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WINDOWS



Jagarnath Mahto

53-yr-old Jharkhand Education Minister enrolls in Class 11

Ranchi: Jharkhand Education Minister Jagarnath Mahto enrolled for Class 11 at a government-affiliated inter college under his Dumri constituency on Monday. The 53-year-old minister has opted for the Arts stream at the Devi Mahto Smarak Inter College Navadih in the Bokaro district. Mahto said that when he was sworn in as Education Minister for the state, he had to face a lot of criticism because of his education career that spanned only till Class 10. The constant criticism pushed Mahto to restart his educational career. "I will complete my education. I also do agricultural work and serve people. There is no age for learning. I will inspire people to do everything," Mahto said.

Urdu poet Indori, tested +ve for Covid, dies of heart attack

New Delhi: Well-known Urdu poet Rahat Indori died of heart attack at a hospital in Indore in Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday. He was 70. The poet had tested positive for coronavirus on Sunday. "He was admitted for coronavirus treatment but passed away after suffering a heart attack," his son Satraj Indori said. A doctor at Sri Aurobindo Hospital said Indori suffered heart attack on Monday. "He was admitted to the hospital on Sunday after testing positive for Covid-19. He had 60% pneumonia," said Dr Vinod Bhandari.

WOMENIA



KEEP THE CALM AT HOME

P2

BUSINESS



'GDP GROWTH MAY HIT LOWEST SINCE 1947'

P6



RAMP UP COVID TESTING

Modi tells CMs of 10 most-affected States

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that there is a need to increase coronavirus testing in states where the testing rate is low and the positivity rate is high.

Speaking at the meeting with Chief Ministers, held through video conferencing, the Prime Minister said if we defeat coronavirus in the 10 states then the country will also win.

"In states where the testing rate is low and the positivity rate is high, there is a need to increase testing there in particular, Telangana, Bihar, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. A view has emerged that testing should be increased in these states," he said.

"Today 80 per cent of active cases are in these 10 states. Hence, the role of all these states is very big in the fight against coronavirus. The number of active cases is exceeded 6 lakhs. Most of



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks during a discussion with the Chief Ministers of 10 States via video conferencing on Covid-19 situation, in New Delhi on Tuesday

Follow mantra of contact tracing, testing in 72 hours

these cases are in these 10 states," he said.

"That's why the need was felt for these states to sit together, review and discuss the issue. From this discus-

sion, we also got to learn a lot from each other's experiences. If we defeat coronavirus in these 10 states then the country will also win," he said. The Prime Minister

said that the number of testing has reached 7 lakhs per day and is also increasing continuously. He said that if we try more in a focused way then we can achieve the

target to bring down Case Fatality Rate (CFR) to less than 1 per cent.

"The average fatality rate is much lower than in rest of the world. It is a matter of

satisfaction. It is constantly decreasing. Percentage of active cases has decreased and the recovery rate has increased. So, this means that our efforts are proving effective," the Prime Minister said. "The most important thing is that it has also increased trust among people. Their confidence has increased and their fear of the infection has also decreased. If we try in a more focused way then we can achieve the target to bring down CFR to less than 1 per cent," he said.

He said that there was a phase when COVID-19 became a huge problem in some districts of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi. "We have seen that in some districts of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi, there was a phase when COVID-19 became a huge problem. We held a review meeting and a committee was formed under the chairmanship of Union Home Minister Amit Shah and to a great extent, we achieved desired results," he said.

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Russia claims vaccine ready

Putin says daughter inoculated

Moscow: Russia became the first country on Tuesday to officially register a coronavirus vaccine and declare it ready for use, despite international skepticism. President Vladimir Putin said that one of his daughters has already been inoculated.

Putin emphasized that the vaccine underwent the necessary tests and has proven efficient, offering a lasting immunity from coronavirus. However, scientists at home and abroad have been sounding the alarm that the rush to start using the vaccine before Phase 3 trials — which normally last for months and involve thousands of people — could backfire.

Speaking at a government meeting Tuesday, Putin said that the vaccine has undergone proper testing and is safe. "I would like to repeat that it has passed all the necessary tests," he said. "The most important thing is to ensure

full safety of using the vaccine and its efficiency."

The Russian leader added that one of his two adult daughters has received two shots of the vaccine. "She has taken part in the experiment," Putin said.

Putin said that his daughter had a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 Fahrenheit) on the day of the first vaccine injection, and then it dropped to just over 37 degrees (98.6 Fahrenheit) on the following day. After the second shot she again had a slight increase in temperature, but then it was all over. "She's feeling well and has high number of antibodies," Putin added. He didn't specify which of his two daughters — Maria or Katerina — received the vaccine. Russian authorities have said that medical workers, teachers and other risk groups will be the first to be inoculated.

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Covid recovery rate up at 70%

CASE FATALITY RATE FALLS BELOW 2%: GOVT

New Delhi: Successful implementation of containment strategy, aggressive testing coupled with standardized clinical management of critical patients have resulted in the rise of Covid-19 recovery rate to nearly 70 per cent, while the case fatality rate has fallen below 2 per cent, the Union Health Ministry said on Tuesday.

With more patients recuperating and being discharged from hospitals and home isolation (in case of mild and moderate cases), the total recoveries have jumped to 15,83,489 with 47,746 patients getting discharged in a span of 24



hours, it said. The national recovery rate has risen to 69.80 per cent, according to the Union health ministry. The actual case load of the

country is the active cases (6,39,929) which is only 28.21 per cent of the total positive cases and they all are under active medical

supervision, the ministry said. "With a consistent and sustained increase in recoveries, the gap between recovered patients and active Covid-19 cases has reached nearly 9.5 lakh. India's test, track and treat strategy is showing the desired result - the gap between percentage of recoveries and percentage of active cases of Covid-19 is growing every day," the ministry said.

Focus on improved and effective clinical treatment in hospitals, use of non-invasive, improved and coordinated services of the ambulances for ferrying patients for prompt and

timely treatment have resulted in seamless efficient patient management of Covid-19 patients, it said.

"As a result, the case fatality rate (CFR) has been low when compared to the global average. It has fallen below 2 per cent on Tuesday and currently stands at 1.99 per cent," the ministry said.

India's Covid-19 caseload rose to 22,68,675 with 53,601 new infections being reported in a day, while the death-toll climbed to 45,257 with 871 people succumbing to the disease in a span of 24 hours, the Health ministry data updated at 8 am showed.

2 killed in Baltimore blast

Baltimore: Two people are now confirmed dead following a natural gas explosion that destroyed three row houses in Baltimore and sent seven people to the hospital, authorities said Tuesday. Baltimore Fire Department spokeswoman Blair Adams said at a 9 a.m. news conference that a man was pulled from the debris shortly before 1 a.m. A woman had been pronounced dead at the scene shortly after Monday morning's explosion. Seven others were hospitalized, five in critical condition, Adams said.



Shooting near White House interrupts Trump's press briefing

Washington: A uniformed Secret Service officer shot and wounded a man during a confrontation near the White House that led to US President Donald Trump being abruptly escorted out of a briefing room during a televised news conference Monday, authorities said. The White House complex was not breached and no one under Secret Service protection was in danger, said Tom Sullivan, chief of the Secret Service Uniformed Division.

The name of the man, 51, and his condition were not released by Sullivan. The District of Columbia fire department said the man suffered serious or possibly critical injuries.

Sullivan said the man had claimed he was armed, moved aggressively toward the officer, and appeared ready to fire before the officer shot him once. Sullivan did not address whether the man had indeed been armed.

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Vice-President redefines norms to connect with people

Despite confinement due to lockdown, Venkaiah Naidu reaches out to many using technology

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: "Connecting, Communicating, Changing," in short this is how one can describe the style of functioning of the Vice-President of India, Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu, who has completed three years in office on Tuesday.

As the Vice-President of India, Naidu used to have at least 20 engagements per month and

used to speak at over 70 public events and 14 convocation ceremonies. But that was before the corona pandemic hit the country. Turning crisis into opportunity, he quickly came to terms with the confinement and redefined the norms of engagement and made extensive use of technology platforms to connect with the people.

Speaking at a function to release a publication



titled "Connecting, Communicating, Changing," by Union Defence Minister

Rajnath Singh, the Vice-President said that he spoke to over 1,600

people over phone individually sharing experiences of coping with the confinement and made extensive use of social media urging the people not to panic under the situation and instead make simple alterations in daily habits to deal with the situation. 350 tweets and 55 Facebook posts were used to reach out to the people with facts about the corona virus. Naidu described this

"Mission Connect" as very rewarding.

Naidu, who is also the Chairman of Rajya Sabha, brought Winds of Change. The research and analysis commissioned by him has revealed that the productivity of the House has been declining over the last 25 years with the House reporting annual productivity of 100% only once in 1999 during the last 20 years.

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Womenia

TWEET PATROL


**DIA MIRZA
@DEESPEAK**

A dream within a dream 💎 Yet if hope has flown away In a night, or in a day, In a vision, or in none, Is it therefore the less gone? All that we see or seem Is but a dream within a dream. — Edgar Allan Poe
Photo: Rafique Sayyed



KEEP THE CALM AT HOME



TEJAL SINHA

With diagrams of how to properly wash your hands flooding the internet, you might think that's the main way to prevent you and your kids from getting sick during the Coronavirus pandemic.

But fear, uncertainty, and being holed up at home to slow the spread of COVID-19, have made it tough for families to keep a sense of calm. It's important to help children feel safe, keep healthy routines, manage their behaviour and build resilience.

Here are some tips to help your family through the

outbreak:

Answer questions about the pandemic simply & honestly
Talk with children about any frightening news they hear. It is ok to say people are getting sick, but say following rules like hand washing and staying home will help your family stay healthy.

Keep in touch with loved ones

Children may also worry about a grandparent who is living alone or a relative or friend with an increased risk of getting COVID-19. Video chats can help ease their anxiety.

Keep healthy routines

During the pandemic, it is more important than ever to maintain bedtime and other routines. They create a sense of order to the day that offers reassurance in a very uncertain time. All children, including teens, benefit from routines that are predictable yet flexible enough to meet individual needs.

Structure the day

With the usual routines thrown off, establish new daily schedules. Break up schoolwork when possible. Older children and teens can help with schedules, but they should follow a general order, such as wake-up routines, getting dressed, breakfast and some active play in the morning, followed by quiet play and snack to transition into schoolwork.

A word about bedtimes

Children often have more trouble with bedtime during any stressful period. Try to keep normal nighttime routines such as Book, Brush, Bed for younger children. Put a family picture by their bed

for "extra love" until morning. Too little sleep makes it more challenging to learn and to deal with emotions.

Redirect bad behaviour

Sometimes children misbehave because they are bored or don't know any better. Find something else for them to do.

Creative play

Suggest your children draw pictures of ways your family is staying safe. Make a collage and hang it up to remind everyone. Or, build an indoor fort or castle to keep the germs at bay, bringing in favorite stuffed animals or toys.

Direct your attention

Attention--to reinforce good behaviors and discourage others--is a powerful tool. Notice good behavior and point it out, praising success and good tries. Explaining clear expectations, particularly with older children, can help with this.

Know when not to respond

As long as your child isn't doing something dangerous and gets attention for good behavior, ignoring bad behavior can be an effective way of stopping it.

Use time-outs

This discipline tool works best by warning children they will get a time-out if they don't stop. Remind them what they did wrong in as few words and with as little emotion as possible.

Samantha Akkineni is 'green obsessed'

Southern star Samantha Akkineni is obsessed with the colour green, going by her recent social media post.

Samantha, who has been growing vegetables at home, posted a picture on Instagram where she is seen dressed in a green-gold Indian attire. "Green obsessed," she commented.

Actress Hansika Motwani took to the comment section to praise Samantha's look.

She wrote: "So pretty."

Samantha recently shared some words of wisdom on how to be extraordinary. She posted a black-and-white picture of herself, with her back towards the camera. She is seen dressed in a long cotton dress. Samantha is known for her performances in films such as "Ye Maaya Chesave", "Neethaane En Ponvasantham", "Eega", "Mersal" and "Rangasthalam". She impressed all with her role in "Super Deluxe" last year. She will next be seen in "Kaathuvaakula Rendu Kaadhal", starring Vijay Sethupathi. The film also stars Nayanthara. It is directed by Vignesh Shivan.



Jackets from the '90s are cool again

Hate it or love it, the 90's trend is here to stay. They say history repeats itself and as it turns out, so does fashion! 90's is considered to be the golden era of fashion which witnessed the introduction and rise of jacket trends that are still relevant today.

Jackets and coats

Invest in some statement oversized coats and jackets. These add a great structure and layer to an otherwise ordinary outfit. Look for viscose and modal blended fabrics to ensure you have maximum comfort. Pair them with a plaid skirt or some straight cut pants.

Bomber jacket

The bomber jacket trend was massive in the 90's and now making a huge comeback. Thanks to the fashion industry gravitating towards at leisure and street wear fashion. While originally worn oversized and baggy, bomber jackets tend to look best with ripped jeans and sneakers.



Get your hair monsoon ready

The rainy season has stepped in, and as beautiful as it may seem, the rain can cause havoc for your hair if you are not careful. One of the most common problems faced during the monsoon is hair fall. This happens mainly because your scalp isn't clean and dry, and with the excess of moisture, it leads to all sorts of troubles. As astounding as it may sound, don't let it dampen your spirit.

All you need to do is to put in a little effort to take care of your hair and follow these important hair care tips that we've listed out for you.

Apply coconut oil

Applying coconut oil 15 minutes before you shampoo helps in preconditioning your hair. A pre-shampoo treatment with coconut oil makes hair greasy and lessens the water your hair soaks up during washing. It also deals with the scalp problems in men and women.

Keep the scalp clean with antibacterial shampoo

During the long monsoon month there is high oil secretion on the scalp, which makes the hair look flat at the roots. To combat this, it is essential to wash your hair regularly. Antibacterial hair shampoos and cleansers are hair care essentials for the scalp as they help fight fungal and bacterial infections.

A leave-in conditioner is a must

Rain water is usually acidic and dirty. If you are stepping out, use a protective leave-in conditioner and dry your hair naturally. It will form a protective layer on your hair and shield it from the damage rain water can cause. Besides, it will act as a deodorizer to keep your hair smelling good.

Keep your hair dry

While it may be tempting to step out in the rain or you may actually get caught in it, remember that as soon as you step inside your home, take the time out to wash and dry your hair. Excess moisture on the scalp is like inviting infection. Another hair care tip is to avoid tying your hair if it's wet.

Use the right comb

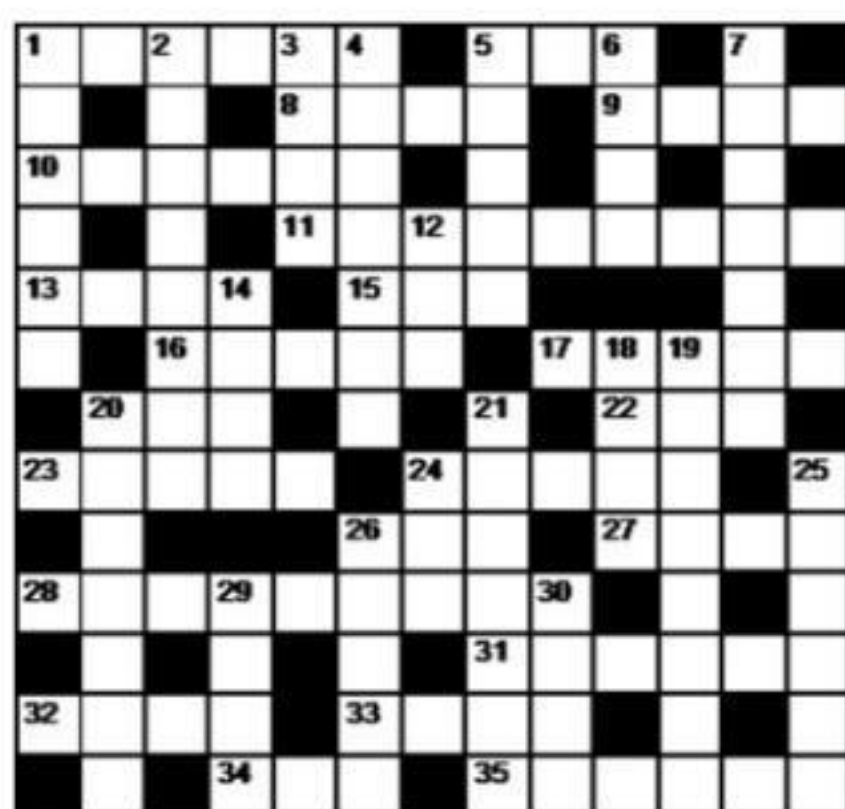
In all seasons, it is important to use the right kind of comb. Especially if you are dealing with wet hair, use a wide tooth comb because it will ensure that your hair doesn't break and get damaged.



QUICK TIP

Don't take things personally. Sometimes we get on each other's nerves while we're cooped up and under stress. Assume "purity of intention" with your partner.

— Mariana Falconier, Family studies expert



SOLUTION TO AUGUST 11

CROSSWORD

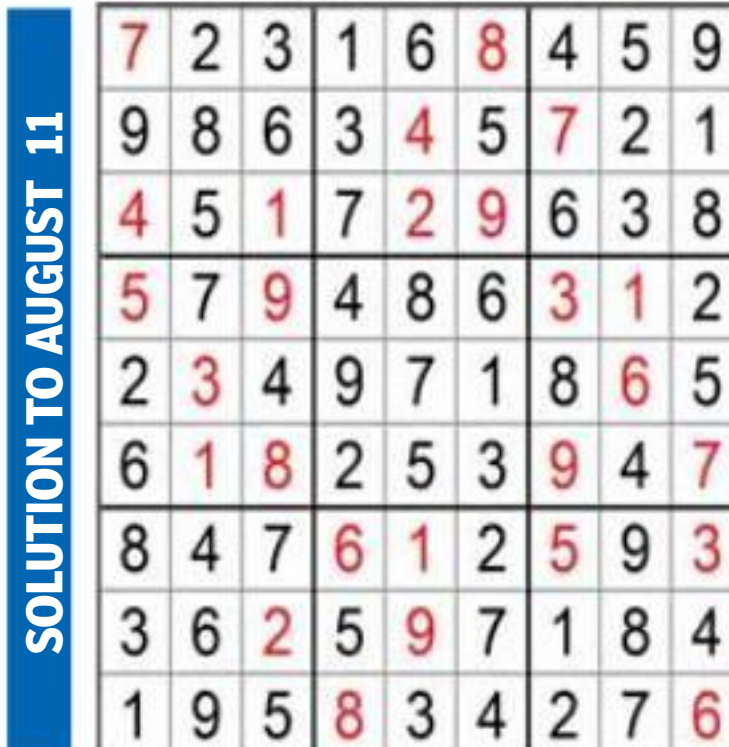
Across

- Big name in "penny journalism" (6)
- Curve (3)
- Side (4)
- Above (4)
- Original (6)
- Something that is radiated (9)
- Mystique (4)
- Examine, check (3)
- Freely (5)
- Drug-kicking program (5)
- Videlicet (3)
- Indian dish (3)
- Musical notes (5)
- Pretend (5)
- Long fish (3)
- Revise (4)
- Deliberately (9)
- Castrated man (6)
- Musical symbol (4)
- Taj Mahal locale (4)
- Cook in hot fat (3)
- Perceives an odour (6)

Down

- Group of seven (6)
- Ill effect of industrial pollution (4,4)
- Stellar object (4)
- City in W central Israel (3,4)
- Compass (5)
- Cover (4)
- Expulsion (7)
- Society page miss (3)
- A kind of axe (4)
- Border (4)
- Shackle (8)
- Talkative (7)
- Cashiers (7)
- Entrance money (3)
- Feels irritation or tingling in skin (6)
- Composition (5)
- Type of pastry (4)
- Beijing coin (4)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO AUGUST 11

NEWS ROUNDUP

Bipasha Basu has a personal photographer at home



Actress Bipasha Basu has a personal photographer at home. No prizes for guessing, it is her hubby Karan Singh Grover. Along with an Instagram post with a string of pictures featuring her, Bipasha wrote: "My personal photographer at home @iamksgofficial Me=Poser." The actress also shared a boomerang video flipping her hair. "Hair Swinging Kinda Mood #loveyourself," she wrote. On the work front, Bipasha reunites with Karan in the thriller "Dangerous", co-starring Suyash Rai, Natasha Suri, Sonali Raut, and Nitin Arora.

I-Day alert as SFJ offers \$125K for Khalistan flag at Red Fort

New Delhi (IANS): The security agencies are on high alert as the banned Sikhs For Justice (SFJ) is learnt to have announced a \$125,000 reward for anyone who hoists a Khalistan flag at the Red Fort on Independence Day on August 15.

Delhi Police, the nodal agency for law and order in the national capital, was busy co-ordinating with different security establishments ahead of Independence Day when it was alerted to the SFJ offer.

Over 45,000 security personnel will guard every nook and corner of the city on Independence Day, besides over 2,000 snipers deputed at specific locations on high-rise buildings in the 5-km periphery around the Red Fort.

Security agencies have meanwhile assured that it is "just an attempt by the SFJ to create panic". Senior Delhi Police officers connected with making the security arrangements said any suspected person

will be taken into custody and that it is "impossible" to breach the security cordon on Independence Day.

The alert was issued after SFJ's Attorney and General Counsel Gurpatwant Singh Pannun put out a message on the social networking sites, announcing "a reward of USD 125,000 for anyone who will raise Khalistan flag at the Red Fort during India's 74th I-Day celebrations".

Declaring that August 15 is

not Independence Day for the Sikhs, the SFJ leader reminded the community that "1947 was just a swapping of rulers for them as the Indian Constitution labels the Sikhs as Hindus; a genocide of Sikhs was committed with impunity (1984) and natural resources of Punjab are being unjustly appropriated."

The pro-Khalistan group last month had declared that it planned to hold voter registration camps for its secessionist

agenda 'Referendum 2020' on August 15 in front of Indian Embassies in the US, the UK, Canada, Italy, Germany, France, Australia, and New Zealand during the Independence Day celebrations.

Indian security agencies have already asked these Embassies to be on alert.

Besides, the SFJ, banned by the Ministry of Home Affairs in July 2019 for advocating 'Referendum 2020', has chosen Punjab, Delhi, and Jammu

and Kashmir since July 4 to launch its online voter registration for 'Referendum 2020' through different portals but reportedly could not gather support. The group has used Canadian cyberspace twice for launching its voter registration for the referendum in Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir on the instructions of Pannun, who is among the nine pro-Khalistan activists designated terrorists by the Indian government last month.



BJP MP Sakshi gets death threat from Pak number

Kanpur: BJP MP Sakshi Maharaj has given a written complaint to the police claiming that he has received calls from a Pakistani number threatening to kill him in a bomb blast.

In the complaint to inspector in-charge of Sadar Kotwali, Dinesh Chandra Mishra, the MP from Unnao said that he got two phone calls from some terrorist organisation of Pakistan threatening to blow him up along with his residence.

According to the letter, the caller claimed that Kashmir would soon become a part of Pakistan and he also used foul language for the Ram Temple groundbreaking ceremony at Ayodhya.

The caller said that he and his mujahideens were keeping an eye on him round the clock, the MP said in the letter, adding that he also abused Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.



The MP has demanded that immediate steps be taken to save his life and property.

Acting on the complaint, Superintendent of Police Rohan P Kanay directed circle officer Yadendra Yadav and Kotwali in-charge to probe the matter and take help of surveillance teams. The SP said that a report has been registered. The MP has Y category security and police is also deployed at his residence but the security would be reviewed in the light of the threat call, the SP added.

No mask: Jadeja's wife argues with Guj police

Rajkot: India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja's wife entered into an argument with a police constable in Gujarat's Rajkot after the latter asked her the reason for not wearing a mask, police said on Tuesday. The cricketer was driving the car at the time of the incident on Monday night.

While he was wearing a mask, his wife Rivaba wasn't, a senior officer said. The cricketer's wife had a heated argument with head constable Sonal Gosai when the latter stopped her car at Kisanpara Chowk after noticing that she was not wearing a mask, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Manoharsinh Jadeja told PTI.

"Our primary investigation has revealed that Rivaba Jadeja was not wearing a mask. While it is a matter of investigation why the issue escalated, we have learnt that both the parties entered into a verbal spat," the DCP said. Following the argument, Gosai complained of uneasiness and was taken to a nearby hospital, he said. She was discharged after half an hour and is fine now, the officer said, adding that no FIR has been lodged as yet.

Kerala police begin probe into cyber attacks on journalists

Thiruvananthapuram (IANS): The Kerala Police on Tuesday began a probe into the complaint given by the Kerala Union of Working Journalists after some mediapersons came under cyber attack for posing inconvenient questions to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. State Police Chief Loknath Behra said in a statement that the Hi-tech Enquiry Cell and the Police Cyberdome have started the probe.

For the past few days a journalist couple working in a TV channel and another woman journalist with a different TV channel had come under unprecedented cyber attacks.

The major issue for the attackers seemed to be that these journalists were asking inconvenient questions to Vijayan in particular and the CPI-M in general.

SC backs daughter's right to property

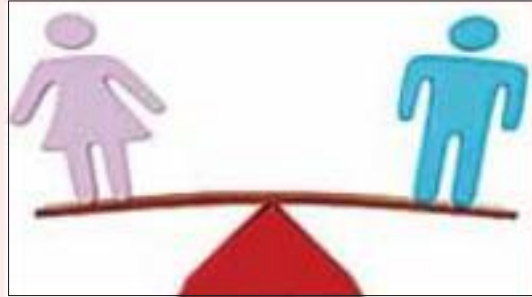
New Delhi: A woman can claim equal share in family property as a daughter, the Supreme Court reiterated today as it stressed that the Hindu Succession Act - that was amended in 2005 to give women equal inheritance rights - can have a retrospective effect.

A three-judge bench, headed by Justice Arun Kumar Mishra, today said, "Once a daughter, always a daughter... a son is a son till he is married. The daughter shall remain a coparcener (one who shares equally with others in inheritance of an undivided joint family property) throughout life, irrespective of whether her father is alive or not."

The question that urged the top court to make the remarks today was: "Does the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005, which gave equal right to daughters in ancestral property, have a retrospective effect?"

The top court was hearing a batch of appeals that raised the issue.

The question arose out of the



top court's contradicting rulings in 2016 and 2018 with regards to interpretation of Section 6 of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, which was later amended in 2005.

In 2018, the court had reaffirmed that a daughter "by birth become a coparcener in her own right in the same manner as the son."

The court today said a woman will have an equal share in undivided family property regardless of whether her father was alive when the law was amended in 2005 or not, stressing that the law has a retrospective effect.

In 2005, the amendment did not provide a retrospective operation. "Sons and daughters of a coparcener become coparceners by virtue of birth," according to the amendment.

RAJASTHAN CRISIS RESOLVED

Pilot returns to cockpit

Gehlot says will address grievances of Sachin Pilot



Randeep Surjewala and Ajay Maken, added "not to forget political instincts of (Ashok) Gehlot which rarely fail him".

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said, "The political crisis in Rajasthan Congress stands resolved amicably

by the intervention of none other than Rahul Gandhi himself."

"This is reflective of steadfast unity in Congress party and the commitment of Congress legislators to never fall prey to BJP's evil designs to defeat democ-

racy," he told PTI.

Senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh said he was very happy that finally the efforts of Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi "resolved the dispute of Rajasthan Congress".

"Now everyone should fulfill the promises made to the people of Rajasthan," he said.

Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said the path of reconciliation is the best for Pilot and "for all of us".

Hailing Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi for their efforts, Congress leader Jitin Prasada said, "We have managed to keep one of our own, Sachin Pilot, with us."

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Tuesday said it was his responsibility to address the grievances of MLAs and Pilot

TN CM asks Modi for ₹15,321 cr to fight pandemic

Chennai (IANS): Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K. Palaniswami on Tuesday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Rs 15,321 crore including a special grant of Rs 9,000 crore to fight the Covid-19 pandemic.

Speaking at the video conference meet of Modi with several Chief Ministers, Palaniswami also told the Prime Minister that the central government should bear 50 per cent of the Covid-19 test cost of Rs 5 crore incurred by the state per day.

"Both Central and State tax rev-



enue will fall short of the budget estimates. To make up for the shortfall, Tamil Nadu may be allocated 9,000 crore rupees special grant to combat Covid-19 and it's after effects on the State's economy," Palaniswami said.

Pointing out that the Tamil

Nadu government has received Rs 512.64 crore from the Centre in two tranches under the Emergency Response Health Systems Preparedness package out of the allotted Rs 712.64 crore, Palaniswami urged that the package be increased to Rs 3,000 crore.

"As we have already fully exhausted the State Disaster Response and Mitigation Fund, I also request an ad-hoc grant of 1,000 crore rupees from NDRF (National Disaster Response Force) immediately to fight the pandemic. Releasing a pending

CMR (custom milled rice) subsidy of 1,321 crore rupees at this time, will facilitate paddy procurement," Palaniswami told Modi.

In order to revive the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector in the state, Palaniswami urged Modi to instruct the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to provide at least Rs 1,000 crore as refinance facility to the Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation Limited from the Reserve Bank of India special packages.

3 bodies found; toll in Idukki landslide reaches 52

Idukki: The toll in the landslide in Pettimudi in the high range Idukki district rose to 52 with three more bodies being recovered from the debris as rescue operations continued on Tuesday to trace those missing.

The bodies of two men and a woman were recovered, officials said.

Personnel of NDRF, Fire, Forest and police departments have expanded their search operations to the downstream of a river in their efforts to trace 19 more people who were still missing in the August 7 tragedy near Rajamala, they said. Search is also being carried out at the site of the disaster to trace those feared trapped in the debris, the officials said.

Isha brings online yoga for Tamil Nadu prisoners

Coimbatore: On the request of Tamil Nadu Prisons Department, Isha Yoga Centre is conducting online yoga sessions for inmates at all Central Prisons in Chennai, Vellore, Coimbatore, Trichy, Salem and Palayankottai. Isha teachers trained by Sadhguru are delivering the online modules in Tamil to participants. The request was made by the State government's Prisons Department to improve physical and mental health of inmates.

The online sessions com-



menced on July 28 and include Yoga Namaskar, Simha Kriya and Isha Kriya. Simha Kriya is a 3-minute yogic practice designed by Sad-

hguru and offered to the world as a tool to enhance one's immune system and strengthen the respiratory system by improving lung capacity.

Several practitioners of Simha Kriya, around the world, including doctors have testified to the efficacy of the practice. Thousands of prisoners across Tamil Nadu are benefiting from the online sessions. Isha has been conducting yoga sessions in Tamil Nadu prisons for almost 20 years.

Learning more about Covid-19 reduces pandemic-related stress

New York (IANS): Researchers have found that if people know more about Covid-19, the less pandemic-related stress they will exhibit. The study published in the 'Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences' also found that making plans to reduce stress was also effective for older adults but not for people in their 40s or younger. "Covid-19 is a new disease -- it's not something that people worried about before so we wanted to see how people were responding to and coping with this new source of stress," said study co-author Shevaun Neupert from North Carolina State University in the US. "For the results, the research team surveyed 515 adults across the US. The adults ranged in age from 20-79. The cohorts of study participants had an average age of just under 40 and 46 of them were more than 60 years old. The surveys were conducted between March 20 and April 19,



2020. One part of the survey was a 29-item quiz designed to assess how much study participants knew about Covid-19. Coupled with other elements of the survey, this lets researchers assess whether an understanding of Covid-19 made people feel more stress or less."

"We found that knowledge is power. More the factual information people had about Covid-19, the less stress they exhibited. That was true across age groups," Neupert said. Accord-

ing to the researchers, knowledge reduces uncertainty and uncertainty can be very stressful. "Although speculative, it is likely that knowledge about this new virus reduced uncertainty which in turn reduced feelings of pandemic stress," Neupert added.

The researchers went into the study thinking older adults would likely experience more stress related to Covid-19 because the disease was portrayed as particularly dangerous to sen-

ior citizens. But they found that pandemic-related stress levels were the same for all age groups.

"These results suggest that everyone can benefit from staying engaged with factual information that will increase knowledge about Covid-19," the study authors wrote. "In addition older adults who are able to use proactive coping such as trying to prepare for adverse events could decrease their pandemic stress," they noted.

Another recent study, published in the journal PLOS One, revealed that the Covid-19 pandemic is causing higher levels of depression, anxiety, suicidal tendencies and psychological trauma among adults.

Recently, Australian researchers also found that elevated psychological distress, including depression and anxiety symptoms, were found among adults during the peak of the Covid-19 outbreak in the country.

Industrialist stuns guests with lifelike statue of wife

Bengaluru: At an industrialist's housewarming ceremony in Karnataka, guests were stunned to see his wife sitting on a sofa at the entrance. Shrinivas Gupta's wife Madhavi had died three years ago in a car crash. It was Madhavi's dream home and her family couldn't think of moving in without her.

The answer was a silicone statue so lifelike that the guests were speechless when they walked into the industrialist's new house in Koppala district, some 353 km from Bengaluru, and saw the lady of the house, smiling, in a pink silk saree, according to News18 report.

According to Gupta, the statue was installed just ahead of the ceremony so his wife, Madhavi, could always live in her "dream home".

"It is a great feeling to have my wife again at my home; this was her dream home. The house was designed as per her

wishes and she alone was monitoring the progress of the construction of the house," Mr Gupta said, adding he and his daughters missed her terribly.



"Artist Shreedhar Murthy from Bengaluru took a year to make the statue. Silicone was used instead of wax for durability," he said, adding that the statue was built inside the house with the help of their architect Ranghannanavar.

"Our architect suggested I get a silicone statue instead of a wax statue as we live in Koppal, which is a hot place, and an AC can't be used all the time to maintain correct temperature for wax," Mr Gupta added.

RBI debt recast timely, but more steps needed

In its last week’s bi-monthly monetary policy announcement, the Reserve Bank of India pressed the ‘pause button’ on its rate cut spree. The country’s Central bank kicked off its rate cut spree in February 2019 soon after Shaktikanta Das, a retired bureaucrat, assumed charge as the RBI Governor. From a high of 6.25 per cent in February last year, the key repo rate at which the RBI lends to banks has come down to 4 per cent now. Barring on three occasions when it kept the key interest rates unchanged, the apex bank’s six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) reduced interest rates whenever it met. The status quo in key rates in this August policy was the fourth ‘pause’ in the last 19 months. The RBI Governor cited inflationary pressures for holding key rates this time. However, the apex bank maintained an accommodative stance, hinting that it

would go for more rate cuts if the situation warranted. But the key positive takeaway from the RBI’s latest bi-monthly policy review is its announcement on one-time debt restructuring for companies and individuals. It has asked banks to provide a window for debt recast by corporate as well as individual borrowers who did not default on repayments till February this year. This is aimed at easing the financial burden caused by Covid-19 pandemic on borrowers. The decision even enables personal loan borrowers to restructure their debt. Further, the apex bank also increased the loan component on gold value. Till now, financial institutions are allowed to lend gold loans up to 70 per cent of the value of the yellow metal. This has now been enhanced to 90 per cent, thus putting extra funds in the hands of existing and new gold loan borrowers. The load recast scheme will also provide relief to financially-strained MSMEs. RBI set up a five-member committee headed by KV Kamath, former ICICI Bank chairman, to work out modalities for the debt restructuring. The committee will also come up with sector-specific benchmarks. That way, sectors such as tourism, transport and hos-

pitality which have been impacted the most by the Covid-19 pandemic might get additional reliefs. With its debt recast move, the apex bank conceded the most sought-after demand of India Inc. But it needs to do more to put the Covid-hit economy back on the recovery track as macroeconomic indicators are still sending danger signals. The RBI also admitted that ever-rising Covid-19 cases derailed the recovery process in July. Perhaps, that’s why it did not give any indication on the extent of the contraction in India’s GDP though it said that the economy would contract in FY21. It may need more time to assess the real impact of the Covid crisis. But infusing life into the economy while keeping inflation in check is not an easy task for the Central bank during this once-in-a-century health and economic crisis. It would have to initiate more steps and put more money into the hands of people without worrying about fiscal deficit. Also, it should not hesitate to print more currency as some developed countries are doing, to tide over the big crisis. For, the majority of Indians need more proactive measures from RBI to put their lives back on a sound economic footing.



Who owned the chemicals that blew up Beirut? No one will say

MARIA VASILYEVA, LISA BARRINGTON & JONATHAN SAUL

In the murky story of how a cache of highly explosive ammonium nitrate ended up on the Beirut waterfront, one thing is clear - no one has ever publicly come forward to claim it. There are many unanswered questions surrounding last week’s huge, deadly blast in the Lebanese capital, but ownership should be among the easiest to resolve.

Clear identification of ownership, especially of a cargo as dangerous as that carried by the Moldovan-flagged Rhosus when it sailed into Beirut seven years ago, is fundamental to shipping, the key to insuring it and settling disputes that often arise.

But interviews and trawls for documents across 10 countries in search of the original ownership of this 2,750-tonne consignment instead revealed an intricate tale of missing documentation, secrecy and a web of small, obscure companies that span the globe.

“Goods were being transported from one country to another, and they ended up in a third country with nobody owning the goods. Why did they end up here?” said Ghassan Hasbani, a former Lebanese Deputy Prime Minister and opposition figure. Those linked to the shipment denied knowledge of the cargo’s original owner or declined to answer the question. Those who said they didn’t know included the ship’s captain, the Georgian fertilizer maker who produced the cargo and the African firm that ordered it but said it never paid for it.

The official version of the Rhosus’ final journey depicts its voyage as a series of unfortunate events. Shipping records show the ship loaded ammonium nitrate in Georgia in September 2013 and was meant to deliver it to an explosive maker in Mozambique. But before leaving the Mediterranean, the captain and two crew members say they were instructed by the Russian businessman they regarded as the ship’s de facto owner, Igor Grechushkin, to make an unscheduled stop in Beirut and take on extra cargo. The Rhosus arrived in Beirut in November but never left, becoming tangled in a legal dispute over unpaid port fees and ship defects. Creditors accused the ship’s legal owner, listed as a Panama-based firm, of abandoning the vessel and the cargo was later unloaded and put in a dockside warehouse, according to official accounts. The Beirut law firm that acted for creditors, Baroudi & Associates, did not respond to requests to identify the cargo’s original legal owner. Reuters was unable to contact Grechushkin.

The empty ship eventually sank where it was moored in 2018, according to Lebanese customs. The Rhosus’ final movements are under fresh scrutiny after the ammonium nitrate caught fire inside the warehouse and exploded last week, killing at least 158 people, injuring thousands and leaving 250,000 people homeless.

Among the still-unanswered questions: who paid for the ammonium nitrate and did they ever seek to reclaim the cargo when the Rhosus was impounded? And if not, why not?

The cargo, packaged in large white sacks, was worth around \$700,000 at 2013 prices, according to an industry source. Under international maritime conventions and some domestic laws, commercial vessels must have insurance to cover events such as environmental damage, loss of life or injury caused by a sinking, spill or collision. Yet the Rhosus was uninsured, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

The ship’s Russian captain, Boris Prokoshev, said by phone from his home in Sochi, Russia, that he had seen an insurance certificate but could not vouch for its authenticity.

Reuters was unable to obtain a copy of the ship’s documents.

The Mozambican firm that ordered the ammonium nitrate, Fábrica de Explosivos Moçambique (FEM), was not the cargo owner at the time because it had agreed to only pay on delivery, according to its spokesman, Antonio Cunha Vaz. The producer was Georgian fertilizer maker Rustavi Azot LLC, which has since been dissolved. Its owner at the time, businessman Roman Pipia, told Reuters he had lost control of the Rustavi ammonium nitrate plant in 2016. UK court documents show that the firm was forced by a creditor to auction off its assets that year.

The factory is now run by another firm, JSC Rustavi Azot, which also said it could not shed light on the cargo owner, according to the plant’s current first deputy director, Levan Burdiladze. FEM said it had ordered the shipment through a trading firm, Savaro Ltd, which has registered companies in London and Ukraine but whose website is now offline.

A visit to Savaro Ltd’s listed London address on Monday found a Victorian terraced house, with a locked and barred door, near the fashionable bars of Shoreditch. No one responded to knocks on the door.

UK-registered Savaro Ltd director Greta Bieliene, a Lithuanian based in Cyprus declined to answer questions. A source familiar with the inner workings of Savaro’s trading business said it sold fertilizer from ex-Soviet Union states to clients in Africa.

Ukraine-based businessman Vladimir Verbonol is listed as director of Savaro in Ukraine, according to Ukrainian corporate data base You Control. As grief and anger over the blast turn to civil unrest in Beirut, there are signs the Lebanese government’s promised investigation has already turned its sights back to the Rhosus and Grechushkin, the man the crew considered as its owner.

A security source said Grechushkin was questioned at his home in Cyprus last Thursday about the cargo. A Cypriot police spokesman said an individual, whom he did not name, had been questioned at the request of Interpol Beirut.

The Rhosus arrived in Beirut in November 2013 with a leak and in generally poor condition, captain Prokoshev said. It had already been beset with problems.

In July 2013, four months before docking in Beirut, the ship was detained for 13 days by port authorities in Seville, Spain, after multiple deficiencies including malfunctioning doors, corrosion on the deck area and deficient auxiliary engines were found, according to shipping data. It resumed sailing after inspection firm Maritime Lloyd issued a cargo ship safety construction certificate, which would have involved a survey of the ship, the data showed.

Teimuraz Kavtaradze, an inspector at Georgia-based Maritime Lloyd, which does not rank among the most prominent and widely-used inspection firms, said he could not confirm whether or not the firm had provided any inspection documents to port officials in Seville. He said he was working for Maritime Lloyd in 2013 but that other staff and the management had since changed. Seville port officials were not immediately available for comment. Paris MoU, a body of 27 maritime states under whose authority the detention was carried out, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Moldova, where the Rhosus is registered, lists the owner of the ship as Panama-based Briarwood Corp. Panama’s maritime authorities did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The ship’s charterer, Teto Shipping Ltd, is based in the Marshall Islands and was dissolved in 2014, according to International Registries, which says it provides shipping registry services to the Marshall Islands.

The captain passed an email address that they had been using for Teto Shipping, but requests for comment to the same address went unanswered. The captain said he regarded Grechushkin and Teto as the same entity.

International Youth Day: Dreams & destiny

B MARIA KUMAR

Nothing is more inspiring for the youth at the moment than this year’s theme of International Youth Day as far as their pivotal role in building a safe and secure world is concerned. It is on August 12 that the UN, all national governments, public institutions, NGOs and people in general across the globe will be pledging together to strengthen the hands of young persons towards the realisation of the objective, ‘Youth Engagement for Global Action’ for attaining a sustainable humane society.

The population in the 15-24 age group, known as the ‘youth’ in the parlance of the UN, stands out as the most promising future-productive segment of world demographics. As Covid-19 monster is still jeopardising the world with infections, casualties, fears and anxieties, the lives of people have almost become suspended for want of concrete cure and reliable vaccine. It is in the instant circumstances that the youth’s active participation and positive contribution have become the need of hour not only to promote universal peace and brotherhood amidst the current cross border tensions in the sub-continent and Cold War like strained relations between the capitalist America and the communist China but also to safeguard the planet from the accelerating climate change as well as the ongoing pandemic crisis.

As we are aware, the youth can prove their mettle unflinching, if they are provided with opportunities to pursue their well-intended goals. Truly, the youth of 21st century i.e. Generation Z or millennials, have distinct values juxtaposed to that of earlier generations. They have new definitions for every challenge in the society with much broader perspective in global context. Technology has changed their perception more than ever. Their vision, however, needs to be a rightly introspected agenda so that they would become meaningful and indispensable for the good of fellow human beings.

But the real picture of the state of youth affairs is not as bright as it is generally imagined. For example, India is referred to as the most youthful nation because it tops the global list with the largest young population. A massive number means that it is a gigantic task to support them in their requirements such as education, employment, entrepreneurship etc. Failure to meet their demands could lead to unsavoury socioeconomic and political repercussions. Unfortunately, a major chunk of youth population does not seem to be as commanding as they ought to be. This is due to more than one causative factors. A survey in 2016, jointly conducted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and Lokniti about the Indian youth’s attitudes, anxieties and aspira-



The International Youth Day timely reminds the world of urgency and primacy to shape the young people righteously in social, economic and political life processes. History is a witness to the testimony that the youth can invariably make things happen if they are given space to excel. Early and altruistic investments in them will help result in high returns in terms of their constructive abilities and true potential. Vesting legitimate responsibilities will metamorphose them into leaders of not just tomorrow but of today. It is in this context that the former UN Secretary General and Nobel peace prize winner Kofi Annan exhorted, “Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace”. This is the most appropriate message on the occasion of International Youth Day, which the youth will have to imbibe as guiding principle in the pursuit of their dreams and ambitions

tions, pointed out that their thoughts and views are still traditional. This is exactly opposite to what was said by the Nobel literature laureate Octavio Paz, who asserted that modernisation begins by being a critique of the past. Another survey in 2017, commissioned by an NGO called Pratham, underlines that a significant number of teenagers suffer from lack of minimum awareness in the present era of knowledge economy. Most of the youth

were also found faring badly on social relations front. Various studies showed that they are addicted to virtual world and are conditioned to communicate by text rather than on phone or face-to-face interaction. Steve Jobs equated creativity with social connectivity and as a result, the youth are not likely to exhibit creative talent to the extent it has to be.

Therefore, the basic onus on the society is to groom the youth properly so as

to reap the intended outcomes. Nobel Prize winning physicist Leo Esaki reportedly indicated that the average age of Nobel laureates at which their critical inventions and discoveries were made is 32 years, though their awards were announced much later. He felt that the age of 20 to 30 is the span of peak creativity. This revelation makes it highly significant to stimulate the young brains with a view to moulding them into prospective innovators and wealth creators. Otherwise, any mishandling or underestimation will lead to irreparable damage. One extreme case of such an example was that of Hitler’s tyrannical socialisation approach during WW-2, owing to which the German youth were inculcated with hate and prejudice in the guise of ‘Aryan Supremacy’. The aftermath was an apocalyptic tragedy.

Hence, the International Youth Day timely reminds the world of urgency and primacy to shape the young people righteously in social, economic and political life processes. History is a witness to the testimony that the youth can invariably make things happen if they are given space to excel. Early and altruistic investments in them will help result in high returns in terms of their constructive abilities and true potential. Vesting legitimate responsibilities will metamorphose them into leaders of not just tomorrow but of today. It is in this context that the former UN Secretary General and Nobel peace prize winner Kofi Annan exhorted, “Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace”. This is the most appropriate message on the occasion of International Youth Day, which the youth will have to imbibe as guiding principle in the pursuit of their dreams and ambitions.

(The writer is former Director General of Police, Cyber Crimes, MP)

Centre’s move to boost economy laudable

The Finance Ministry announcing stimulus package arranged to release in a tranche series objectivising through its banker, RBI, to lift MSMEs and corporate sector while inclining to rescue the capsizing economy, which had been ferociously disturbed by Covid-19 pandemic, was well in time and added brownie points to the party in power at the Centre to a little extent.

Subsequently, the moratorium option leaving a leverage of preference for the customers of various banks who had availed different loans on their personal capacity also came as a big relief to them. The situation now pleads the policy makers for minimum income support and waving off the accrued interest on the loans until to the extent of pandemic period. Opinions of economic heads and experts from the RBI and other statistical agencies on growth rate, inflation, GDP, employment and other economy driving parameters should be taken into account to ease the prevailing situation. While the best efforts are going on in a coordinated manner between the States and the Centre to further avert possible uncertainties on social, economic, biological and even political fronts, what shall be appreciated is better strategy ensuring minimum income support to the families of the country. The psychosomatic stress being experienced by the middle and lower-income classes due to the pandemic is unfortunate.

M Janardhan Rao, Vijayawada

Govt should announce exam dates

It has been a long time since the government has kept final year students in dilemma over examination issue. There is no confirmation by the government whether exams will happen or not. If the government is allowing

LETTERS

all the sectors to function, why it is not allowing education sector? As per the UGC, examinations should be held otherwise degrees will not be recognised. The UGC has urged the Supreme Court regarding it and now the matter is in the court. Due to some politics, students are having to pay a heavy price for it and as far as students’ future is concerned, exam date should be declared.

Deepak Chawda, Hyderabad

Education system needs overhaul



The current education system needs lots of changes and innovations. In India, the education system is not so good nor so bad. The reason due to which it is not so good is lack of innovations and technologies. We are getting only theoretical knowledge, but no practical knowledge. In some cases, we think that we should change the present education system but in others, we also think what is the guarantee that the new education system is better than the present education system. More advanced technologies should be used in order to compete with other countries. More and more amendments should be done to make students physically fit and mentally strong. For making our country good in education, we have to change the present system and have to take the risk. If education creates curiosity in a child rather than putting burden on them, it would help students to

learn things easily and thereby making skilled individuals who are needed for the development of our country. I hope this would come soon.

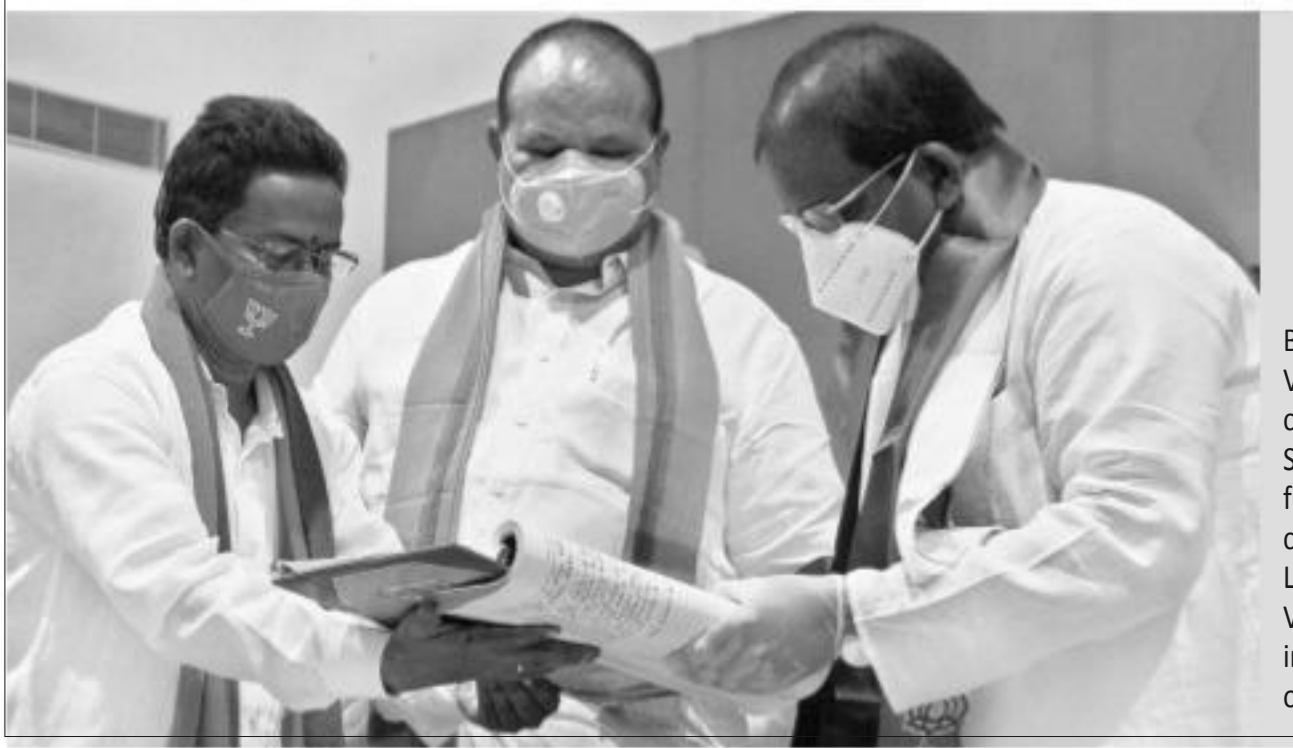
Kusuma Srivalli, Hanamkonda, Warangal

Prevention of accidents is government responsibility

It is acceptable if there is a disaster in a government unit and people demanding compensation to the victims. But these days, the government is declaring ex-gratia or compensation in a rather populist manner within a few hours of any mishaps, without verifying whether the government faulted somewhere in their routine exercises of inspecting the private units like hospitals or hotels. If so, it needs to check whether remedial action has been taken or not. Now, as a taxpayer, a citizen is empowered to ask whether high compensations can be paid when the stakeholders are completely private and when they are not direct victims of the government. The government must first make this irresponsible hospitals, hotels or industries to pay through their nose and then conduct an enquiry to see whether government has faulted anywhere in its mandatory duties. Accordingly, it can release the compensation. This will also help the government to fix accountability on the concerned staff so that future mishaps can be minimised if not totally eliminated. Family members of victims take the compensation and feel that losing their kith and kin is an act of God. It is high time life has to be valued first instead of consoling the sufferers with some aid after the damage is done. Prevention is always better than cure.

D Nagarjuna, Hyderabad

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BJP MLC Somu Veerajulu taking charge as party State president from outgoing chief Kanna Lakshminarayana at Venue Convention in Vijayawada on Tuesday

BJP should develop as an alternative: Ram Madhav

- While not opposing 3 capitals, BJP national general secretary calls upon party cadres to fight for justice to Amaravati farmers
- Exhorts party leaders and activists to shed the mindset of junior partner in State politics, become a constructive opposition with 'friendly' criticism of the govt
- Newly sworn-in State president Somu Veerajulu wants new political system with nationalistic outlook in the State

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Vijayawada: The BJP should transform into an alternative political force in the state, said BJP national general secretary Ram Madhav while attending the swearing-in ceremony of Somu Veerajulu as the president of the state unit of the party here on Tuesday.

He exhorted the party cadres to come out of acting as the junior partner in the state politics and become a constructive opposition party with friendly criticism.

Ram Madhav, expressing concern over lack of a strong opposition in the state, gave a direction to the party cadres to form a formidable force in the next four years. "If everyone worked hard it is not impossible to assume power in the state in 2024," he said.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi might continue as prime minister for the next one-and-a-half decade but that was not enough for the state BJP. The state cadres should catch hold of the opportunity to become a force to reckon with," he said.

Making it clear that it was not an easy path, he said that the party cadres need not look at Delhi for directions.

He said that the Centre had directed the state government after bifurcation to build the capital city and agreed to the proposal to build



BJP National General Secretary Ram Madhav addressing at the State unit new president's swearing-in ceremony in Vijayawada on Tuesday

Amaravati: Differences in BJP comes to the fore

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Confusion in the state BJP over state government's move to trifurcate capital city was only confounded on Tuesday at the swearing-in ceremony of Somu Veerajulu, the new BJP state president. The duplicity of the party came to the fore once again when the BJP national general secretary Ram Madhav's views and that of the state president's views contrast with each other.

Ram Madhav wondered when Uttar Pradesh which was four-times bigger could have just one capital, why Andhra needed three capitals. "Has the UP government not been running such a big state from a single capital city of Lucknow?" he said (though there are serious questions over the law and order situation in UP). However, he rushed to defend the Centre's non-interference immediately by

adding "it is going in the same way as it had gone during the Chandrababu Naidu regime on the location of the capital city for AP. But that does not mean we should not question the three capitals issue."

This 'suggest-but-not-insist' policy is in direct contrast with the Centre's stand on the issue as well that of the new BJP president along with a section of the BJP local leadership which prefers silence.

The claim of Ram Madhav that the BJP would stand by the farmers of Amaravati also sounds hollow as the farmers are insisting on Amaravati as the capital without any changes. Standing by the farmers means fighting the government at all levels, including waging a legal battle as the farmers are doing.

Since the issue was presently in the court of law, the BJP leader said, the party would wait and see before announcing its future course of action.

it at Amaravati by providing funds. "Now the state government puts forward the proposal to build three capital cities in which two the Centre has no say."

However, the BJP fought against the corruption in Amaravati and would continue its fight if corruption takes place in case of three capitals also, he said appealing to the party cadres to fight for

justice to the Amaravati farmers.

Speaking on the occasion, newly-appointed state president Somu Veerajulu said that a political system with nationalistic outlook was needed in the state. "BJP aims at providing good administration and development," he said.

BJP leader Ch Adinarayana Reddy said that AP BJP was against three capitals proposals.

Yanamala pessimistic about new industrial policy

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Former finance minister and TDP leader Yanamala Ramakrishnudu said the new Industrial Development Policy-2020-23 (IDP 2020-23) announced by the state government does not offer any hope of reviving the ailing and crisis-hit sectors in the state economy.

Ramakrishnudu said in a statement on Tuesday said the YSRCP government's policies so far had crippled the construction, manufacturing, real estate, energy, pharma and other major contributors to the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). The industrial growth rate went down to negative, recording -2.2 per cent in just 14 months.

The TDP leader said that the new policy had not raised hopes of generating employment opportunities. Lakhs of workers lost their job opportunities because of the retrogressive policies pursued by the Jagan government. It was unfortunate that even the government employees were not getting full salaries. The YSRCP leaders were responsible for destroying the AP brand image that was carefully built by the TDP government, he alleged.

He said that because of the blackmail tactics of the YSRCP leaders, all previous investments were withdrawn. Industries in the state collapsed due to the fear of Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy's unpredictable decisions. Growth in the construction sector

- Says the new policy is not investor-friendly, has failed to raise any hopes on employment generation
- Accuses Jagan govt of crippling all important sectors like construction, real estate, manufacturing and energy, putting the State on path of negative growth



was -1.1 per cent, trade and hotels -0.7 per cent, real estate -0.3 per cent and tertiary sector -1.0 per cent. This negative growth will aggravate further due to Covid-19 threat, he warned.

The former minister said that the YSRCP government has not addressed many important issues in the new industrial policy. With AP credit rating falling continuously, investments are unlikely to come in future, he predicted.

Stating that Jagan has no commitment, Ramakrishnudu said the YSRCP leaders had no idea about the concepts like 'Ease-of-Doing Business' that has potential to make any state an industrial hub. Budget allocations were very small compared to the previous government. The TDP rule brought largescale industries in automobile, IT and electronics, pharma and food processing sectors, he said.

Shooting near White House interrupts Trump's press briefing

Continued from P1

Law enforcement officials were trying to determine a motive and authorities were investigating whether the man had a history of mental illness.

Trump had just begun a coronavirus briefing when a US Secret Service agent escorted him from the briefing room. The President returned minutes later, saying there had been a shooting outside the White House that was under control.

There was an actual shooting and somebody's been taken to the hospital, Trump said. The President said law enforcement had fired the shots and that he

believed the individual who was shot was armed. It was the suspect who was shot, he said.

Trump said the agent had escorted him to the Oval Office. The White House was placed on lockdown following the incident.

In a Monday night statement to reporters, Sullivan said the shooting occurred just before 6 pm after the man approached the uniformed Secret Service officer near 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue and told the officer he had a weapon.

The man then turned around and ran aggressively toward the officer, and in a drawing motion, removed an object from his

clothing, Sullivan said. The suspect then crouched into a shooter's stance, as if about to fire a weapon before the officer shot the man once in the torso, he said.

Both the suspect and the officer were taken to the hospital. Sullivan released no information about the officer and would not answer any questions at a late-night news conference near the scene.

An internal review of the shooting by the Secret Service was underway, and the Metropolitan Police Department was also investigating, a standard protocol.

Ramp up Covid testing

Continued from P1

The Prime Minister asserted that the most effective weapon against coronavirus is containment, contact tracing, and surveillance. "Now the public is also understanding and co-operating. This is a good result of our awareness efforts. This is why the system of home quarantine is being implemented in such a good way today. Experts are now saying that if we identify cases within 72 hours of onset, then this infection slows down to a great extent," he said.

"I get ground situation from you and also get to know that we are heading in the right direction. I am satisfied that every state is fighting this pandemic at its own level.

Whether it is the Centre or state government, we are able to work as a team. We are getting good results due to this team spirit," he said.

The Prime Minister said that efforts like better management in hospitals and increase the number of ICU beds have helped a lot.

Among those present at the meeting were, Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath, Tamil Nadu CM EK Palaniswami, West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee, Punjab CM Amarinder Singh, Telangana CM K Chandrabab Naidu, Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray, Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani, Bihar CM Nitish Kumar and Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Russia claims vaccine ready

Continued from P1

Deputy Prime Minister Tatyana Golikova said that the vaccination of doctors could start as early as this month.

The Health Ministry said in Tuesday's statement that the vaccine is expected to provide immunity from the coronavirus for up to two years. Putin emphasized that vaccination will be voluntary. Russian officials have said that large-scale production of the vaccine will start in September, and mass vaccination may begin as early as October.

Vice-President redefines norms to connect with people

Continued from P1

Naidu said that the overall productivity of the last eight sessions presided by him during the last three years has been 65.50%, despite the intervening election year seriously impacting the functioning of the House for three sessions. He informed that the productivity of Rajya Sabha was only 28.90% during the 248th session, 27.30% during the 247th and a low of 6.80% during the 248th session. As a result, the annual productivity of Rajya Sabha has been 35.75%, the lowest ever, he said.

The Chairman said that the functioning of the House subsequently was marked by sustained

high levels of productivity of 104% during the 249th session, 99% during the historic 250th session and 76% during the last and 251st session. He said that this turnaround resulted in average productivity of 78.42% during 2019, the highest since 2010. Referring to improvement in legislative output as yet another indication of change, Naidu said that out of the 93 Bills passed by Rajya Sabha during the last three years of his Chairmanship, 60 of them accounting for 65% of the total were passed which includes some major bills like the Triple Talaq Bill, the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill and the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Bill.

Syamala Rao to represent govt in capital petitions

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: The state government has appointed a senior IAS officer to attend all cases in the courts against three capitals. Chief Secretary Nilam Sawhney nominated J Syamala Rao, secretary, municipal administration and urban development (MAUD) department on Tuesday to file counter affidavits in the courts as the 'authorised signatory' on behalf of all the departments, including the chief secretary. If he is on leave, V Rama Manohara Rao, special secretary, MAUD, will act as authorised signatory.

There have been many writ petitions filed in High Court against

the state government challenging the two legislations aimed at creating and developing three capitals for the state. The two laws are AP Capital Region Development Authority Repeal Act, 2020 and AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Act, 2020.

Nilam Sawhney said that many writ petitions are being filed before the High Court regarding these two Acts. In these petitions, multiple number of departments are being made respondents. Hence, it is very important that a comprehensive view of all the actions taken by the government is brought to the notice of the High Court, she said in the GO MS No 80, while nominating Syamala Rao as authorised signatory.

To overcome Covid crisis, cab drivers turn liquor smugglers

- 22 travels drivers in Tirupati have been arrested by SEB in the last few months for peddling liquor from Karnataka
- Closure of travel industry, lockdowns and restrictions pushe many cab drivers into financial problems
- Huge difference in prices of liquor in AP and Karnataka is fuelling the smuggling

K NETHAJI

Tirupati: Months of unemployment has forced many cab drivers into bootlegging in the district. With no income due to lockdown and restrictions, many travel vehicle drivers have turned to smuggling non-duty paid (NDP) liquor from Karnataka.

Statistics of raids and seizures effected by Special Enforcement Bureau in the last few months reveal that 22 out of the 46 liquor smugglers caught in the act in the district were travel vehicle or cab drivers.

Huge difference in the price of



Special Enforcement Bureau personnel arrest liquor smugglers in Tirupati (File picture)

liquor in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka means earning considerable profit to maintain their families in these hard times. According to sources, have turned to smuggling liquor from Karnataka as it is just across the border from Chittoor district.

The AP government has increased the prices of cheap

liquor abnormally, purportedly to wean away addicts from the booze as part of its 'phased' prohibition. While a quarter bottle of Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) sells at Rs 180 in our state, it is around Rs 80 in the neighbouring states. People, mainly daily wage labourers and other poor sections are unable to buy the liquor from

government outlets at such a huge prices. In this backdrop, some travel drivers entered into the business as they are familiar with routes and places in the neighbouring state. They buy each quarter bottle at Rs 80 and sell it anywhere from Rs 100 to Rs 120, thus earning a profit of Rs 20 to Rs 40 on each bottle. It is a win-win for both sides as the buyer saves Rs 80-Rs 40 on each bottle.

In recent raids, SEB personnel seized huge quantities of Karnataka liquor in tetra packets from travel drivers and noticed that most of them had worked as drivers in tourism cab drivers to Tirumala. Most of these peddlers are found to be residents of Tirupati Urban and Rural areas.

SEB assistant excise superintendent M Sudheer Babu told The Hans India that they were closely keeping tabs on habitual peddlers who were involved in non-duty paid liquor sales and trying to counsel them to bring change among them. "More than 40 per cent of the accused previously worked as travel vehicles drivers and now they have turned into smugglers, Sudheer Banu said.

Industrial Policy not for weaker sections: Cong

HANS NEWS SERVICE



Vijayawada: Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) came down heavily on the New Industrial Policy announced by the YSRCP government stating that it was not at all helpful to the downtrodden sections of the society.

APCC president S Sailajanath said in a statement here on Tuesday that the Jagan government which came to power with the support of SC, ST and BC communities did nothing for their welfare. Moreover, the new policy cuts down the concessions enjoyed by them all these years.

The new policy which claims to giving priority to issues like employment, equal development of all regions, environment-friendly, competing with the national average development would actually result in loss of jobs, lifting of employment dole, regional difference in the name of decentralisation.

Moreover, there was no incentive in the policy for 75 per cent jobs for local people.

Successful governments used to give 50 per cent subsidy on the land costs to the SC, ST, BC and minorities if they start industries but there is no such subsidy in the new policy, he said.

The new policy had also cut down the investment incentives from 35 per cent to 15 per cent and the 45 per cent subsidy for women entrepreneurs was reduced to 35 per cent that too would be given after three years. "The incentives are necessary for the industry in the early years not in the later years," he pointed out.

TODAY'S QUOTE

Industry-friendly reforms in mining sector

“More industry-friendly, productive friendly reforms will be brought to the mining sector very shortly. Investors, explorers and miners should explore the huge opportunities that Indian mining sector offers. 500 mining blocks will be offered through open and transparent auction process - Union Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi



CORONA

CEOs expect Covid to entrench WFH

Almost four out of five chief executives expect remote working to become more widespread in their businesses as a result of Covid, a global survey from accountancy firm PwC showed. New York, London and some other major cities currently have only a fraction of their normal workforce in offices

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	79.26	South	
Euro	92.59	African Rand	4.89
UAE Dirham	22.39	Hong Kong Dollar	11.09
Thai Baht	2.77	Japanese Yen	0.81
British Pound	101.87	New Zealand Dollar	51.85
Australian Dollar	56.37	Saudi Riyal	21.93
Canadian Dollar	59.03	Swedish Krona	9.86
Swiss Franc	85.23	Singapore Dollar	57.26

DELHI WEDNESDAY 12 AUGUST 2020

BIZ BRIEFS

Entries sought for Lexus Award

Hyderabad: Lexus India announced the fourth edition of the of its Lexus Design Award India 2021, marking its footprint in the design space by providing evolving and prominent designers a space to showcase their creativity and talent. The call for entries is open till October 6, 2020. The annual design competition offers professionals, students and design enthusiasts across the country a chance to exhibit their originality. Lexus India will embark on a digital journey with this edition. PB Venugopal, president, Lexus India, said, "Lexus Design Awards provides a platform for the design fraternity to showcase their talent in solving challenges and captivating the hearts and minds of the consumers. The past editions have received an overwhelming response with stellar entries by the very talented Indian design community".

FAIFA hails agri fund

Hyderabad: The Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA), a non-profit organization representing farmers and farm workers of commercial crops across the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Gujarat, lauded the recent launch of financing facility by Prime Minister Narendra Modi under Rs 1 lakh crore Agriculture Infrastructure Fund. This fund will be crucial for farmers, agri-entrepreneurs, startups, agri-tech players and farmer groups looking to boost the country's agriculture infrastructure. It will also allow the agri-sector to help enhance its contributions to the GDP. Javare Gowda, president, FAIFA, said: "This financing facility will help the farming sector to plan medium-to-long term debt financing facilities for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management infrastructure and build community farming assets through interest subvention and financial support".

Hyundai Creta's 5 lakh sales

Hyderabad: Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HML) on Tuesday said its SUV Creta has crossed five lakh cumulative sales mark in the domestic market. The model also remains the best-selling SUV for three consecutive months of May, June and July this year. Its new version was launched in March this year. "Creta has been the blockbuster model in the Indian automobile industry ever since its launch in 2015," HML Director (Sales, Marketing and Service) Tarun Gang said in a statement. With the 5 lakh sales mark, the model has set yet another benchmark in the industry, reaffirming a legacy of leadership in the SUV segment, Gang said.

Pharma cos use Elgi products

Hyderabad: India's several leading pharmaceutical companies are using AB series range of oil free screw compressors manufactured by Elgi Equipments for producing clean air. With lower cost of ownership, the AB series range of air compressors meets the ISO 8573-1 compliance requirements. In addition, the Elgi AB Series delivers unmatched air quality in line with the ISO8573-Class 7 compliance norms ensuring zero traces of microbial contaminants. With the IS:10500:2012 certification for water quality, the AB series also guarantees the safest pneumatic air for pharmaceutical industry. Jairam Varadaraj, MD, Elgi Equipments, said: "In light of the pandemic, Indian pharma has a tremendous opportunity to play a pivotal role in global healthcare. With growing FDA scrutiny and delicate pharmaceutical manufacturing processes, the quality of compressed air is of quintessential importance".

'GDP growth may hit lowest since 1947'

Infosys founder Narayana Murthy lays emphasis on creating health infra for vaccinating everybody

Bengaluru: Flagging fears that the country's GDP growth may even touch its lowest since independence in the backdrop of coronavirus pandemic, Infosys founder N R Narayana Murthy said the economy should be brought back on track and people should be prepared to live with the pathogen.

He also pitched for developing a new system that should allow every player in every sector of the country's economy to operate at full steam with suitable precautions. "India's GDP is expected to shrink by at least five per cent. There is a fear that we may even reach the lowest GDP (growth) since independence, since 1947," Murthy said.

The software icon was participating in a discussion on 'Leading India's Digital Revolution' during the 16th edition of Institute of Engineering and Technology's



India Digital Conversations held virtually. "The global GDP has gone down. Global trade has shrunk, global travel has almost disappeared. The global GDP is likely to shrink between 5 per cent and 10 per cent," he said.

Murthy said that right from the first day of the national lockdown on March 24 his view had been that people have to be prepared to live with the virus for three

reasons - there is no vaccine, no cure for coronavirus and the economy cannot be brought to a halt. The earliest possible vaccine was from Oxford University, which may be available in the country anywhere from six to nine months, he said.

"But even if we are able to vaccinate 10 million people a day, it is going to take 140 days to vaccinate all the Indians. That is a long

The global GDP has gone down. Global trade has shrunk, global travel has almost disappeared. The global GDP is likely to shrink between 5 per cent and 10 per cent

- N R Narayana Murthy



period to prevent the spread of the disease," Murthy said.

"We cannot make the economy come to a halt. Overall, 140 million workers have been affected by this virus. So the smartness is in defining a new normal. This normal should allow our economy to grow while moving on the earth and fighting the virus," the tech leader said.

Stressing on developing a new

system to deal with the current situation, he also laid emphasis on creating a health infrastructure for vaccinating everybody once a vaccine was available and working towards a cure for the new virus.

"India has traditionally not invested sufficiently in public health. We have severe shortage both in talent and in material for a robust public health system. The state of our Institute of Public Health is a good data point," said Murthy.

In the given system, Murthy said, social distancing, and use of masks were the best way to combat the virus. He, however, lauded the country for having done a decent job under the present circumstances. To bring the economy back on track, the Infosys founder suggested getting back the 140 million migrant workers who have gone back to their vil-

lages to their workplaces, mostly in urban India.

His second advice was increasing the number of hospital beds and adding equipment for testing and taking care of the projected number of Covid-19 patients for three months and six months from now.

"Even today there is a severe shortage of Covid-19 care facilities in second tier and third tier towns," said Murthy lamenting the demise of one of his relatives due to coronavirus in Hubballi, a north Karnataka tier-2 city and district headquarters.

The 74-year-old tech leader also favoured amending laws and providing infrastructural facilities for companies which can't use the work-from-home paradigm and increasing the public transport and public safety facilities for businesses and the public to operate 24 hours.

RELIANCE AMONG TOP 100 GLOBAL COMPANIES

Ranks at 96th place in Fortune Global 500 list, up 10 places from last year

New Delhi: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries has jumped 10 places to break into the world's top 100 companies on the Fortune Global 500 list. The oil-to-telecom conglomerate is ranked 96th in the 2020 ranking released by Fortune on Tuesday.

This is the highest any Indian company has been ranked on the Fortune Global 500 list. Reliance had broken into the top 100 in 2012 ranking when it was ranked 99th but slipped in subsequent years to rank 215th in 2016. Since then it has risen steadily, according to the ranking.

State-owned Indian Oil Corp (IOC) slipped 34 positions to rank 151st on the 2020 ranking while Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) is ranked 190th, 30 notches lower than its last year's



State-owned Indian Oil Corp slipped 34 positions to rank 151st on the 2020 ranking while Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) is ranked 190th, 30 notches lower than its last year's ranking.

ranking. The country's top lender State Bank of India (SBI) has risen 15 ranks to 221st position.

Other Indian firms on the list include Bharat Petroleum Corp

Ltd (BPCL) at rank 309th, Tata Motors at 337, and Rajesh Exports at 462. Fortune said companies are ranked by total revenues for their respective fiscal

years ended on or before March 31, 2020.

While Reliance had a revenue of \$86.2 billion, IOC had revenue of \$69.2 billion. ONGC had revenue of \$57 billion and SBI had \$51 billion.

According to Fortune, the 2020 list is topped by Walmart with a revenue of \$524 billion, followed by three Chinese companies - Sinopec Group (\$407 billion), State Grid (\$384 billion), and China National Petroleum (\$379 billion).

Royal Dutch Shell is ranked 5th followed by Saudi oil giant Aramco at 6th position. There is no change in positions of Walmart, Sinopec, and China National Petroleum while State Grid has jumped two positions and Shell slipped two notches.

Saudi Aramco doing due diligence for RIL stake

New Delhi: Saudi Aramco, the world's largest oil exporter, is doing due diligence on buying a \$15 billion stake in Reliance Industries Ltd's refining and petrochemical business, its CEO Amin Nasser said. Billionaire Mukesh Ambani had in August last year announced plans to sell to Aramco a 20 per cent stake in RIL's oil-to-chemical (O2C) business, which he valued at \$75 bil-

lion. The deal was to close by March 2020 but has been delayed. "With regard to the Reliance deal, all I can say at this stage is that it's going through the due diligence," Nasser said in June quarter earnings call with investors. "So, depending on the due diligence, we will make our decision after we complete the due diligence on that deal." According to the transcript of the investor

call, he went on to state that the deal to buy a stake in the world's largest single-location oil refining complex and India's biggest petrochemical assets is a big deal. So, we need to take our time to review and then decide based on the outcome of the due diligence study". Ambani had at RIL's annual general meeting last month stated that the Aramco deal had been delayed "due to unforeseen circumstances in the energy market and the Covid-19 situation".

India sees record notebook sales as WFH gains traction

New Delhi: India witnessed a record buying of notebooks by the enterprises as millions of employees worked from home (WFH) in the June quarter as HP led the overall traditional PC market once again with the 32.8 per cent market share, a new IDC report said on Tuesday.

Lenovo with 27.5 per cent market share replaced Dell (17.8 per cent share) in the second position despite witnessing a 62.7 per cent decline in its overall shipments.

Overall, the India traditional PC market inclusive of desktops, notebooks and workstations declined by 37.3 per cent year-over-year (YoY) in the second quarter to 2.1 million units against 3.3 million units in the June 2019 quarter, said the IDC 'Worldwide Quarterly Personal Computing Device Tracker'. However, notebook sales went up by a whopping 17.6 per cent.

HP's strong performance in the commercial segment was supported by a few large wins and helped the company to maintain



However, over all PC market, including desktops has declined by 37.3% during April-June

its lead in the overall PC category.

Also, among the top five companies, it was the only company to have a positive annual growth rate in the commercial segment, as its shipments grew 11.8 per cent (YoY) in 2Q20.

"Despite the supply and logistics challenges in the first half of the quarter, companies executed most of the large orders in 2Q20. Also, many companies shifted their employees to notebooks for the first time," said Bharath Shenoy, Market Analyst, PC Devices, IDC India.

In the product categories, desk-

top PCs were the most impacted with a 46.4 per cent decline.

However, discounting Lenovo's mega-deal of 1.1 million units with the Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu (ELCOT), notebooks grew 17.6 per cent from the same time a year ago.

According to Jaipal Singh, Associate Research Manager, Client Devices, IDC India, as most of the big orders for business continuity planning have been more or less executed in the quarter gone by, "the PC market is now expected to face challenges posed by the Covid-19 crisis and the looming economic situation".

"Enterprise buying will come back down to earth and SMB demand is expected to remain muted for some quarters," said Singh. The consumer segment had a relatively small quarter since the market was operational for just 45 days due to country-wide lockdown in the first half of the quarter. However, strong demand from eLearning was able to cover the gap to some extent.

PowerGrid net profit at ₹2,048 cr in Q2

HANS BUSINESS

Hyderabad: State-owned Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd posted an over 18 per cent fall in its consolidated net profit to Rs 2,048.42 crore for the June 2020 quarter. The company's consolidated net profit had stood at Rs 2,502.80 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous financial year 2019-20.

Its total income rose to Rs 9,816.72 crore in the April-June 2020 period, compared with Rs 9,361.72 crore in the year-ago period. Expenses rose to Rs 6,277.29 crore, from Rs 5,982.30 crore a year ago.

PowerGrid transmits about 50 per cent of the total power generated in India on its transmission network. During the quarter, the company recognized as an exceptional item, the one-time consolidated rebate of Rs 1,075 crore to Discoms / Power Departments of the States and Union Territories for passing on to the end-consumers on account of Covid-19 pandemic against the billing of



April 20 & May 20. Excluding the impact of this one-time rebate, the company's profit increased by 18 per cent over the corresponding period of FY20 on standalone basis. For the quarter, the company incurred a capital expenditure of about Rs 1,906 crore and capitalized assets worth Rs 1,184 crore (excluding FERV) on consolidated basis. Powergrid's gross fixed assets on a consolidated basis stood at about Rs 2,28,856 crore as on June 30, 2020.

Major transmission elements commissioned during the quarter include 400kV D/C Hiriyur-Mysore line and ICTs at Meerut, Koteswar and Balipara substations of PowerGrid. Further, long pending 400kV D/C Rajarhat-Gokarna transmission line was also commissioned in July.

Galaxy Note20 pre-bookings hit 5 lakh

New Delhi: Samsung on Tuesday said that the pre-booking notifications for its 'Make in India Galaxy Note20 smartphone crossed more than 5 Lakh this year, which is more than double the figure the company achieved last year with Galaxy Note10. The South Korean major last week opened pre-booking for its Galaxy Note20 series in India, The 6.7-inch Galaxy Note20 (8GB+256GB) was launched at the original price of Rs 77,999 while the 6.9-inch Galaxy Note20 Ultra 5G (12GB+256GB) is available for Rs 104,999 in the country.

"We are very excited as the latest series has received an overall good response from the audience and the pre-booking notifications of the devices were double than that of Galaxy Note10 last year," said Aditya Babbar, Director, Mobile Business, Samsung India.

Samsung on Monday unveiled a mystic blue colour edition of the newly-launched Galaxy Note20 in India.



67 per cent parents oppose reopening of schools



tember 1 and subsequently, Local-Circles decided to conduct a survey to get the collective parent pulse on how they feel about reopening of schools in less than a month. The survey received over 25,000 responses from parents and grandparents in different parts of India.

With total number of Covid-19 cases at 2.2 million and a daily case load of approximately 65,000, India now has the highest number of daily cases in the world.

The infection is spreading so fast in the country that it took only 20 days for the number of infected to

increase from 1 million to 2 million and as per the WHO guidelines, children fall in the high-risk category.

Children if infected can be carriers of the virus and spread it to other members of the family with grandparents being the most vulnerable as many families in India have a joint family structure.

Parents were asked if they approve of the reported Government plan of restarting schools from September 1 for Classes 10-12 and for Classes 6-10 after 15 days. In response, 58 per cent said 'no' while only 33 per cent answered 'yes'.

With majority of the parents opposing the reopening of schools from September 1, parents were also asked for the reason as to why they are opposed to schools in In-

dia starting from September 1, 2020.

In response, 13 per cent said they cannot afford to take chances with children given the risk and unknowns related to Covid-19, while 1 per cent said there is a serious risk with seniors in the family in case a child in the family gets infected. A 9 per cent said social distancing will not be possible in schools, 5 per cent said the Coronavirus spread will increase even faster if schools were reopened, and 2 per cent said they believe online education is a good substitute given the situation.

A 47 per cent said all of the above were valid reasons for them as 23 per cent said they are not opposed to opening of schools from September 1.



Attendants of patients collect oxygen cylinders for their relatives undergoing treatment, at a hospital in Srinagar on Tuesday

Agra's pvt hospitals loot patients

Agra (IANS): When Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma was told at an official meeting that the private hospitals in Agra were charging more than Rs 15,000 daily for Covid-19 patients, he was taken aback. Sharma told district officials to adopt appropriate measures to bring down the tariff at par with Lucknow where the daily charges were Rs 6,800. In the last 10 days there have been numerous complaints against the private nursing homes for overcharging distressed Corona patients and their kin. The bills worked out to more than Rs 1 lakh for a week's stay at the facility. A level-3 nursing home charges around Rs 17,000 a day with ventilator and ICU support while the level-1 charge on an average around Rs 11,000 a day.



HP to compensate flower growers

Shimla (IANS): The Himachal Pradesh Cabinet on Tuesday decided to compensate flower growers for losses incurred during the lockdown. The government has also decided to recruit 2,322 people in the Irrigation and Public Health department. The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown thereafter have resulted in cumulative losses of Rs 15.77 crore to the floriculturists from March to May due to non-transportation of flowers, an official statement said. In order to help the floriculturists, the Cabinet approved the guidelines for providing financial assistance or relief amounting to Rs 4 crore. A government spokesperson told IANS that the Cabinet at its meeting under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur gave approval to appoint 2,322 workers in the Jal Shakti Vibhag.

Shivraj says he has tested -ve

Bhopal: MP Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Tuesday said he has tested negative for coronavirus infection, six days after being discharged from a private hospital. Chouhan, 61, had tested positive for coronavirus infection on July 25. He has been in home quarantine since he was discharged on August 5. "My COVID-19 report has come out negative. On the advice of doctors, I will be in isolation till tomorrow. I sincerely thank doctors, nurses and their entire team. I will be grateful for all your best wishes and prayers for my health," the CM tweeted. Chouhan had again tested positive for the infection on August 3. However, the Chirayu Hospital where he was admitted had said that the CM was being discharged as per the guidelines of the Indian Council of Medical Research.



Patient dies awaiting treatment

Kolkata (IANS): A 60-year-old female coronavirus patient died in an ambulance outside a private hospital in Kolkata while allegedly awaiting admission as her family failed to deposit in time Rs 3 lakh demanded by the staff. The incident took place at Desun Hospital on the EM Bypass here on Monday night. The patient had been brought from East Midnapore's Tomluk. The deceased's husband had died of Covid-19 three days ago. Her family said that when they took the patient to the hospital they were asked to deposit Rs 3 lakh. They said they immediately deposited Rs 80,000 and asked for an hour to arrange the remaining amount. But, they alleged, the hospital authorities categorically told them that doctors would not be able to start treatment unless the full payment was made.

Expert panel to meet today

New Delhi: An expert committee under the chairmanship of NITI Aayog member Dr VK Paul will meet on Wednesday to consider the logistics and ethical aspects of procuring and administering the COVID-19 vaccine, the Union Health Ministry said on Tuesday. The committee on vaccine administration will engage with all the stakeholders including state governments and vaccine manufacturers, the ministry said in a tweet. The committee would chalk out strategies on the aspects of prioritisation of the vaccine administration once it is developed, rollout and cold chain logistics and training of the people who would be administering it. The Expert Committee on Vaccine Administration under the chairmanship of Dr V K Paul, NITI Aayog will meet on 12th August to consider logistics & ethical aspects of procurement & administration of COVID-19 vaccine, the ministry tweeted.



Suspension of flights to Kolkata on

Kolkata: In a bid to contain the novel coronavirus in Kolkata, the West Bengal government has extended the suspension of flights from six major cities— Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Pune, Nagpur and Ahmedabad till August 31. 'Kindly refer to my earlier letter no. 371/HS/PA/20 dated 3-07-20 under reference to Chief Secretary's letter No 282-CS/2020 dated 17-7-20 regarding the suspension of flights to Kolkata from High COVID prevalence cities (vis, Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Chennai and Ahmedabad). I am further directed to inform you that the suspension of flights from the aforesaid cities to Kolkata will continue till 31st August 2020,' the letter from Home Secretary Alapan Bandyopadhyay reads.

191 UP jail inmates test positive

Lucknow (IANS): At least 191 inmates at the Basti district jail in Uttar Pradesh have tested positive for the novel coronavirus. The latest figure took the overall tally of COVID-19 infected inmates in jails across the state to 1,379. The Basti inmates were found positive after the health department teams conducted tests on August 9. There are around 1,400 inmates currently lodged at Basti district jail. Chief medical officer, Basti, A.K. Gupta, said on Monday night that preliminary investigations have revealed that an infected person who had gone to distribute medicines, might have led to the spread inside the jail premises. "All have been isolated inside the prison in separate barracks, while eight others who are older inmates have been shifted to the district hospital," he said.



New Delhi (IANS): Only 33 per cent parents support reopening of schools from September 1, according to a survey by LocalCircles. Risk and unknowns of Covid-19, and hard to implement social distancing norms in schools pose risk to seniors in the family are among the top reasons why parents don't want schools starting from September 1.

Many schools started online sessions for the children to ensure that learning does not stop. As per latest media reports, the central government is now considering opening schools from September 1 as part of its final unlocking measures starting with Classes 10-12 and Classes 6-9 with a 15-day gap.

As a reaction to the media reports, many parents raised the issue of schools restarting on Sep-

New Zealand hit by virus after 102 days

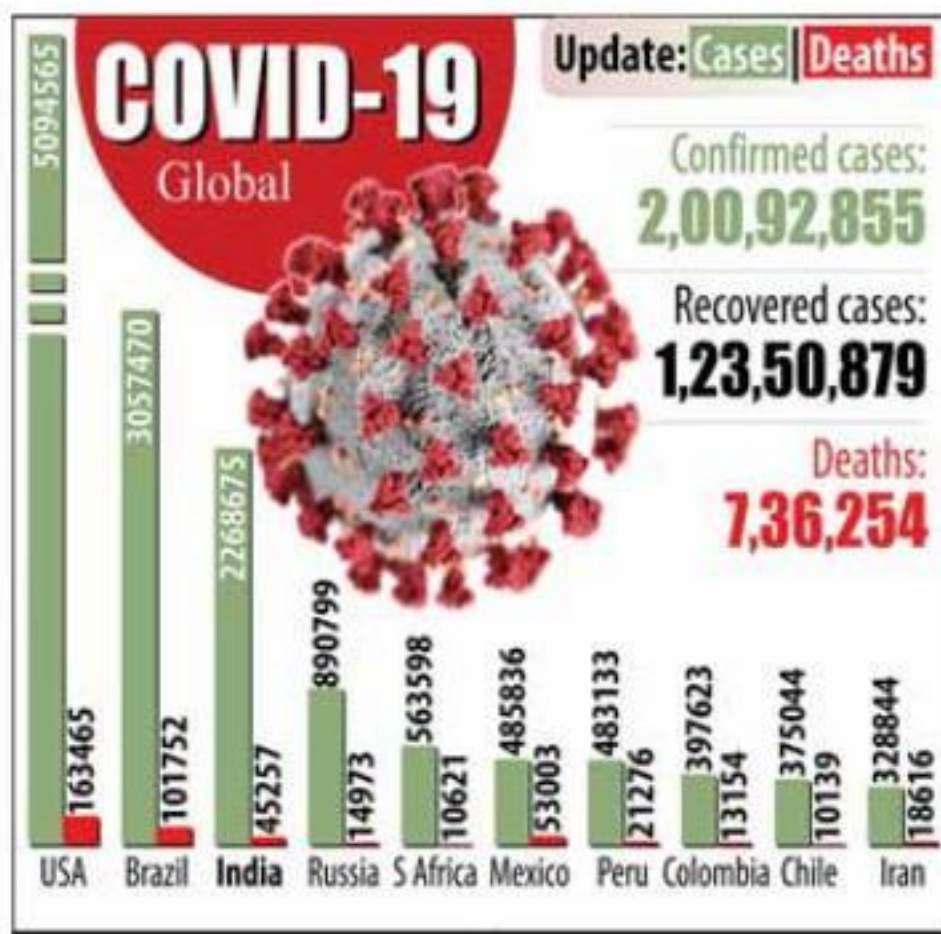
Auckland: New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern on Tuesday said authorities have found four cases of the coronavirus in one Auckland household from an unknown source, the first reported cases of local transmission in the country in 102 days.

Ardern said Auckland, the nation's largest city, will be moved to Alert Level 3 from midday Wednesday through midnight Friday, meaning that people will be asked to stay at home, while bars and many other businesses will be closed.

"These three days will give us time to assess the situation, gather information, make sure we have widespread contact tracing so we can find out more about how this case arose and make decisions about how to respond to it once we have further information," Ardern said at a hastily called news conference late Tuesday.

"I know that this information will be very difficult to receive," Ardern said. "We had all hoped not to find ourselves in this position again. But we had also prepared for it. And as a team, we have also been here before."

She said that traveling into Auckland will be banned unless people live there and are traveling home.



Daily mouthwash may cut transmission risk: Study

London (IANS): In the fight against the novel Coronavirus, a team of German scientists has claimed that Sars-Cov-2 viruses can be "inactivated" using commercially available mouthwashes.

According to the study, published in the Journal of Infectious Diseases, high viral loads can be detected in the oral cavity and throat of some Covid-19 patients.

The use of mouthwashes that are effective against Sars-Cov-2 could, thus, help to reduce the viral load and possibly the risk of Coronavirus transmission over a short term, the researchers said.

"Gargling with mouthwash cannot inhibit the production of viruses in the cells, but could reduce the viral load in the short term where the greatest potential for infection comes from, namely in the oral cavity and throat," said study researcher Toni



of gargling.

The researchers then used Vero E6 cells, which are particularly receptive to Sars-Cov-2, to determine the virus titer.

In order to assess the efficacy of the mouthwashes, the team also treated the virus suspensions with cell culture medium instead of the mouthwash before adding them to the cell culture.



FIR against ASHA workers for violating unlock guidelines

New Delhi (IANS): The Delhi police has registered an FIR against ASHA workers and Central trade unions protesting at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi area for violating unlock guidelines.

"An FIR is registered against unauthorised protesters of ASHA Workers and Central Trade Unions who gathered at Jantar Mantar in violation of unlock guidelines. Protests are strictly banned at Jantar Mantar. Such gatherings can worsen the COVID-19 situation," New Delhi DCP Eish Singhal said. Hundreds of ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) workers staged a protest at Jantar Mantar on Sunday demanding that the government accept their longstanding demands. Shouting slogans, these workers demanded that ASHA workers be paid a fixed monthly remuneration equivalent to the statutory minimum wage for skilled workers in the respective states.

Efforts on to prevent 2nd wave: Uddhav

Mumbai: The Maharashtra government is striving to see there is no second wave of COVID-19 in the state, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said on Tuesday during a meeting held by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Thackeray also said hospitals will be set up in all districts of the state to control the epidemic, according to an official statement.

The chief minister said Maharashtra did not hide a single COVID-19 case and death due to the disease and

shared information with transparency.

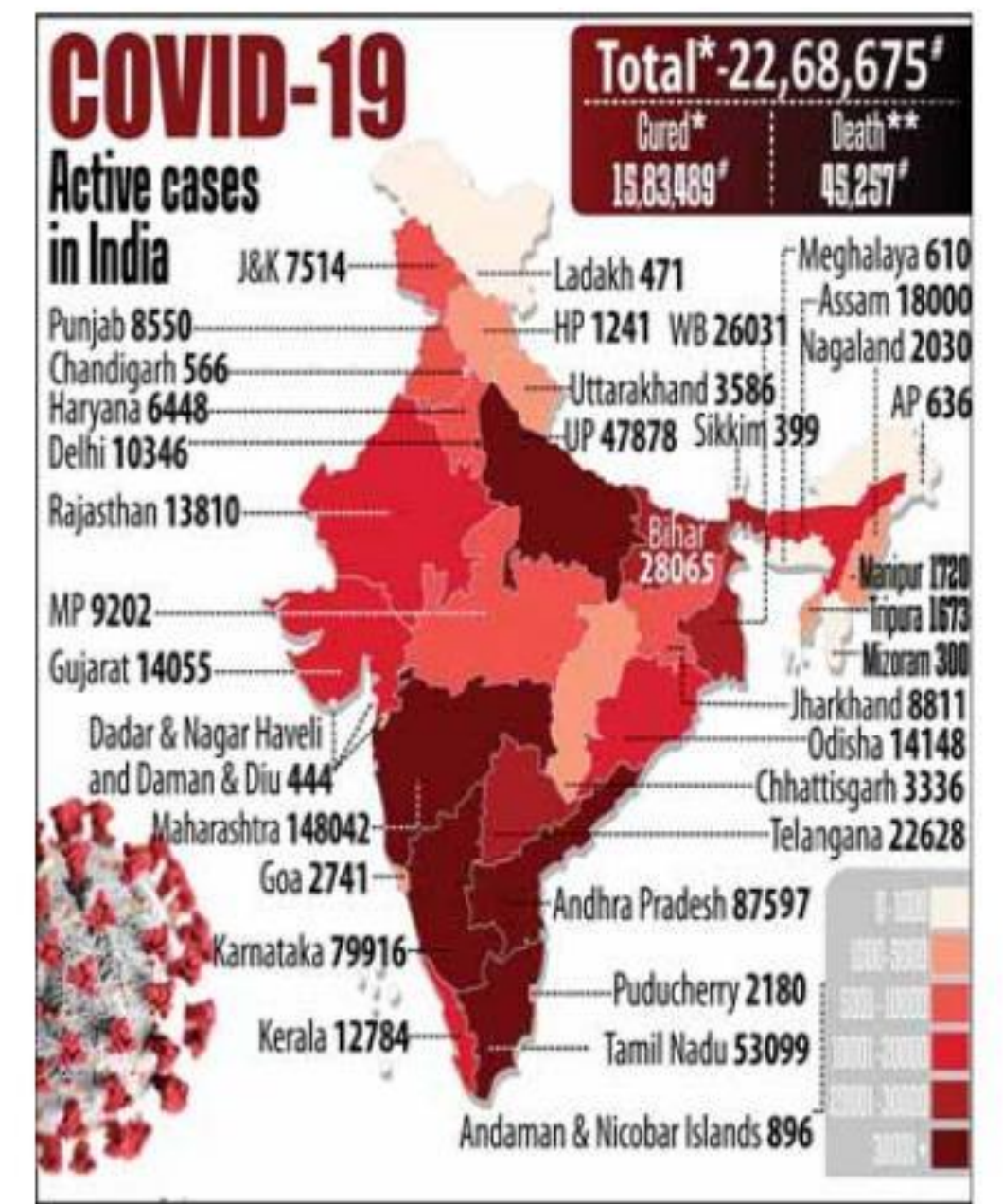
Modi held a meeting with chief ministers of Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh via video conferencing to review measures taken to tackle COVID-19. The chief minister said it has been observed that after recovering from COVID-19, patients contracted some other diseases, and called for setting up a mechanism to treat such individuals.



Virus reunites family after 20 years

Ranchi (IANS): Amid the rising Coronavirus cases and deaths across the world, a heart-warming story has emerged from coal city Dhanbad where a man was reunited with wife and child after 20 years. Gajadhar Sonar, a resident of Belgarh village of Koderma left home 20 years ago after a quarrel with his wife and was living in Jharia Lilloripathra of Dhanbad district under an assumed name, Satyanarayan.

However, with the spread of Covid-19, when Gajadhar Sonar had a cold and fever, his neighbours enquired about his family members. The neighbours suspected him to be Covid-19 positive.



IPL 13

BCCI team to arrive in UAE later this month for recce of facilities

Dubai (IANS): A top delegation of BCCI officials is expected to arrive in Dubai by the third week of August to do a recce of the venues of the UAE, which is all set to host the 13th edition of the Indian Premier League.

The IPL 2020 edition will be played at three venues in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah from September 19 to November 10.

According to a report in the Gulf Times, the team will consist of IPL chairman Brijesh Patel, Hemang Amin, interim CEO of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and COO of IPL and they will have to quarantine themselves for six days on arrival in their hotel rooms before getting to work.

The BCCI has got the government green signal too to host the



IPL in the UAE keeping in mind the COVID-19 situation in India.

The BCCI on Monday invited third parties to express their interest in acquiring the title sponsorship rights for the 13th edition of the IPL - a slot which has been left vacant following Vivo's exit.

The last date of submitting the expression of interest (EOI) is August 14, a BCCI statement said. The final bid should be sent to the cricket board on August 18.

The BCCI, last week, had decided to suspend the partnership with Chinese mobile company Vivo. The move came after the BCCI and the IPL Governing Council were both criticised for retaining Vivo as the title sponsor amid the raging anti-China sentiment.



‘Sreejesh has set the bar very high for goalkeepers in India’

New Delhi (IANS): Indian junior men's hockey team goalkeeper Prashant Kumar Chauhan believes veteran PR Sreejesh has set the bar high for young goalkeepers in the country.

"We are very lucky to see the way PR Sreejesh has evolved as a goalkeeper over the years. The way he is always aware of important match situations is amazing and it is something I would like to emulate," said Chauhan.

"Sreejesh was at his absolute best during the penalty shoot-out in the FIH Hockey Pro League 2020 against Netherlands and Australia. It was amazing to see the way he protected the goal during the penalty shoot-out. He has set the bar very high for young goalkeepers in India," he added.

The 19-year-old, who was part of the silver medal-winning team at the 3rd Youth Olympic Games in 2018 and the Sultan of Johor Cup in 2019, is happy with the way his career has progressed so far.

"It's been great to be part of the Indian junior men's hockey team since 2018. I feel I have

learned many important things required to be successful at the highest level. "I have enjoyed the pressure in big matches and I feel the junior circuit is a wonderful platform for any young player to test himself. I hope I get to play many more matches in the future and I would certainly like to contribute to many more crucial victories for the Indian junior team," said Chauhan.

While speaking about his goals for the future, Chauhan said that nothing can be bigger than performing well for the senior Indian team.

"Playing for the senior Indian team has to be my ultimate goal and my aim is not to just play for the senior team, but to also have a long career in the senior international circuit.

"I hope I can be the senior Indian team's first choice goalkeeper one day and I dream of contributing to the Indian team's victories in massive tournaments like the Olympics. I am going to continue working hard on my game and I am sure I will receive my opportunities soon," said Chauhan.

Kohli, Paine best Test captains in world right now: Faiz

Jaipur (IANS): FaizFazal, a domestic veteran and Ranji Trophy-winning skipper with Vidarbha, believes India's ViratKohli and Australia's Tim Paine are two of the best captains in the world at the moment.

In a recent interaction on Sports Tiger's show 'Off the Field', on being asked who the best captain in the world, Faiz answered, "I am a fan of Tim Paine, he is very good as a Test captain. Virat is also very good in Tests."

On being asked about him not



getting a call to the national team after scoring a half-century in his debut match, Faiz said, "The competition in Team India is very tight, I feel very fortunate that I played for India be-



cause that was the aim, to play for the country. Nothing can be compared with that. But I still aim to play for the Test team. But, yes, I feel disappointed that I could not continue my place in

the Indian team."

He added, "The game itself is my motivation and I love playing cricket at any stage. That's why even in the off-season, unfortunately, this season, I could not go but I always travel to the UK and plays the premier league there."

Faiz, who scored 1,001 and 942 first-class runs in the 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively, represented India in a solitary ODI against Zimbabwe in 2016 where he scored a half-century. He also shared his experience

of being a captain and how difficult it is to lead a team. "I love captaining Vidarbha. I have been very fortunate to get some amazing cricketers in my side. Even when I was leading in the Duleep Trophy, I had some amazing cricketers in that team as well."

"You cannot teach a lot, it comes naturally," he added.

Faiz had exceptional domestic seasons in the past few years where he led Vidarbha to back to back Ranji Trophy title victories in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Solskjaer urges United to improve after entering Europa semis

Cologne (IANS): Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has urged his team to improve their game following their narrow 1-0 win over FC Copenhagen in the Europa League quarter-final clash.

United needed a penalty from Bruno Fernandes in the 95th minute on Monday night to secure victory over a well-organised Copenhagen side, whose goalkeeper Karl-Johan Johnson made an incredible 13 saves in the match.

"We had to be disciplined, we had to be patient and, in the end, that patience worked for us. We created enough chances to win the game," Solskjaer told UEFA.com at the end of the match.

"We hit the post a few times



and were unlucky with a couple of VAR (reviews). They were the right decisions, but we could have been better with the timing of

our runs and stuff," he added.

Solskjaer also admitted that players made it hard for themselves by not being more ruthless

in front of the goal. He, however, also praised the opposition goalkeeper, who arguably had one of the best nights of his career.

"We need to improve on many aspects. But if you create as many chances as we did today, we'd like to be more clinical and efficient and score when we have them," the Norwegian said.

"Even though we did create some fantastic opportunities, sometimes it looked like the boys wanted to walk the ball over the line. But there are always some defenders there and a keeper, who today was probably man of the match."

Manchester United, who won the trophy in 2017, will next face either Wolverhampton Wanderers or Sevilla in the semi-final of the tournament.

Hyderabad FC unveils new logo for the club

Hyderabad: Hyderabad Football Club on Tuesday unveiled their new and updated crest which will be used in all forms of communication with the 2020-21 season onwards.

The Club's new logo retains the primary assets of the original crest which showcases a merger between the rich legacy of Hyderabad, it's contribution to Indian football along with the city's rapidly evolving modern identity.

Hyderabad FC co-owner Varun Tripathaneni said, "It's a start of the new and exciting era for all of us at Hyderabad FC, and we're happy to share the evolution of the club's logo. Our crest and brand identity has been a bold one, and we felt this upgrade will really helps us venture into a lot of things."

"It's an exciting new redesign for the HFC brand. In Hyderabad, football has always been our sport, so we're proud to be presenting the new logo which salutes our rich footballing legacy, while embracing a modern Hyderabad," added Varun Tripathaneni.

Coached by Albert Roca, Hyderabad FC's new-look team will debut the brand-new crest on the field in the 2020-21 season of the Indian Super League.



Eng vs Pak: Latif bats for Haider Ali's inclusion in 2nd Test

Karachi (IANS): Former Pakistan cricketer Rashid Latif feels 19-year-old batsman Haider Ali should be included in the team for the second Test against England starting Thursday at the Ageas Bowl.

England won the first Test in dramatic style in Manchester to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series and the visitors will have to bring their A-game in Southampton to have any chance of levelling the series.

Latif feels Haider is ready to make his Test debut in the tough English conditions and therefore should get a chance to showcase his skills in the crucial game. "Haider Ali is missing from this team. His time to play is now and if he doesn't play, you will waste one year of his career," Latif said on his YouTube channel 'Caught Behind'.

NZC confident of hosting '37 days of int'l cricket'

Auckland (IANS): New Zealand Cricket (NZC) is hopeful of hosting international matches later this year and is confident of setting up bio-secure bubble in a similar way that England did against West Indies last month and also for their ongoing Pakistan series this month.

New Zealand recently marked 100 days without community transmission and NZC is looking to bring cricket back to its shores after COVID-19 halted the sport in the country in March.

According to the normal FTP, West Indies, Pakistan, Australia and Bangladesh were scheduled to travel to New Zealand this year. NZC chief David White remains hopeful of the countries travelling for the respective series, the schedule of which could be put forward in the coming days.

"We are making tremendous progress. I was just on the phone to the West Indies, they're confirmed, Pakistan is confirmed, Australia and Bangladesh... so 37 days of international cricket," White told reporters as per ESPN-cricinfo.

Training kids of Kuki tribe, Len Doungel finds 'rich hearts'

ArrayNew Delhi (IANS): Early morning at 5 am, a crowd of villagers gathered around the village ground in Longja in the Chandel district of Manipur - barely a couple of hours from the India-Myanmar border.

A group of boys ranging from ages 8-20 have all formed a huddle around a nimble figure donning the India training kit, as the latter explains the finer details of the game to them.

The people gathering around the ground, that is surrounded by the eastern reaches of the Himalayan mountains, faintly recognise the India international, who had last year scored his maiden goal for India in the World Cup Qualifier against Afghanistan in Dushanbe, Tajikistan - Seiminlen Doungel.

For the 26-year-old winger, this was an opportunity to get back to his roots and connect with people from the Kuki tribe, who still live in the traditional manner.

"Coming here was quite special for me. My family is also from the Kuki tribe. Much like most of the Kuki people, my father also used to get his earnings from the farm. We have sort of moved on from that way of life



since I became a professional. But coming here and experiencing the simplicity with which these people lead their lives was simply amazing," Doungel said to the-aiff.com.

Doungel, who is fondly known as Len in the dressing room, went on to stay in that village for two-and-a-half weeks, in order to impart his footballing knowledge to the local kids.

"I felt a real connection to these people. Even when I am in Manipur, I mostly get to speak my language (ThadouKuki) at home. With these people I could speak that," he said. "The kids there were really simple and did

not know much about the world of football."

Len explained that while the kids in the village did not know about the world of football, each one of them was encapsulated by the 'beautiful game.'

"They all know how to play football and like to play it too. But what they do not know is the scope that the sport has in the modern-day. Back in my younger days we did not know much of the scope of pursuing football as a professional. But now football can give you a viable career -- be it as a player or in any field surrounding the game," he explained.

Bengaluru (IANS): India men's hockey team member Mandeep Singh, who has tested positive for coronavirus, has been shifted to a multispecialty hospital after his condition moved from "mild to moderate severity of COVID-19", Sports Authority of India (SAI) has informed.

In a statement on Tuesday morning, SAI said: "During night monitoring of vitals on August 10 (Monday), it was found that Mandeep Singh's blood oxygen level was dropping below normal which indicated that he is moving from mild to moderate severity of COVID-19."

"SAI authorities on campus took an immediate decision to shift him to SS Sparshmultispecialty hospital as a precautionary measure. His condition is currently stable," it added. Apart from Mandeep, captain

Manpreet Singh, Surender Kumar, Jaskaran Singh, Varun Kumar and Krishan Pathak have also been diagnosed with COVID-19 following their arrival at the SAI's National Centre of Excellence (NCOE) for the hockey national camp which began on August 4.

"All six athletes in NCOE Bengaluru who tested COVID-19 positive, were being monitored constantly and their vitals were being checked four times everyday - in the morning, afternoon, evening and in night before sleep," SAI further said.

"I am self quarantined on the SAI campus and I am very happy with the way SAI authorities have handled the situation,"

Manpreet had earlier said. "I am very happy that they made the testing of a t h - letes



m a n d a - tory. That proactive step helped in identifying the problem right in time. I am doing fine and hope to recover very soon."