



THE HANS INDIA

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WINDOWS



Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla chairing a meeting of Secretary-Generals of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha along with representatives of CPWD and NDMC over arrangements for upcoming Monsoon Session, in New Delhi ON Thursday

Very dangerous hurricane makes landfall in US

Houston: Hurricane Laura made landfall in southwestern Louisiana early Thursday after strengthening into an "extremely dangerous" Category 4 classification, with the US authorities warning of potentially catastrophic impacts. The National Hurricane Center said that Laura, packing 240 km per hour sustained winds, brought a "catastrophic storm surge, extreme winds and flash flooding" to the state. It intensified rapidly into a Category 4 hurricane as it barreled toward the Louisiana and Texas coasts and was on the verge of becoming a Category 5, the most powerful classification, when it hit land. Laura made landfall as a Category 4 storm, but it has since weakened to a Category 2.

China tests 2 deadly missiles successfully

Washington/New Delhi: Just before the US imposed a visa ban on Chinese government members in response to the militarization of the South China Sea, Beijing had fired two missiles, including an 'aircraft-carrier killer', into the disputed sea. As per a South China Morning Post (SCMP) report, China fired one intermediate-range ballistic missile, DF-26B, from Qinghai province and another medium-range ballistic missile, DF-21D, from Zhejiang on Wednesday into the sea, provoking the US to take an unprecedented action against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime, People's Liberation Army (PLA) and their businesses.

NATION



78 PER CENT PARENTS WILLING TO LOSE YEAR OF WARDS' SCHOOLING

P3

SPORTS



DHONI IS MOST INSPIRATIONAL CAPTAIN IN 50 YEARS OF GLOBAL CRICKET: CHAPPELL

P8



Cloudy skies followed by rain predicted in Delhi

New Delhi: Cloudy skies are expected to keep the mercury in check in the national capital on Thursday while a fresh spell of rain is likely towards the evening, the weather department said.

The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle around 33 degrees Celsius and 26 degrees Celsius, respectively. The India Meteorological Department had on Tuesday issued an alert for "moderate to heavy" rains in the national capital from Wednesday to Friday. The rain is likely to inundate low-lying areas and disrupt traffic on roads, it had warned.

Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the regional forecasting centre of the IMD, said the monsoon trough will remain close to Delhi-NCR till Friday. Delhi has recorded 213.3 mm rainfall against the normal of

228.2 mm in August so far, a deficiency of 7 percent. Overall, it has gauged 531.9 mm precipitation against the normal of 504.3 mm since June 1, when monsoon season starts, the Met department said.

IMD had forecast moderate to heavy rain in Delhi on Thursday but that was delayed scientists said as the moisture was concentrated around east UP. IMD had to withdraw the heavy rain warning for Delhi on Wednesday.

A well-marked low pressure area is lying over coastal areas of Gangetic West Bengal and north Odisha. It is very likely to move west-north-westwards across interior parts of Odisha and Gangetic West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, north Madhya Pradesh and south Uttar Pradesh during next 4-5 days.

States stare at ₹2.35-lakh crore revenue shortfall

GST TALE OF 2 OPTIONS

New Delhi: Amid a chorus by non-NDA ruled states for compensation of GST revenue shortfall, the Centre on Thursday presented two options to states under which they can borrow from the market to make up for the estimated deficit of Rs 2.35 lakh crore this fiscal.

At the end of a five-hour long meeting of the GST Council, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said there was no proposal to raise tax rates to make up for the shortfall that has been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Citing a legal opinion from the Attorney General, she ruled out the Centre making good the shortfall from either its coffers or borrowing against its balance sheet.

The deficit can be made good by states borrowing using a special window, she said, adding that this loan can be repaid after five years from the collection of GST cess.

If states agree to either of the options, it would effectively mean that cess would continue beyond five years of the GST rollout.

In 2017, all states agreed to subsume their local taxes such as VAT into the new, nationwide Goods and Services Tax (GST) in return for the Centre promising to make good any loss of revenue in the first five years.

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Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman chairs the 41st GST Council meeting via video conferencing, in New Delhi, Thursday. MoS for Finance Anurag Thakur is also seen

'ACT OF GOD'

Covid may lead to economic contraction: FM

New Delhi: The Centre on Thursday placed before the GST Council two options for borrowing by states to meet the shortfall in GST revenues, pegged at Rs 2.35 lakh crore in the current fiscal.

Briefing reporters after the 41st meeting of the GST Council, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the economy is facing an extraordinary 'Act of God' situation that may result

in an economic contraction.

As per the Centre's calculation, the compensation requirement by the states in the current fiscal would be Rs 3 lakh crore, of which Rs 65,000 crore is expected to be met from the cess levied in the GST regime. Hence, the total shortfall is estimated at Rs 2.35 lakh crore.

Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said that

of this estimate, Rs 97,000 crore is on account of GST shortfall, while the rest is due to the impact of coronavirus. "The compensation gap which has arisen this year (expected to be Rs 2.35 lakh crore), is due to coronavirus as well. The shortfall in compensation due to the implementation of GST has been estimated to be Rs 97,000 crore," he said.

Continued on Page 5

WE ARE NOT HAPPY WITH OUTCOME, SAYS CONG

New Delhi: The Congress Thursday said it was "dissatisfied" with the outcome of the GST Council meeting and accused the Centre of adopting a majoritarian approach and thrusting "solutions" on states.

The Finance ministers of Congress-ruled states are not happy with the outcome of GST Council meeting as decisions were thrust upon them by the Centre, Punjab's FM Manpreet Badal said at a virtual press conference after the GST Council meeting.

"We are not happy at the outcome. But, we have no choice," he said. Puducherry Chief Minister V Narayanasamy, who represented the Union Territory at the meeting as he also holds the finance portfolio, said it is unfortunate the Centre was not helping the revenue-starved states by honouring its commitment to pay them GST compensation at 14 per cent.

Don't delay NEET, JEE exams further

Over 150 academicians write to PM

New Delhi: Over 150 academicians from various universities in India and abroad have written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying that delaying JEE-Mains and NEET any further will mean compromising the future of students.

"Youths and students are the future of the nation but in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, clouds of uncertainty have gathered over their careers too. There are many apprehensions about admission and classes which need to be resolved at the earliest," they said in their letter.

The signatories include academicians from the Delhi University, IGNOU, Lucknow University, JNU, BHU, IIT Delhi and Indian academicians from foreign universities such as University of London, University of California, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Ben Gurion University, Israel, among others.

Continued on Page 5



Delay will lead to 'zero year', say IIT heads

New Delhi: Further delay in conducting medical and engineering entrance exams NEET and JEE will lead to a 'zero academic year' and any quick alternative to the crucial exams will dilute the quality of education and have cascading ef-

fects, according to Directors of several Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).

Amid the chorus for postponement of the two exams in view of the rising COVID-19 cases, the IIT Directors appealed to students to trust the

institutions conducting the exam.

"The pandemic has already disrupted the academic plans of many students and institutions and we don't see the virus going away anytime soon. We should not let this be a zero academic

Amid row, over 14L aspirants download admit cards

New Delhi: Amid calls to postpone the JEE (Mains) and NEET (UG) examinations, over 14 lakh aspirants have already downloaded the admit cards till Wednesday evening after the National Testing Agency (NTA) released them. JEE Mains exam 2020 will be held from September 1 to 6, while the NEET (UG) exam 2020 will be held on September 13. For JEE (Main), 7.41 lakh out of 8.58 lakh aspirants have downloaded the admit cards.

year as it might have consequences on the bright future of several students," said IIT Roorkee Director Ajit K Chaturvedi. He also said students and their parents need to have faith in the system.

Continued on Page 5

Quota within quota

SC for revisiting 2004 verdict on Scheduled Castes sub-classification

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday disagreed with its 2004 Constitution Bench judgement, which ruled against giving preferential treatment to certain sub-castes within Scheduled Castes. The top court said this judgement needs to be revisited.

A five-judge bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra, and comprising Justices Indira Banerjee, Vineet Saran, M R Shah and Aniruddha Bose, said it is essential to reconsider the 2004 verdict in the E V Chinnai case and, this matter should be placed before Chief Justice S A Bobde for appropriate direction.

The bench observed that reservation may be made for the sub-castes within Scheduled Castes, and such classification would not lead to interfering with the presidential order under Article 341.

The bench noted once the state has power to give reservation, then it could go ahead with sub-classification, to extend the benefits of reservation to those sub-castes, which have not

availed these benefits.

The bench also said it seems the 2004 verdict in the E.V. Chinnai case was not correctly decided, therefore it requires a reconsideration.

The 2004 verdict in the Chinnai case was also decided by a five-judge bench. As a result, the matter would now have to go to a larger bench. This will be placed before the Chief Justice to refer it to a bench of seven judges or more.

The current case came up before the apex court after the Punjab and Haryana High Court struck down a state law, which empowered the government to sub-classify SC/STs for grant of quotas.

The state government appealed against a 2010 verdict. The high court had struck down Section 4 (5) of the Punjab Scheduled Caste and Backward Classes (Reservation in Services) Act, 2006 and termed it unconstitutional. This Act gave first preference to Mazbhi Sikhs and Balmikis castes for SC quota in public services.

5 benches in Delhi HC to hold physical courts

PURNA SINGH

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Thursday said five of its benches will start holding physical courts on a rotation basis from September 1, and issued standard operating procedure (SOP) for it. The High Court, which has been conducting hearings through video conferencing since March 24 to contain the spread of ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, said the remaining benches shall continue taking up matters through the virtual mode.

Continued on Page 5

SC rejects plea to carry out Muharram procession

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday declined permission for carrying out Muharram procession across the country and asked Lucknow-based petitioner to move before the Allahabad High Court with his plea.

The apex court said how it can pass a general order for the whole country. A bench comprising Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian said it would lead to chaos and targeting of a particular community.

"You are asking for a gen-



eral order and then if we allow this, there will be chaos. Particular community will be targeted for spreading Covid. We don't want that. We as a court cannot risk the health of all the people," the bench, which heard the matter through video conferencing, said. The bench allowed the petitioner to withdraw the petition with the liberty to approach the High Court with limited prayer of holding procession in Lucknow.

The apex court was hearing a PIL was filed by Shia leader Syed Kalbe Jawad.

Womenia

TWEET PATROL


ANUSHKA SHARMA
@ANUSHKASHARMA

And then,
we were three!
Arriving Jan 2021 ❤️👶



QUICK TIP



Blazer and slim leggings

Black pants are a closet staple, but they can be a bit too body-hugging for some office environments. Offset their slim, legging-like silhouette with a boxy herringbone blazer that's long enough so you feel covered. Pull on a pair of black sock boots to continue the leg line and make your stems look a mile long.

SKIN CARE FOR TEENS

Skin changes are a natural part of your teenage years. Frequent breakouts, acne scars, facial hair, dullness and tanning are some common problems teenagers face. Nearly 75 per cent teenagers develop a love and hate relationship with their skin during this period.

Teenage is not an easy phase to deal with the challenges of teen skin are sizable. Gushing hormones, friends, peer pressure lead to enlargement of the oil glands, making teen skin oily and creating large pores, blackheads and the dreaded acne.

During this period our skin is influenced by many factors. It is affected by our diets, habits and lifestyle, as well as exposure to the elements. The body also goes through many changes during the various phases of growth, development and maturity. Hormonal changes and imbalances during these times also influence the skin.

It is a misconception that acne is something teenagers must live with. As a teenager, you may be told that you will 'grow out of it'.

Yes, acne may disappear with time, but it leaves scars that remain. Therefore, it is imperative that the condition be checked from spreading. Acne can be controlled and even prevented if appropriate measures are taken on time. As a teenager, learn to understand



your skin and give it the kind of care that it needs. You should also recognise the value of professional care and seek help in a good time. Here are the top skin tips for teen skin care.

'Cleansing' is the keyword for an oily skin. Daily cleansing and skin care, with appropriate products, is the only way of preventing acne and other oily-skin conditions. Oily skins tend to attract more dirt. The pores must be kept free of hardened oil and the oiliness of the skin surface must also be reduced. Therefore, you need a medicated cleanser, face wash that is specially formulated for acne prone and oily skins. Use plenty of water to wash off all traces of the cleanser.

In order to deep cleanse the skin, a scrub or cleansing grains should be rubbed gently on the skin. This helps to keep the pores free of oil. Blackheads are also dislodged and discouraged from forming. However, scrubs

should not be applied on pimples, acne or rash. Frequent washing with soap and water is not advocated. Do not wash your face with soap more than two or three times a day. Avoid the use of oily cleansing and nourishing creams. If the outer layer feels taut, as in winter, use a light liquid moisturiser.

If pimples and acne make an appearance, never hesitate to seek professional help. For such problems, medicated lotions, ointments and face packs are available and can be added to the daily skin care routine. Make sure that your hair and scalp are kept scrupulously clean. Dandruff and other conditions can lead to pimples and acne. You can opt for clinical treatment for acne, with cleansing and extraction of blackheads. Veg Peel treatments are recommended for the pits (tiny holes) in the skin, left by acne.



I expected much worse from 2020: Couturier JJ Valaya

PUJA GUPTA

Fashion designer JJ Valaya says he was convinced that 2020 would be a washout and that the focus should be on the coming year. But he now sees the fashion industry reviving.

"It will take its time to come back to full strength but you should always look at positive things, at least it's picking up again," Valaya says.

The celebrated designer, who launches his e-commerce site valaya.com, speaks about the impact the pandemic has had on the business of fashion, the future of the industry and how fashion will be phygital in the future. The designer is also set to show his collection at the FDIC Virtual Couture Week to be held soon.

The launch of the actual store has moved to 2021 early and the website is being launched exactly when it was planned. There are no changes in what we had planned, other than the fact that the virtual world is being launched before the actual.

Valaya adds, "Frankly, I expected much worse. I was convinced that the season of 2020 is going to be a washout, because Indians are known for their large and extravagant weddings; if they don't get that, then most boys and girls can't decide. If there is no drama, then what's the point of having a wedding! I was assuming that most of the weddings would be delayed to 2021."

Mentally, across the board, all the designers were ready for a season which would be lackluster. They are quite pleasantly surprised, because weddings are still

happening, maybe not as many and maybe a lot smaller but they are still happening. When there is a wedding, people have to dress up, look beautiful and stunning, so we opened our stores about two and half months back and since then I was very pleased to note that the footfall as well as the business has started to go up again.

"The functions are fewer, therefore the purchasing power of people is also limited, so I don't think there is any radical change other than the fact that girls and boys want something new and still want to make something bespoke for themselves. There is no such major change other than the usual thing, which is not industry driven but more circumstance driven, and there is no way around it, which is why the virtual platform is going to play a major role," shares Valaya.

A large number of the enquiries of business are buyers from outside India. It's not easy for them to travel long distances, and this year that also can't happen. When you see the site when it's up and running, you will notice how we have created the same experience as you would expect if you were to visit us. From the human touch, detailed appointments, measurements, everything online will make sure that we don't lack in any way and the customer is happy.



Common makeup mistakes and how to avoid them

We all have our makeup routine that we feel we'll never stray away from. But what if your everyday routine is actually full of beauty blunders? Have no fear: we're here to help! We took some time to write down the biggest makeup mistakes we've discovered over the years and explain why they may be throwing a wrench in your routine.

Here are some common makeup mistakes, and of course, how to avoid them.

Applying before moisturising

Dry skin is makeup's worst enemy. Applying makeup directly to dry skin can cause flakiness, which makes it difficult to blend the product into the skin. Before applying any makeup, make sure your face is freshly cleansed and moisturised. A moisturiser that can double down as a primer is the best choice. To remedy your dry skin long term, make sure to exfoliate weekly!

Too much concealer/Not setting

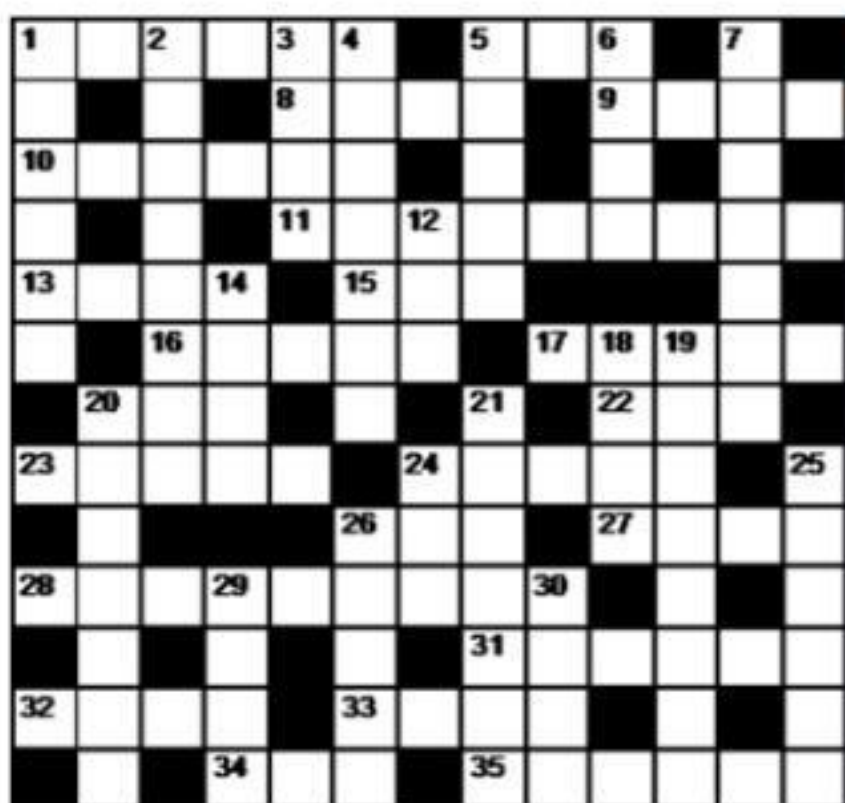
We love concealer as much as the next gal, but be wary of using too much. You should not apply concealer on your entire face. Instead, tackle the areas that need correction, such as

blemishes and dark spots, with a light layer and build up as needed to avoid accentuating fine lines and wrinkles. Opt for more lightweight concealers that still offer good coverage for a more natural and luminous finish.

Wrong shade of foundation

It's a makeup mistake everyone has made at some point. Wearing the wrong shade of foundation will automatically give away that you are wearing

makeup because your face won't match the rest of your skin. When choosing a foundation, make sure to shade match by testing on your face rather than your arm for the most accurate results. It doesn't hurt to buy two colours that seem close to your skin tone, and either choose the shade that looks best in natural daylight or keep both to mix-and-match as your skin tone fluctuates throughout the seasons.



SOLUTION TO AUGUST 27

CROSSWORD

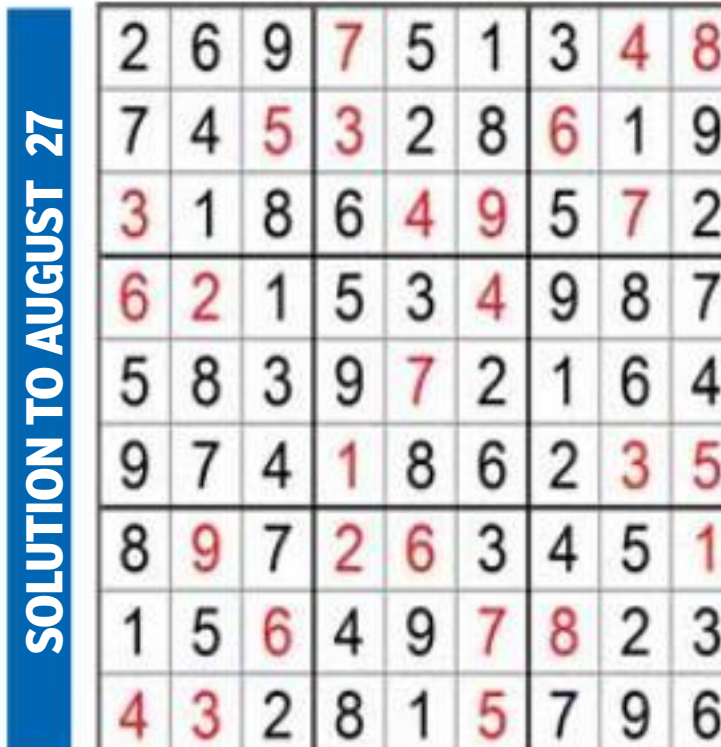
Across

- 1 Goal (6)
- 5 First Woman (3)
- 8 Sudden assault (4)
- 9 Phoenician port (4)
- 10 Driving aid (6)
- 11 Pitiless (9)
- 13 Revise copy (4)
- 15 Plague carrier ? (3)
- 16 Oscillated (5)
- 17 Drive back (5)
- 20 'Me' in French (3)
- 22 Table scrap (3)
- 23 Argentinian dance (5)
- 24 Pasta variety (5)
- 26 Charged atom (3)
- 27 Mark (4)
- 28 NCO's command ? (9)
- 31 Topsy (6)
- 32 Indonesian island (4)
- 33 Vegetable of onion genus (4)
- 34 Shed tears (3)
- 35 Period of the year (6)

Down

- 1 Ejected or expelled (6)
- 2 Throw overboard (8)
- 3 Study hard (4)
- 4 Inns (7)
- 5 Decree (5)
- 6 Bibliography abbr. (2,2)
- 7 Strange secrets of the beacon (7)
- 12 Cloth fragment (3)
- 14 A small branch (4)
- 18 Many millennia (4)
- 19 Goes before (8)
- 20 Warlike (7)
- 21 Means (7)
- 24 Luau dish (3)
- 25 Coloured chalk (6)
- 26 2006 FIFA World Cup champions (5)
- 29 Long poem telling of great events (4)
- 30 Winged goddess (4)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO AUGUST 27

NEWS ROUNDUP

Bhumi Pednekar: Women are not supposed to be whitewashed in cinema

Actress Bhumi Pednekar says female characters are whitewashed on screen and there is a need to change that notion, because she believes women have superpowers.

"We need to change the depiction of genders. We need to change how we show women and men. Women are not supposed to be whitewashed -- we have desires, we have ambition, we have physical needs and emotions, and we have the capacity to balance. I believe women have superpowers. I think we need to see a lot more of that in our cinema," Bhumi said.

She added that there has to be a change also in the way men are shown on screen.

"Similarly, we must alter the way men are shown in films. We put so much pressure on the male gender, telling them that they are supposed to be strong, that they can't cry, can't show emotion. That is so wrong. This narrative -- 'mard ko dard nahi hota' or 'a man doesn't hurt' -- needs to change," she said.

Bhumi says cinema has a huge impact on its audience and it can be used to change the mindset of people in the most positive way. "I also believe we need to stop objectifying women and there needs to be a lot more inclusivity in films, including the LGBTQIA+ community. I know change is in the air. I just wish we could accelerate it. Like, I just watched 'Super Deluxe' and I couldn't believe what I was watching," she said.

Bhumi says there is great work happening in cinema. "I feel lucky to be part of the Hindi film industry at this point," she added.



It's scary to take exams as Covid deaths rising: JEE, NEET aspirants

Kota: Thousands of Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) Main and the National Eligibility and Entrance Test (NEET) aspirants at Rajasthan's Kota, India's biggest coaching hub, continue to protest on social media with videos demanding the postponement of exams till the coronavirus pandemic shows a decline in numbers.

After the National Testing Agency (NTA), which conducts the exams, clarified that the JEE and NEET will take place as scheduled, students, as well as the coaching institutes in Kota, have registered their disagreement. They called the move to conduct the exams, meant for admissions to engineering and medical colleges, "insensitive."

"I still remember those restless two weeks in April when hundreds of students like me wanted to go back to their hometown in Uttar Pradesh in the middle of the pandemic. And finally, we left



Kota in buses. But most of us had to return to Kota fearing that exams might be slated any day and we had opted for Kota as the test centre," said 18-year-old NEET aspirant Ranjit Singh Rajput. "But thousands of our batchmates who studied here with us in the coaching centre are unable to reach their centres. And especially with the rise in deaths due to the Covid-19, it's scary to take exams right now", Rajput, who hails from Uttar Pradesh and is presently in Kota, according to Outlook report

Most of the students who underwent coaching from Kota institutes are also protesting on social media and posting their videos on Facebook and Twitter against the arrangements done by the government.

"Not every city has an exam centre. Students along with their parents will have to move to another city for the examination centre. Also, how can they ensure the social distancing aspect? Moreover, it's inhumane to appear for exams with masks on for three hours," another NEET as-

plicant Jaya, who is presently stuck in Kota said

Echoing Jaya's concerns, JEE aspirant Manas said, "What about those students whose family members have contracted Covid and are in quarantine? How will they appear for exams? The examination authorities have been insensitive all this while. There will be movement of lakhs of students as well as their parents which will lead to more Covid cases."

Meant for admissions in medical colleges and IITs, JEE which is a computer-based test, is slated to be held between September 1 and 6 while the NEET (UG), a pen-paper-based exam, will be held on September 13. However, the government has said that they have made all arrangements to ensure a smooth conduct of both exams. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has reiterated its commitment to go ahead with the exams next month.

LIFE IS ALL ABOUT BALANCE



A man with disability walks on a deserted street during the biweekly lockdown in the wake of coronavirus pandemic in Kolkata on Thursday

Most serious situation after 1962: Jaishankar on Ladakh

New Delhi: The stand-off with China in eastern Ladakh is "surely the most serious situation after 1962", Foreign Minister Dr S Jaishankar has said, referring to the 1962 Indo-China war.

"This is surely the most serious situation after 1962. In fact, after 45 years, we have had military casualties on this border. The quantum of forces currently deployed by both sides at the LAC is also unprecedented," Mr Jaishankar said in an interview to Rediff.com.

India and China have had several rounds of military and diplomatic meetings, with only limited disengagement having taken place in parts of eastern Ladakh.

Indian and Chinese forces have been locked in a tense stand-off since May. 20 Indian soldiers were killed in action at Galwan Valley in Ladakh on June 15 in a deadly brawl with Chinese troops, stoking anger against China that led to weeks of talks between senior officials on how



to ease tensions.

The Foreign Minister said that India has conveyed to China "clearly" that peace and tranquility in the border areas are the basis for the relationship between the two neighbours.

"If we look back at the last three decades, this is quite self-evident. Indian and Chinese armies are locked in a tense

stand-off in eastern Ladakh for over three-and-half-month despite multiple rounds of diplomatic and military talks," Jaishankar said.

He said border situations in the past were resolved through diplomacy. "If you look back over the last decade, there have been a number of border situations -- Depsang, Chumar and Doklam.

In a sense, each one was different. This one surely is. But what is also common is that all border situations were resolved through diplomacy," the Foreign Minister said.

The Foreign Minister said that a solution to the stand-off with China must be predicated on honouring all agreements and understandings without attempting to alter the status quo unilaterally.

"As you know, we are talking to the Chinese both through military channels and diplomatic ones. In fact, they work in tandem," he told Rediff.com ahead of the release of his book "The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World".

India and China have not been able to agree on their 3,488-km-long border that runs from the snow deserts of Ladakh in the western sector to thick forest and mountains in the east, despite several rounds of talks over the years.

78 per cent parents willing to lose year of wards' schooling

Why should all suffer?: SC on plea to delay exam for foreign MBBS

New Delhi (IANS): In view of the Covid-19 pandemic, at least 78 per cent of Indian parents are unwilling to send their wards to school immediately post lockdown, even if that entails repeating an academic year, a new survey said on Thursday.

The survey conducted by edtech startup SP Robotic Works among 3,600 parents and an equal number of children found that 82-86 per cent of the parents from Bengaluru, Mumbai, Hyderabad and mini-metros are unwilling to take any risk with their children.

The findings also showed that the sleeping pattern of nearly 50 per cent of the children has been disturbed with 13 per cent having no regular pattern of sleeping.

According to the survey, 67 per cent of the parents think that their child's screen time has gone up by at least 50 per cent during the lockdown. The fear of the pandemic had affected 40 per cent of the children surveyed, causing unaddressed anxiety issues, the report said.

"The current situation has unearthed the immense potential of platforms with experiential and interactive learning which engage children in practical tasks and logical reasoning," Sneha Priya S, Co-Founder and CEO of SP Robotic Works, said in a statement.

The data also revealed that 10 per cent of the children aged between 7-10 want to be entrepreneurs,



while the number goes up to 17 per cent in children in the 16-17 age group.

Amongst other dream jobs, STEM continues to dominate the aspirations of young India with 52.5 per cent kids wanting to either be a scientist, technologist, data scientist, or doctor.

The Supreme Court on Thursday declined to entertain a plea seeking to postpone the Foreign Medical Graduates Examination (FMGE), a licensure examination held for students who have done MBBS courses from foreign countries, slated for August 31.

A plea was filed in the top court stating that several students are struck in foreign countries and they are not in position to return to India to take this exam.

A bench, headed by Justice Arun Mishra and comprising Justices B.R. Gavai and Krishna Murari, noted: "Why should all students suffer because of inconvenience of some?"

Cops pick up Rhea's father for ED questioning

Mumbai: A team of Mumbai police reached the residence of actress Rhea Chakraborty, who is accused of abetting actor Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide, in Santacruz on Thursday and took her father along for a questioning by the Enforcement Directorate, an official said.

The police team reached Chakraborty's house as per the request made by the ED, the official said. "The ED requested the Mumbai police to reach their house and escort Rhea's father Indrajit out as it wants to question him," the police official said.

"Accordingly, some police personnel reached their residence in the afternoon and took her father along for a questioning by the central agency," he added. However, he did not specify whether her father was taken to the ED office in south Mumbai or some other location.



Actor Rhea Chakraborty said there was a threat to her and her family's life and requested the Mumbai police for protection. Rhea took to Instagram and shared a video where her father was seen being hounded by the media outside her building compound.

Rhea's brother Showik Chakraborty arrived at the DRDO guest on Thursday for questioning by the CBI, which is probing actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case, a police official said.

This is the first time that a member from Rhea Chakraborty's family is being questioned by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the case of Rajput's death.

'Invoke NSA against rape accused'

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday directed officials to initiate strict action and invoke the stringent National Security Act against those involved in the rape and murder of a 17-year-old girl in Lakhimpur Kheri district.

The mutilated body of the girl was found near a dry pond around 200 metres from her village falling under the Neemgaon police limits on Tuesday. She had left home to fill out a scholarship application, police had said. Her autopsy report later confirmed rape.

Officials have been directed to initiate action under the NSA against those involved in the incident, an official spokesperson said.

The chief minister has also extended an ex gratia of Rs five lakhs to the bereaved family and told them that the state government would get the case heard in a fast track court in order to ensure that the guilty are punished at the earliest, he added.

India now has worst single day Covid spike

New Delh (IANS): India on Thursday witnessed the worst-ever single day spike of 75,760 Covid cases that has ever been recorded by any country. It pushed the national tally to 33,10,234 while the toll breached the 60,000 mark with 1,017 more fatalities in the last 24 hours.

Out of the total 33,10,234 cases, 7,25,991 are active cases; 25,23,771 people have recovered from the deadly virus while a total of 60,472 have died due to the pandemic, the data from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) said.

With 56,013 recoveries in a day, the recovery rate stood at 76.24 per cent while the fatality rate was 1.83 per cent.

Maharashtra continued to be the worst-hit with a total of 7,18,711 cases and 23,089 deaths. Tamil Nadu is at the second spot with 3,97,261 cases and 6,839 deaths. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, West Bengal, and Bihar followed.

According to the fresh data from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a to-



Union Minister Gurjar infected

Chandigarh (IANS): Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Krishan Pal Gurjar tested positive for coronavirus on Thursday. He is the fourth Parliamentarian representing Haryana, to have tested positive for Covid-19. The 67-year-old BJP MP from Faridabad asked all those who had come in contact with him over the past few days to take coronavirus seriously and get themselves tested.

He tweeted that he had been experiencing health problems and got his Covid-19 test done. Earlier, three BJP Parliamentarians from the state -- Sanjay Bhatia, Brijendra Singh and Nayab Singh Saini -- had tested positive for coronavirus.



30 Punjab legislators test positive

Chandigarh (IANS): At least 30 lawmakers, nearly 25 per cent of the total strength of 117, have tested positive for coronavirus, according to a list released by the Punjab Legislative Assembly on Thursday.

However, seven of them have recovered. But a majority of the legislators may not attend the one-day Monsoon session of the Assembly on Friday as they are home quarantined.

State Rural development Minister Tript Rajinder Bajwa was the first Minister to test positive for coronavirus but he has recovered and rejoined office. After him, Jails Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa tested positive followed by Revenue Minister Gurpreet Kangar and Industries Minister Sham Sunder Arora.

Chief minister Amarinder Singh on Wednesday said that 23 of the 117 MLAs in Punjab have so far tested positive for Covid-19.

tal of 9,24,988 samples were tested in the last 24 hours with the total number of samples tested so far reaching 3,85,76,510.

A total of 1,550 laboratories are conducting Covid-19 tests across the country. Out of these total labs, 993 are government labs while 557 are private.

A total of 795 laboratories conduct Real-Time RT PCR for Covid-19 while the TrueNat Test for Covid-19 is being conducted by 637 labs. The CBNAAT Test is being carried out by 118 labs across the nation.

From Nirbhaya case to ugly gang wars, CCTVs help crack cases

New Delhi (IANS): On the night of December 16, 2012, a 23-year-old physiotherapy student was brutalised by five men and a juvenile in such a horrific manner that the whole country flared up in anger and outrage, came out in protests and forced the government to change rape laws.

Initially the police had nothing in their hands except the versions of the victims. So where did the first clue come from? It was when a team of investigators reached hotels at Mahipalpur, they got the first clue. It was the CCTV cameras that captured the moving white bus and provided the Delhi po-

lice its first lead. Later, all the accused were caught and justice done.

CCTV cameras have been crucial in not just identifying the accused in heinous crimes but also bringing them to justice in the court of law. The CCTV provides a first clue to the investigators who follow the lead and adds momentum in solving the case. Recently, many cases were solved by the police in Delhi and NCR with the help of the 'third eye'.

In a case of brutal assault on a 12-year-old girl in Delhi's Paschim Vihar this month, the police managed to arrest the ac-



cused only after scanning at least 100 CCTV footage.

In July this year, the brutal murder of a 25-year-old man was caught on CCTV camera in West Delhi, where he was stabbed to death allegedly by a juvenile and his two friends af-

ter the victim warned them not to perform bike stunts in Raghbir Nagar. The accused were later identified and nabbed.

Police also believe that many times the CCTV cameras act as a deterrent for criminals.

"CCTV has been very crucial in not just solving important cases but also acting as a deterrent for the criminals. From murders to burglaries, it has always aided the investigative agencies and helped the police to bring the criminals to justice," said senior police officers.

Even the hit-and-run case of Delhi police Traffic ACP Sanket

Kaushik in Delhi's Rajokri on July 25 was solved after the cops scanned at least 15 CCTV footage. The accused tempo driver was arrested later.

Even in the most brutal gang wars in Delhi and NCR, much crucial evidence has been provided by CCTVs installed in the area. Security cameras are invaluable to law enforcement agencies when they are trying to determine the accuracy of other types of evidence. Sometimes the authenticity of the witness statement is cross verified with the help of CCTV cameras installed.

"There have been cases when

people try to mislead the police by manipulative theories about a murder or robbery or even theft. Sometimes they even have self-inflicted injuries to derail investigation. The CCTV cameras then play a crucial role in unearthing lies and manipulations and reach the actual culprit," said a senior police officer.

For police having both the security camera footage and other types of evidence including witness or victim statements builds a much stronger case, which means higher conviction rates and greater consequences for people who commit crimes.

Erdogan’s arrogance poses new threat to world

A way from the public eye in a good part of the world, the Mediterranean Sea is emerging as the latest hotspot of the world with Turkey and Greece readying themselves for a confrontation. The clash here is over Turkey’s claim of drilling rights in the eastern Mediterranean. Greece has gone for legal extension of its territorial waters towards Italy which is, it claims, not affecting the core of disputed area. Prime Minister Kyriako Mitsotakis told Parliament that Greece was abandoning decades of “passive” foreign policy due to the increased aggression from Turkey. At the same time, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan warned Greece on August 26 not to test his country’s patience or courage. Erdogan is

sure attempting to emerge not just as a dictator of the Islamic world, but also wants to replicate a part of history by claiming rights over lands ruled by the Byzantine Empire once upon a time, just as China is doing. The problem with the Turkey President is similar to that of China’s Xi. Both are facing serious internal problems, not just with their economies but also with their popularities. Turkey is facing negative ratings from financial institutions, hence Erdogan prefers speaking more of his past glory and its restoration. Relations between the two nations have been nosediving of late. Turkey began pushing migrants into Greece illegally despite the warnings of European Union and Greece began pushing them back to Turkey. That is one of the political clash points. This apart, religion and gas also added to the trouble in the region. Relations between the two countries also worsened over the Hagia Sophia. The centuries-old Hagia Sophia, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site, was originally a cathedral in the Byzantine Empire before it was turned into a mosque in 1453, when Constantinople fell to Sultan Mehmet

II’s Ottoman forces. In the 1930s, however, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, shut down the mosque and turned it into a museum in an attempt to make the country more secular. Following a local court order, Erdogan on July 10 issued a decree to convert the Hagia Sophia back to a mosque. Many Greeks continue to revere the Hagia Sophia and view it as a key part of Orthodox Christianity. On July 24, when Friday prayers were held at the Hagia Sophia for the first time in 90 years, church bells tolled across Greece in protest. Thirdly, it is nearly 40 years that the two countries have disagreed over rights to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea, which covers significant oil and gas deposits. On July 21, Turkey announced it would be exploring a disputed part of the sea for oil and gas. Greece placed its air force, navy and coastguard on high alert. Political ambitions of Erdogan make him change his stance as often as possible. Erdogan has been warned by the EU not to escalate matters, yet little sense dawns on him due to his ambitions. This is going to be a new headache for the world now.



Green dentistry is all about human health, environment

DR CHINDAM RAMYASREE

On the purpose of implementing and promoting human health and environmental wellbeing, we celebrate May 22 as Happy Green Dentistry Day. Green dentistry is a relatively new concept in dentistry. This high tech approach minimises the environmental impact of dental practices.

Dentistry is a profession dedicated to promoting health and wellness of the people. It is defined as the ‘evaluation, diagnosis, prevention and/or treatment (non-surgical, surgical or related procedures) of diseases, disorders and/or conditions of the oral cavity, maxillofacial area and/or the adjacent and associated structures and their impact on the human body’ and it also contributes to climate change and increasing the pollution of our environment, though dentists generate small amounts of environmentally unfriendly waste materials.

Green dentistry is an innovative way of dental practice which is environment-friendly and at the same time conserves money and time by reducing waste, conserving energy and decreasing pollution with the use of latest techniques and procedures. Green dentistry is an approach to meet the needs of millions of patients and helps dental professionals to protect planetary and community health as well as the financial health of their practices. Green dentistry meets the needs of millions of wellness lifestyle patients, and helps dental professionals protect planetary and community health, as well as the financial health of their practices.

Green dentistry reduces the industry’s detrimental impact on the environment and promotes environmental awareness and sustainability to patients. It is an approach of dentistry that encourages sustainable practices by reducing resource consumption and waste.

Why green dentistry? The color “green” denotes renewal, growth, and hope. Green dentistry is not only environment-friendly but also conserves money and time by reducing waste, conserving energy and decreasing pollution with the use of latest techniques and procedures. It insists on to reduces waste and pollution, saves energy, water, and money and to incorporate high tech innovations, focus on wellness. The prime intent is to create the awareness of various environmental problems caused by the dental community and to equip the dentists with various environmental substitutes of the materials in use and to impart them with tier of “green” guidance which would invoke them to become leading stewards of the environment. Green dentistry works on implementing four important key tenets i.e. 4 R’s, of Going Green, namely, Reuse, Recycle, Reduce and Re-think. This strategy implemented by dental professionals to help make an easier transition to a more sustainable practice to reduce the burden on the environment.

Reuse: To reuse is to use an item again after it is already used once. To reuse, single use items should be replaced by reusable items. This encourages the prolonged use of an item, to prevent the item from contributing to waste being put in landfills. Finding a new purpose for an item extends its life and decreases contributions to landfills. You’d be surprised how much waste and pollution is generated by a single dental practice.

Recycle - Dental waste and pollution: The process of converting the waste materials into reusable objects is recycling. Much of the waste that is found in landfills can be reprocessed and recycled into a new product. To reduce the waste of useful products, reduce the waste of raw materials and energy needed to extract the materials, reduce water pollution and air pollution from landfills and incinerators respectively, recycling products is a viable way to reduce overall contamination of the environment. Recycle is a viable way to reduce overall contamination of the environment.

Reduce - Conservation of water, energy and money: In order to decrease the pressure on the earth’s resources, people must decrease or reduce their consumption of water and energy. To “reduce” is to minimise the amount of waste. One can reduce waste production by reusing and recycling maximum amount of materials. The first and most efficient element of the waste hierarchy is minimising the waste created and the obvious approach to have an abundance of a resource is to use less of it.

Rethink - High-tech approach: Rethinking has utmost importance in dentistry. Redeveloping a mindset is a strategy for change. Green dentistry is a high-tech approach that reduces the environmental impact of dental practices and encompasses a service model for dentistry that supports and maintains wellness. Every decision is made with a certain mindset and redeveloping a mindset is a strategy for change. Environmentalism and sustainability are both considered states of mind. Rethinking the way that dentist offices are run is the initial step in trying to change the modern practice.

Re-thinking the dental procedures, construction, and administration of a dental clinic, in accordance to the dogma of eco-friendly dentistry as a paradigm. As of now, there is no ideal alternative for downsizing the waste generated by these used disposable items. Executing little, affordable transitions will still have a remarkable effect on the environment on a long run.

Many innovations on the leading edge of dental technology are also better for patients and the planet. Use of digital based radiography instead of conventional film radiography.

Rethinking the way that dental offices are seen is the initial step in trying to change the modern practice.

Even though there are many ways in dentistry to reduce waste and pollution, a few of them mentioned here like digital imaging instead of traditional method, use of hospital grade, reusable sterilisation items, recycling and reusing the old hand instruments, using nontoxic, biodegradable surface disinfectants and cleaners, using stainless steel reusable or compostable impression trays, Use of an amalgam separator, disinfecting the water lines regularly using biodegradable or enzymatic cleaners etc.

Dentistry’s green future embraces this wellness-based model because our profession is on the front of total body wellness. That is the reason it is rapidly gaining importance worldwide to overcome the environmental issues. Wellness based modalities that are part of dentistry’s green future.

We can conclude that green dentistry is an evolving approach to reduce the environmental impact from dental practice. As dental health practitioners, we should be concerned with promoting not only human health and well-being but also that of the environment. Eco-friendly dentistry is a very important tool and there is a huge impact of dental practice on the environment. It aims at reducing the detrimental impact of dental services on the environment and promotes environmental awareness and sustainability to patients. Green dentistry protects the environment and mankind from the hazards of rapid urbanisation in developing countries. So, become a part of dentistry’s clean, green and profitable future. Start wherever you are and do something for a safer and greener future. The planet, your patients, and your practice will thank you.

(The writer is a practising general dentist at Dr K Surendar Reddy Super Specialty Dental Clinic, Hanamkonda, Warangal)

Odisha’s tribal heartland fights Covid

NABA KISHOR PUJARI

Houses in Gotiguda hamlet in Odisha’s Malkangiri district have a message painted on them: Students who are relatively weak in studies need remedial classes; the school infrastructure needs a facelift. The 13-house hamlet is in Mathili tehsil, where the demography is dominated by scheduled tribe communities. A literacy rate of 35 per cent is bad even for the district’s average of 48.54 per cent.

The village faces multiple development challenges even after 73 years of India’s independence. Basic facilities like a well-connected road and electricity are still a distant dream for the villagers. The villagers have struggled to get a school in their village; there are 20 school-going children between the ages of 6 and 14 years. As a result, these children are forced to go to the school in Markapalli, two kilometres away.

But most importantly, the school has also been shut following the imposition of the country-wide lockdown to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19). Without electricity and other digital resources required to attend the government’s online classes, these children are now being pushed to the margins of education. Recently, Odisha’s School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash told journalists while unfurling the tricolour in Jajpur that the time was not right to reopen schools. “There are around six million students presently enrolled in Odisha schools out of which, only 2.2 million have access to online education through various means be it Siksha Sanjog, Dakhyata or Madhu App.”

He further announced that his department was going to launch a ‘Shiksha Samparka’ programme where teachers would be sent to villages to teach children who lack resources to benefit from the government’s online education initiative.

In India, 73 per cent of a total 1.04 million schools are government-run and 54 per cent of school-going children attend such schools. A report by UNESCO has also revealed that more than 143 million primary school children and more than 133 million secondary school children in India are likely to be affected by school closures due to the pandemic-induced lockdown.

The Right to Education Act 2009 is a progressive legislative framework that guarantees free and compulsory education for all children within the age group of 6-14 and mandates that a primary school (Class I to Class V) should be established within one kilometre



tre from their habitation.

“Since the future of our children appears dismal, we chose to battle against the injustice and inequality that we face. Wall-writing is a step forward in our years-long struggle,” Manguli Madhi, a parent of a school-going child of Gotiguda said.

Not just Gotiguda, but more than 6,000 villagers across Odisha’s most remote and tribal-populated districts have painted their walls with these messages. A commoner may ponder over what these wall writings could mean but s/he would end up praising the spirit behind them. At a time when online classes by the Central and Odisha government are failing to reap benefits for underprivileged children as they lack required resources to take part in them, the wall writing campaign is of great relevance. “A wall-writing in a village may be perceived as mere brushwork by many of us. But this serves as a ray of hope to these people,” says Gitanjali Mohanty of Shramajeebee Sangathan, Malkangiri, a district-level forum that organised this wall-writing campaign in the district.

However, to amplify their voices, they have joined the recently initiated national campaign on education led by the Atmashakti Trust, a non-profit that works in the state since the last 10 years on socio-economic and political empowerment of the most marginalised communities. The campaign seeks to activate government mechanisms to start remedial classes and improve school infrastructure across the country.

“Nothing will come easy for us until we raise our voices, be it for a ration card, old-age pension or any other local issues that concern us. Tribal and Dalit communities are always at the bottom of the government’s developmental priority list and often face discrimination and social exclusion,” Manima Jani, president of the Mahila Lok Bikash Sangathan, a women’s collective in Koraput, said.

“In a State where 32.59 per cent population is below the poverty line according to the Niti Aayog SDG India Index Baseline report, it is evident that people have fewer choices. As a result, they use collective action as a tool to resist state apathy,” Ruchi Kashyap, an expert on education, said. “The challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic seem far more consequential for these tribal and other marginalised communities as a whole than the rest of the population, due to their close-knit communities living in rural areas, lack of awareness, limited resources of livelihood and poverty,” Kashyap added.

Like many other States, schools in Odisha were among the first of many institutions that started shutting down as a precautionary measure to contain the spread of SARS-CoV-2. Hopes have decreased further as positive cases of coronavirus have seen an upsurge in many parts of the State. Schools and colleges, that were set to re-open, were directed to shut down. Children from the tribal and Dalit communities, who constitute 40 per cent of the state population and who depend on gov-

ernment schools for their education, were the worst sufferers due to this decision. “Everything else can wait but not education. Therefore, we decided to run a wall-writing campaign where we can build pressure on the government in favour of remedial classes and re-vamping school infrastructure in our villages,” Sudhakhar Pradhan, an active member of Jeebika Suraksha Mancha, Kandhamal, said.

What could be an operative medium to represent the voice of the masses at a time when Covid-19 has gripped us all? It is not that people have not tried. Earlier, they had opted for postcard campaigns, signature campaigns and other cost-effective and accessible means to reach out to the government and its machinery. But, due to the pandemic-induced lockdown, their choices were limited. Therefore, they opted to write on their walls, hoping that this will work for them. But, can wall-writings change their fate? Will these writings encode their hope into reality? “The repercussions are unclear as of now. But we still carry the hope that the government will hear us. Rather, we believe this initiative may serve as a tool to help bridge the missing link between the people’s needs and the accountability of the government,” Swarnalata Nayak, a member of the Lok Unnati Sangathan, that works for the upliftment of these communities in Balangir district, said.

There is a popular saying that we live by — “If you want to change the world, start at home”. When a

government appears to be apathetic towards the welfare of those who are at the bottom of the development pyramid, it underpins the genesis of a struggle-based movement.

But, how do these people learn to take actions? There, Odisha Shramajeebee Mancha (OSM) and Mahila Shramajeebee Mancha, Odisha (MSMO) come into the picture. OSM and MSMO are the two state-level apex bodies of people’s collectives in Odisha that work in the field of education, health, agriculture, livelihood, women rights, water and sanitation and many other local issues in 17 districts of Odisha where a large chunk of the population are tribals and Dalits.

“We believe in collective action. If a large group of people or forums are raising their issues unitedly, it gives them the power to bargain, influence and negotiate with the government. As a people’s collective, we educate communities to be informed and make them aware of their rights and entitlements so that these enable them to take actions on their own,” Dasarathi Naik, an executive body member of OSM, said. “Societal change will occur only when people are aware and initiate actions to fight against inequalities and injustice,” he added.

“After all, these writings on the wall are not a decoration to celebrate a festival or a sheer manifestation of imagination, but the anticipation of these villagers that policymakers will hear them,” Naik said.

(Courtesy: Down To Earth)

JEE, NEET entrance exams should not be delayed

A campaign has begun demanding postponement of the medical and engineering - NEET and JEE - slated for September, as the coronavirus pandemic continues to surge. However, there is no knowing how long this situation will continue. Keeping qualifying exams in abeyance is not in the interest of lakhs of enrolled candidates. The national test agency, which conducts both exams, has announced social distancing measures such as more testing centres, fewer students per room, and staggered entry and arrival. NEET and JEE is the culmination of two years of intense study by higher secondary pass outs. Interminable delays blunt their preparedness. Despite all these leaders - Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, Odisha Chief Minister Patnaik, and several others - joining populist chorus demanding postponement, Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal must not buckle before the protesters, as that would enable a vocal minority to override the interest of the silent majority that wants to enrol in college soon. Further delay would be self-defeating as herd immunity could be a long time away. By then the next batch would be ready to sit for these examinations, creating an untenable situation. Onus also rests on the Centre and the States to restore transport services so that students can travel without difficulty to venues. Authorities must amplify the reassuring messaging to students and parents that safe conduct of exams in their interest, especially



LETTERS

with politicians and even international teen activists joining the cancel bandwagon. Such entrance tests have been conducted overcoming Covid-19 fears in various countries, India must not dither either.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, Bengaluru

Bollywood should get rid of its nepotism

Hollywood of western world which always fascinates film buffs with their stories, content, and genre including thriller, action, etc is loved by the youth of our nation. Just for example, people here talk about Batman and Superman but not about Shaktiman. Here is where Bollywood comes where directors like Christopher Nolan, Zack Snyder, Jon Favreau and Russo brothers do not exist. What they create is unrealistic shows, meaningless dramas and heaps of trash. We 137 crore people of India are sold by media, fashion newspapers editors and the like. Bollywood is full of nepotism, and there is no brain, and is notorious for stealing stories from the west. Steve Jobs said good artists copy, great artists steal - and we have always been shameless about stealing great ideas. And Bollywood is pretty much doing that thing. Hollywood has nepotism but not like Bollywood has. If it does not mend its ways

and start afresh, Bollywood will be gone, and once again English people will rule the tinsel town. Today an outsider died due to the evil practices in Bollywood, tomorrow many others will also die. This thing will kill Bollywood. No matter how powerful you are, be humble always.

Madne Pravesh Kumar, Hyderabad

Life is precious, tests can wait

The JEE and NEET entrance tests are slated to be held from September 1st. It is considered the holding of the tests when the pandemic is at peak, is not only desirable but also highly risky. The risk of Covid-19 is still not over. Huge number of positive and cases and Covid-19 deaths are being reported on a daily basis from across the country. People are living in fear. The agony of the parents will become multi-fold. Heaven will not fall if the test is postponed and held on a later date after restoration of normalcy. There will surely be an academic setback for students appearing for this year’s tests. But can be overcome by other means by deferring this year’s study to next year. Life is more important than money or study. Secondly, there is a race over finding a medical candidate for the virus by many countries including India. Research and trials are in the final stage. So, a medicinal answer to the virus is around the corner. Tests can be held when normalcy is restored.

Sravana Ramachandran, Bengaluru

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COVID-19

AP cuts testing charges by private labs

- The charge for samples forwarded by the State govt to private labs has been reduced from 2,400 to Rs 1,600
- In case of suspects directly approach labs, the prescribed charge has been brought down to Rs 1,900 from the earlier Rs 2,900
- Medical and Health Dept says decision has been taken in view of the abundant availability of test kits



forwarded by the state government, will henceforth be Rs 1,600.

Similarly, the medical and health department has also restricted the charge for those getting tested directly in the private laboratories from the existing Rs 2,900 to Rs 1,900. Giving out the reason for the reduction in charge, the state government said that the kits for the conduct of rapid Covid-19 tests are now abundantly available in the state. This has led to the fall in the test kit prices.

Keeping in view the necessity

to conduct testing on a massive scale, it was decided to transfer the benefit of price reduction straight to the people of the state, the order said.

The state has been at the forefront in conducting maximum number of Covid-19 cases. As per the statistics available on the website of the state medical and health and family welfare department, the state has so far conducted tests on 34,79,990 samples for coronavirus, which according to the state government, is the highest across the country.

State inches towards 4 lakh mark

- 10,621 fresh cases, 92 deaths reported in 24 hours
- Total number of cases stands at 3.93 lakh with 2.95 lakh recoveries

Amaravati: State on Thursday moved closer to the four-lakh mark in coronavirus cases after adding 10,621 afresh in 24 hours.

The state's tally now read 3.93 lakh total cases, 2.95 lakh recoveries and 3,633 deaths, leaving 94,209 active cases, according to the latest government bulletin. The state registered 92 Covid-related fatalities in 24 hours ending 9 am on Thursday while 8,528 more patients had recovered from the infection. After 34.79 lakh sample tests, the Covid-19 positivity rate went further up to 11.30 per cent, as per government data. On Thursday,

Prakasam district joined East Godavari in adding more than 1,000 fresh cases.

Chittoor, Guntur and Nellore added over 900 cases each and West Godavari, Srikakulam, Anantapur, Kadapa and Kurnool reported over 800 each.

Kurnool reported 13 fresh casualties, Nellore 11, East Godavari 10 and Chittoor nine in 24 hours.

Kadapa and West Godavari reported seven more deaths each, Anantapur, Prakasam and Visakhapatnam six each, Guntur five, Krishna, Srikakulam and Vizianagaram four each, the bulletin said.



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy launching a web application that facilitate various services like e-crop, Kisan Credit Cards under Fisheries Department, at his camp office in Tadepalli on Thursday

Aqua farmers should get MSP, says AP CM

Directs officials to ensure pre-processing, IQF and cold storage facilities to farmers

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy said that aqua farmers should get MSP (Minimum Support Price) and the government should provide basic infrastructure for pre-primary and secondary processing.

During a review meeting on animal husbandry and fisheries departments here on Thursday, the Chief Minister told the officials that aqua farmers should get the MSP besides providing pre-processing, IQF and cold storage facilities.

These facilities, which will help the farmer to store their produce to get remunerative price, should be linked to Janata Bazaars which will boost the morale of the farmers and keep the middlemen and private syndicates at bay.

"For the first time we have started Market Stabilisation

Fund and have released Rs 3,200 crore to save the farmers from middlemen and have spent money on tobacco farmers. We should think of the interests of aqua farmers as well on those lines and ensure fair price to aqua products like prawns, fish besides poultry, dairy, cereals, vegetables, fruits and others.. The pattern of e-cropping should also be adapted to aqua field," he said.

He said during his Padayatra farmers had told me about how they were being exploited by syndicates from seed, feed to processing, dictating the market terms.

"We have to show an alternative to the farmers and must provide them infrastructure to store their products till they get the proper price so that there would not any distress sale on part of the farmer. We should plan the facilities taking mandal as a unit," the Chief Minister said.

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: The Union Cabinet Secretary held a video conference with the Chief Secretaries and Health Secretaries of nine states and one Union Territory including Andhra Pradesh.

Andhra Pradesh officials explained the measures taken to step up testing, tracing and isolating the patients and the government's long term plans to enhance medicare facilities in the state in the wake of Covid-19.

The video conference was held to review and discuss the

Union Cabinet Secy reviews situation with AP officials

- AP officials explain the steps taken to increase testing, tracing and isolating patients
- Hotspot States/UTs are advised to act proactively to reduce case fatality to less than 1% by focusing on containment, contact tracing and surveillance

Covid management and response strategy in these states/UTs.

Union Health Secretary made a detailed presentation

on the current status of pandemic in these states/UTs, with a focus on districts reporting high case fatality and the need to refine as well as strengthen

approach and strategies relating to testing, contact tracing, surveillance, containment, home isolation, availability of ambulances, hospital beds, oxygen, treatment protocols, etc.

It was observed that out of the total deaths in the country in the last two weeks, 89 per cent of deaths are in these 10 states/UTs and hence, they needed to continue their rigorous

vigil so as to contain the spread of infection as well as take steps to reduce fatalities.

The states/UTs were advised to proactively take steps towards reducing case fatality to less than 1 per cent across all districts focusing on containment, contact tracing and surveillance, tracing and testing of new contacts within 72 hours, ensuring a minimum of 140 tests per million per day in all districts while targeting and ensuring timely admission to healthcare facility if SPO2 level falls below the designated level among other things.

Naidu shedding crocodile tears for Dalits: YSRCP

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Vemuru YSRCP MLA Merugu Nagarjuna said that Leader of Opposition N Chandrababu Naidu was shedding crocodile tears for Dalits.

Speaking to the media here on Thursday, the MLA said the sincerity of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy can be seen from the fact that he has appointed a Dalit woman as home minister and also five other ministers from weaker sections. He said Naidu has no right to speak for Dalits as atrocities were committed against them during his term in Krishna, Guntur, Prakasam and Nellore districts and in his native Chittoor district, but Naidu had never bothered about them.

The MLA alleged that Naidu was a Dalit-hater as can be seen from his statement, "Would anyone be willing to be born into a



Merugu Nagarjuna

Dalit family." He said such was Naidu's attitude towards the Dalits. "Dalits lived in fear during his rule and as per the National Crime Records Bureau, the state stood in the fourth place in atrocities against the weaker sections," during his tenure.

He said social boycott of Dalits took place during Naidu's rule and it was ridiculous that he was showering insincere love towards them for the past few days.

- Party MLA Merugu Nagarjuna alleges that the TDP chief is a 'Dalit-hater'
- Praises sincerity of Jagan Mohan Reddy towards Dalit welfare as proved by his appointment of a Dalit woman as Home Minister

He said 364 Dalits were ostracised during Naidu regime in East Godavari district when they went to install the statue of Ambedkar but Naidu had not done anything about it. A book can be written about the atrocities committed against the Dalits during the Naidu regime, he said. "Naidu kept quiet when a Dalit woman was disrobed on the streets in Visakhapatnam district."

Coronavirus casts its shadow on jails

Amaravati: A total of 1,375 prisoners in various jails in the state have contracted the coronavirus infection so far and only one of them has succumbed, director general of prisons (DG) Mohd Ahsan Reza said on Thursday.

Five of the Covid-19 positive prisoners escaped from custody while undergoing treatment in hospitals and hunt was on to nab them, he told PTI.

Of those infected, 380 had fully recovered, leaving 873 active cases in various jails across the state.

"Another 116 inmates, who tested positive, were enlarged on bail," the DG said.

Inmates who tested positive for coronavirus were being treated in the respective jails only. "Majority of the cases are only asymptomatic and we have created required facilities for the treatment. We are isolating the patients and ensuring proper medicare, even administering costly injections with the help of the local administration," the DG said. Among the staff in 41 pris-

- Director General, Prisons, Mohd Ahsan Reza says 1,375 inmates contracted virus
- Five positive patients escape while undergoing treatment
- While one prisoner dies of Covid-related illness, 4 out of the 241 infected prison staff fall prey to the pandemic



ons, including four central jails, in the state, 241 tested positive for Covid-19 and four died.

Of the 241, 95 were cured and 142 were active cases. "The casualties were more among our staff than the prisoners. The lone prisoner who died was also on dialysis," Reza pointed out.

After the outbreak of coronavirus in March, the department of prisons released 430 prisoners on interim bail and over 2,100 on regular bail to avoid congestion

in the cramped jails. It also banned the regular mulaakats (meeting of inmates with their kin and lawyers) to prevent the infection.

"We released a lot of inmates on bail and the restrictions put in place helped prevent the spread of the pandemic in prisons. We also did not have fresh intake and that also helped," the DG said.

However, with an increasing number of arrests made by the

newly formed Special Enforcement Bureau mostly in liquor cases, the fresh intake had to be renewed.

"The influx of new inmates possibly led to the spread of infection. The central jails in Kadapa, Rajamahendravaram and Nellore saw a major case-load," the DG said.

The department of prisons has been organising weekly tests in all jails for the staff as well as inmates.

5 benches in Delhi HC to hold physical courts

Continued from P1

The cause list will specify in advance the courts which shall take up matters through physical hearing and those through video conferencing. Though the High Court will open on all five days in a week, the benches will sit on rotation basis.

An office order issued by Registrar General Manoj Jain said that while considering the matter regarding resumption of physical functioning of the High Court, the suspension of functioning of court has been extended till September 30.

All the pending matters listed before the high court from September 1 to 30 would be adjourned to November 3 to December 7 respectively, the order said.

As per the SOP, the entry in the court blocks for the purpose of attending physical hearings will be restricted to only one advocate per party whose case is listed that day and party-in-person who is pursuing

his/her case without any legal assistance.

Besides, senior counsel engaged by any advocate, registered clerks for delivering bulky case files to advocates and standing or nominated counsel for any of the party or entity whose cases are listed for physical hearing that day will be allowed.

Juniors, interns or law students associated with the advocate concerned, relative of any litigant and non-registered clerks will not be allowed entry in the court blocks, the SOP said.

Those litigants who are represented through an advocate will not be allowed entry to the court block, unless specific directions of the court and persons displaying symptoms of flu, fever and cough will not be permitted to enter, it added.

It further said that lawyers, clerks, litigants who are about 65 years of age and those suffering from co-morbidities may refrain from appearing in courts.

Don't delay NEET, JEE exams further

Continued from P1

"We strongly believe that the central government will successfully conduct the JEE and NEET exams taking full precautions to ensure that the future of students is taken care of and the academic calendar for 2020-21 is rolled out," it added. This development comes amid the growing chorus against the conduct of these exams in September in view of the rising coronavirus cases. Chief Ministers of seven states held a virtual meeting with Sonia Gandhi and decided to move the Supreme Court against the conduct of the JEE, NEET exams scheduled to be held in September.

GST TALE of 2 options

Continued from P1

But with the economy slowing down, Rs 70,000 crore shortfall was seen in the last fiscal and this year it is estimated to widen to Rs 2.35 lakh crore.

Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said out of this amount, only about Rs 97,000 crore is attributable to the implementation of GST, while the rest in on account of the coronavirus pandemic hitting the economy.

Pandey, who is also the finance secretary, said while GST collections have been impacted by the pandemic this year, there was a shortfall of Rs 70,000 crore in 2019-20 (April 2019 to March 2020) which was made good

from the surplus of previous two years. When GST was implemented in 2017, the Centre had promised to compensate states for any revenue loss for five years from a pool created by levying cess over and above the GST on luxury and sin goods. This cess pool generated a surplus in the first two years but witnessed a deficit in FY20 as well as the current fiscal. Detailing the options presented to the states, Sitharaman said the Centre, in consultation with the RBI, will provide a special window to states to borrow Rs 97,000 crore at a reasonable rate of interest. This money can be repaid after five years from the collection of cess.

'Act of God'

Continued from P1

Pandey said a special window can be provided to the states, in consultation with the RBI, at a reasonable interest rate for borrowing of Rs 97,000 crore. The amount can be repaid after five years (of GST implementation) ending 2022 from cess collection.

The second option before the states is to borrow the entire Rs 2.35 lakh crore shortfall under the special window. "States have been given seven days' time to think over the proposal," Pandey said. "During April-July 2020, the total GST compensation to be paid to states is Rs 1.5 lakh crore, this is

so because there was hardly any GST Collection in April and May," said Pandey. The 41st meeting of the GST Council, headed by Union Finance Minister and comprising representatives of all states, held deliberations via video conferencing on ways to make up for the shortfall in states' revenues. While the Congress and the states ruled by non-NDA parties pushed for the Centre meeting its statutory obligation of covering the deficit, the Union government cited a legal opinion to say it had no such obligation if there was a shortfall in tax collections. The Centre as well as BJP-JD(U)-ruled Bihar were of the opinion that the states should borrow to make up for the shortfall in the tax revenues that have been compounded by the COVID-19 crisis.

Delay will lead to 'zero year', say IIT heads

Continued from P1

According to Virendra Tewari, Director, IIT Kharagpur, "The exams have a global reputation for seeking excellence and are considered one of the toughest and prestigious examinations in the world. A quick alternative to these tests will certainly not be as gratifying as competing for this examination by all fair means". "I urge the aspirants to take it up as a challenge and show their mettle and sincerity to the world," he said.

Sarit Kumar Das, Director, IIT Ropar, who is also a member of the Joint Admission Board (JAB) of IITs, said the decision to conduct

the exams in September has not been taken overnight but after due consideration.

"Does anyone have an idea how the situation is going to be after three months or five months? Even if the exam is held in September, we won't be able to start classes before the middle of November at the earliest.

That itself means almost a loss of a semester. Further delay will do nothing other than loss of a year and then next year you will have two first-year batches. Are our institutions ready with the infrastructure to handle such a situation?" he asked.

Naidu accused of 'distorting' SC verdict on Amaravati

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: YSRCP Anakapalle MLA Gudivada Amarnath accused TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu and his friendly media for "distorting" even the court verdict on Amaravati.

Speaking to media at party central office at Mangalagiri on Thursday, Amarnath said that a section of media friendly to Naidu has been distorting the apex court judgment on special leave petition filed by the state with regard to decentralisation bill and CRDA repeal bill.

While Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy opted for decentralisation of administration for equal development of all regions, the reports filed in a section of media are creating panic among the people of North Andhra and Rayalaseema regions.

Chandrababu Naidu and media favourable to him are conspiring to oppose the decentralisation of administration ever since the Chief Minister announced it in the Assembly, he said. MLA Amarnath, flaying a section of media for reporting misinformation on the construction of state guest house in Visakhapatnam, said the guest house land was not related to the Thotlakonda Buddhist site. The protected area at Thotlakonda is limited to an extent of 120 acre, and the land allotted for the government guest house is five kilometre away from the Buddhist sites, he said.

TODAY'S QUOTE

Let's make India 'China mukt Bharat'

“In one of our businesses, 65% turnover came from Chinese imports. In 2 months, we brought it down to 35%. Making efforts to it to zero. Let's all give #MakeInIndia a special thrust and make our country a 'China mukt Bharat'”

- RPG Group Chairman **Harsha Goenka**



US

Double-dip recession likely as Covid rises

A resurgence of Covid-19 cases in US could drag country's GDP into double-dip recession. "There is thinking about what happens as we come into the fall, whether we see any resurgence in the virus that would cause an additional pullback in the economy," Esther George of Federal Reserve of Kansas City

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)

US Dollar	78.23	South	
Euro	91.72	African Rand	5.03
UAE Dirham	22.1	Hong Kong Dollar	10.95
Thai Baht	2.72	Japanese Yen	0.8
British Pound	101.41	New Zealand Dollar	51.41
Australian Dollar	56.19	Saudi Riyal	21.64
Canadian Dollar	58.91	Swedish Krona	9.73
Swiss Franc	84.58	Singapore Dollar	56.74

DELHI FRIDAY 28 AUGUST 2020

BIZ BRIEFS

Maxxis Tyres partners HMSI

Hyderabad: Tyre maker Maxxis India announced a significant association with Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India by being an exclusive OEM partner for its Hornet 2.0 bike. As per this exclusive association, the new Hornet 2.0 BSVI compliant bike will be fitted with the tyre maker's Extramaxx tyres which are built using aramid fibre, the same fibre used for making bulletproof vests. Its dual compound composition minimises rolling resistance. Bing-Lin Wu, Marketing Head, Maxxis India, said, "Honda Hornet 2.0 has already generated a lot of anticipation in the India market and Maxx tyres will further elevate rider's experience of driving this juggernaut. Our Extramaxx tyres has already proved their mettle amongst the most rugged terrains". The tyre maker is targeting a market share of at least 15% of India's two-wheeler tyre market by 2023.

Multi-Verse's new product

Visakhapatnam: Multi-Verse Technologies Pvt Ltd on Thursday launched in.collab application, a new digital address for safe and secured networking as well as collaborations. With this application, citizens can now discover, create, connect, communicate, and transact on a secure end-to-end encrypted system amongst themselves, enterprises and governments. AS Rajgopal, Managing Director, MultiVerse Technologies, and MD & CEO, NxtGen Technologies, said: "We are a society of complex and unique individuals. Incollab is built to empower individuals take control of their digital data as well as share and consume content on individual terms. It is programmed to allow seamless collaborations of businesses and build on communities with shared interests enabling a more cohesive interaction yet ensuring complete data privacy". The information visible across personas are at the discretion of the account user, he added.

FreeHit Fantasy raises ₹4 cr

Hyderabad: FreeHit Fantasy Sports has raised Rs 4 crore as angel investment. The amount will be utilised to fund the company's growth plans of acquiring 10 million users by the end of 2021. It will be available on iOS, Android and the web from August 30 and will be the first application in the country to offer assured winnings in addition to contests as low as Re. 1. The fantasy gaming application will have a hyperlocal approach and will be available in eight Indian languages soon. The firm was founded by Prathyush Chowdary, Tarun Varma Dandu and Ramana Kovelamudi from Hyderabad. This is the first time that a company from the Telugu states has raised funding of this scale.

AO Smith's MiniBot

Hyderabad: AO Smith, a manufacturer of water heaters, has announced the launch of MiniBot in Telangana, a 3-litre instant water heater with a unique design and cutting edge technology. The new device comes with Blue Diamond glass lining for the inner tank and enables resistance compared to conventional glass-lined products. It also protects against premature tank failure caused by the hard and contaminated water commonly found in India and extends the life of water heater. The incoloy heating element is protected by glass coating to prevent scale formation. Parag Kulkarni, Managing Director, A O Smith India, said "AO Smith is again raising the bar in instant water heater category with this launch and re-defining the standards in the instant water heaters category".

GMR unveils mega group rejig plans

Plans to demerge non-airport business; to raise ₹5000 cr

HANS BUSINESS

Hyderabad: GMR Infrastructure Ltd on Thursday unveiled a strategic group restructuring involving demerger of non-airport vertical business as part of efforts to simplify the corporate holding structure. Along with the rejig, the board of GMR Infrastructure Ltd (GIL) on Thursday also approved raising up to Rs 5,000 crore through issuance of securities.

The restructuring is a step in the right direction towards creating pure plays in different businesses of the group thereby attracting sector-specific global investors and unlocking value for the current shareholders of GIL, the company said in a statement.

The board of GIL together with other group companies - GMR Power Infra Limited (GPIL) and GPUIL - have decided on a composite scheme of arrangement involving vertical split demerger of the non-airport business (energy, EPC, urban infrastructure, etc) of GIL into GPUIL, as a going concern. Along with the rejig, GPIL would be amalgamated with GMR Infrastructure Ltd (GIL) as a step preceding demerger, the statement said. "Separate listing of both the airport and non-airport businesses will also help in simplifying the corporate holding structure. The vertical split demerger will go a long way in facilitating deeper understanding



The restructuring is a step in the right direction towards creating pure plays in different businesses of the group thereby attracting sector-specific global investors and unlocking value for the current shareholders of GIL

- GMR Group

of the airport business independently as compared to other business verticals within the group," the statement said.

Currently, GMR group operates the country's busiest airport, Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi, and Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport. Also, it operates Cebu airport in Philippines. Once the scheme is implemented, GIL would emerge as the India's only pure play-listed airports company and all existing GIL shareholders would continue to have their same shareholding in the company.

The appointed date for the scheme, being the date on which the undertakings shall vest in the respective resulting companies, has been fixed as April 1, 2021. The scheme is subject to customary approvals from stock exchanges, Sebi, NCLT, shareholders and creditors. The scheme is to create "mirror shareholding of GIL in GPUIL with all existing shareholders of GIL becoming shareholders of GPUIL in the same proportion". It also envis-

ages issue of 1 additional share of Rs 5 each of GPUIL for every 10 shares in GIL of Re 1 each as on the record date.

According to the statement, GMR has significantly grown and diversified into multiples segments within the broader infrastructure space, necessitating the need to separate airport business. GIL Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Grandhi Kiran Kumar said the company has been closely evaluating various options and as a step in that direction, post the separation of non-airport business, it would be India's only pure play listed airports company and continue its growth journey.

"We at GMR Group are committed and will continue to evaluate various strategic options to unlock shareholder value," he said. On Thursday, GIL board also cleared raising up to Rs 5,000 crore in one or more tranches through issuance of securities. The enabling resolution for raising funds would be subject to shareholders' approval.

RBI GUV TO BANKS

Risk averseness will be self-defeating

Mumbai: Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Thursday asked banks to avoid extreme risk-aversion, terming it self-defeating, and also advised them to "smell vulnerabilities" in businesses early to avoid frauds, which have been growing lately. He said the banking system continues to be sound and stable, but acknowledged that the Covid-19 crisis will lead to an erosion of capital for banks.

The remarks, made at a webinar by financial daily Business Standard, come at a time when credit growth has slowed down to under 6 per cent, leading many to wonder if the banks have become risk-



Risk management systems of banks should be sophisticated enough to smell vulnerabilities - RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das

averse because of concerns over asset quality. The RBI annual report released earlier this week said frauds doubled to Rs 1.85 lakh

crore in FY20. "The risk management systems (of banks) should be sophisticated enough to smell vulnerabilities brewing within various businesses well in advance and should be dynamic enough to capture the looming risks in sync with changes in the external environment," Das said.

"One visible area of concern in the arena of risk management is the inability or the ability to manage the incidence of frauds, both cyber related and otherwise," he added.

Das said the higher incidence of frauds which have come to light in recent times have their origins in "not so efficient risk management

capacity of the concerned banks both at the time of sanctioning the loans and also post-sanction credit monitoring". Das also trained his guns at the sluggish credit growth, warning banks that extreme risk aversion will be "self-defeating" which will deprive the banks of their income sources. "It would create a situation where the banks will not be able to win their bread. In other words, it will impact their income also. Extreme risk-aversion is certainly not desirable," he said. he banks have to focus on governance, risk management, quality of decision-making and going forward building resilience, he added.

Reliance warns of action for misuse of Jiomart

New Delhi: Reliance Retail has issued a strong caution notice for unscrupulous elements who are duping innocent people in the name of granting franchisee for Jiomart services.

In a public caution notice, Reliance Retail said it is the registered licensee of trademarks, Jio and Jiomart, a recently launched online grocery service.

"We would like to inform the public at large that we are not operating any dealership or franchisee model currently nor have we appointed any franchisee or any agent for appointing franchisee or dealer in any manner whatsoever", the notice said. "Further, we do not charge



any amount under the pretence of appointing a person as a franchisee", Reliance Retail said.

"We have been informed about certain unscrupulous individuals who are creating fake websites, pretending to be us or associated with us and duping innocent individuals under the pretence of granting franchisee of Jiomart services", Reliance Retail caution notice said.

KTR lauds SBI's efforts in disbursing pensions

HANS BUSINESS

Hyderabad: KT Rama Rao, Minister for MA & UD, Industry & Commerce, IT, Telangana, on Thursday appreciates efforts of Hyderabad Circle of State Bank of India in handling the disbursements of Aasara pensions and other social security schemes of the Telangana government.

OP Mishra, Chief General Manager, SBI Hyderabad Circle & Chairman of State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) met the Minister here and presented a report on the operations of the bank in Telangana.

"SBI through digital platforms

has handled bulk transactions in a smooth and efficient manner. The bank handled more than 85 lakh transactions for payments to Aasara pensioners, 1.74 crore beneficiaries under food security card holding families (during Covid-19), 1.70 crore transactions to civil supplies," SBI said in its presentation.

SBI is lead bank in 20 out of 33 districts and has a network of 1,163 branches and 2,569 customer service points. The bank has today digitally launched 125 new customer service points (CSPs). All PMJDY accounts are handled through CSP channel, the bank said.



OP Mishra, CTM, SBI Hyderabad Circle, with Industry Minister KT Rama Rao

Markets end modestly higher amid F&O expiry

Mumbai: Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty pared most of their intra-day gains to end marginally higher on Thursday as monthly derivative contracts expired amid weak global cues.

After touching a high of 39,326.98 during the session, the BSE Sensex succumbed to selling pressure in the last hour of trade. It finally finished at 39,113.47, up 39.55 points or 0.10 per cent. The NSE Nifty inched up 9.65 points or 0.08 per cent to close at 11,559.25.

IndusInd Bank was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rallying over 6 per cent, followed by M&M, SBI, HDFC, Axis Bank, Sun Pharma and Maruti. On the other hand, ONGC, Bajaj Auto, RIL, Kotak Bank and UltraTech Cement were among the laggards.

After opening higher, the markets continued to trade in the positive zone in the afternoon session as traders were encouraged by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das' statement that the new resolution frame-



Sensex edges up after succumbing to selling pressure in late hour

work is expected to give durable relief to borrowers amid the Covid-19 crisis, said Narendra Solanki, Head- Equity Research (Fundamental), Anand Rath.

However, market participants turned cautious as August futures and options (F&O) contracts expired, traders said.

Further, global investors are awaiting cues from US Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell's speech at the central bank's annual Jackson Hole symposium. Officials in the past have used the meeting, being held online this year, to

make market-moving announcements. Bourses in Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul settled with losses, while Shanghai was in the positive territory.

Stock exchanges in Europe were trading on a negative note in early deals. Global oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.04 per cent higher at \$46.18 per barrel.

Meanwhile, the rupee soared 48 paise to close at 73.82 against the US dollar after the RBI Governor said the central bank has not exhausted its ammunition to deal with the pandemic-induced stress.

Apparel retail likely to see 45% fall in biz

New Delhi: The rating agency said it expects companies in the apparel retail sector to weather the near-term demand volatility and sluggishness through effective liquidity management, while also improving their competitive advantage.

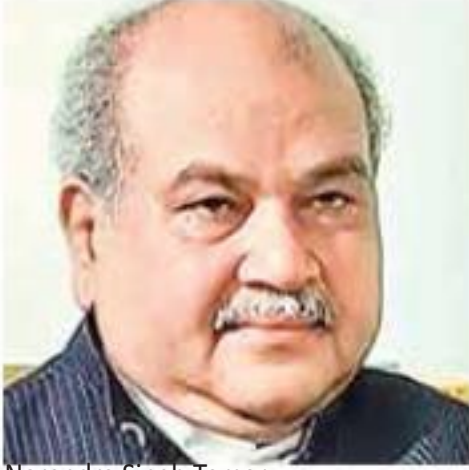
"Ind-Ra expects the apparel retail sector revenues to fall 40-45 per cent in fiscal 2020-21. We also expects a demand recovery year-on-year with a lower base effect and new store openings as the organised sector's share continues to grow," it said.

Ind-Ra said that by the third quarter of the current financial year, it expects overall sales of the apparel retail sector to touch around 85 per cent of the pre-Covid-19 levels.

Centre lauds TS govt for farmer-friendly schemes

► Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar advises all States to replicate TS' Rythu Bandhu scheme to strengthen the agriculture sector

► Union Minister Piyush Goyal praises State Industry Minister KT Rama Rao for achieving desirable results through TSIPASS by inviting huge investments to the State



Narendra Singh Tomar



KTR

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: The Central government lauded the Telangana government for successful implementation industry promotional programmes and farmer-friendly schemes

Union Industry and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal extolled State Industry minister KT Rama Rao for achieving desirable results through TSIPASS by inviting huge investments in the State. Goyal on Thursday held a video conference with all State Industry Ministers on the theme of "One District One Product". The Union Minister said that the Centre will

conduct a study on the Telangana's unique industrial policy, and added that he himself is keen to learn about the industrial development taking place in the State.

KTR has sought the Centre's assistance for establishment of a pharma city in Hyderabad, textile park and medical devices park etc in Warangal. He briefed Goyal about the State government's recent decision to provide more employment to the local youth in the upcoming industry units. The progress in the development of Corona vaccine was also discussed in the meeting.

Union Agriculture Minister

and schemes which are being successfully implemented in Telangana. He explained that the State government itself had initiated Rythu Bandhu Samithies, which resulted in establishing and expanding a large network of farmers in the State. He said with this network, schemes like Agriculture Infrastructure Fund can be successfully and effectively implemented.

"The Centre made an announcement that it would bring reforms in the maintenance of agriculture markets. We need clarity on what kind of reforms are expected. Hundreds of market committees are successfully working in the Telangana State.

"The pension scheme is being implemented for the employees of the market committees and also for those who are retired. Works are going on to improve the infrastructure facilities in the markets. We need a clarification on what will happen to these works if the Centre comes out with reforms," Telangana Agriculture Minister S Niranjan Reddy asked.

Go for change of crop methods to make farming more profitable, suggests KCR

Stating that agriculture in the country is done in a whimsical manner Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao says we have to identify which crop is suitable for which terrain and cultivate only those crops there

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao suggested that India should be divided into crop colonies and implement change of crop methods to make agriculture a profitable profession.

The Chief Minister on Thursday held a meeting with the NABARD team of representatives at Pragati Bhavan. He felt the agriculture was done in the country in a whimsical manner. The country has a wide variety of soils. "We have hilly terrain, cold climate areas and coastlines. We have to identify which crop is suitable for which terrain and cultivate only those crops there", he said adding that it is also not enough if the agriculture produce is increased. The cultivated produce should have suitable marketing too, Rao suggested stating that otherwise one has to



Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao holding a meeting with NABARD officials at Pragati Bhavan on Thursday

face the adverse conditions in the market. Along with the policy on cultivation, proper marketing strategy should be in place, the CM opined.

He asserted that there is a need for major shift in the negative attitude that the agriculture is not profitable and desired that the country should be self-reliant in the production of food grains and should reach a stage where it would be able to export food grains to other countries.

KCR further stressed the gov-

ernment and institutions like NABARD implement schemes that would encourage agriculture and agri-based industries.

He explained the NABARD chairman GR Chintala about Telangana government's decision to set up food processing SEZs in a big way, requesting NABARD to prepare schemes and programmes to financially assist the setting up of food SEZs, food processing units. This policy should also be duplicated all over the country, he added.

State eyes ODF tag, survey on the cards

The government wants to cover every household in the State

► The incentive for construction of IHHL (Individual Household Latrine) is Rs 12,000 out of which Rs 4,000 is given by Central government and Rs 8,000 would be from State government

► The officials were asked to release funds based on the applications uploaded on the website and payment would be made only after construction of toilets

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: In its efforts to make the state open defecation free (ODF), the Municipal Administration Department has asked the Municipal Commissioners in the State to take up house to house survey to find out whether the households have individual toilets so as to make the State ODF by October 2.

The government wants to ensure every household in the State had individual toilets so as to make the State open defecation free (ODF) by October 2 on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanthi. Major towns have been declared as open defecation free during the year 2019.

The Municipal Commissioners were further asked to submit requirement of toilets, ward-wise, location-wise of toilet-less households house with insaniatary toilets for utilising 'Property mapping-Bhuwan' app going on for identification of toilet less houses and also insaniatary toilets during house to

house Survey.

The director of Municipal Administration N Satyanarayana issued circular directing the commissioners to upload the applications on <http://swachhhs.cgg.gov.in> and also to take immediate action for construction of individual household toilets and conversion of insaniatry toilet into sanitary toilets immediately and complete the same by October 2 this year.

The officials were asked to release funds based on the applications uploaded on the website and payment would be made only after construction of toilets and Aadhar seeding in the website duly uploading photograph of the toilets.

The government has been providing incentives for construction of toilets. The incentive for construction of IHHL (Individual Household Latrine) is Rs 12,000 out of which Rs 4,000 is given by Central government and Rs 8,000 would be from State government. In case of conversion of insaniatry toilet to sanitary toilet, government provides an incentive of Rs 7,000 and the share of the Central government is Rs 4,000 and the share of Telangana government is Rs 3,000 per toilet. The Municipal commissioners have been asked to get the share of the state government from the 'Pattana Pragathi' grants being released.

All the municipal commissioners were asked to complete the target by October 2. They were also asked to ensure all payments to the beneficiaries are made through online mode into the bank accounts and not to take up cash disbursements anywhere.

Errabelli wants permanent solution to floods in Warangal

Discusses impact of floods on the district with Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar

► While entire paddy crops in some villages are completely damaged, at some places lakes are breached, roads are completely damaged cutting-off the villages from the rest of the world

► He asks the Chief Secretary to ensure immediate relief to the affected people

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Panchayat Raj & Rural Development Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao on

Thursday met Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar and discussed the flood situation in Warangal. During the meeting, the Minister discussed finding a permanent solution for flooding in urban areas and to access the damage caused in two districts (Rural & Urban). He asked the Chief Secretary to ponder over providing immediate relief to the affected people following heavy downpour for a fortnight starting from August 12.

One of the reasons for flooding of several areas in Warangal



Panchayat Raj minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao holding discussion with Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar in Hyderabad on Thursday

City, he found out after speaking to locals was the encroach-

ment of nalas, while in Mulugu and Bhupalpally, floods were

caused due to overflowing Godavari river and linked water system.

At some places the lakes breached, roads were completely damaged causing entire villages to cut-off. On the other hand, the entire paddy crops in some villages were completely damaged affecting the lives of farmers. He requested the Chief Secretary to review all the reports being produced by the Warangal officials and ensure compensation is reached the eligible.

Cong flays KCR's silence on conduct of NEET, JEE exams

KCR is not concerned about the health and safety of students who are being forced to write the JEE and NEET exams, says Cong treasurer Gudur Narayana Reddy

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: TPCC treasurer Gudur Narayana Reddy has strongly condemned Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao for his silence over conduct of JEE and NEET amid coronavirus pandemic.

Narayana Reddy said 67,319 students from Telangana have registered for JEE while 55,800 have registered for NEET exams. "Even seven non-BJP Chief Ministers have opposed the conduct of JEE and NEET in view of rising cases of coronavirus. However, CM KCR is acting as a BJP CM and not raising his voice for postponement exams," he said



in a media statement on Thursday.

The Congress leader said that the Chief Minister is not concerned about the health and safety of students who are being forced to write the JEE and NEET exams.

Four Covid+ve prisoners flee from Gandhi Hospital

They escape by cutting the ventilator grill of the bathroom and climb down with the help of a rope

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Taking a cue directly from movies, four inmates escaped from the Covid ward of Gandhi Hospital in the early hours on Thursday by cutting the ventilator grill in the bathroom and using a rope to climb down the building.

The prisoners were lodged at the Central Prison Cherlapally and tested positive for coronavirus a few days ago, so they were admitted to the hospital. The issue of their escape came to light when the security staff was taking attendance and could not find the four persons. According to a source from

the hospital, who did not wish to be named, it's known that the four persons behaved suspiciously since the time they were admitted to the hospital. It seemed as if they were prepared and were waiting for a chance to escape and that is the reason they carried the required equipment with them, such as grill cutter and rope. Moreover they might have also disguised themselves after escaping from the building to avoid the glare of the police and security guards.

The source said, "It is very important to investigate the origin of their equipment which they used for escaping, because when an inmate is admitted to a hospital he is

not allowed to carry even a needle or pen. Though the police have started investigating the matter, such acts highlight the loopholes of the system."

Those who escaped included a prisoner from Tandur and was arrested by Tandur police of Vikarabad district in connection with a theft case and assault a few months ago. Another inmate was an accused in a robbery case registered at Rajendra Nagar police station. The other two prisoners were also arrested in similar cases under different police stations in the city.

Chilkalguda police have formed special teams and are investigating the case while questioning the hospital staff.

PROTEST AGAINST JEE, NEET

TS NSUI chief begins indefinite fast

Hyderabad: TS NSUI president on Thursday began an indefinite hunger strike at Gandhi Bhavan demanding the postponement of nationwide JEE-NEET and Telangana CET's and the cancellation of final year exams of UG/PG students.

Speaking to the media at Gandhi Bhavan, Venkat Balmoor said that NSUI at national level and State level fought on every front for the postponement of CET and for the mass promotion of SCC students without exams, while braving the Covid-19 situation and the 'illegal' arrests.

However, looking at the Central and the State governments' attitude, the students are losing hope and committing suicides, while the authorities are gearing up for conducting exams putting health of lakhs of students at risk amidst pandemic. "We tolerate anything but not this irresponsible and senseless attitude. As a last resort, I am going on fast unto death. It is either justice or my death. I am ready for both".



TPCC chief and Nalgonda MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy speaking at the fast unto death camp by NSUI president B Venkat and other students leaders at Gandhi Bhavan on Thursday

Meanwhile, the TPCC president N Uttam Kumar Reddy who

visited the site of hunger strike said that both the State and Cen-

tral governments should understand the sensitivity of the mat-

ter, keeping in view the health of students who remained in dilemma ever since the schedule of exams was announced. "KCR and Modi are playing with the lives of students, by not paying heed to health experts," he said.

TPCC to hold protests today

Later Uttam Kumar announced that Congress will hold protests on Friday in Hyderabad and all district headquarters against the Central government's decision to hold NEET & JEE during the peak period of pandemic. The congress workers will also join simultaneously online campaign 'speak up for student safety' demand postponement of JEE&NEET exams on Facebook/ Twitter/ You tube etc.

AICC Incharge of Telangana, R C Khuntia, former PCC president V Hanumantha Rao said safety and lives of students is more important than these examinations and demanded that the Central government should rethink and postpone these examinations.

Cop on Covid duty dies of cardiac arrest at Gandhi

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Police constable Ampolu Kranthi Kumar from Bowenpally police station of 2004 batch who was deployed at Gandhi Hospital on a night shift suffered massive cardiac arrest while on duty on Wednesday.

According to police, the constable who was attached to Bowenpally police station was serving duty at the hospital since the pandemic began and he was not tested positive for coronavirus. Moreover, he was to celebrate his 28th birthday on September 3.

The constable was manning the main entrance of the hospital when he complained of uneasiness in the chest. He then informed his colleagues who immediately alerted superiors and the family members



and was rushed to NIMS hospital where he was declared dead on arrival. Preliminary reports suggested that he died of a heart attack. However, a detailed examination would confirm the exact cause of the death, said the police.

Dhoni is most inspirational captain in 50 years of global cricket: Chappell

KAISER MOHAMMAD ALI

New Delhi (IANS): Charismatic Mahendra Singh Dhoni is the “most inspirational captain” of international cricket in the last 50 years, along with legends Englands Michael Brearley, Australians’ and Mark Taylor, and Clive Lloyd of the West Indies, says Aussie great Greg Chappell in an Exclusive Interview with IANS without words.

Clearly mightily impressed by Dhoni’s game, Chappell, who was India coach during the first two years of Dhoni’s international career (2005-2007), also revealed that the wicket-keeper-batsman “exceeded” all his expectations and was “best Indian captain that I have seen”.

Chappell, 72, said that Dhoni had “immense skills” and loved to compete. He disclosed that he would throw many challenges at him and the Indian would love to live up to those, on way to becoming “one of the great all-rounders of his era”. On the lighter side, the legendary Aussie revealed that he enjoyed Dhoni’s “humour and cheeky manner”.

Dhoni, the only captain globally to win ICC 50-over World Cup, ICC Champions Trophy, and the ICC T20 World Cup, has 50-plus success percentage as captain in One-day Internationals and T20 Internationals while in Test matches it is 45.

And in IPL, the mercurial



cricketer from Ranchi has captained Chennai Super Kings to the title three times since the tournament’s inception in 2008. He retired from international cricket this month after captaining India in 60 of the 90 Tests he played, 200 of the 350 ODIs, and 72 of the 98 T20 Internationals he appeared in between 2005 and 2019. He, however, continues to lead Chennai Super Kings.

Dhoni, who turned 39 last month, played on his terms and retired on his terms, even though some people rather charitably opined that he was dragging along. Perhaps, he wanted to compete one last time in a T20 World Cup, which was originally

scheduled to take place in Australia this year, before being postponed due to coronavirus.

The trophy cabinet of Dhoni is overflowing. The Indian government conferred on him the Padma Bhushan, the third highest civilian honour of the country, in 2018, and the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian honour, in 2009. Besides, he won the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award, the most prestigious sports accolade of India, in 2007. The Indian Territorial Army conferred on him the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel in 2011. Apart from these, he won many ICC awards.

Excerpts from the Exclusive Interview:

How was your experience with Dhoni the cricketer and Dhoni the person?

My experience with Dhoni the cricketer and Dhoni the person were positive. He was very easy to work with because he was open and forthright. There was no false modesty with Dhoni; if he thought he could do something, he was confident enough to say that he could.

You have always praised Dhoni’s cricketing acumen. What, according to you, were the outstanding features of his game?

The outstanding feature was his self-belief. He stood out amongst his peers with his confi-

dence and his directness. MS was not interested in ‘games’. He liked to be dealt with in a direct way and he responded in kind.

Where would you place him as a cricketer and as a national captain in the annals of the global list?

In my opinion, he is the best Indian captain that I have seen and I would put him in the highest bracket of captains and leaders in the game in my experience. He is up there with Michael Brearley, Ian Chappell, Mark Taylor, and Clive Lloyd as the most inspirational captains of the past 50 years.

What were the most satisfying moments – both on- and off-field -- spending with Dhoni that you cherish?

I enjoyed Dhoni’s shumour and cheeky manner. He was a good competitor who loved a challenge. I enjoyed challenging him to be the best player that he could be.

Did Dhoni the cricketer live up to your expectations when you were India coach? Did he execute your plans on the field of play?

He exceeded any expectations that I had and he may have exceeded his own expectations. It is a great credit to him that he utilised his immense skills to become one of the great all-rounders of his era and an inspirational leader.



AIFF asks East Bengal to provide update on players’ dues by Sep 4

Kolkata (IANS): The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has asked city football giants East Bengal to clear the air on players’ payments by September 4 after at least five footballers approached the Players’ Status Committee (PSC) regarding their salaries that have remained unpaid by the club’s former investors.

After September 4, the matter will be presented to the PSC.

Bengaluru-based Quess Corp terminated the agreement with East Bengal on July 17 and gave the sporting rights back to the club.

On April 25, Quess had activated the Force Majeure clause to unilaterally terminate all the contracts with effect from May 1.

The players, among whom some had multi-year contracts with the club and others have a one month salary pending, had sent notices to Quess East Bengal, with whom they had con-

tracts. Quess, in their reply, had said they have nothing to do with East Bengal any longer.

The players also approached the AIFF PSC through their representative, the Football Players’ Association of India (FPAT).

They have also terminated their contract unilaterally and are now free agents.

“The AIFF has sent a letter to East Bengal asking them to respond to players’ demands regarding non-payment. They have been given time till September 4 after which the matter will be referred to PSC again,” a source close to the development told IANS on condition of anonymity.

“Usually, the PSC evaluates both parties’ claims, but in this case if East Bengal does not respond till September 4, only players’ demands will be placed. If East Bengal replies and asks for more time, another week after September 4 will be given to them,” the source added.

Indian runners hit by cancellation of 2020 World Marathon Majors

New Delhi (IANS): The announcement of the 40th edition of the London Marathon changing its format to an elite runner only event last week dashed all hopes of amateur runners who were expecting to run at least one of the World Marathon Major (WMM) races in 2020. The race was the last of the six WMM races to announce cancellation of its usual mass event format. Hundreds of Indian runners had been preparing to run at least one or more of the WMM races since 2019 or earlier.

“Since February 2020 runners who’d been training hard to accomplish their personal goals at one of the WMM and other International races have been dealing with the disappointment of races getting postponed and eventually cancelled,” said Gauri Jayaram, Founder of Aurali Holiday Company that represents all six of the WMM, along with other popular races such as the Comrades Marathon and the Antarctica Marathon in India.

“The safety of the runners and the spectators is above everything else, however many race participants have been deeply affected. Some were on the verge of getting their sixth star medal in 2020. With no clarity on when International running events will resume, some have taken a break from the sport while others have been financially impacted”

The six WMM races, that attract over 2.5 lakh runners and about 4 million spectators collectively through the marathon course each year, have become a bucket list item for amateur runners in India in the past five years. While there are only 41 Indians who accomplished the WMM challenge, hundreds were expecting to run at least one of the WMM races in 2020.

Running an International marathon entails several months of physical and mental commitment along with some financial planning to cover expenses such as flights, stay, race entry etc. While there are some offers of refunds or deferral of services to future years, expenses incurred in visas, training and nutrition etc. are a financial loss for athletes. Given the high quality of the WMM events, many runners aim to achieve their best performances at one of these races, in particular the BMW Berlin Marathon that has been host to as many as 11 World Records.

IPL 2020 will be the toughest for cricketers, feels MadanLal

New Delhi (IANS): Citing his concern over the rise in coronavirus cases worldwide, former Indian cricketer MadanLal on Thursday said that this year’s Indian Premier League (IPL) would be the “toughest” for cricketers, both mentally and physically.

Speaking to IANS, MadanLal said that no cricketer should, even by accident, break the COVID-19 protocol in the UAE, where the IPL starts on September 19. “There are challenging days ahead for the cricketers. It will be their toughest IPL as they can’t roam outside, explore the place to relax their mind. They will have to be in bio-bubble all the time. It will be tough both mentally and physically, but I am sure that all sportspersons are aware of the situation very well and would take it with ease,” MadanLal said.

“Cricket is starting again for Indians and this will be taken as a positive step. Economy-wise it was also very important for the board (BCCI) as many people’s livelihood depends on it.”

Asked about the likely empty stands at the stadiums during the IPL, MadanLal said everybody should be thankful enough



that the lucrative league was starting and rest of the “worries” should be put on hold. “What I got to know is that in the first 15 days there will be no crowd but the ECB (Emirates Cricket Board) may relax the rules later, depending on the number of Covid cases there. However, crowd in the stands or not should not be a concern right now. IPL is happening and that is very big; forget all other small worries,” he added.

On the issue of “Mankading”, when the non-striking batsman is run out by a bowler on finding him out of the crease before bowling a delivery, the former India all-rounder supported Ravichandran Ashwin’s stand. He said that he didn’t see a problem as Ashwin has done it a couple of times but he did it within the laws of the game.

Jamshedpur FC add Lallawmawma to bolster defence

Jamshedpur (IANS): Jamshedpur FC on Thursday announced its fourth signing in the space of ten days with the addition of left back Ricky Lallawmawma. The 28-year-old signed a two-year deal keeping him at the club till 2022. The defender hails from Mizoram and previously plied his trade with ATK for two years and was part of the squad that won the Indian Super League (ISL) in 2019-20. Ricky expressed his delight at signing for Jamshedpur FC. “I am so happy to be joining Jamshedpur FC, a club with a great Head Coach, loud and proud supporters and fantastic facilities. The club has a plan along with a big ambition to do well in the Indian Super League and to be consistently successful.



Tour de France to be broadcast in India on Eurosport

New Delhi (IANS): Eurosport will provide global coverage of the Tour de France which is scheduled to start on August 29. Eurosport said that it will be continuing on its “digital-first” approach which it says saw a 95 per cent rise in minutes watched year-on-year in 2019. “Eurosport is recognised as the ‘Home of Cycling’ across Europe and it’s exciting to be part of the team covering the biggest event in our sport once again this year,” said 2012 Tour winner Sir Bradley Wiggins, who hosts the popular podcast “The Bradley Wiggins Show.”

“Building on last year where I reported live from the heart of the peloton, I’ll be helping to bring cycling fans closer to the action by expanding The Bradley Wiggins

Show with daily shows throughout the Tour - ensuring we don’t miss a moment. I’m also looking forward to again working with the talented Eurosport and GCN cycling team on The Breakaway,” he added.

Around 3,000 local language social media posts will be published alongside 600 localised videos across Eurosport and and Global Cycling Network’s (GCN) social platforms. Daily interactive digital content including quizzes and polls will also be available via the GCN App. In addition, Eurosport’s industry-leading editorial team will continue to feed fans’ passions for the sport’s best stories with around 200 local language Tour de France stories planned per market.

Windies name squad for England tour, Anisa Mohammed opts out

Barbados (IANS): Cricket West Indies (CWI) has named an 18-member squad for the five-match T20I series to be played against England next month. The five T20Is will be played from September 21-30 at the Incora County Ground, Derby.

This series will be the first time women’s cricket is played at the international level since the final of the ICC T20 World Cup played between Australia and India at the MCG on March 8. Several series since - like India tour of England, Australia tour of South Africa and South Africa tour of England - have been cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

West Indies will also be without their lead bowler Anisa Mohammed as she opted out of travelling amidst all the restrictions and precautions that are being taken owing to the widespread pandemic.

“All players were given the option to decline selection for any COVID-19 related concern. Anisa Mohammed was the only potential selectee who declined the invitation to travel to England,” CWI said in a statement.

The squad, which has one uncapped player in Kaysia Shultz, will undergo coronavirus tests this week before taking a charter flight to the UK on August 30.

“It is with pleasure that we are able once again to have our West Indies Women’s team involved at the international level,” Ann Browne-John, the lead selector for women’s and girls cricket, said.

West Indies squad: Stafanie Taylor (c), Aaliyah Alleyne, Shemaine Campbelle, Britney Cooper, Shamila Connell, Deandra Dottin, Afy Fletcher, Cherry Ann Fraser, Shabika Gajani, Sheneta Grimmond, Chinelle Henry, Lee-Ann Kirby, Hayley Matthews, Natasha McLean, Chedean Nation, Karishma Ramharack, Kaysia Shultz, Shakera Selman.

Former football players hail coach Sukhwinder Singh for Dhyhan Chand Award

New Delhi (IANS): Messages poured in from all quarters for former Indian football team head coach Sukhwinder Singh after he was named as the winner of the Dhyhan Chand Award for Lifetime achievement in Sports and Games.

Former India captain Bhaichung Bhutia was the first to congratulate his ex-coach, stating that Sukhwinder “fully deserves the Award.”

“I am happy he won it. Sukhi-sir is one of the most deserving coaches to have won the award. He fully deserves it. Congratulations Sukhwinderji! He was also the one to give me my first match as the India captain. I will always be grateful to him for that,” Bhaichung said to the aiff.com.

Another former Blue Tigers captain Bruno Coutinho believes that it was Sukhwinder who had enhanced India’s performance after he came in.

“The Dhyhan Chand Award is a great honour for someone like him. He was a great coach, technically very sound. What was great about him was that he enhanced our performance, and under his guidance, we did really well,” said Coutinho.

Renedy Singh, who had made his debut under the coaching of Sukhwinder Singh, believes that he had turned the Blue Tigers from a team that would lose against difficult opposition, to a team that would compete against them.

“He is arguably one of the most successful



Indian coaches for the National Team. Sukhwinder sir was the coach under whom I made my National Team debut. He really turned our team around from one that used to lose by a big margin against sides like Malaysia to a team that could give a tough fight to some of the best Asian teams like UAE and Uzbekistan,” said Renedy.

The former India winger argues that one of Sukhwinder’s biggest achievements in the India dugout was putting out a fine performance in the First Round 2002 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers, where India missed out on qualification for the second round by a point.

Pitted against the likes of UAE, Yemen and Brunei, India collected 11 points in Group 8, with three wins, two draws, and a solitary loss, falling short of qualification to the next round by a single point to UAE.

In the midst of these results, was a famous 1-0 victory that the Blue Tigers earned in Bangalore (now Bengaluru) against a UAE side that made it all the way to the FIFA World

Cup Play-offs, where they eventually lost to Iran.

While a second-half strike by Jules Alberto off a Khalid Jamil long-throw did the trick, many at that time, thought that it was indeed Bhaichung Bhutia, who had scored the goal, as the latter had followed the ball into the net, seemingly touching it with his studs right after it had crossed the line.

“It was an amazing game. I remember everyone thought that I had scored that goal. Even Sukhi sir, after the match thought I had scored it,” Bhaichung recalled with a smile. “But I had to later clarify to everyone that it was indeed Jules Alberto, who scored, and not me.”

Sukhwinder had coached India in 36 international matches and has a 47.22 per cent winning rate to his name. He was also in charge of the India U-13 and the Pailan Arrows from 2011 to 2012.

The 71-year-old has won the SAFF Cup twice in 1999 and 2009, and also clinched bronze with India in the 1999 SAF Games.

An aspect about Sukhwinder that made him such an effective coach, feels Renedy, was that he always had his sights set on the next match, no matter what.

“Even after that famous win against UAE in Bangalore, he reiterated that we should stay calm and not go overboard with our celebrations. We had a crucial game coming up next week against Yemen, and we needed to focus on that,” said Renedy.

2020 National Sports Awards to be held virtually

New Delhi (IANS): The 2020 National Sports Awards will be held via video conferencing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Sports Ministry said on Thursday. The ceremony is scheduled to be held on Saturday (August 29), and the Ministry said that 65 out of the 74 awardees will be present. Of the nine award winners who will not attend the virtual ceremony, three have tested positive for Covid-19. The awards are usually presented by the President at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. This time, however, President Ram Nath Kovind will be connected via a National Informatics Centre (NIC) link from Rashtrapati Bhavan while the recipients will be present at Sports Authority of India (SAI) and NIC centres in various locations across the country, the Sports Ministry said in a statement. Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju would be present at the Vigyan Bhawan in the national capital for the award ceremony. The programme will be telecast live on Doordarshan.