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Villagers travel through the swollen Ganga river on a boat, in Patna, on Thursday

CORONA TESTS Act on illegal labs: Delhi HC

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Thursday directed the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government to take action against illegally operated and online healthcare providers collecting samples for the Covid-19 investigation.Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan gave this instruction while hearing a petition seeking a ban on the collection of Covid-19 probe samples of these alleged illegal online service providers. This petition has been filed by a doctor. It has been alleged that these institutions are cheating people by calling themselves medical examination laboratories. The

court directed Additional Permanent Counsel Sanjay Ghosh and Advocate Urvi Mohan, appearing for the Delhi Government, to take action in this matter as per law. Petitioner Dr Rohit Jain, in his petition filed through advocate Shashank Dev Sudhi, had said that these

healthcare institutions are the biggest threat to the life and safety of common people.

Rajasthan HC breather for **Gehlot govt**

Jaipur: Amid the ongoing political crisis in the state, the Rajasthan High Court on Thursday gave some relief to the Ashok Gehlot government in the case challenging the merger of six BSP legislators with the ruling Congress and seeking a stay on it. Disposing of a petition filed by Bahujan Samaj Party national Secretary Satish Mishra and Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Madan Dilawar, a division bench of Chief Justice Inderjit Mahanti and Justice Prakash Gupta said that notice, issued earlier by a single judge bench, should be delivered to all six former BSP MLAs, by August 8.

Maha opposes **CBI** probe into **Palghar case**

New Delhi: The Maharashtra government on Thursday opposed the PILs seeking a transfer of the Palghar lynching case investigation to the CBI or a court-monitored probe, telling the Supreme Court that "enough has been done" with charge sheets filed against 300 accused and six police officials suspended already. In an affidavit, Maharashtra Police's Assistant Inspector General of Police, Vinayak Deshmukh, said that considering the seriousness of the case and large number of accused involved, and in "order to maintain the complete fairness, independence and transparency in the investigation", the case had been transferred to the specialised unit of the state CID on April 20.



windows 12-yr-old raped, left to die in house

She's battling for life at AIIMS

Shaken me to the core: Kejriwal

New Delhi: A 12-year-old girl, raped and tortured inside her home in Delhi, is in a critical state and under observation after her surgery at AIIMS hospital. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, describing it as a barbaric crime, said he had spoken to the police chief and a hunt was on for the attacker.

"The child is in a serious state, unconscious. A surgery has been done. She will be under observation for 24 to 48 hours," Kejriwal said after a visit to AIIMS. He said he would get the best lawyer on the case and ensure that the attacker got the toughest punishment.

The girl was bleeding incessantly and had severe wounds on her body when she was taken to hospital.

Before his visit to the hospital, Kejriwal tweeted that the savage assault "has shaken me to the core. Such predators roaming free can-

not be tolerated." The girl was allegedly sexually assaulted and attacked with a sharp object when she was alone at home in west Delhi on Tuesday. The attacker escaped. An attempt to murder case has been registered besides one



Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Delhi Commission For Women Chairperson Swati Maliwal visit AIIMS hospital to meet the 12-year-old rape survivor's family, in New Delhi

under a stringent law for

sexual crimes on children. Neighbours found the girl lying in blood and informed her parents and the police. The police are questioning residents in the area and scanning security footage. The girl was first taken to Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital and later shifted to AIIMS after preliminary treatment. According to re-

ports, she was constantly bleeding. "We received information on Tuesday regarding the assault of a minor girl. An FIR under section 307 (attempt to murder) and POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act has been registered and further investigation is underway," senior police officer A Koan said

Continued on Page 5

2ND TRANCHE OF ₹15,000-CR PACKAGE

CENTRE INJECTS ₹890 CR MORE TO COMBAT COVID

New Delhi: The Union government on Thursday released Rs 890.32 crore as the second installment of the Covid-19 emergency response and health system preparedness package to 22 states and Union Territories, the Union Health Ministry said. The amount of financial assistance to each state and Union Territories is based on their Covid-19 caseload.

Those who received financial assistance in the second installment include Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram and Sikkim, the

ministry said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced the Rs 15,000 crore package as part of the 'Whole of Government' approach wherein the Centre is leading the Covid-19 response and management, and supporting the states and UTs through technical and financial resources.

The second installment of the aid will be used to

↑ O D D D @MANJULtoons

strengthen public health infrastructure for testing, including procurement and installation of RT-PCR machines, RNA extraction kits, TrueNat and CB-NAAT machines, bolster infrastructure for

treatment and develop-

ment of ICU beds, installation of oxygen generators and procurement of bedside oxygen concen-

trators among others. It would also be used for engagement, training and capacity building of necessary human resources and

incentives to healthcare workforce and volunteers. including ASHA workers on Covid-19 duties, the health ministry said, adding that wherever necessary, volunteers registered on the Covid Warriors portal may also be engaged in coronavirus

duties. The first installment of Rs 3,000 crore was released in April to all states and UTs to aid and enable them ramp up testing facilities, augment hospital infrastructure, conduct surveillance activities along with procurement of essential equipment, drugs and other supplies, the health ministry said. As part of this package, states and Union territories have been strengthened with 5,80,342 isolation beds, 1,36,068 oxygen-supported beds

Also, 86,88,357 testing kits and 79,88,366 Vial Transport Media (VTM) have been procured by them. As many as 96,557 human resource has been added and incentive has been given to 6,65,799 human resources. The package has aided provision of mobility support to 11,821 staff, the ministry said.

and 31,255 ICU beds.

Moderna vaccine candidate protects mice from Covid: Study **New Delhi:** US biotechnology mcg dose and later chal-

company's vaccine candidate lenged with SARS-CoV-2 virus protected mice from infection either five or 13 weeks after with SARS-CoV-2, the virus the second injection were prothat causes Covid-19, accordtected from viral replication in ing to a study published in the the lungs and nose, the rejournal Nature. The findings searchers said. by scientists, including those Mice challenged seven weeks after only a single dose from the National Institute of of 1 mcg or 10 mcg of Allergy and InfecmRNA-1273 were tious Diseases also protected (NIAID) in the US, show that against viral the vaccine, known as mRNA-1273, induced neutralising antibodies in mice when given as two intramuscular injections of a 1-microgramme (mcg) dose three weeks apart. Additional ex-

replication in the lung, they said. NIAID Vaccine Research Center (VRC) scientists worked with investigators from the University of Texas at Austin to identify the atomic structure of the spike protein on the surperiments found that mice face of the novel coronavirus. given two injections of the 1-**Continued on Page 5**

GC MURMU APPOINTED NEW CAG

New Delhi: Jammu and

> Kashmir Lt

Gover-

Girish



Chandra Murmu has been appointed new Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India. Murmu will be replacing Rajiv Mehrishi, a 1978 batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre, as the CAG.







pensioners PURNA SINGH New Delhi: The Central

facility for

New healthcare

government has taken an effective step towards providing healthcare to the pensioners. There are many pensioners who are not currently covered under the CGHS facility or live in a place where there is no CGHS facility. Such pensioners will get fixed medical allowance from now. This limit will be a maxi-

mum of Rs 1,000 per month. The Central government has also given an option to these pensioners to get treatment in the nearby city where CGHS facility is available. For this, the pensioner will have to register himself. There are about 65 lakh pensioners in the central government.

One of the options the government has given to pensioners is that they can get fixed medical allowance at the rate of five hundred rupees per month. These rates are revised. At present, this rate is one thousand rupees. If pensioners wish that they are willing to undergo treatment in a nearby city with CGHS, then they can avail OPD or IPD. Continued on Page 5



out, in Ahmedabad on Thursday

8 Covid patients killed in Gujarat hospital blaze

Gandhinagar: A major fire in the ICU ward of a private dedicated Covid hospital in Ahmedabad claimed the lives of eight patients, including 5 men and 3 women in the wee hours on Thursday. One seriously burnt patient is being treated while 40 other patients have been evacuated and shifted to the SVP hospital in Ahmedabad. According to information, the fire broke out in the ICU ward of 'Shrey hospital', a dedi-

Navrangpura area in Ahmedabad at around 3 am on Thursday. **Continued on Page 5**

cated Covid-19 hospital in

PM expresses grief

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the loss of lives in a fire that broke out at a Covid-19 hospital in Ahmedabad. "Saddened by the tragic hospital fire in Ahmedabad. Condolences to the bereaved families. May the injured recover soon," the Prime Minister tweeted. Modi said he has spoken to Chief Minister Vijay Rupani regarding the incident and assured all possible assistance to the affected. Union Home Minister Amit Shah also expressed grief on the accident and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Historian Sadia Dehalvi dies at 63 Delhi loses her favourite storyteller



PURNA SINGH

New Delhi: Famous Delhi writer, historian and social activist Sadia Dehlvi passed away after fighting cancer for a long time. She was 63. Saadia was recently admitted to a hospital in Delhi where she was undergoing treatment. Saadia died at her home on Wednesday. Saadia, who belongs to the royal 'Shama' family, edited the women's Urdu magazine Bano. His grandfather, Hafiz Yusuf Dehlvi, started a prestigious

Urdu film Shama and literary monthly magazine in 1938. Saadia was a foodie and wrote a book on the history of Delhi's cuisine in 2017, titled "Jasmine and Commodities, Memories and Recipes of Meri Delhi". A versatile woman, Sadia has also produced and scripted documentary and television programs including "Amma and Family" (1995), including Zohra Sehgal, who was a veteran actress. Sadia was a close friend and confidant of the late writer Khushwant Singh. Continued on Page 5

Standoff with China likely to be prolonged: MoD

New Delhi: The present stand-off with China is likely to be prolonged, said Defence Ministry in a status report on border tension in Eastern Ladakh. The ministry has put out an update on Chinese aggression on Line of Actual Control on its website.

The report stated that the situation in Eastern Ladakh arising from "unilateral aggression by China continues to be sensitive and requiring close monitoring and prompt action based on evolving



situation." The ministry stated that Chinese aggression has been increas-

ing along the Line of Actual Control and more particularly in Galwan

Valley since May 5, 2020. The Chinese side transgressed in the areas of Ku-

north bank of Pangong Tso lake on May 17 and May 18. "Consequent to this, ground level interactions were held between armed forces of both sides to defuse the situation. Corps Commander Level Flag Meeting was held on June 6. 2020. However, a violent face-off incident took place between the two sides on June 15, 2020 resulting in casualties of both sides," the

grang Nala, Gogra and

ministry stated. Continued on Page 5

India warns China against Kashmir interference

Washington/New Delhi: The Union government on Thursday warned China against attempts to interfere in India's internal affairs after Beijing unsuccessfully initiated a discussion in the UN Security Council on Jammu and Kashmir. In a statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs, the government said that this was not the first time that China has sought to raise a subject that is solely an internal matter of India. "As on previous such occasions, this attempt too met with little support from the international community. We firmly reject China's interference in our internal affairs and urge it to draw proper conclusions from such unfructuous attempts," the government said.

Continued on Page 5





KRITI KHARBANDA @KRITI_OFFICIAL

Do you think people would be kinder and more empathetic towards other people if this was taught in school and our grades and future dependent on it?



Do away with your dandruff

ANANYA BHAT

andruff is a beauty malady that has left no one in this world. It's very annoying to see those flakes pouring out from our scalps like snow falling from the heavenly sky.

The worst part is that you can encounter this situation round the clock and year. But unlike your other skincare problems like zits, dark circles or greasy hair which could be covered with a dab of concealer and spritz of shampoo.

Unfortunately, you cannot get away with your dandruff easily. Dandruff is no jest, hence it has to be taken seriously.

Often caused by a condition 'seborrheic dermatitis', that converts the skin red, oily & scaly. Thereafter yellow & red scales flake off, which causes dandruff. Also, sometimes a fungus 'Malassezia' promotes dandruff.

Those with an oily scalp, tend to produce more sebum- extra sebum means more work for Malassezia and therefore more acid production on the scalp.

Certain factors that trigger the multiplication of Malassezia are age, hormone, and stress. Rare reasons for dandruff also include- 'contact dermatitis', which is caused by the reaction from- shampoos, air-sprays styling gels, conditioners, etc.



Tea tree oil

With anti-bacterial and antiinflammatory properties, it may slay the symptoms of dandruff. Tea tree oil is effective in fighting the fungus that causes dandruff including the condition of seborrheic dermatitis as well! But if you have sensitive skin, it is advised to dilute tea tree oil by adding carriers oils like Argan oil and Jojoba oil.

Coconut oil is an excellent and natural source of hydration that keeps dryness at bay. You can also add a few drops of coconut oil in your shampoo & conditioners to increase its efficacy. Coconut oil & its components have anti-microbial properties that keep your hair and scalps healthy for long.

Aloe vera Aloe vera is considered a very

beneficial treatment for dandruff. It prevents the scalp from getting too much oily. Also, it is effective against various fungal infections & hair-fall due to its anti-bacterial & anti-fungal properties. It even helps in reducing inflammation which relieves the symptoms of dandruff.

Apple cider vinegar A common remedy for dandruff that stimulates the shedding of

dead skin cells on the scalp. Also, it balances the pH level of the scalp that reduces the burgeoning of fungus and therefore fights dandruff. You can use apple cider vinegar by adding a few drops of this in your shampoo or conditioners or even by diluting it in the water before applying it on your scalp.

Onions

Onion oil or onion juice nourishes your hair follicles and replenishes the nutrients lost from the scalp. It prevents any scalp infections and reduces the hair fall due to its anti-bacterial & anti-fungal properties. Fortified with natural nutrients and powerful antioxidants, it even prevents premature hair greying.

Good diet

Eating more probiotics works well for health. It enhances the immune system of the body and helps in fighting against fungal infections & dandruff. While increasing the intake of Omega-3 also works well. Because it is crucial for skin's health and works against premature aging. Deficiency of omega-3 causes dry skin, dry scalp & dandruff. When taken in enough quantity, it relieves inflammation, irritation & other symptoms of dandruff. Sources of omega-3 include-Fishes, Chia seeds, Walnuts and Flax seeds.

International

If you look around your

city, one of the staples

of any city is a good bar,

a friendly pub or a busy

in rural Ireland, busy

Hong Kong, the back

in the United Arab

someplace to have a

club. So no matter if your

woods of Canada or even

Emirates, there is always

brew ski. And this day is

for those that do enjoy

those drinks, and to

appreciate those that

make them – Beer Day!

Beer Day

for monsoon

Skin radiance facial

Rejuvenates dull and dehydrated skin, makes skin soft and supple, lightens, tones, firms and nourishes the skin, deep cleansing and natural instant glow of the skin.

Lemon and wheatgrass cleansing milk is applied to clean the skin, this is applied all over the face, neck and back in circular movements and wiped off with damp cotton. Skin polishing is done with orange peel and alpine salt whitening skin polisher. This is applied on skin briskly in circular movements and rinsed thoroughly and pat dry. This can be used to detoxify the skin and

for 10 minutes.

Face pack skin-perfecting Kiwi fruit and aloe vera based face pack is applied, a few drops



Home-based facials to keep monsoon skin problems at bay

onsoon is not a very favorable season for skin, problems like sweaty skin, dehydration, chappy skin, skin infections are very common during this season. And pandemic coronavirus is making the situation worse for the skin as people are bound to wear face masks because of which people are complaining of harsh skin reactions, skin rashes, acne and open pores.

You can boost the immunity of your skin in monsoon by diance and makes skin supple adopting a skincare routine with natural beauty ingredients that you can find from your kitchen or kitchen garden. You can do your own facials that will take care of your skin in a way of cleansing, toning, moisturizing and tightening.

Richa Aggarwal, beauty expert & owner, Cleopatra salon and bridal makeovers shares facial

enhance the radiance of the skin.

The face needs to be washed with lukewarm water and what nourishes moisturizer is applied, hands are dipped in cold water and gentle massage is done for 10 minutes in outward movements. Leave this on the skin

of honey and rose water is added

into the pack and applied on the face. Keep the pack for 15 minutes and wash off with cold water. It's very good nutrition for skin with the goodness of vitamin C. The process is finished with the application of shea butter moisturizer.

Anti-aging facial

Tackles the problem of fine lines, wrinkles and sagging skin, boosts skin elasticity, skin raand firmer.

Cleansing is the first step and helps in removing dirt, pollutants, excess oil, and leaving your skin healthy. Cleansing is done with Green apple cleanser with the help of a wet cotton pad. This removes impurities and harmful dust particles from the skin thus leaving skin clean, soft, and moisturized. Green apple helps soothe skin and fights to age.

Exfoliation (5 minutes)

Exfoliate skin with the scrub made with brown sugar and aloe vera gel, take mixture on your palms and rub in a circular motion all over your face, forehead, nose, and chin.

Don't overdo scrubbing. This will help in removing skin cells, dark patches, suntan, blackheads and whiteheads, and open pores to allow the skin to breathe and make skin glow. Massage for 20 minutes. This helps in improving blood circulation and strengthen face muscles and helps to achieve flawless skin. The message is done with Vitamin E cream and wheat germ cream, massage is done in semi-circular

movement and done softly, it's very effective for dry skin, in case of oily skin massage can be done without wheat germ cream. Hands are dipped into raw milk and rose water while doing massage. For Face pack, you can use ingredients like Orange Peel, Neem leaves, Multanimitti, Honey and Rose water.

How your psyche affects your skin health

A guide on Psychodermatology by a senior psychiatrist

SIDDHI JAIN

he skin and the mind are intricately related. The **L** story is more complex than the proverbial appearance of "dark circles under the eyes" if you have not slept well. A relatively new discipline, Psychodermatology that studies the interface between Dermatology and Psychiatry is emerging. Skin is one of the largest organs

of the human body. It protects the inner body from the outside world. It senses the environmental cues, integrates them and coveys them to the body particularly the brain. It also is affected by the changes in the inner stability of the body, the hormones, neurochemicals, and proteins of the brain and the effect of these on the body's immunity.

It is not surprising then that skin would be affected by the changes in the mental state of a person, as a number of mental processes are also mediated



through the same hormones, neurotransmitters and proteins of the brain, Dr AchalBhagat, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, Delhi told IANSlife.

Categories of skin and mind disorders

Skin diseases precipitated or exacerbated by psychological stress: In these disorders, there is an antecedent stress which is followed by the worsening of a

skin disorder. Three common examples of this category are Psoriasis (a disorder in which the skin cells multiply ten times or so faster and flaky skin appears on red bumpy patches), Atopic Dermatitis (a disorder which accompanies disorders like Asthma and Hay fever and presents with red and itchy skin) and Acne.

Psychiatric disorders with dermatological symptoms: There is no primary skin condition and everything seen on the skin is self-inflicted. Underlying the behaviour that leads to these skin lesions is anxiety, low self-esteem or delusions. Unfortunately, the person living with these disorders instead of being supported is blamed for their illness due to the stereotype of the mental ill health amongst the health professionals. The examples of these disorders include dermatitis artefacta (skin lesions produced by the patient's seemingly voluntary actions), trichotillomania (repetitive pulling of one's hair), body dysmorphic disorder (persistent worry about the shape of one's body part), delusional parasitosis(a false, firm, unshakable belief that parasites have infested the skin).

Psychiatric symptoms that accompany the skin disorders: Emotional symptoms like anxiety and depression are prominent as a result of having a skin disease, and the psychological consequences may even be more severe than the physical symptoms. The examples include illness like Vitiligo (patches of skin losing their pigment).

Effects of psychiatric drugs on the skin: For example, Lithium (a mood stabilizer) causes acne and skin rash. Similarly, medicines for skin disorders may cause depression, for example, it is thought that a drug called finasteride (used for hair loss) may cause depression. More often than not these linkages get overlooked by physicians.

26 27



- Across **US President**
- **Donald** ____ (5) Characteristic spirit (5)
- 10 Drained slowly (5)
- 11 Slick stuff (3) 12 Declares or promises (5)
- 13 Legal dissolution of a
- 15 British ____: United

marriage (7)

- Kingdom? (5) 18 Needlefish - "rag"
- anagram (3)
- 19 Discomfiture (6) 21 Continuing (7)
- 22 One of the United States
- (4)
- 23 Over or above (4) 24 Armed conflict (7)
- 26 Nutty sweet (6) 29 Unit of resistance of
- electricity (3)
- 32 Roman magistrate (7)

31 Large pig-like animal (5)

- 34 Cleaning instrument (5) 35 At this moment (3)
- 36 Weeper of myth (5)
- 37 Big cat (5) 38 Mean grin (5)

CROSSWORD

- Down 1 Impassive (5)
- 2 Smoked sausage (7)
- Talk wildly (4)
- Taking care of the lawn (6)
- 7 Gives in (5)

6 Sheriff's men (5)

- 9 Virus that causes AIDS (3) 12 Tumbler (7)
- 14 Cloth fragment (3) 16 Starbucks order (5)
- 17 Oozes through (5)
- 19 School clothes (7)
- 21 Confess (3,2)

20 Huge (5)

- 23 Yerevan its capital (7) 24 Rabbit's run (6)
- 25 "Take On Me" group (1-2)
- 27 Sahara stopover (5) 28 Herschelle of South
- 30 Seed scatterer ? (5)

Africa (5)

32 Fleshy fruit (4) 33 Dress up (3)

SUDOKU



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	6	2	3	9	5	1	8	4	7

Urvashi Rautela: Future history books will need one chapter just for 2020

T ooking ahead in time, actress and former beauty queen **└**Urvashi Rautela feels history books in the future will need to dedicate an entire chapter to the year 2020.

From forest fires to the COVID-19 pandemic and now a blast in Beirut, the year has seen one disaster after the other. "Future history books will need one chapter just for the year 2020," said Urvashi.

She is devastated by the recent explosion in Beirut. "My thoughts and prayers are with Beirut, Lebanon. I am heartbroken by the loss of life in this tragic



ty to all those affected and those working tirelessly to help. I can't even imagine the predicament of the people witnessing this out there. So many lives (have been) lost, thousands of people (are) injured," she said.

Urvashi has friends in Lebanon and is upset that she can't reach them.

"My friend Yara is a Lebanese singer and Cynthia Samuel is Miss Universe Lebanon. They both are close friends and it's quite sad that they both live in Lebanon and I can't reach them," she said.

Now Krishna Janmabhoomi Trust set up in Mathura

Mathura (IANS): With the 'bhumi pujan' clearing the way for the construction of the grand Ram temple in Ayodhya, the Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi Nirman Nyas has now been set up in Mathura with 80 saints from 14 states as part of it.

Acharya Devmurari Bapu, who heads the trust, said, "We got the Nyas registered on July 23 on the occasion of 'Haryali Teei' and there are 11 saints from Vrindavan who are part of the

trust." The Acharya further said that a signature campaign will soon be launched to connect other saints and seers for the 'liberation' of the Krishna Janmabhoomi.

"After the signature campaign, we will launch a nationwide movement on the issue. We had started the campaign in February, but we did not proceed further due to the lockdown," he

The main dispute for the Kr-

ishna Janmabhoomi is the Shahi Idgah which is located adjacent to the Krishna Janmabhoomi Temple in Mathura.

The Trust is already laying claim to the four-and-a-half-acre land next to the mosque to use it as a 'Ranga Manch' (variety hall) for religious and cultural functions organised by it and the temple authorities.

The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), since the demolition of the Babri mosque in 1992, has

been claiming that 'liberation' of Krishna Janmabhoomi in Mathura and the Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi is next on its agenda.

However, the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, which was passed by the then Narsimha Rao government, prohibits conversion of places of worship -- like churches, mosques and temples -- into places of worship of a different religion.

Ram Trust receives donations of ₹41 cr

Ayodhya (IANS): The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust has, so far, received donations to the tune of Rs 41 crore even before the construction of the proposed Ram temple has begun. This does not include the donations made by religious leaders, including Swami Chiddanand Saraswati of the Par-

marth Niketan, Swami Avdeshanand Giri of the Juna Akhada, Baba Ramdev and other dignitaries who were in Ayodhya on Wednesday.

According to Swami Govind Dev Giri, treasurer of the trust, "The total donation to the trust stood at Rs 30 crore when the logbook was last seen on Tuesday. Another Rs 11 crore was donated by Morari Babu, which makes it about Rs 41 crore. However, the amount does not include donations made on Wednesday."

The seer also stated that people had contributed for the cause of Ram temple even during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Not correct to say only certain matters listed before court: SC

New Delhi, (IANS): The Supreme Court on Thursday observed that it was not correct to say that only certain matters were listed before the court, and the rest were not, insisting that the apex court's registry is working very hard.

The remarks were made by a bench of Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Justice Ajay Rastogi during the hearing of a plea filed by Yatin Oza, challenging the Gujarat High Court decision withdrawing his senior advocate designation following his remarks against the High Court registry.

Justice Kaul said that people can have grievances, but to say "that only certain category of matters are being listed, and not the rest, is not correct". Telling counsel representing Oza that it is a very difficult time for everybody and not just for the legal community, Justice Kaul insisted that the apex court registry was working very hard, and the bar should convey its grievances in a better language. Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Oza,



contended before the bench that he would not repeat something like this again, and his client tends to get "emotionally carried away". However, at this, the bench noted that there are better ways to show emotion. The top court was informed by another counsel appearing for Oza that he is willing to tender an unconditional apology. The bench replied that the bar can always point out issues with the bench, but the language needs to be looked at. Oza expressed regret on using the contentious words which led to these developments and assured the top court that he would tender an unconditional apology before the High Court. The apex court posted the matter for further hearing after two weeks.

Rains lash Mumbai, landslide at Malabar Hill

Mumbai (IANS): Intermittent heavy showers continued to lash Mumbai a day after it was battered and shattered by stormy weather that left a trail of destruction, fallen trees or branches, hundreds of vehicles submerged or broken down, officials said here on Thursday.

Overnight rains were reported from most parts of coastal Maharashtra including Mumbai, Thane, Palghar, Raigad, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, besides regions of Western Maharashtra like Kolhapur, Satara and Sangli. A minor landslide occurred when a portion of a hillock at the posh Malabar Hill crashed down near Pedder Road, but luckily there were no casualties.

The IMD Mumbai said that the Mumbai city received 33.1 cms and the suburbs got around half or 16.2 cms rainfall.

In the past 24 hours, many areas of south Mumbai witnessed their maiden floods, including those which had escaped flooding during the July 26, 2005

Karnataka's Kodagu hit Kodagu: A landslide occurs near Talacauvery in Kodagu district; a team of National Disaster Response Force has reached the spot. The Karnataka government will release more funds if needed amid the incessant rainfall across the state. Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Thursday directed the district in-charge ministers to take ap-

propriate precautions in the face of increasing rainfall across the state. The Chief Minister has also instructed district incharge ministers not to leave the constituency MLAs and officials and visit instructed to visit affected areas. He has been instructed to take other measures, including the distribution of relief on the spot, read the CMO statement.



Flood situation in Bihar grim

Patna (IANS): The flood situation in Bihar remains grave as the waters have entered 1,165 panchayat areas in 16 districts of the state. Though the water level in some rivers has gone down, the Ganga is still witnessing an upsurge.

The water in the Ganga river has crossed the danger mark near Kahalgaon.

Nineteen people have died in 121 blocks in 16 districts across the state so far. The Bihar Disaster Management Department has claimed that relief and rescue operations are continuing. An official of the Bihar State

the danger mark in many areas. Additional Secretary in the Disaster Management Department Ramchandra Dua said that 1,165 panchayat areas in 121 blocks in 16 districts of Bihar have been hit by the floods. About 66.60 lakh people in

these areas have been affected.

Water Resources Department

said on Thursday that the water

level of the Kosi is dropping.

However, a slight increase was

noticed in the water level of the

The Bagmati, Budhi Gandak,

Kamla Balan, Ghaghra and

Ganga rivers are flowing above

Gandak river.

recorded a staggering 160 cms rainfall in a 24-hour period. These include: Churchgate, Colaba, Marine Lines, Marine Drive, parts of the congested Kalbadevi, Dongri, Mohammed

Great Floods, when the city Ali Road, Byculla, Mazagaon, Grant Road, Charni Road, Mumbai Central, besides the traditional flood hotspots of Dadar, Parel, Sion, Matunga, Kings Circle, Wadala, Kurla, and several suburban areas.

TV actor Samir Sharma commits suicide

Mumbai: Television actor and model Samir Sharma has allegedly died by suicide at his home in Mumbai. He was 44.

Samir was found hanging from the kitchen ceiling on Wednesday night at his home in Neha CHS building, situated at Ahinsa Marg in Malad west. According to Malad police, Samir had rented the apartment in February this

While on a round during night duty, the watchman of the society saw the body and alerted the society members.

Looking at the condition of the body, the police suspects that the actor committed suicide two days back. No suicide note was recovered the spot,

reported Mid-Day. "A case of accidental death has been registered and the body has been sent for autopsy," said senior inspector George Fernandez, Malad police station.

Partial relief for Gehlot govt

Jaipur: In partial relief to the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government in Rajasthan, the division bench of the high court on Thursday disposed of appeals filed by a BJP MLA and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) against the order of a judge, who had refused to stay the functioning of six BSP MLAs as Congress legislators.

BJP MLA Madan Dilawar and BSP national secretary Satish Mishra had approached the division bench on Tuesday appealing against the single-judge bench order. Both the parties had earlier filed writ petitions challenging the decision of Speaker CP Joshi in September 2019 allowing merger of the six BSP MLAs with the Congress. The single-judge bench of Justice Mahendra Kumar Goyal had issued notices to the speaker and secretary of the assembly, and the six MLAs on July 30 and directed them to submit replies on August 11.

However, the judge had not granted any interim relief and refused to put a stay on the six BSP MLAs' participation in the proceedings of the House as Congress legislators. The division bench of



Chief Justice Indrajit Mahanty and Justice Prakash Gupta had issued a notice to the assembly speaker on Wednesday on the appeal but no reply was filed on his

His counsel Kapil Sibal argued in the court that the appeal in the division bench is not maintainable. Sibal also said that the speaker's office cannot be used as a post office to get the notices served to any MLA. In response to which, the division bench directed to serve the notices through Jaisalmer's district judge and publish them in two newspapers of Jaisalmer and Barmer. It said the single judgebench will hear the stay application of the BJP and the BSP on August 11. Six BSP MLAs — Sandeep Yadav, Wajib Ali, Deepchand Kheria, Lakhan Meena, Jogendra Awana and Rajendra Gudha – defected to the Congress in September last month.

CBI court rejects Indrani's bail plea

New Delhi: The bail plea of Indrani Mukerjea who is imprisoned for her alleged role in her daughter Sheena Bora's murder, was rejected by a special Central Bureau of Investigation court in Mumbai on Thursday.In December last year, the CBI court had rejected a petition filed by Indrani, who was seeking bail citing deteriorating health. It was her fourth bail plea which has been rejected by the court.

In 2012, Indrani along with Peter Mukerjea and former husband Sanjeev Khanna had allegedly murdered Sheena over a financial dispute. The alleged crime was uncovered three years later in 2015.

Indrani came to the notice of police after her driver, Shyamvar Rai, who was arrested in another case in August 2015, revealed the murder plot. The police then arrested Indrani, Khanna and the driver for the alleged murder. Peter was put behind bars later for allegedly being involved in the murder.

BJP sarpanch shot dead by militants

504 separatists sign 'good behaviour bond'

Kulgam: BJP leader and sarpanch Sajad Ahmad Khanday was shot dead by militants near his home in south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Thursday, police said. The militants, who appeared to

have studied the area closely, fired at him from close range at Vessu in Qazigund area, 60 km from Srinagar, police officials said. Khanday was immediately rushed to a hospital in nearby

Anantnag district where he was

declared brought dead, they said. The incident comes less than 48 hours after a BJP-affiliated panchayat member, Arif Ahmad Khan, was shot at in Kulgam district. He is recovering from his injuries in hospital. Meanwhile, as many as 504 separatist leaders, who had been detained following the abrogation of Article 370 provisions a year ago, were released after they signed bond of "good behaviour",

Jammu and Kashmir Police chief

Dilbag Singh said on Thursday.

Singh also said out of the 350 separatist leaders and stone pelters who had been sent to jails in other states, only 50-60 continued to remain behind bars and the rest were released. "A total of 504 separatist leaders belonging to Hurriyat Conference and Jamaat-e-Islami (JK) and others have been released so far after they signed good behaviour bond," he told PTI here. Those who sign "good behaviour bond" are bound to maintain peace and not indulge in any violent or separatist activities after being released from jails or home detention. The Director General of Police (DGP) said after the abrogation of Article 370 provisions on August 5, 2019, a total of 5,500 youths were detained by security forces and all of them were let off after three-four days following counselling and taking assurance from their parents that they would not indulge in any violent acts like stone pelting in future.

Soz a prisoner, **BJP crushing** democracy, says Priyanka

New Delhi: The BJP-led Centre is treating senior Congress leader from Jammu and Kashmir, Saifuddin Soz like a prisoner and is therefore crushing democracy, said the party's general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Thursday. Vadra said Soz has played a crucial role in strengthening the Indian democracy and the Centre was practising "tyranny" in the Union Territory.

"Saifuddin Soj Sahab has played a big role in strengthening the Indian democracy. By treating him like a prisoner, the BJP government is crushing democracy. For the past one year there is tyranny in J-K. I want to remind the government that India is democractic republic," Vadra's tweet, which has also had a picture of Soz standing inside the boundary of his house with barbed wire fences on them, read.

Countdown to Beirut blast began 6 yrs ago with a leaky, troubled ship

Beirut: The countdown to catastrophe in Beirut started six years ago when a troubled, Russianleased cargo ship made an unscheduled stop at the city's port.

The ship was trailed by debts, crewed by disgruntled sailors and dogged by a small hole in its hull that meant water had to be constantly pumped out. And it carried a volatile cargo: more than 2,000 tons of ammonium nitrate, a combustible material used to make fertilizers — and bombs that was destined for Mozambique.

The ship, the Rhosus, never made it. Embroiled in a financial and diplomatic dispute, it was abandoned by the Russian businessman who had leased it. And the ammonium nitrate was transferred to a dockside warehouse in Beirut, where it would languish for years, until Tuesday, when Lebanese officials said it exploded, sending a shock wave that killed more than 130 people and wounded another 5,000.

The story of the ship and its deadly cargo, which emerged Wednesday in accounts from Lebanon, Russia and Ukraine, offered a bleak tale about how legal



battles, financial wrangling and, apparently, chronic negligence set the stage for a horrific accident that devastated one of the Middle East's most fondly regarded cities.

"I was horrified," said Boris Prokoshev, the ship's 70-year-old retired Russian captain, about the accident, speaking in a phone interview from Sochi, Russia, a Black Sea resort town just up the coast from where the ammonium nitrate began its journey to Beirut

in 2013. In Lebanon, public rage focused on the negligence of the authorities, who were aware of the danger posed by the storage of 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate in a warehouse on the Beirut docks yet failed to act.

Senior customs officials wrote to the Lebanese courts at least six times from 2014 to 2017, seeking guidance on how to dispose of the ammonium nitrate, according to public records posted to social media by a Lebanese lawmaker, Salim Aoun.

"In view of the serious danger posed by keeping this shipment in the warehouses in an inappropriate climate," Shafik Marei, the director of Lebanese customs, wrote in May 2016, "we repeat our request to demand the maritime agency to re-export the materials immediately."

The customs officials proposed a number of solutions, including donating the ammonium nitrate to the Lebanese army or selling it to the privately owned Lebanese Explosives Co. Marei sent a second, similar letter a year later. The judiciary failed to respond to any of his pleas, the records suggested.

The Rhosus, which flew the flag of Moldova, arrived in Beirut in November 2013, two months after it left the Black Sea port of Batumi, Georgia. The ship was leased by Igor Grechushkin, a Russian businessman living in

Cyprus. Prokoshev, the captain, joined the ship in Turkey after a mutiny over unpaid wages by a previous crew. Grechushkin had been paid \$1 million to transport the highdensity ammonium nitrate to the port of Beira in Mozambique, the captain said.

The ammonium nitrate was purchased by the International Bank of Mozambique for Fábrica de Explosivos de Moçambique, a firm that makes commercial explosives, according to Baroudi and Partners, a Lebanese law firm representing the ship's crew, in a statement issued Wednesday.

'740 tons of ammonium nitrate not at **Chennai Port'**

Chennai (IANS): Refuting some news reports about 740 tonnes of ammonium nitrate being stored at Chennai Port, an official said the consignment has been shifted out a long time back.

"There is no storage of 740 tonnes of ammonium nitrate at the Chennai Port. It was shifted out long back," a port official told IANS.

It may be recalled that 2,700 tonnes ammonium nitrate stored at Beirut port in Lebanon exploded on Tuesday killing 135

persons and injuring thousands. It was learnt that the ammonium nitrate consignment of 740 tonnes in 37 containers were imported by Amman Chemicals in 2018 as fertiliser.

ported from Korea.

The consignment was imofficial document listing out the



MoD admits Chinese intrusion, Rahul questions PM Modi

New Delhi: After the Defence Ministry's acknowledgement of Chinese troops' transgressions into the Indian territory in different parts of eastern Ladakh, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday asked why the Prime Minister was lying over the issue.

"Why is the PM lying?" a tweet by the Wayanad MP, which also had an English newspaper's article over the defence ministry's acknowledgement embedded,

Gandhi has time and again raised the issue, especially since the Galwan valley clash which led to 20 Indian Army personnel losing their lives in a violent face-off with Chinese troops.

The Defence Ministry, in an

major activities of the department in June, acknowledged Chinese transgressions in Indian territory in different parts of eastern Ladakh including Pangong Tso, Gogra and Kungrang Nala areas.

"Chinese aggression has been increasing along the LAC and more particularly in Galwan valley since 5th May 2020. Chinese side transgressed into the areas of Kugrang Nala, Gogra and north bank of Pangong Tso lake on May 17 -18 2020," the defence ministry said.

The document was uploaded on the ministry's website very recently and it is the first time that the Rajnath Singh-led Ministry has admitted officially about the transgressions by the Chinese troops.

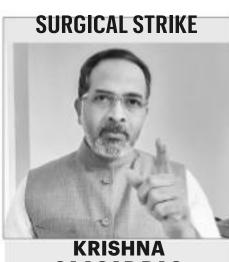
Wily leaders, phony pen pushers stifle democracy

Bureaucrats are always busy. Particularly, in our democracy. They are always running around attending meetings, seminars, one-on-one and burn midnight oil over the schemes and programmes of the government, chasing the elusive targets. The fundamental question, however, remains: What is it that you are getting done? Is it the paperwork? Or is it the real work? The question becomes pertinent because of the failings of the governments in implementing their promises except some pet themes and projects that the leaders hold dear to their hearts. A complaint often heard is that the bloated ego of senior bureaucrats sticking to their paperwork are crushing the young and ideal officers. No ingenuity is allowed in governance and responsiveness is a crawl. The policy

initiatives or changes made by the political heads often end up in disasters or non-implementation due to the "show" which lacks substance. As we see nowadays even the rewards follow not on the basis of results but on the basis of favouritism. A Chief Minister's eyes do not matter for the bureaucracy, as much as his/her ears do. Favouritism flows from here and not based on merits, sadly. The cat and mouse game only means who is gaining power, credit or the blame setting aside everything else. The decline in bureaucracy is often shocking. The judgments and solutions are often based on the political rhetoric of the leaders. After the emergence of the regional parties thanks to identity politics, the decline has become sharper and more pronounced in bureaucracy to such an extent that it is the Legislature that takes the beating in the long run when such bureaucrats learn to please their masters and the latter become inevitably transfixed by the sycophancy. Why do leaders forget to kick out such 'advisers' who play a negative role, a real worthless one, is bewildering sometimes. We often come across - rather on a regular basis - citizens complaining of 'officers' being busy and not being able to either meet them or address their grievances. Why don't they care

or bother to address the genuine grievances of the people? Why don't they advise - if it is the fault of the Legislature - to go for course correction? Off-hand transfers of bureaucrats, denial of promotions at the topmost level by giving extensions to some and elevation of some unworthy officials to higher and powerful positions are all result of opportunistic politics played by the bureaucrats in tandem with the political masters. Frank Sonnenberg, one of the top American thought leaders says, "The responsibility of a leader is to lead... The fact is some leaders are causing irreparable damage to great institutions by shirking their responsibilities. They're afraid to address difficult issues, make tough decisions, and introduce the change that's required to achieve long-term success." As he rightly calls them "these counterfeit leaders" spend much of their time playing politics, protecting their turf, and promoting their self-interests. To make matters worse, counterfeit leaders, in both public and private sectors, often masquerade as positive role models while condoning unethical or irresponsible behaviour that undermines the very foundation of their institution. Do we see any parallels in our country?

Ayodhya Ram Mandir & the rise of new India



SAAGAR RAO

Ayodhya ended on the 9th December 2019 with Supreme Court of India giving its final verdict. August 5th, 2020 marks another historic milestone, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi initiated the construction of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya by participating in Bhumi Puja.

RSS Sarsanghchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat's speech, if heard and assimilated well should ignite billion minds in India. Mohan Bhagwat has not declared triumphant victory over anyone, he simply stated the fight in the courts were over 30 years and we patiently fought, and for accomplishing a just cause, one need to have enormous patience.

Dr Mohan Bhagwat placed before the nation a massive agenda, when he called upon on all Indians to turn their hearts into a temple, before the completion of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. It is indeed a clarion call for peace, harmony, empowerment and selfactualization. RSS stood tall as always, with Dr Mohan Bhagwat's giant persona, enormous knowledge and universal wisdom, to inspire India.

PM Narendra Modi's speech heralded the rise of a New India. As always, Narendra Modi directed his thoughts towards future, India's imminent rise, potential of Indian nationals, his vision for religious harmony and brotherhood.

As a centuries old conflict ended peacefully, and the construction of a magnificent Ram Mandir is initiated in Ayodhya, there are many take-aways for all Indians to once again realize, how tolerant and a naturally secular nation we are. The petitioner who fought against Ayodhya Ram Mandir was invited and was present in the puja ceremony, and so were many priests representing all religious entities in India. It was a show of what lies ahead in the future, the rise of a peaceful, mature, tolerant and a prosperous nation.

Ayodhya Ram Mandir construction also transits a generational timeline. 30 years is certainly a massive generational time-lapse, if one were to only consider just the court trials. The



generation Z as it is called (those born after 1995) has very little idea of what transpired in Ayodhya, and they are not quite concerned about conflicts in the past space and time. Their focus is more on future, than on the past.

India now has an opportunity to start on a clean slate of communal harmony and brother-hood. The task of transforming one's heart into a temple, as Dr Mohan Bhagwat suggested is a step in the right direction.

I outline 4 tranformatory possibilities for a New India.

National Identity above everything: The citizens of New India should take more pride in their National Identity than any other identity. It is possible to crawl out of the social silos, which we have built through petty differences based on smaller identities. These differences diminished our true potential, engaging our energies on unproductive, negative actions.

When national identity takes over all other identities, there is homogenous national spirit. It can drive a cohesive effort towards accomplishing multiple national agendas. Elimination of poverty, making agriculture viable for small farmers, 100% literacy, gender justice, equal opportunity, infrastructural growth, corruption free governance, ease of business, wellness and individual prosperity are all possible.

Undivided agenda of Nation Building can lead India towards incomparable supremacy in the world. National Identity over everything, is an essential key for New India's rise.

Religious Freedom & Pride: In New India, no one should be PM Narendra Modi's speech heralded the rise of a New India. As always, Narendra Modi directed his thoughts towards future, India's imminent rise, potential of Indian nationals, his vision for religious harmony and brotherhood. As a centuries old conflict ended peacefully, and the construction of a magnificent Ram Mandir is initiated in Ayodhya, there are many take-aways for all Indians to once again realize, how tolerant and a naturally secular nation we are. The petitioner who fought against Ayodhya Ram Mandir was invited and was present in the puja ceremony, and so were many priests representing all religious entities in India. It was a show of what lies ahead in the future, the rise of a peaceful, mature, tolerant and a prosperous nation

apologetic about their religion, their god, their places of worship or their religious rituals. Once all Indians consider national identity is above everything, religious identity will remain purely a personal and private affair. If religious identity doesn't impact one's life and livelihood, it transforms into a non-denominator.

New India should not allow politics to divide people based on religious identity. It should bluntly shun the all forms of religious appeasement. Elections should be fought, and outcomes decided on social empowerment, quantifiable economic results, good governance and measurable betterment of lives and livelihoods.

Religious identity with no special advantages or disadvantages, will be rendered free of hate and division. Religion should be practiced with all splendor and glory, as it drives great personal

and social values. Faith builds great hope and drives individuals to purse their dreams without having to quit in despair. Religious practice also promotes family unity, togetherness and provides a great support system.

Work is Worship: New India should drive a national value 'Work is Worship'. Lack of this value is lowering national productivity. Work culture is driven by this value, and it drives an individual to attain skills, give his best effort, deliver expected results, be accountable for roles assigned, take pride in being a professional and upgrade skills regularly.

regularly.

New India should respect all professions and ensure all citizens transform into competent professionals. Vocational skills should dominate the educational system, while academic and research orientation should certainly be given its due.

Lack of professionals and professionalism is draining this nation's productivity and leading to massive pilferage of resources and missed opportunities. New India should focus on re-orienting the national mind-set towards professionalism.

Social & Communal Harmony: New India should not clap and whistle for rabid speeches. Rabble rousers should not be made heroes on primetime TV shows. There must be social decorum and communal conduct in the nation. Insolence and impudence should be shunned by all nationals. There should be strong laws and enforcement to contain those indulging in making brazen public statements and taking part in provocative actions.

Social and communal harmony must be promoted through inter-faith gatherings, meetings, associations and congregations right from the village level. Social and communal tolerance should be rewarded and exemplified through real-time role models. In fact, social and communal harmony should be actively promoted as a national value.

By the time Ayodhya Ram Mandir is built, India can undo the damage done to its social fabric. Decades of deviant political and social conduct through appearement and hate should be destroyed forever. As Dr Mohan Bhagwat said, all Indians should transform their hearts into temples and find god within

(The author is the chief spokesperson of the BJP, an organisational strategist and a global leadership coach)

DELHI RIOTS 2020



Fact finding panel confirms targeted violence

GHIASUDDIN

On 18 March 2020, the Fact-Finding Committee (FFC) constituted by Delhi Minorities Commission (DMC) submitted its report on Delhi riots of February 2020. A riot is an identity-based violence which is a by-product of rage in identity politics. It has a rueful impact on the lives and livelihoods of people, almost like war between two hostile nations.

Several incidents highlighted by the report conclusively state that there was a systematic and targeted violence against a specific community. Shops with specific names in Bhajanpura Market and Nawaral Market were targeted as part of identity-based violence. The attacks on 17 mosques and unfurling of saffron flag on Allah Wali mosque in Karawal and Maula Baksh mosque in Ashoka Nagar are gory reminiscence of the medieval era, where the victorious either trampled down the sacred sites of the defeated or changed its nature, as an ultimate sign of subjugation and humiliation of the opposite party. Desecrations of the mosques during this riot was to humiliate the identity of the so called 'defeated'. As mentioned in the report, the riots were in retaliation to the anti-CAA protests. It is indeed unfortunate that in the 'world's largest democracy', citizens are being punished for availing their democratic right to a peaceful protest.

Politics aside, it is important to note how these incidents are connected with legal impunity and affect the administration of justice. Just like common citizens are bounded by the law and any unlawful act done by them will jeopardise their liberty, the public officers and servants are bound by law to protect the life, property, and liberty of citizens and maintain peace and tranquillity in the society. If the public officials fail to perform their duties, they can be punished but a 'government-political' sanction under Section 197 of Criminal Procedure Code (Cr P C) is required to start investigation or they are admonished or reduced in their rank under All India Service Rules. However, no such permission is required to start investigation against the common man. The legislative intent behind section 197 of Cr P C is to protect public servants and officers from frivolous prosecution for act done 'in the course of their employment'. The power to give green signal for investigation against the officials is usually subject to the whims and fancies of the ruling party. Law presumes that he/she acts in the interest of State in the course of their employment. By no stretch of imagination, their non-performance of duty in tumult and fury of identity-based violence can be an act 'in the interest of nation'. However, for investigating their role in failing to prevent or control the targeted violence, this provision acts as a legal impediment in administration of justice to the victims of violence.

FFC-DMC states that the violence escalated in the days following BJP leader Kapil Mishra's speech. The High Court of Delhi on 26 February 2020, while hearing a petition seeking the registration of a First Information Report against BJP leaders Kapil Mishra, Anurag Thakur and Parvesh Verma for their speeches that led to incitement of violence among other prayers, asked the Delhi Police to take a "conscious decision" to register an FIR in 24 hours. Justice Muralidhar expressed "anguish" that the city is burning and questioned the Delhi Police on the delay and its lack of acknowledgment of the speeches themselves as crimes.

On July 14th 2020, the Delhi Police states in an affidavit that there is no prima facie evidence against Kapil Mishra and others to register an FIR. Hope this will not be considered as an act of dereliction in the future.

Dereliction by the police is not limited to acts of delay in deployment of armed forces in rush hours of riots. But the anonymous, unnamed, omnibus references as well as delay in FIR during investigation i.e., post-riots are the perfect legal pitfall that makes the conviction of real perpetrators almost difficult. The incidents of violence and reaction of police have been clearly documented in the report – the police force finally came at around 6.30 pm on 23 February 2020. A police officer aimed his gun at the attackers but someone from within the police force, may be a Daroga (see pg 42) stopped the policeman, saying 'do not stop them' (attackers). The police officers then stopped, which intensified the loot and arson. The omission of a police officer is an offence under section 119 as an abetment of offence.

Another incident of Faruqiya Masjid near Brijpuri and its after-

math reveals the scheme to derail the administration of justice. "Delhi Police personnel personally visited him (complainant) and conveyed to him a message to compromise with the named persons or write a new complaint without naming the persons in his complaint." (pg 40 of FFC-report).

The act of police personnel forcing complainant not to disclose the names of perpetrators is one of essentials for the offence under Section 166 and 166A of IPC. Under Section 166 and 166A whoever being a public servant 'knowingly disobey, to the prejudice of any person, any other direction of the law regulating the manner in which he shall conduct such investigation, shall be punished for not less than six months but which may be extend to two years'.

Sanction is pre-requisite for the investigation under Section 119 of IPC but under Section 166 and 166A it is not required, yet the role of sanction which is political in nature plays a pivotal role in the administration of justice against the public servants.

The report further documents the slurs such as 'kaat do in Mullon ko'- cut these Mullas into pieces-. In present times, the words 'Mulla' and 'kut-mulla' is slur associated with Muslims in North-India. It is vocabulary to express a sense of animosity and inferiority against them. The legislation like 'Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989' has criminalised the caste-specific slur associate to Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe and this has helped reduce the caste specific crimes in India. There is need to recognise and criminalised the religious-identity based slurs that instigates violence on par with the above mention legislation. If these slurs are not criminalised, religious identity-based violence could very well blow into genocide.

Further, the FFC of DMC conclusively states that the Delhi riots were identity-based violence and when this identity transcends from 'non-State actors' to 'State actors', the very notions of rule of law and justice is limited to the privileged identity.

For the non-occurrence of such riots in the future or to mitigate the chance of occurrence or loss of life, it is imperative that the Command Responsibility is introduced in the Indian criminal law. As recommended in the report of FFC, Command Responsibility will make the higher officials responsible in their failure to command the subordinates to act. It encompasses the failure to take reasonable steps to prevent crimes, as well as the failure to punish crimes that have occurred and outlaw the practice of sanction as pre-requisite for the investigation of public officers/servants in incidents of such identity-based violence.

(The writer is a Hyderabad-based advocate. Views expressed are personal)

More loans to MSMEs a bad idea

This refers to the report 'Liquidity to MSME rises to as bank loans cross Rs 1.38 lakh crore' (August 5). While giving again loans to the MSMEs which are heavily indebted, banks should be very careful that this loans don't add to debt problems and also very careful that banks when lend more to this entities don't use it as a way to find out the money back to themselves to bail out the bad loans given in past. What really needs to improve MSME's is business conditions is stronger growth as we come out of this recession and also looking at this situation, finding ways to give them debt relief rather than additional debt. Restructure the debt they already have. Interestingly, banks are giving loans to MSMEs who already had loans. What about the MSMEs who have no loans or finding ways to get loans.

Vikas Panchareddy, Hyderabad

People's welfare should be priority, not temple

The inaugural or Bhumi Pooja of Ram Mandir in Aayodhya happened on August 5. People have fought for this for many years and finally won, the government of Uttar Pradesh set a budget of more than Rs 500 crore



for a number of development and projects in Ayodhya, but right now there are more than 22,000 active cases of Covid-19 in the State. People are suffering and are unable to handle the pandemic all by themselves. Here we can see the priorities of the government where the government is ready to spend Rs 500 crore for Ram Mandir and not enough for the medical and other required facilities for the people suffering from coronavirus or for native migrants. Sure, people have been fighting for Ram Mandir for decades but there is a time for everything. In these pandemic times, the first priority of the government should be their people, not Ram Mandir.

ient should be their people, not Ram Mandir. **K Nikitha Rachel Melissa,** Tarnaka, Secunderabad

Political agenda behind Ram Mandir

On August 5, it became clear that political agenda, rather than religious worship, was behind the foundation stone laying ceremony of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. On August 5 last year, the Centre abrogated Article 370 and 35 A. This year on the same day, people of

Jammu and Kashmir were preparing to observe Black Day in protest against the removal of special status. The government and even common people knew about this since a long time ago. The government performed Bhoomi Pujan on August 5 to suppress voice of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The government knows very well that in this modern age, the best way to suppress the voice is to shut down the internet and not give the media a chance to raise voice. Bhumi Pujan was performed to divert the attention of the media from Jammu and Kashmir so that all the media of the country would focus only on Ayodhya. They should not get a chance to cover news related to Jammu and Kashmir. It is not just this year. Now every year in the future, the whole Indian media and all Indians will term August 5 as Ayodhya and Ram Mandir Day and not as Black Day for Jammu and Kashmir. The government also succeeded in implementing its agenda. Apart from Ayodhya throughout the day, not a single news was seen on television channels. The most shameful thing is the fact that the media of our country was so engrossed in covering Ayodhya that it did not feel the need to show the news of fire in Covid hospital in Ahmedabad.

Narayan Hari, Chandigarh

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HC frowns at ₹52,000 cr spending on Amaravati

Petitioners present **CRDA** records of funds spent so far on capital to the Full Bench of the court, urging it to declare provisions of decentralisation Act invalid



- The judges observe that this was public money and the state exchequer will suffer a lot if they go waste
- The court also seeks details of how many buildings have been completed, at what stage the construction has been stopped and what are the dues to contractors from Accountant General too

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Nelapadu (Amaravati): The Full Bench of High Court comprising Justice Rakesh Kumar, Justice M Satyanarayana Murthy and Justice A V Sesha Sai expressed serious concern over the huge expenditure on Amaravati capital city, on Thursday.

Hearing a batch of petitions on the funds spent on construction of capital city at Amaravati, the bench wanted to know how

much funds so far have been spent, where the construction was stopped and other details, after advocates Unnam Muralidhar and K Indranil Babu representing the petitioners submitted to the Full Bench the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) records stating that so far Rs 52,000 crore has been spent.

The writ petitions prayed, among others, that the chapter III of the Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Act, 2020 proposing to shift the capital from Amaravati and constituting different capitals declared as devoid of legislative competence and violative of the principal of promissory estoppel and violative of Article 14,19,21, 300A of the Constitution besides being violative of the principles of natural justice and amounts to cheating under the veil of sovereignty by the

The Full Bench remarked that this was public fund and the state exchequer would suffer a lot. The Full Bench also wanted to know as to how many buildings were completed, at what stage the construction was stopped and what is the due amount to be paid to the contractors. The justices also asked the government to submit the details in full.

The Full Bench also served notice on the state Accountant General ordering him to submit the details from where these funds were raised.

The case was posted for further hearing on 14 of this month.

IMPLEMENTATIN OF APRSA

Gave ₹22,111 cr to AP: Centre

- In an affidavit submitted to the AP High Court, Union Ministry of Home affairs says almost all the provisions of AP Reorganisation Act have been fulfilled
- According to it, Special Category Status is not granted as 14th **Finance Commission did not** make a distinction between special category and general category states

Amaravati: The Centre on Thursday informed the Andhra Pradesh High Court that it has released Rs 22,111.88 crore as post-devolution revenue deficit grant and another Rs 16,510 crore under different heads, including capital city development, to the state during 2014-20.

In a counter-affidavit on a petition seeking grant of Special Category Status (SCS) to Andhra Pradesh and implementation of the provisions of AP Reorganisation Act, 2014, the Union ministry of home affairs said the issue of grant of SCS was considered keeping in view the larger interest of the nation.

The 14th Finance Commis-

sion did not make a distinction between special and general cat-

egory states. Its approach was to fill the resource gap of each state to the extent possible through tax devolution and, if such devolution alone could not cover the assessed gap, for certain states a revenue deficit grant was provided, it said.

Assistant Solicitor General N Harinath filed the counter-affidavit before a bench of Justices Rakesh Kumar, A V Sesha Sai and M Satyanarayana Murthy, opposing the petitioner's plea.

The Centre said the Finance Commission recommended a total award of Rs 22,113 crore to AP for the five-year period (from 2015).

Out of this, Rs 22,111.88 crore has been provided to the state, it added.

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

It also said a sum of Rs 3,979.50 crore was released out of Rs 4,117.89 crore assessed as resource gap for the period June 2, 2014 to March 31, 2015.

For the multipurpose Polavaram project on River Godavari, the Centre said a sum of Rs 8.614.16 crore had been released so far.

The ministry of finance sought clarification (from the state government) on the audited statement of expenditure and revised cost estimate of the project at 2013-14 price level, for further release of funds.

It said the Advisory Committee of Union ministry of Jal Shakti had on February 11, 2019 approved the revised cost estimate for an amount of Rs 55,548.87 crore at 2017-18 price

Referring to the 13th Schedule of the APRA, 2014, the Centre maintained that provisions under Section 93 of the Act relating to setting up of infrastructure projects and national educational institutions have a long gestation period of 10 years.

The Centre also said it amended provisions of the Income Tax Act, 1961 to extend additional financial incentives for setting up new manufacturing enterprises in the backward areas of the state.

The Centre said almost all provisions under Section 92 (12th Schedule) of the APRA (on matters relating to coal, oil and natural gas, and power generation, transmission and distribution) have been implemented.

From these facts and circumstances, the writ petition needs to be dismissed, the Centre requested the High Court.

A similar writ petition on the issue was pending adjudication before the Supreme Court.

TDP slams inaction over crimes on women

Demands action on YSRCP supporters who allegedly molested a 10-year-old girl in Rajamahendravaram

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu accused the government of turning a blind eye to the molestation of a 10-year-old girl by YSRCP 'goons' in Rajamahendravaram. He also retweeted a video of girl's parents appealing to Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy for justice to their daughter.

In a statement on Thursday, the TDP president said the incident occurred under Rajamahendravaram rural police station and demanded stringent action

against the culprits. Stating that the ruling party

ciding the location of capital of the state.

activists were threatening the parents of the girl for lodging the complaint, he observed that the lackadaisical attitude of the YS-RCP government towards crimes committed by its supporters was making them bolder by day.

Naidu recalled how the offences against women continued unchecked in the past 14 months under Jagan Mohan Reddy rule. The latest assault has taken place even before the recent kidnap and rape of a 16-year-old Dalit minor girl by 12 miscreants is forgotten, he said.

"It appears that the YSRCP goons have no fear of the law going by how they left the gangrape survivor at the police station after perpetrating the crime. In another incident in Kurnool district, a tribal woman was gangraped right in front of her husband," he said.

Botcha accuses Naidu of blocking Vizag growth

- Claims besides north Andhra, people of Krishna and Guntur districts too are welcoming three capitals
- Asks TDP leaders of the region whey they are still in a party whose chief is obstructing the development of north Andhra
- Alleges that the state 'lags 30 behind' in development owing to the 'mean' policies of former chief minster

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Visakhapatnam: Minister for municipal administration and urban development Botcha Satyanarayana said that TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu was obstructing the growth of Visakhapatnam and questioned the TDP leaders why they should continue in such a party that hinders growth.

Addressing the media here on Thursday, the minister said Naidu had a wonderful opportunity to serve the people of Andhra Pradesh for five years. "What did he do during his



Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development Botcha Satyanarayana addressing media in Visakhapatnam on Thursday

tenure? It is shameful that he is only bent upon safeguarding his assets and his coterie," he said.

He said that Visakhapatnam would witness a comprehensive development which will stand out in the country. The development will be centred on bringing back the lost glory of Visakhapatnam, he said, adding Amaravati farmers would not be left behind. "Besides north Andhra people, even those residing in Guntur and Krishna districts are in favour of three capital cities," Satyanarayana claimed.

It is because of Naidu's 'mean' policies and sole capital development, the minister alleged that the state lagged 30 years behind in terms of development.

"Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy favours decentralised administration so that the fruits of development would reach all sections of people across the 13 districts of the state. We are not going to encourage 'dramatic' politics like Naidu," Satyanarayana added.

About the much-hyped Ganta Srinivasa Rao's joining the YS-RCP, the minister responded, "When the YSRCP wants and when Ganta leaves the TDP, he will join the party."

GANTA'S ENTRY INTO YSRCP OPPOSED

HANS NEWS SERVICE witnessed similar protests, includ-

Visakhapatnam: Raising slogans, the YSRCP leaders in Bheemunipatnam constituency staged a protest against TDP Visakhapatnam North MLA Ganta Srinivasa Rao joining YSRCP.

The protestors alleged that those involved in land-grabbing should not be part of the YSRCP. A number of places across Bheemunipatnam constituency

ing PM Palem, Chennapuram and Tagarapuvalasa.

While activists from 1,2,3 and 4 wards staged a protest at Madhurawada and Dr.B.R. Ambedkar junction, a few others from wards 5,6,7 and 8 participated in the dharna at PM Palem. In some places, the protesters raised slogans and held placards, while in others areas, they formed human chain as a mark of protest.



joining the YSRCP in Visakhapatnam on Thursday

Buggana visits skill centre at Kia

Penukonda(Anantapur): Finance minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy visited the Kia Skill Development Centre near Kia factory along with Roads and Buildings minister Sankara Narayana here on Thursday. Kia Motors managing director Shim explained the training mode through a power point presentation. They also visited the computer laboratory, Assembling shop, Engine, Paint, Press and Body shops in the factory and also basic technical maintenance shop. Speaking on the occasion, Rajendranath said that the government is preparing a common syllabus for training in the skill development centres in the state.

Moderna vaccine candidate protects mice from Covid: Study

'BJP leaders should clarify their

stance on capital: Padmasri

Amaravati: The Amaravati Women JAC member and Congress leader

Sunkara Padmasri said BJP showed its real face with the Union gov-

ernment telling the High Court that Centre has nothing to do in de-

Reacting to the affidavit submitted by the Union ministry of home

She demanded that the state BJP leaders to clarify their stand on

the issue as they had been expressing support to Amaravati agitation.

affairs on Amaravati case on Thursday, Padmasi it had become clear

that BJP was not with the farmers agitating for Amaravati.

Continued from P1

This structure was used by Moderna in the development of the vaccine candidate, according to the researchers.

The latest study found that the investigational vaccine also induced robust CD8 T-cell responses in mice. It did not induce the type of cellular immune response that has been linked to vaccine-associated enhanced respiratory disease (VAERD), according to the researchers.

This rare, allergic-type inflammation was seen in individuals vaccinated with a whole-inactivated respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine in the 1960s, they said.

The researchers explained that VAERD can occur when a vaccine induces an immune response that is not strong enough

to protect against infection. They vaccinated mice with subprotective doses of mRNA-1273 and then challenged the mice with SARS-CoV-2.

The mice showed no evidence of enhanced lung pathology or excessive mucus production, indicating the vaccine did not cause enhanced disease, the researchers found.

The team noted that the data from these studies, combined with data from studies in nonhuman primates and Phase-1 clinical testing, support the evaluation of mRNA-1273 in clinical efficacy trials.

The researchers also explained how their prior research on a candidate MERS-CoV vaccine paved the way for a rapid response to the Covid-19 outbreak.

New healthcare facility for pensioners

Continued from P1

He will get fixed medical allowance for treatment in OPD. IPD treatment will be provided only after depositing the fixed contribution to CGHS. If they want to fully avail the facility of CGHS, they will have to pay the fixed contribution amount for one year or ten years. After this they will get life time validity of CGHS card. If non CGHS pensioners want to pay for their treatment, they will have to register at the nearest CGHS center. For this, they can choose any of the above options. If they do not do so, their bills will not be paid by the department.

12-yr-old raped,

Initial investigations reveal that the girl's parents were away at work when she was assaulted. According to the police, she was struck on her head and face with a sharp object multiple times.

The Delhi Commission for Women has sought a report from the police by Saturday. "Reportedly, the girl was brutally raped and then the culprit(s) tried to kill her. Presently, she is fighting for her life in AIIMS, Delhi. It is reported that she was attacked with blunt objects and has injuries all over her body. This is a very serious matter,"

India warns China against Kashmir interference

Continued from P1

The government on Wednesday received a letter of support from the US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs which held China responsible for the aggression along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh.

Chairman and Ranking Democrat Member Eliot Engel and Ranking Republican Member Michael McCaul, wrote jointly on behalf of the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs, saying that they wanted to demonstrate the strong bipartisan support for the US-India relationship.

"Members of both parties recognize the impact that a strong US-India partnership will have on the trajectory of the 21st century. As Prime Minister Modi said in February of this year, our ties 'are no longer just another partnership. It is far greater and closer relationship.' This closer relationship is all the more important as India faces aggression from China along your shared border, which is part of the Chinese government's consistent pattern of unlawful and belligerent territorial aggression across the Indo-Pacific.

"The United States will re-

main steadfast in support of India's efforts to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity," the letter addressed to Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar said.

The US House Committee in its letter also acknowledged the "ongoing serious security and counterterrorism concerns" in Jammu & Kashmir and said that it looks forward to "working with" Indian government to "address these concerns while upholding our shared commitments to the democratic values and freedoms on which our countries' bond was built".

Standoff with China likely to be prolonged: MoD

It further pointed out that subsequently second Corps Commander Level Meeting took place on June 22, 2020 to discuss modalities of de-eslogue at military and diplomatic level is continuthe report stated. The report ended with saying that "prompt action based on evolving situation"

The third meeting took place on June 30 and it went on for around 12 hours. During the meeting, all contentious areas of stand-off were dis-

but did not. India claims Line of Actual Control at Finger 8 and Chinese are sitting between Finger 4 and Finger 5. Similar, differences exist in Depsang and Demchok.

The fourth meeting took place on July 14 where India and China military delegates held deliberations about disengagement of troops and materials at the borders for 15 long hours. Indian delegates asked Chinese People's Liberation Army troops to completely withdraw from Pangong Lake and Depsang.

The fifth meeting that took place on August 2 made it clear that China's commitment for disengagement at the border in Eastern Ladakh was non-committal and the Indian authorities directed armed forces to prepare for a long haul.

8 Covid patients killed in Gujarat hospital blaze

Continued from P1

"Eight patients admitted in the ICU ward have died due to burning and asphyxiation. Looking at the primary information, it is assumed that the fire broke out due to a short circuit. Our officials are investigating the incident with the help of FSL experts. The bodies of the victims are being sent for the postmortem," said a senior police official of the Navrangpura police station.

The fire has claimed the lives of 5 men and 3 women, all corona patients admitted in the ICU ward, situated on the fourth floor of the hospital building.

Several fire fighters were rushed to the spot and within hours brought the fire under control. Shrey hospital, is a 50-bed private hospital declared as a dedicated Covid-19 by the Gujarat government.

"We have shifted over 40 patients admitted in the hospital to the SVP hospital in Ahmedabad. One of the paramedical worker is also badly affected from burns. Stable patients and other patients on Oxygen have also been shifted to the SVP hospital. The shifting process is still on," said a hospital authority.

Historian Sadia Dehlvi dies at 63

Continued from P1 Khushwant Singh dedicated

his book "Not a Nice Man to Know" to her. He wrote, "Sadia Dehalvi, who gave me more affection and fame than I loved."

In Khushwant Singh's book "Men and Women in My Life",

there is a photo of Sadia and

there is a chapter devoted to her

in the book. Sadia produced the

television show "Not a Nice Man to Know" with Khushwant Singh interviewing women from various fields. She lived with her son Armaan Ali Dehalvi.

Eminent historian S Irrfan Habib tweeted, "Very sad to hear about the demise of Sadia Dehalvi, a well-known cultural figure of Delhi, dear friend and wonderful person."

left to die in house

Continued from P1

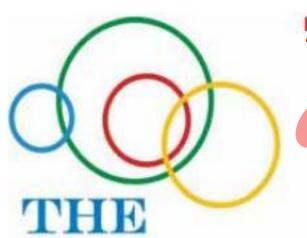
the panel said.

Continued from P1

calation process. "While engagement and diaing to arrive at mutually acceptable consensus the present stand-off is likely to be prolonged," should be taken.

cussed to stabilise the situation.

China had agreed to move back in Pangong Tso



TODAY'S QUOTE

India can be challenger to China in mfg

India has the inherent advantage of having a large domestic market and can evolve into becoming a manufacturing hub for the world. India can definitely become a challenger to China. But right now, China has a long lead over us – Hero Chairman Pawan Munjal



BANK RULE No multiple current accounts for borrowers

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has come up with additional measures to curb the use of multiple operating accounts for loans wherein banks have been directed not to open current accounts for customers already availing credit in the form of cash or overdraft (OD).

FOREX (bu	y rates i	n ₹)	V
US Dollar	79.44	South	
Euro	93.2	African Rand	-5
UAE Dirham	22.44	Hong Kong Dollar	11.12
Thai Baht	2.78	Japanese Yen	0.81
British Pound	102.3	New Zealand Dollar	52.32
Australian Dollar	56.75	Saudi Riyal	21.98
Canadian Dollar	59.32	Swedish Krona	9.92
Swiss Franc	85.69	Singapore Dollar	57.45

BIZ BRIEFS

Microsoft unveils new platform

New Delh: Microsoft on Thursday announced the general availability of its Power Platform Return to the Workplace solution in India to help organisations prepare for the return to work. Returning to the workplace will be a phased process and it will be vital for organisations to be equipped to give their leaders and employees timely and accurate information. Designed for fast deployment and customisation, the 'Power Platform Return to the Workplace' solution is a comprehensive, end-to-end set of modules built on a secure and compliant platform, Microsoft said in a statement. Together, the modules provide an endto-end experience for executive leaders, facility managers, employees, managers, as well as health and safety leaders.

Glenmark's **Covid drug**

Hyderabad: Drug maker Glenmark Pharmaceuticals on Thursday said it will launch a 400 mg version of oral antiviral drug FabiFlu for the treatment of mild and moderate Covid-19 in India. Currently, the drug is available in 200 mg dosage. The company, however, did not disclose the price at which it will be selling the drug. The higher strength will improve compliance for patients by effectively reducing the number of tablets required per day, Glenmark said. With the new 400 mg version, patients will now have a more relaxed dosage regimen, with 9 tablets required on Day 1 (4.5 in the morning and 4.5 in the evening), and thereafter 2 tablets twice a day from Day 2 till the end of the course. Glenmark is the first company in India to have received DCGI nod for the 400 mg dosage form.

New plan from **Bajaj Life Allianz**

Hyderabad: Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance launched a guaranteed income insurance plan -Bajaj Allianz Life Flexi Income Goal to enable individuals to create a financial back-up for their family's goals. This plan comes with features like flexibility to receive or accumulate survival benefits including cash bonus, guaranteed monthly income and guaranteed benefit. In this plan, policyholders are given high flexibility to choose to receive cash bonus from 1st month onwards of the policy or accumulate the benefits for earning additional returns. It's available in two variants - income benefit and enhanced benefit. Under the income benefit, at the end of each policy year, policyholders shall receive a cash bonus. Under the enhanced benefit, policyholder gets 50 per cent of the sum assured as a lump sum at the end of the premium payment term.

FICCI, OYO in partnership

Hyderabad: As the pandemic severely impacts the economy and the employment scenario, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) and hospitality major OYO have come together to develop and design an online training and certification course specifically for the hospitality industry. The course will focus on redesigning the sanitisation protocols and minimising person-to-person contact for a hotel in line with the standard operating procedures announced by the Union Ministry of Tourism, said a joint statement. "The certification course will help thousands of individual budget, mid-segment, boutique hotels and homestays in India as well as hospitality professionals, to maintain and improve their safety and hygiene standards," it said.

HANS BUSINESS

Economy is extremely weak: RBI

Apex bank keeps key interest rates on hold as inflation worries haunt; surge in fresh infections weighs

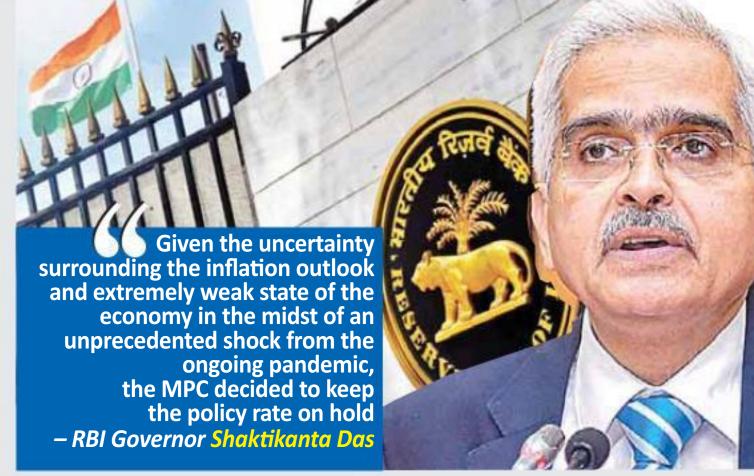
Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday kept key interest rates unchanged to help tame inflation that in recent times had surged past 6 per cent mark, and said that the economy is in an extremely weak condition following the Covid-19 pandemic.

After cutting interest rates by 115 basis points since February, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) after three days of deliberations voted unanimously to leave the policy repo rate unchanged at 4 per cent.

The MPC also decided to "continue with the accommodative stance of monetary policy as long as necessary to revive growth, mitigate the impact of Covid-19 while ensuring that inflation remains within the target" zone, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said, while delivering the decision of the MPC on monetary policy.

"Given the uncertainty surrounding the inflation outlook and extremely weak state of the economy in the midst of an unprecedented shock from the ongoing pandemic, the MPC decided to keep the policy rate on hold," he added.

Das said the central bank would remain "watchful for a durable reduction in inflation to use the available space to support the revival of the economy." While, economic activity had started to recover from the lows of April-May, a



forced re-clamping of lockdowns in several cities and states to "level-off" various high-frequency indicators.

The six-member MPC saw upside risks to food prices and elevated headline inflation during July-September, which would ease in the second half of the 2020-21 fiscal.

The Governor said the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) was of the view that supply chain disruptions on account of the Covid-19 pandemic persists, with implications for both food and non-food prices.

"A more favourable food inflation outlook may emerge as the bumper rabi harvest eases

surge in fresh infections have prices of cereals, especially if open market sales and public distribution offtake are expanded on the back of significantly higher procurement. Nonetheless, upside risks to food prices remain," Das said.

> "The abatement of price pressure in key vegetables is delayed and remains contingent upon normalisation of supplies. Protein-based food items could also emerge as a pressure point," he said.

Keeping interest rates unchanged will help achieve the medium-term target of consumer price index (CPI) inflation of 4 per cent with a band of +/-2 per cent while supporting growth, RBI said.

real GDP growth for the April 2020 to March 2021 fiscal.

"Real GDP growth in the first half of the year is estimated to remain in the contraction zone. For the year 2020-21 as a whole, real GDP growth is also estimated to be negative," Das said.

Das announced a Rs 10,000 crore additional special liquidity facility for the housing sector and smaller non-bank finance companies (NBFCs). To deal with economic disruptions caused by Covid-19, RBI allowed lenders to implement a resolution plan for corporate loans without change of ownership.

Debt restructuring relief for MSMEs

Mumbai: In view of the continued need to support the viable MSME entities on account of the fallout of Covid-19, the Reserve Bank on Thursday extended the one-time debt restructuring for small businesses by another three months to March 2021.

Besides, the central bank has also relaxed some of the existing provisions for availing this scheme by the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

With Covid-19 rupt normal functioning and cash flows, the stress in the MSME sector has got accentu-

ated, warranting further support, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said while announcing the central bank's bi-monthly monetary policy outcome.

"Accordingly, it has been decided that stressed MSME borrowers will be made eligible for restructuring their debt under the existing framework, provided their accounts with the concerned lender were classified as standard as on March 1, 2020. This restructuring will have to be implemented by March 31, 2021," he said.

As per the existing scheme, the borrower account had to be standard as on January 1, 2020. Asset classification of borrow-

ers classified as standard may be retained as such, whereas the accounts which may have slipped into NPA category be-



tween March 2, 2020 and date of implementation may be upgraded as 'standard asset', as on the date of implementation of the restructuring plan.

However, the RBI asked banks to maintain additional provision of 5 per cent over and above the provision already held by them for accounts restructured under these guidelines.

The RBI has also retained the aggregate exposure limit of the existing guidelines. As a result, the exposure limit also including non-fund based facilities of banks and NBFCs to the borrower should not exceed Rs 25 crore as on March 1, 2020.

More glitter to gold loans

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India on Thursday added additional shine to gold ornaments and jewellery by allowing banks to give loans up to 90 per cent of the value of such items pledged by borrowers.

At present, loans sanctioned by banks against pledge of gold ornaments and jewellery is up to 75 per cent of the value of such items. The additional loan against jewellery is expected to mitigate the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on households, entrepreneurs and small businesses and help them tide over their temporary liquidity mismatches. "With a view to further mitigate the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on households, entrepreneurs and small

businesses, it has been decided to increase the permissible loan to value ratio (LTV) loans against pledge of

gold ornaments and jewellery for non-agricultural purposes from 75 per cent to 90 per cent," the RBI said in its circular sent to all commercial banks.

Innovation Hub' on anvil

pabilities which can be leveraged to deepen financial inclusion and promote efficient banking services. "The Innovation Hub will support, promote and hand-hold cross-thinking spanning regulatory remits and national boundaries," RBI said in its Regulatory Policies'. The Hub, it added, will act as a centre for ideation and incubation of new capabilities which can be leveraged to cial products and/or services to help

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank on deepening financial inclusion, effi-Thursday said it will set up an 'Inno- cient banking services, business vation Hub' in the country for continuity in times of emergency ideation and incubation of new ca- and strengthening consumer protection, among others. Observing that the Reserve Bank has constantly endeavoured to encourage responsible innovation by entities in financial services sector, it said the central bank earlier took various initiatives for setting up Regulatory Sandbox. 'Statement on Developmental and The Regulatory Sandbox framework was one such recent initiative in which digital payments were the first cohort, RBI said, adding "six proposals were accepted under the create innovative and viable finan- Sandbox, the pilot studies/ trials of which have been delayed on account achieve the wider objectives of of the present Covid-19 situation."

Startups get priority sector tag

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday decided to broaden the scope of Priority Sector Lending (PSL) by including startups and enhancing borrowing limits for renewable energy sec-

tors. Broadening the scope of PSL, it has been decided to include "startups; increasing the limits for renewable energy, including solar power and compressed bio gas plants; and, increasing the targets for lending to "Small and Mar-



ginal Farmers" and "Weaker Sections", the central bank said.

The central bank would also increase the targets for lending to 'small and marginal farmers' and 'weaker sections' under the PSL. The eligible entities get access to credit on easier terms from

banks under the PSL. Banks are required to assign 40 per cent of Adjusted Net Bank Credit or Credit Equivalent Amount of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure, whichever is higher to priority sector, including agriculture and micro-enterprises, it said.

Mkts march higher on RBI stance; IT stocks up

Mumbai: The Sensex surged 362 points while the Nifty reclaimed the 11,200-mark on Thursday after the RBI left interest rates unchanged but maintained an accommodative stance to shore up growth.

After rallying 558 points during the day, the BSE Sensex ended 362.12 points or 0.96 per cent higher at 38,025.45. The broader NSE Nifty jumped 98.50 points or 0.89 per cent to finish at 11,200.15.

Tata Steel was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rising 3.82 per cent, followed by Infosys, Bajaj Finance, HCL Tech, TCS, ICICI Bank and Tech Mahindra. On the other hand, M&M, Bharti Airtel, L&T and Axis Bank were among the laggards, shedding up to 0.75 per cent. Sectorally, rate-sensitive banking, realty and auto indices settled up to 1.15 per cent higher.

"Indian benchmark indices came off highs but still closed out a volatile day with gains, following RBI commentary regard-

Sensex surges 362 points while Nifty reclaims 11,200 mark



ing interest rate outlook. Although expectations of a rate cut were there, RBI kept rates on hold, following a rise in inflation. However, it has indicated that monetary policy will remain accommodative until growth revives," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

We believe that if inflation remains under control, there will be further policy easing from the central bank. With this event out of the way, markets are expected to turn focus back on earnings visibility and quality, he said.

Road transport sector likely to contract by 18-20% in FY21

40-day lockdown has aggravated prevailing softness in economy

New Delhi: The domestic road transport sector is likely to contract by up to 20 per cent on account of Covid-19 pandemic-induced challenges, rating agency Icra said on Thursday.

It has also revised the

outlook on the logistics sec-

tor from 'stable' to 'negative', given the prevailing circumstances and its impact on the industry metrics. The rapid rise of Covdpandemic subsequent restrictive measures implemented by

the central and state governments to contain the disease have adversely impacted the prospects of the Indian logistics sector, especially the road freight transportation movement, Icra said in a statement. The implementation of the 40-day nationwide lockdown aggravated the prevailing softness in the Indian economic activity, resulting in a deIt has also revised the outlook on the logistics sector from 'stable' to 'negative', given the prevailing circumstances and its impact on the industry metrics

cline in freight availability during Q4FY20, which further contracted sharply in Q1FY21, it said.

"In FY21, Icra expects a contraction of 18-20 per cent year-on-year in aggregate revenues of its sample of logistics companies. Additionally, the near-term profitability metrics are anticipated to remain under pressure given the subdued fleet utilisation levels in light of muted freight availability, and continued high fixed costs such as driver salaries, truck EMIs and maintenance costs," the



agency said. Accordingly, the outlook on the sector has been revised to 'negative' from 'stable', it added.

"The implementation of nationwide lockdown to contain the Covid-19 spread resulted in disruption in supply-chains across sectors, restrictions on crossborder movement and dearth of availability of drivers and thereby led to contraction in revenue of the logistics sector in Q4FY20; and subsequently in Q1 FY2021," said Shamsher Dewan, Vice President, Icra Ratings. Further, the nearterm growth prospects of the sector also remain subdued owing to the evolving Covid-19 situation, which has exacerbated the Indian macroeconomic growth scenario, he said, adding that accordingly, the domestic logistics sector is expected to contract sharply in the current fiscal.

Icra noted that the freight movement during the period was impacted by restrictions on cross-border movement, shortage in availability of drivers and manpower due to largescale migration and lack of availability of return load.

In addition to the impact on the road logistics sector, the macro-economic slowdown and evolving Covid-19 situation also had a bearing on rail and seaway freight traffic, with freight volumes contracting by 21.3 per cent and 19.7 per cent y-o-y, respectively, during Q1FY21, it said.

Nabard, NHB get ₹10k cr liquidity

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India has once again turned its attention to meeting the funding requirements of NBFCs, MFIs and housing finance by providing additional special liquidity facility of Rs 10,000 crore to National Housing Bank (NHB) and the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard).

Announcing a series of liquidity and regulatory measures to ensure economic activity continues in this period of Covid-19 outbreak and the lockdown, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said advances under the special liquidity facility would be charged at repo rate at the time of avail. This will allow the institutions to provide onward support to housing finance companies and small non-bank finance companies at competitive rates.

As per the RBI decision, under the special liquidity facility both NHB and Nabard would be provided Rs 5,000 crore capital each that will be used to refinance the identified sector.



A health worker collects blood sample of Delhi Civil Defence personnel for the serological survey at a school, during unlock 3.0, in New Delhi on Thursday

109 succumb in Maha police

Mumbai: A total of 137 new COVID-19 cases and two deaths were reported in the Maharashtra Police force in the last 24 hours, taking the total count to 10,163. With two more fatalities, the



total deaths in the state police force reached 109. Out of the total number of police personnel infected with coronavirus, 8,189 have recovered and 1,865 cases are active, informed the Maharashtra Police on Thursday. Maharashtra with 1,46,268 active cases and 3,05,521 cured and discharged patients continues to be the worst affected. The state has also reported 16,476 deaths due to the infection, as per the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Veteran Communist leader dies



Kolkata (IANS): Veteran leader of Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), Shyamal Chakraborty, passed away at a private hospital here on Thursday. He was tested for Covid positive and got admitted to a hospital on July 29. He was suffering from respiratory problems and was put on ventilator. His

condition deriorated on Sunday night and immediately he was put on life support. Initially, he was admitted to a private hospital at Ultadanga but later shifted to a private hospital near EM Bypass. The next day his health condition slightly improved but again it deteriorated and he stopped responding to the medical treatment, hospital sources said. Chakraborty died at 1.45 p.m., sources said.

K'taka Min, 2 JD-S MLAs infected

Bengaluru (IANS): Karnataka Minister of Cooperation S.T. Somashekar and two Janata Dal-Secular (JD-S) legislators -- G.T. Devegowda and Naganagouda Kandkur tested positive for coronavirus and are under treatment, an official said on Thursday. "Though Somashekar tested positive for COVID-19, he is asymptomatic and quarantined at home in the city. His office



has also been sealed after his personal assistant too tested positive for the virus," the department official told IANS here. Somashekar, who defected from the opposition Congress and joined the ruling BJP in November, got re-elected from the Yeshwantpur Assembly in the city's northern suburb during the December 5 bypolls. Devegowda, a legislator from Chamundeshwari Assembly in Mysuru district, took a Covid test and the result came out to be positive. "As Devegowda is asymptomatic, he has been home quarantined in Mysuru," a JD-S official said.

'Hospitals can't turn away patients'



Bengaluru (IANS): No private hospital in Karnataka can turn away a patient without attending to him or her, irrespective of the Coronavirus status, an official has said. "Private medical establishments shall not deny treatment and ad-

mission to any patient approaching the establishment irrespective of the fact that such patient may or may not be suffering from Covid-19," an official from the state Health and Family Welfare Department said on Wednesday. Likewise, no private hospital can insist on a patient for a Covid-19 test report, said the official invoking the Disaster Management Act. "The establishments also cannot insist for Covid test report," he said, directing all private hospitals to strictly abide by their responsibilities. According to the department, it is the duty of every private hospital to provide first aid and take lifesaving steps when any patient approaches it.

Two TN MPs, MLAs test positive

Chennai (IANS): The number of people's representatives from Tamil Nadu testing positive for coronavirus went up by four with two Members of Parliament (MP) and two legislators turning into Covid-19 patients. The two MPs are CPI's M. Selvaraj representing Nagapattinam and



DMK's S. Ramalingam from Mayiladuthurai who have tested positive for coronavirus. Similarly actor-turned-politician Karunas, a legislator elected on AIADMK symbol from Thiruvadanai constituency and AIADMK legislator S. Pavunraj from Poompuhar seat also tested positive for Covid-19. Several legislators including ministers and political leaders belonging to the ruling AIADMK and the opposition DMK have tested positive for corona in the recent past.

500 inmates in Arizona affected



Phoenix (IANS): More than 500 inmates at a prison in the US state of Arizona have tested positive for the novel coronavirus, authorities said. In a statement on Wednesday, the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and

Reentry (ADCRR) said that 517 inmates at the ASPC-Tucson Whetstone prison have contracted the virus and were been housed in separate areas while receiving medical care, reports Xinhua news agency. "They will not be allowed back into the general population until they have been medically cleared," the statement added. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ADCRR said that it has taken significant actions to mitigate the risk and impacts of COVID-19 in its facilities. "Keeping our staff, inmates and communities safe continues to be our top priority," the statement added.

110 students quarantined in US



Washington (IANS): More than 110 students have been ordered to quarantine at home for 14 days after six children and a school staffer tested COVID-19 positive in a school district in the US state of Mis-

sissippi. Taylor Coombs, spokesperson for the Corinth School District, told CNN on Wednesday that a total of 116 students, considered to be in "close contact", were asked to quarantine, reports Xinhua news agency. In a letter posted on Facebook on Wednesday, the Corinth School District told parents that an individual from Corinth Middle School tested positive as well as an employee at Corinth Elementary School. The letter added that the school district has carried out contact tracing and is asking anyone who came in contact with the infected individuals to quarantine for 14 days.

Alcoholism drug may help fight virus, says study

Moscow (PTI): Disulfiram, the medication used to treat alcoholism, may help in the fight against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, according to a study.

The researchers from National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE) in Russia noted that the structural elements of the novel coronavirus that are less subject to mutation during its evolution should be chosen as a target for the potential treatment.

Otherwise, a medication effective against one strain would no longer be effective against another, they said.

The best candidates for this are conservative proteins, such as the



SARS-CoV-2 virus main protease M pro, according to the study published in the Mendeleev Communications

In addition to being resistant to mutations, M pro plays a major role

in coronavirus replication, which means that its inhibition is able to slow down or even completely stop its reproduction inside the body, the researchers said. The potential drugs were taken from the database of medications approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The modelling data demonstrated that sulphur-containing drugs show unusually high ligand efficiency at the active centre of SARS-CoV-2 main protease Mpro, but only disulfiram 4 retains stable interactions.

Most commonly used for treating alcoholism, disulfiram fights SARS-CoV-2 in two ways, the researchers said.

First, as previously demonstrated in vitro with SARS and MERS coronaviruses, it is a covalent inhibitor, they said.

It fights COVID-19 symptoms such as the significant decrease in reduced glutathione, which is an im-

portant antioxidant, according to the researchers.

This deficiency may lead to severe manifestations of the disease, they said. The Russian chemists said they were also the first to predict the potential efficiency of neratinib, an irreversible tyrosine kinase inhibitor, against SARS-CoV-2.

According to the researchers, the tests that were performed on July 27, 2020, demonstrated that disulfiram really inhibits M pro in 100 nm concentration, which confirmed the results of the modelling.

The second substance -- neratinib - demonstrated activity on M pro, but
it was insufficient for clinical use,
they said

Virus spread contained, claims Health Minister

New Delhi (IANS): India's Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Thursday asserted that the spread of coronavirus has been contained in the country, citing how half the total cases are from three states only and another 30 per cent from seven others.

His remarks come as the country is inching towards the grim mark of two million cases. It has already logged over 40,000 deaths and is recording more than 50,000 daily cases since the past few days.

India's COVID-19 tally rose to 19,64,537 with 56,282 fresh cases in the last 24 hours, according to the Union health ministry data.

The total death toll climbs to 40,699 with 904 deaths in last 24 hours.

Active COVID-19 cases in India are stand at 5,95,501, while 13,28,336 people have recovered from the disease.

Speaking at a virtual meeting

of WHO's Regional Director, South East Asia, Poonam Khetrapal Singh with Health Ministers from the region on maintaining essential health services and public health programmes in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, Harsh Vardhan alluded to the efficacy of the government's containment strategy.

"The strategy has been successful in that 50 per cent of the cases are from three states and 32 per cent of the rest are from seven states. The spread of the virus



GLOBAL CASES AT 18.7 MN

Washington(IANS): The overall number of global coronavirus cases has topped 18.7 million, while the deaths have increased to over 706,000, according to the Johns Hopkins University. As of Thursday morning, the total number of cases stood at 18,727,530 and the fatalities rose to 706,041, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed in its latest update. The US accounted for the world's highest number of infections and fatalities at 4,821,287 and 158,171, respectively, according to the CSSE. Brazil came in the second place with 2,859,073 infections and 97,256 deaths. In terms of cases, India ranks third (1,908,254), and is followed by Russia (864,948), South Africa (529,877), Mexico (456,100), Peru (439,890), Chile (364,723), Colombia (334,979), Iran (317,483), the UK (307,258), Spain (305,767), Saudi Arabia (282,824), Pakistan (281,136), Italy (248,803), Bangladesh (246,674), Turkey (236,112), France (228,576), Argentina (220,682), Germany (214,113), Iraq (137,556), Canada (120,033), Indonesia (116,871), Philippines (115,980) and Qatar (111,805), the CSSE figures showed.

thus has been contained."

The Minister said that the lockdown was effective in slowing down the rate of growth of cases and gave the government time to augment the health infrastructure and testing facilities.

"From one lab in January, India has 1,370 labs today. Indians anywhere can access a lab within



Plasma therapy trial by AIIMS shows no benefit

New Delhi: Convalescent plasma therapy did not show benefit in reducing mortality risk among COVID-19 patients, according to an interim analysis of a randomised controlled trial done at AIIMS, Delhi to assess the efficacy of this mode of treatment.

During the trial, one group of patients was given convalescent plasma therapy along with the standard supportive treatment while the other group only received standard treatment. The number of fatalities recorded in both the groups was equal and there was not much clinical improvement in the condition of patients, he said.

three hours travel time. 33 of the 36 states and UTs (Union Territories) exceed WHO's recommendation of testing 140 people per million per day."



Taste bud cells might not be target of Covid-19

New York (IANS): Contrary to the previous findings, which stated that the novel coronavirus directly targets taste buds cells in Covid-19 patients, a new study has now revealed that the loss of the sense of smell and taste linked to inflammation caused by the infection. "An intriguing early symptom among some Covid-19 patients is the loss of the sense of smell and taste, which has led to the suspicion that the virus that causes the illness, SARS-CoV-2, could be targeting taste buds," said study authors from the University of Georgia in the US. "But the initial data from mice suggest that might not be the case," the authors wrote in a paper published in the journal ACS Pharmacology & Translational Science.

According to the study, viruses cause infection by invading specific cells in the body and reproducing, often damaging or killing those cells in the process. Research has shown that SARS-CoV-2 enters human cells through angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2), a receptor on the surface of some cells, including those of the human tongue. For the current findings, the research team wanted to find out whether ACE2 was expressed specifically in taste bud cells, as well as when this receptor first emerges on tongue cells during fetal development, by studying mice as a model organism.

BRAZIL MULLS EXTENDING EMERGENCY

Brazilia(IANS): Brazilian Economy Minister Paulo Guedes said that the government was considering extending an emergency economic aid program to the nation's poorest citizens amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Brazil will face another "one or two more months of economic difficulties" as a result of the impact caused by the pandemic, Xinhua news agency quoted Guedes as saying on Wednesday. "We will examine, together with the Congress, the reformulation of emergency aid along with the creation of the 'Renta Brasil' program," the Minister said. According to the government, more

than 65 million people have so far received the emergency government aid. In April, it had approved an initiative to offer monthly financial aid amounting to 600 reals (\$113) to low-income informal workers and single mothers for a period of three months. The government extended the program for another two months on July 1, and because of its positive impact, it was now considering continuing it until the end of the year, but lowering the amount disbursed.

Brazil currently accounts for world's second highest number of coronavirus cases and deaths.

Total*-20,06,760* COVID-19 Cured* **Active cases** 13,28,336 in India J&K 7285-Meghalaya 594 Ladakh 421 -Assam 14432 HP 1140 WB 22992 Nagaland 1807 Punjab 6422-Chandigarh 535-Uttarakhand 2923 Haryana 6133-UP 41973 Sikkim 496 Delhi 10072 Rajasthan 12678 MP 8741 Gujarat 14680 Dadar & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu 404 Chhattisgarh 2465 Maharashtra 146268-Telangana 20358 Goa 2072 -Andhra Pradesh 82166 Karnataka 73966 -Puducherry 1700 Kerala 11524 Tamil Nadu 54184 Andaman & Nicobar Islands 687

FB, Twitter remove Trump clip over misinformation

San Francisco(IANS): Facebook and Twitter have removed a video clip from an interview in which US President Donald Trump claimed children were "almost immune" to coronavirus.

The social media platforms said the statement by the US President made during the interview to Fox News violated their rules related to Covid-19 misinformation.

While Facebook removed the clip posted by the President, Twitter briefly suspended a Trump campaign Twitter account, @TeamTrump, for tweeting the video clip which contained the same claim.

The Trump campaign Twitter account became active again after the tweet with the clip was apparently removed.

"This video includes false claims that a group of people is im-

"This video includes false claims that a group of people is immune from COVID-19 which is a violation of our policies around harmful COVID misinformation," a Facebook spokesperson was quoted as saying by the BBC.

This is the first time Facebook



removed a post by Trump for violating its Covid-19 misinformation policy.

A Twitter spokesperson said that the tweet by @TeamTrump was in "violation of the Twitter Rules on Covid-19 misinformation"

However, the microblogging platform, which is facing allegations of being biased against conservative politicians, earlier determined that a post by billionaire Elon Musk which suggested that children were "essentially immune" to coronavirus did not vi-

olate its rules. Studies have shown that while children can get the disease, their risk of suffering serious complications due to the disease is lower compared to adults.

This was not the first time Twitter took action on a Trump post. In May, Twitter labelled two Trump tweets that made false claims about mail-in ballots in California.

Facebook also removed a Trump campaign ad featuring a symbol used by Nazis for political dissenters, saying the ad violated its policies.

Kuwait approves repatriation flights

Kuwait City (IANS): Kuwait has approved a request to operate flights to repatriate Indian expatriates wishing to return home amid a ban on air travel imposed by Gulf country, including India, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a media report said on

Thursday.

Kuwait's DirectorateGeneral of Civil Aviation
(DGCA) agreed to the flights
starting from August 10 until
October 24, Gulf News
quoted the Al Qabas newspaper as saying in the report.
According to the DGCA

approval, 1,000 Indians will leave Kuwait daily, to be flown equally by Kuwaiti and Indian airlines.

Indians account for almost 1 million of Kuwait's 4.7 million population.

"The arrangements proposed by the Indian side are limited to departure only and do not include their return to Kuwait," the Al Qabas newspaper report said citing an informed source as saying. "The decision to ban entry of travellers from 31 countries to Kuwait is still in effect."

take place, even without specta-

"This autumn onwards, we will

have a meeting body attended by

these three parties, so we will see

the outcome of this meeting

body," Takaya told reporters ear-

International Olympic Com-

mittee (IOC) President Thomas

Bach had said in July that the IOC

is opposed to staging events with-

IPL 13: BCCI to invite tender for title sponsorship after Vivo's suspension

New Delhi (IANS): Following the official confirmation regarding Vivo's exit as title sponsors for the 13th edition of the Indian Premier League, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will now invite bids through a tender process for IPL 2020 in the next few days.

Speaking to IANS, sources in the know of developments said that the BCCI will follow due diligence and transparency while recruiting a new title sponsor for IPL 13.

"BCCI will come out with the ITB soon. Tender process will be followed as the board believes in transparency," the source said.

Under the Invitation to Bid (ITB), the winning bidder will be granted title sponsorship rights for this year's IPL season set to be played in the UAE from September 19 to November 10.

Earlier on Thursday, BCCI decided to officially announce the suspension of the partnership with title sponsors Vivo.

The move comes after the BCCI and the IPL Governing Council were both criticised for retaining Vivo as the title sponsor



amid raging anti-China sentiment.

The government has already banned 59 Chinese mobile apps, placed stringent restrictions on Chinese investments, and is reviewing the partnerships Indian educational institutions have with Chinese counterparts.

All this development took place in the backdrop of tensions between the two countries along the LAC in Ladakh where a scuffle between the two armies resulted in the death of 20 Indian soldiers in June.

Earlier on Monday, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), which is spearheading a movement for boycott of Chinese goods, had also criticised BCCI's decision to retain VIVO, the Chinese company, as IPL's title sponsor.

It's almost time: Bumrah shares excitement ahead of IPL 13

Ahmedabad (IANS): Jasprit-Bumrah cannot wait for the 13th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) to kickstart, and the Indian ace pacer took to social media on Thursday to share his excitement.

The BCCI will be organising the IPL at three UAE venues --Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah -- from September 19 to November 10 after it was postponed from March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's almost time," said Bumrah in a tweet with a photo of him celebrating after taking a wicket in a Mumbai Indians jersey. Bumrah had played a crucial role in Mumbai's record fourth title win in IPL last season.

On Wednesday, India's Test vice-captain AjinkyaRahane had also expressed his excitement for IPL 2020.

Rahane was traded by Ra-



jasthan Royals to Delhi Capitals in November last year. "New beginnings for me in the @ipl this year. Looking forward to the season," Rahane said in an Instagram post along with a photo of him batting.

Meanwhile, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has decided to suspend the partnership with title sponsors Vivo for IPL 13. This development came after the IPL Governing Council had on Sunday decided to retain the company as title sponsors.

Tokyo Bay Olympic rings temporarily removed

tors".

lier this week.

Tokyo (IANS): The Olympic ring monument in the Tokyo Bay area has been temporarily removed as it set to undergo safety inspections and maintenance following the postponement of the showpiece event.

According to Kyodo News, the rings will be placed back in the same position in about four months' times. The monument, which is 33m in width and 15m in height, was towed away by small

Tokyo 2020 was initially set to be hosted in July this year but due to coronavirus pandemic, it will now take place from July 23 till August 8 in

Games' spokesman Masa Takaya has not ruled out the possibility of hosting the postponed Olympic Games behind closed doors while insisting that nobody wants to see the games without spectators.

Japan's JIJI Press last week quoted an unnamed Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) executive, who is "close" to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, as saying that the games "should definitely

"He (Bach) is not willing to see the games without spectators," Takaya said. "Tokyo 2020 is not willing to see the games without spectators either. So no one is willing to see the games without spectators.

"In this respect, we will keep monitoring the situation carefully of COVID-19 then we will have thorough discussions among key parties to deliver a safe and secure games next year," he added.

Introduction of strength training has worked wonders: Maymol

New Delhi (IANS): Indian women's football team head coach Maymol Rocky has attributed the rapid improvement in her team to the introduction of strength training into the regular training regime of the play-

Speaking about it at length on AIFF TV, Maymol recalled the period when she first introduced it in the team. "We were preparing for the Olympic qualifiers and I remember the meeting with (General Secretary) Kushal Das sir and (National Teams Director) Abhishek Yadav. We had a longish camp and that was where we first introduced strength training in our regime,"

Maymol stated. "We had two physios, and both of them would be working 24-7 on different training exercises for the girls. We'd have one strength session in the morning, and a tactical session in the evening. We'd also have a video analysis session where we would show the girls where they went wrong and work on improving their games. These things made a world of difference," she added.

"Girls also need to be strong on the pitch, and this unit has proven that."

Along with the strength sessions, the physios also paid a lot of attention to the diet to supplement our training proce-

"It's all about knowing what



to eat. They're used to eating the usual home-food when they go back from the camp. But I made it a rule that if anybody comes back overweight they'd have to do a lot of extra work during the camps. That has got the girls cautious," Maymol opined.

With this rigorous preparation, India went on to make history as they qualified from the AFC Women's Olympic Qualifiers Round 1 for the first time in their history.

Maymol identified three players who have gone on to form the three pillars along the proverbial backbone of the side - goalkeeper AditiChauhan, captain Ashalata Devi, and striker Bala

"I have relied heavily on these three to keep the spirits high in the team. They are the three most experienced players in my team. They have really held the squad together," said Maymol.

CA mull moving Boxing Day Test from traditional **MCG** home

Melbourne (IANS): Cricket Australia is mulling the option of moving the Boxing Day Test from the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) in the wake of a spike in COVID-19 cases in the state of Victoria.

According to the Sydney Morning Herald, Adelaide has emerged as a potential host.

The report says that CA chairman Earl Eddings has called for a rare convening of the national cricket cabinet next week to talk about how the game's \$300 million season will go ahead.

A senior cricket official told The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age that there is no way the current schedule can go ahead as planned with the current state border restrictions amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier, Cricket Australia had said that the current schedule is subject to change and there are plenty of options being considered, including the use of hubs for the Tests against India and the Big Bash.

Last month, it had said it is working towards preparing Adelaide Oval in such a way that Australia and India cricketers get the best training facilities during the quarantine period before the Border-Gavaskar Trophy scheduled to be played later this year.

ENGLAND vs PAKISTAN 1ST TEST, DAY 2

Masood lone ranger for Pak as Eng make merry

Manchester (IANS): Shan Masood on Thursday showed composure of highest order but batters around him did not have an answer to England's bowling firepower as Pakistan were left reeling at 187/5 at Lunch on Day 2 of the first Test being played at the Old Trafford.

Opener Masood continued to graft on the second day as he reached 77* from 225 balls (10x4) but his overnight partner and highly-rated batter Babar Azam departed for 69, failing to add to his score from Wednesday. Resuming the day at 139/2, Babar was enticed into a false drive by James Anderson who had him caught at first slip by hosts' skipper Joe Root.

AsadShafiq (7) followed suit soon after as Ben Stokes took a superb catch at second slip off Stuart Broad's bowling to get rid of the new batsman.

Wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan tried to play watchfully alongside Masood at the other end but half an hour before the end of the first session, Chris Woakes did him with a wider from the crease delivery that caught Rizwan's edge of the bat and flew to 'keeper Jos Buttler.

Earlier on a rain-marred opening day, Pakistan -- after electing to bat -- reached 139/2 before umpire called Stumps due to bad light in the third session which saw only eight overs of play. **Brief Scores:** Pakistan 187/5 at Lunch (Shan Masood 77 batting, Babar Azam 69; Chris Woakes

2/28) vs England



Pakistan's Babar Azam (left) plays a shot during the first day of the first cricket Test match between England and Pakistan at Old Trafford in Manchester, England

IF THIS WAS KOHLI, EVERYONE WOULD BE **TALKING: HUSSAIN ON BABAR'S INNINGS**

Manchester (IANS): Former England captain Nasser Hussain has demanded more respect for Babar Azam after the Pakistan Test vice-captain put on a fine show with the bat on the first day of first Test against England at the Old Trafford.

Following the dismissals of Abid Ali and Azhar Ali, Babar put on an unbeaten 96-run partnership with Shan Masood to help the visitors end the rainmarred opening day at 139/2 on Wednesday.

Babar smashed an unbeaten 69 off 100 balls and his innings included 11 boundaries. Hussain stated Babar is already at the same level as India skipper ViratKohli and Australia batsman Steve Smith and urged for more attention towards the Pakistan star. "I think it is a real shame and it is in part a consequence of Pakistan playing away from home, playing in the UAE all the time in front of no one, Pakistan hiding in the

shadow of Indian cricket, not

going over and playing IPL cricket, not playing India," Hussain was quoted as saying by Sky Sports. "If this lad was ViratKohli, everyone would be talking about it but because it is Babar Azam, no one is talking about it. He averages 68 since 2018 and 55 in white-ball cricket. He's young, he's elegant, he's got all the swagger.

"They keep going on about the fab four, it's the fab five and Babar Azam is in that," he added.



Messi 'wants' to end career at Camp Nou: **Barca chief**

Barcelona (IANS): Barcelona FC President Josep Maria Bartomeu has once again insisted that talismanic forward Lionel Messi will stay at the club beyond his current contract. There is speculation that the record six-time Ballon d'Or winner is unhappy with the club's leadership. It was earlier reported by Gazzettadello Sport that Inter's owners are willing to table an outrageous four-year contract offer that would see Messi earn 50 million euros net a year. Messi's current contract runs through to June 2021 at the end of which he can leave the club for free.

Having right mindset important for Team India in next 1 year, says Raghunath

Bengaluru (IANS): The Indian men's hockey team must treat the next one year as a countdown to the Olympic Games in Tokyo, feels former drag-flick specialist VR Raghunath.

"I think the team must take this period as a one year countdown, and forget everything that's happened in the last 6-8 months. It is time to start afresh," said Raghunath.

The former defender, who was part of some of India's finest victories including the 2014 Asian Games gold medal and FIH Champions Trophy silver medal in 2016, further said that the six-week break would have helped the players recharge.

"The six-week break was ideal for the players to return to the national camp feeling fresh. The Indian team's fitness is top class and they will continue to build on this plus point the next one year but having the right mindset in their approach and staying mentally positive will be very



important," he said.

Putting things into perspective, Raghunath explained, "How the players cope mentally in this new scenario, how they approach every day mentally and once they start training and playing matches, how they will cope with the pressure and the results will matter

a lot.

Olympics, the last 6-8 months pass by really fast and the team must be absolutely prepared physically and mentally."

Commenting about the team's defence, Raghunath said India's current backline can challenge the best teams in the world.

"They are very experienced and the current set of defend-"Usually in the lead up to the ers have about 50-80 caps together. They know each other very well and I don't see them having any problems even when they are put in a tough match-situation against any top team in the world," said the Coorg-lad who continues to actively take part in domestic

hockey. He further highlighted that young dragflickerHarmanpreet Singh has matured as a player and with good support from senior compatriot Rupinder Pal Singh, India can produce lethal PC attack.

"Having two top dragflickers who can play full match is an advantage for India. Both Harmanpreet and Rupinder are equally good and they have completely different execution and qualities.

"Having various options and combinations in drag flick is always good. Plus, India has good options in Varun Kumar and AmitRohidas who can be great support when one of the two top flickers are having a rough day," opined Raghunath.

Official match balls for LaLiga 2020/21 unveiled

Mumbai (IANS): LaLiga and sports company Puma on Thursday unveiled the official match footballs to be used for LaLiga Santander and LaLigaSmart-

The football comes in two iterations; the 'Accelerate', which will be the primary ball for the season in traditional white, and the 'Adrenalina', in lemon tonic fluo yellow, which will

LaLiga be used for "El Clasico", "Derbies" and other decisive fixtures.

The Accelerate match ball will be utilised for the majority of LaLiga fixtures. The ball is designed to adapt to the precise and fast paced action of the league and is symbolic of how the games accelerate the fans heart rates.

The Accelerate is a traditional white ball featuring the colors of the LaLiga logo integrated into the design with custom acceleration graphics to showcase the explosive speed of the ball when moving.

The Adrenalina match ball has

been constructed for the special occasions and made for the extraordinary moments. This ball will be used for "El Clasico", "Derbies" and decisive

> matches throughout the 2020/21 season. The Adrenalina design features electrifying patterns symbolising the nerves in the

body to reflect the

heartbeat increasing and the body producing adrenaline in the players on the pitch and the fans in the stands. Both the Accelerate and Adrenalina are FIFA quality approved, guaranteeing the highest

level of performance. The footballs are high frequency molded for excellent shape retention, durability and reduced water absorption. A unique 8 panel configuration reduces the number of seams re-

sulting in larger panels for better connection with the ball.

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