poised to stay with the Catalan club he