





## SHORT TAKES

## Heavy rains to return tomorrow, says IMD

**New Delhi:** Overcast conditions on Monday kept the mercury in check in the national capital which is likely to witness a spell of heavy rains between Wednesday and Friday, the meteorological department said. Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the regional forecasting centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), said the monsoon trough is likely to shift northwards and will remain close to Delhi-NCR from Tuesday evening to Friday. Under its influence, a convergence of lower-level easterly winds from the Bay of Bengal and southwesterly winds from the Arabian Sea will take place over north-west India, he said. Widespread rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy showers are predicted over northwest India during the period. "One or two spells of moderate rain, thundershowers with isolated heavy rain may occur between Wednesday night and Friday afternoon," he said. On Monday, the maximum temperature settled around 32.7 degrees Celsius, a notch below normal. — *PTI*

## 2 arrested for robbing ₹6.5L

**Gurgaon:** A private firm executive was killed after a speeding car rammed into his motorcycle in Gurgaon, police said on Monday. Alok Gupta, around 50, and his friend were on his way to Greater Noida when the incident took place on the Golf Course road at DLF Phase 2 area around 6 am on Sunday, police said. They had reached Belvedere Park when a Ford Figo coming from the opposite side rammed into the divider, jumped over to the other side and hit Gupta's Harley Davidson, according to a complaint by his friend Rahul Malik, who was on another motorcycle. Gupta and the two passengers of the car were taken to a hospital, where the biker succumbed to his injuries. Malik said. The complainant has mentioned the registration number of the car and the name of its occupants. An FIR has been lodged under sections 304A (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and 279 (rash driving) of the Indian Penal Code, DLF Phase 2 police station incharge Aman Beniwal said.

## 1 dead as car rams into bike

**Gurgaon:** A private firm executive was killed after a speeding car rammed into his motorcycle in Gurgaon, police said on Monday. Alok Gupta, around 50, and his friend were on his way to Greater Noida when the incident took place on the Golf Course road at DLF Phase 2 area around 6 am on Sunday, police said. They had reached Belvedere Park when a Ford Figo coming from the opposite side rammed into the divider, jumped over to the other side and hit Gupta's Harley Davidson, according to a complaint by his friend Rahul Malik, who was on another motorcycle. Gupta and the two passengers of the car were taken to a hospital, where the biker succumbed to his injuries. Malik said. The complainant has mentioned the registration number of the car and the name of its occupants. An FIR has been lodged under sections 304A (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and 279 (rash driving) of the IPC, DLF Phase 2 police station incharge Aman Beniwal said.

## Regulate untaxed tobacco items: Docs

**New Delhi:** Doctors and health professionals have appealed to the Union government for introducing regulations on sale of smokeless and other untaxed tobacco products. Shram, a self-help group working in collaboration with doctors and professionals working in the field of health and education, has appealed to Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan and finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman to regulate the unorganised manufacturing, distribution, and sale of smokeless and other non-virginia tobacco in the country to curtail its widespread consumption, protect the health of citizens, and bring it under a taxation structure.



Staff member wearing masks and shields at Ashok Hotel during its reopening function in New Delhi on Monday.

— *PTI*

## Party accuses govt of planning Delhi riots in Feb. BJP asks Anna Hazare to join its protest against AAP govt

**New Delhi, Aug. 24:** Delhi Bharatiya Janata Party president Adesh Gupta on Monday wrote to social activist Anna Hazare, urging him to join his party's "mass movement" against the government led by Aam Aadmi Party, which he alleged was the "new name of social, political and economic corruption".

In his letter, Mr Gupta alleged that the Aam Aadmi Party government has demolished all parameters of "political purity" and also accused it of "planning" the Northeast Delhi riots in February, which had left at least 53 people dead and around 200 injured. "The Aam Aadmi Party, which came to the government in the name of clean and fair politics, has demolished all the parameters of political

► In his letter, Mr Gupta alleged that the Aam Aadmi Party has demolished all parameters of 'political purity' and also accused it of "planning" the Delhi riots

► The AAP has launched a sustained attack on the BJP, levelling allegations of corruption in the three municipal corporations and also in connection with the riots in the city

purity," Gupta wrote in his letter to Hazare.

No immediate reaction on Mr Gupta's letter was available from the Aam Aadmi Party.

The Aam Aadmi Party has launched a sustained attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party, levelling allegations of corruption in the three municipal corporations ruled by the party and also in connection with the riots in the city.

The two sides have been hitting out at each other on a range of issues, including corruption,

waterlogging and civic amenities in the city along with the riots, in the run up to the civic body polls due in 2022.

"The people of Delhi have suffered the communal riots planned by the Aam Aadmi Party," Mr Gupta said in his letter.

Senior Aam Aadmi Party leader Saurabh Bhardwaj had recently hit out at the Bharatiya Janata Party, accusing it of "orchestrating" the riots in Delhi.

"Aam Aadmi Party is the new name of social, political and economic

corruption and we are constantly fighting against them. Therefore, we request Anna Hazare to come to Delhi and raise voice against corruption and support us in the movement.

"The voice of Anna Hazare will have to be raised again for the relief of the youth and for people of Delhi who feel betrayed by the Mr Kejriwal government," Mr Gupta said.

Mr Kejriwal was a front-line leader of the anti-corruption movement launched by Anna Hazare from Ramlila ground in Delhi in 2011.

Later, Kejriwal and his supporters joined active politics and formed the Aam Aadmi Party which formed government thrice in Delhi and also emerged as the main opposition party in Punjab Assembly.



Rain Lily flowers in bloom at the Humayun Tomb during monsoon season in New Delhi on Monday.

— *PTI*

## AICTE allows MBA courses on basis of marks in UG courses

**SANJAY KAW**  
NEW DELHI, AUG. 24

The All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) has allowed business schools and institutions offering MBA and PGDM courses to admit students based on marks obtained in qualifying undergraduate exams as several entrance tests could not be conducted due to the Covid-19.

The technical education regulator has, however, made it clear that the relaxation is being made available only for the 2020-21 academic session and should not be seen as a precedent for future academic years. The council stated that since many entrance exams have not been conducted in various states, admissions would be allowed without exams this time. Calling itself to be "more a facilitator than a regulator," AICTE has asked students to consider alternative modes for admission which can "benefit the institutions as well as the students."

The regulator, however, said that first preference will be given to those candidates who have appeared

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in any of the entrance tests mentioned in the APH 2020-21 (Approval Process Handbook 2020-21) and qualified irrespective of their marks secured in degree as long as minimum marks as per the handbook is secured.

If vacant seats are still available, candidates shall be selected based on merit in the qualifying undergraduate exams.

The AICTE said the states may also use this relaxation while allotting seats through counselling. Currently, students are protesting for a similar arrangement for undergraduate admissions too.

Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia has suggested through a series of tweets that having only JEE or NEET based admissions is a narrow criteria and India should look at alternative modes of admission.

## Man kills employer after fight over pay cut amid pandemic

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, AUG. 24

A 21-year-old man was arrested from west Delhi's Jharoda Kalan area for allegedly killing his employer, who had slapped him during an argument over salary reduction as his business was severely hit due to the Covid-19 pandemic, police said on Monday.

Tasleem, who worked as servant at a dairy owned by 45-year-old Om Prakash, hit his employer on the head with a wooden stick, slit his neck with a knife, put it in a gunny bag and threw it in a well nearby, police said.

Tasleem, a native of Shamli in Uttar Pradesh, was earlier working at a hotel in Bahadurgarh and was introduced to Prakash in June by a relative.

The monthly salary of the accused was fixed at ₹15,000 after which he started working as a servant at the dairy, police said.

A missing person report was registered on August 12 by the victim's nephew. In the report, the nephew said his uncle had been

► TASLEEM, WHO worked as servant at a dairy owned by 45-year-old Om Prakash, hit his employer on the head with a wooden stick, slit his neck with a knife, put it in a gunny bag and threw it in a well nearby

► ACCUSED told police that his salary was fixed at ₹15,000 per month but as the business was hit due to the coronavirus-triggered lockdown, Prakash had asked him to work on a lower salary which led to an argument

missing since the intervening night of August 10 and 11 and was last seen with the servant, police said. A few days later, the decomposed body of the victim was recovered from a well after which a murder case was registered at Baba Haridas Nagar police station.

When the police initiated the investigation, it found that the accused had disappeared, taking with him the victim's motorcycle and mobile.

Raids were conducted at various places in Shamli,

Panipat and other areas in Haryana but Tasleem was not found, police said.

The police finally arrested Tasleem on Sunday after receiving information that he was seen in Jharoda Kalan area, said Anto Alphonse, deputy commissioner of police (Dwarka).

During interrogation, Tasleem confessed that he had killed Prakash following an argument over salary. He told police that his salary was fixed at ₹15,000 per month but as the business was hit due to the coronavirus-triggered lockdown, Prakash had asked him to work on a lower salary which led to an argument.

Prakash had then slapped him, Tasleem told police.

Tasleem told the police that after Prakash went to sleep, he hit him on his head with a wooden stick and slit his neck with a knife. He then packed the body in a gunny bag and threw it in a well nearby.

The police have recovered two mobile phones along with the knife used in the crime, the deputy commissioner of police said.

## Portion of Delhi BJP office closed after staffer tests positive

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, AUG. 24

A part of Delhi BJP headquarter at Pant Marg was closed down on Monday after a senior staff member working there tested positive for Covid-19.

According to Ashok Goel, the Delhi BJP media department head, the staff member, aged around 60 years, undertook the Covid test on Sunday and his test report was positive.

"To disinfect the office block where he used to sit, it has been closed. Other staff members who sat there have also undergone corona test," said Mr Goel.

The office block is separate from the main Delhi BJP office building, where the party president and other senior office bearers have their chambers.

A Delhi Bharatiya Janata Party leader said the infected employee's wife had tested positive on Saturday, after which he himself undertook the test and is currently in home isolation.

Earlier, a room used by the media department at Delhi Bharatiya Janata Party headquarter was closed after a visitor later tested positive for the virus.

► ACCORDING TO Ashok Goel, the Delhi BJP media department head, the staff member, aged around 60 years, undertook the Covid test on Sunday and his test report was positive

Amid a rise in the number of coronavirus cases in the national capital over the last week, Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain on Monday said the Covid infection rate in the national capital is below 10 per cent even as experts attributed the increase to opening up of economy and patients from outside seeking treatment here.

Delhi recorded 1,450 fresh coronavirus cases on Sunday, the highest single-day spike in August, taking the infection tally to over 1.61 lakh, while the death toll mounted to 4,300.

Sunday's spike in fresh cases surpassed Saturday's increase of 1,412 cases.

Delhi has seen a fluctuation in the number of coronavirus cases since August 1. On August 1, the city recorded 1,118 fresh cases while for the next three days, the number of infections reported in a single-day stayed below the 1,000-mark.

## NBE launches post-MBBS 2-year diploma courses

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, AUG. 24

The National Board of Examinations (NBE), an autonomous body under the Union health ministry, has launched post-MBBS two-year diploma courses in eight specialties. The MCI had converted its ongoing diploma courses into degree courses in 2019 to overcome the shortfall of teaching faculty. To fill the void, the health ministry had asked NBE to look into the possibility of launch-

ing the diploma courses.

The NBE governing body of under the chairmanship of Dr Abhijit Sheth and executive director Prof. Pawanindra Lal took up the challenge of reviving the diploma courses in the country. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the weakness and shortcomings of the primary and the secondary healthcare delivery system were obvious thereby putting an extra burden on the tertiary care health centres with medical colleges

being converted into dedicated COVID Care/Treatment centres. It was, therefore, imperative to augment the hospitals catering to the population in rural, semi-urban areas and tier-II & III cities.

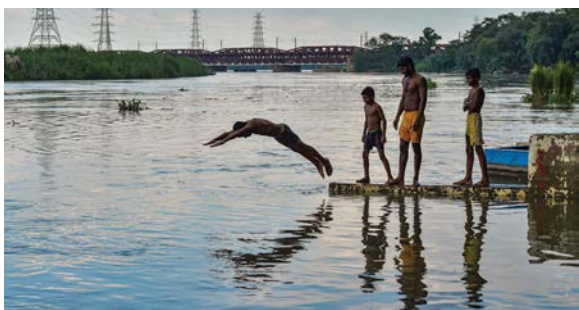
The NBE prepared a blueprint for starting the diploma courses and subsequently notified the launch of NBE diploma courses on August 20. Prof. Lal said the diploma courses will provide much required trained manpower to the district hospitals.

## Water level in Yamuna close to danger mark

**New Delhi, Aug. 24:** The water level of the Yamuna river on Monday rose to 204.38 metres, perilously close to the danger mark, with Delhi's Water Minister Satyendar Jain saying the government is ready to deal with any flood-like situation.

An official said 5,883 cusec water was released from the Hathinikund Barrage in Haryana's Yamunanagar district at 8 am, leading to rise in water levels.

The water level of the river was recorded at



204.38 metres at 8 am, which is just below the danger mark of 205.33 metres.

At 8 pm on Sunday, the water levels were recorded

at 204.18 metres.

At 3.30 pm on Monday, the water level was at 204.32 metres, officials said.

One cusec is equivalent

to 28.317 litre per second. Jain said the government was keeping a close watch and was fully prepared to deal with any flood-like situation.

"We have a flood-control system ready and it will be activated when any the situation demands it," he said. The government has a plan ready for all the areas along the Yamuna, right from Pallava village to Okhla, he said.

The water level of the river rose due to heavy rainfall in its catchment area over the last few days. — *PTI*



## SHORT TAKES

## AIIMS doctors to examine Shripad

**Panaji:** The Oxygen saturation levels of Union Ayush minister Shripad Naik, who is undergoing treatment for Covid-19 here, dropped on Monday, Goa chief minister Pramod Sawant said and added that a team of doctors from AIIMS, Delhi, will take stock of his health in night. A joint team of doctors from the Command Hospital, New Delhi and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) will be arriving in Goa tonight to take stock of Naik's medical condition, the CM said. The team will decide whether to shift Naik to Delhi for further treatment, he said. A senior health department official said Naik's health "fluctuated" in afternoon. "The health condition of Naik is stable all along but his oxygen levels dropped on Monday after which a medical review was done," Sawant said. — PTI

## 5 injured in clash over PUBG in UP

**Muzaffarnagar:** Five people, including two women, were injured in a clash between two groups over popular online game PUBG in Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district on Monday, police said. Four people have been arrested in connection with the incident which took place in Hasanpur village of the district under Kotwali police station area, they said. Two men, Aman and Vishal, got into a confrontation with each other over PUBG. Soon their family members joined in and the confrontation turned into a violent clash in which firearms and lathis were used, Circle Officer Jitendra Kumar told PTI. The injured, who sustained bullet injuries, were taken to the hospital, he said. A case has been registered and four people have been arrested, the police said. Additional force has been deployed in the area. — PTI

## No hard copies of ordinances in House

**New Delhi:** Hard copies of ordinances will not be circulated among MPs in the upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament to check the spread of COVID-19 and they will be given digitised version of the documents, the Lok Sabha Secretariat said on Monday. A number of ordinances promulgated by the government are expected to be taken up by Parliament in the upcoming session. "Members are informed that in view of the prevailing situation of COVID-19 pandemic and in order to check the spread of infection which may occur due to handling of physical papers, it has been decided to discontinue circulation of hard copies of ordinances," the secretariat said in a notification. — PTI

## Separate board for Ladakh schools?

**Kargil:** A committee on Monday proposed establishment of a new territorial board in Ladakh, emphasising that the schools in the Union territory be affiliated to a board which fulfills the realistic needs of the students as per the natural conditions of the region. The committee for review of educational boards for schools in Kargil met under the chairmanship of Executive Councilor for Tourism and Zanskar Affairs, Phunso Tashi here, officials said. It also suggested equal representation from both Kargil and Leh districts in the new "Ladakh Board of School Education" in order to make the process more inclusive in the larger interest, they said. The panel also suggested that local aspirations and values be given due space in subjects like social studies. — PTI

## Journalist shot dead in UP's Ballia

**Ballia:** A journalist working with a Hindi news channel was on Monday night shot dead in Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh, police said. He has been identified as Ratan Singh (45), they said. "Ratan Singh, a journalist working with a Hindi news channel was shot dead on Monday night in Phephana. He has been identified as Ratan Singh (45). We are investigating the case, Additional Superintendent of Police Sanjay Yadav said. — PTI

## Sibal hits out at Rahul, then withdraws tweet

'Rahul never said what was attributed to him'

**New Delhi, Aug. 24:** Senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal on Monday withdrew his tweet in which he had hit out at Rahul Gandhi, and said the former party chief had informed him personally that he had never made the "colluding with the BJP" remark.

Mr Sibal is among the 23 party leaders who have written to Sonia Gandhi seeking "full-time" leadership that is active in the field and "visible" in party offices, devolution of powers to state units and revamping of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) in line with the party constitution among other changes.

As the CWC meeting was underway on Monday and it was reported that Rahul Gandhi had lashed out at the letter writers, Sibal tweeted, "Rahul says 'we are colluding with BJP'. Succeeded in Rajasthan High Court defending the Congress Party. Defending party in Manipur to bring down BJP government."

"Last 30 years have never made a statement in favour of BJP on any issue. Yet 'we are colluding with the BJP!'"

Mr Sibal said a little later that he was withdrawing the tweet.

"Was informed by Rahul Gandhi personally that he never said what was attributed to him. I therefore withdraw my twee," he said.

Sibal then deleted his earlier tweet in which he had hit out at Gandhi.

Tagging Sibal's earlier tweet, Congress' chief spokesperson Randeep



**Last 30 years have never made a statement in favour of BJP on any issue. Yet 'we are colluding with the BJP'**

— Kapil Sibal, Cong leader

Surjewala also said that Rahul Gandhi hasn't said a word of this nature nor alluded to it.

"Please don't be misled by false media discourse or misinformation being spread. But yes, we all need to work together in fighting the draconian Modi rule rather than fighting & hurting each other and the Congress," Surjewala tweeted.

Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad said a section of media is "wrongly attributing that, in CWC I told Shri Rahul Gandhi to prove that the letter written by us is in collusion with BJP. 'let me make it very clear that Shri Rahul Gandhi has neither in CWC nor outside said that this letter was written at the behest of BJP'". — PTI

## 'If Rahul wants, we will quit Maha govt'

**Mumbai:** While several Congress leaders from Maharashtra expressed their faith in Rahul Gandhi's leadership, state minister Vijay Wadettiwar said that the Congress will even get out of the power in Maharashtra if Mr Gandhi doesn't want to continue alliance with Shiv Sena. Mr Wadettiwar, who joined the Congress from Shiv Sena in 2005, said the Gandhi family has the capacity to lead the country and that Rahul Gandhi should be reinstated as the party president. "The Congress party epitomises true democratic values," he claimed.

## Sidda urges Sonia to convince Rahul

**Bengaluru:** Former Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah on Monday urged interim Congress president Sonia Gandhi to convince Rahul Gandhi to take up the party's top post if her health does not permit for full-fledged dedication. The leader requested Sonia Gandhi to continue as AICC president. "And if you feel that your health may not permit for full-fledged dedication, I urge you to convince Shri Rahul Gandhi to take up the position," Siddaramaiah said in a letter to Sonia Gandhi.

## Hand over airport ops to special purpose vehicle: CM Resolution against airport lease

**AGE CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUGUST 24**

The Kerala Assembly on Monday passed a resolution demanding the withdrawal of Union Cabinet's decision to lease out Thiruvananthapuram airport to Adani Enterprises Ltd.

Chief minister Mr Pinarayi Vijayan, while moving the resolution in Assembly, said the Centre should hand over the operations and management of the airport to the Special Purpose Vehicle

(SPV) in which the state government has stake. Despite the state government agreeing to give the amount quoted by Adani Enterprises, the Centre's decision to lease out the airport to the private party cannot be justified, he added.

Though the Congress led UDF supported the resolution moved by the chief minister, Opposition leader Mr Ramesh Chennithala criticized the government alleging double standards on the issue. "While the government attacked the Adani group

**KERALA**  
**CHIEF MINISTER** Pinarayi Vijayan, while moving the resolution in Assembly, said the Centre should hand over the operations and management of the airport to the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) in which the state govt has stake.

in public, it secretly helped them by consulting a law firm close to the company which smacks of criminal conspiracy," he alleged.

The chief minister refuted the allegations and said the state government's stand on the airport was an "open book". The firm being referred to by the opposition, had only carried out legal vetting and had no role in deciding the amount quoted by the state in the bidding process. The lone member of BJP O Rajagopal alleged that he was not allowed to speak on the issue. BJP workers staged a protest outside the Assembly.

The resolution was later passed by the Assembly unanimously.

## Bhadauria launches 'MY IAF' app

**New Delhi, Aug. 24:** Air Chief Marshal R.K.S. Bhadauria on Monday launched a mobile application, "MY IAF", that will provide career-related information to those who want to join the Indian Air Force, an official statement said.

The app was launched by the chief of the Air Staff as part of the "Digital India" initiative, it said. "The format of the app serves as a single digital platform interfacing the users with the details of selection procedure, training curriculum and pay for both officers and airmen," the statement said. — PTI



A devotee immerses an idol of Lord Ganesh in seawater during Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations near Marina beach in Chennai on Monday. The state government decided not to allow the installation of Lord Ganesh idols in public places and processions or their immersion in water bodies following the coronavirus outbreak. — PTI

## Allow students to come via Vande Bharat flights, says SC Neet won't be held abroad: SC

**New Delhi, Aug. 24:** The Supreme Court on Monday declined to pass direction to the Central government to hold the National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test (Neet) Undergraduate (UG) 2020 examination in Gulf countries, but asked the government to allow students to come via Vande Bharat Mission flights to give the exams. A bench of Justice L Nageswara Rao said that the quarantine norms are mandatory for students who would come from the Middle East countries to give exam but allowed petitioners to approach

state authorities to seek relaxation. The bench said the exam will be offline and the students who fly in will have to maintain the 14 days quarantine in view of public health.

The top court asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to speak to ministries concerned to ensure aspirants, for the Neet scheduled on September 13, residing in the Middle East are permitted to come to India in Vande Bharat Mission flights.

Recently, the Medical Council of India has told the apex court that post-

ponement of the Neet UG 2020 examination of this year any further shall be a "drastic deviation" from the academic schedule which may affect the subsequent academic years of the students.

The MCI, in an affidavit, had said plea for overseas examination centres for Neet (UG) does not deserve indulgence from the top court in view of the fact that the Government of India has permitted travel to and from other countries, through Vande Bharat Mission. The Central government, under the Vande

Bharat Mission, has permitted Indian citizens, including overseas citizens of India, to come to India by special flights, the affidavit has added while seeking dismissal of the plea. The top court was hearing plea filed by parents of nearly 4,000 NEET candidates, who sought to alternatively postpone the examination. The parents of these candidates, who reside in Doha, Qatar, Oman, and UAE, have approached the apex court challenging the Kerala HC June 30 order which had dismissed their plea. — ANI

## SC rejects petition on Covid compensation

**New Delhi, Aug. 24:** The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea seeking formulation of a national policy for uniform compensation for families of those who have died due to the coronavirus disease.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and R.S. Reddy dismissed the plea saying that every state has a different policy and gives compensation as per its financial power.

Advocate Deepak Prakash, appearing for petitioner Hashik Thayikandy, said that all he is asking for is a national policy to be formulated that would provide for uniform compensation throughout the country. So

many people have died in India due to COVID-19 and the victims are not getting equal compensation, he said.

Prakash said that in some cases, the Delhi government has given ₹1 crore as compensation, while some states are giving ₹1 lakh. There is no uniform policy on compensation, he said.

The petitioner has also sought a direction to the Centre as well as state governments to formulate an appropriate "compensation plan" to provide ex-gratia monetary compensation to the kin of essential workers and healthcare workers who have succumbed to Covid-19. — PTI

## SEARCH FOR MISSING MALE

General Public is hereby informed that one male (depicted in the photo) namely Sanjay Sharoliya S/o Balu Ram Sharoliya R/o 1/2115, Gali No.18, Near Pal Chowk, Mansarovar Park, Shahdara, Delhi Aged-50 Years has been reported missing since 29.02.2020 from his residence vide DD No.32A Dated 08.03.2020 registered at Police Station Mansarovar Park, Delhi. His physical description is as under:-



Sanjay Sharoliya

**Complexion:** Wheatish, **Height:** 6', **Face:** Round, **Built:** Thin, **ID:** Mentally fit, **Clothing:** Brown coloured jacket, white coloured shirt, grey coloured pant and sport shoes in feet.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing male, may inform SHO, Mansarovar Park, Delhi at E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or website : <http://cbi.nic.in>

Sd/-  
 Tele No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641 SHO, Mansarovar Park, Delhi  
 FAX No. : 011-24368639 Tel.: 011-22599373, 22599375  
 DP/43/SHD/2020 Mob.: 7065036029

## Government of Jammu &amp; Kashmir DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR

Extension No. 08

In view of poor response, the last date for submission of bids invited vide this Notice e-tender Notice No. 06 of 2020 dated 01/07/2020 for **Hybrid Flower seeds** (Summer and Winter) is hereby extended as per details given below:

1. Period of downloading of bidding document	24/08/2020 from 11:00 AM to 09/09/2020 up to 02:00 PM.
2. Bid submission Start Date	25/08/2020 from 10:00 AM.
3. Bid submission End date	09/09/2020 up to 02:00 PM.
4. Date and time of Opening of Tenders	12/09/2020 at 02:00 PM.

Other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid Tender Notice.

By order  
 Sd/-  
 Accounts Officer  
 (Member secretary)  
 J&K Srinagar.

DIPK-4442/20 Dated 22.08.20

## Aim behind Haathi Minar is to create awareness about safety of elephants

## Odisha man builds memorial in elephant's honour

**AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO BHUBANESWAR, AUG. 24**

Krushna Chandra Naik, a resident of Jally village in Odisha's Keonjhar (Kendhujhar) district, has erected a 35-ft monument in the memory of a tusker at the same farmland where it had succumbed a decade ago.

The man erected the tower as for his mother's wish. The tower is locally addressed as 'Haathi Minar.'

On November 7, 2009, the victim elephant from nearby Jyotipur reserve forest entered the paddy fields near Jali village

under Champua block to quench his hunger. As soon as the tusker lifted its trunk to make way through the high intensity cables into the paddy fields of Padmini Naik (Krushna's mother), it came across live wires and got electrocuted in seconds.

Shocked over the incident, Padmini asked her son Krushna to build a memorial at the spot where the animal succumbed.

"My mother was deeply hurt and she could not eat anything for the next couple of days. She had asked me to build a memorial for the elephant in our



field and it was her last wish," said Krushna Chandra Naik who is a retired Odia teacher.

Padmini died two years after the incident.

"The aim behind the Haathi Minar is to create awareness among the



people to also prioritise safety of elephants," added Naik.

"A herd of elephants had come to the village to munch the ripening paddy but one of them died after suffering an electric shock from the

cables installed to guard the crops. Padmini wanted to build a memorial as a tribute to the animal. Accordingly, her son fulfilled the wish and erected the Haathi Minar," Parshuram Singh, a local resident, said.

It took nearly eight years for Krushna to complete the construction work.

The elephant memorial or Haathi Minar — built with an investment of approximately ₹5 lakh — was thrown open to public on January 14, 2019 and since then it has gained popularity as a regional tourist destination.



## SHORT TAKES

## Maoist carrying ₹1L reward surrenders

**Bhubaneswar:** A hardcore Maoist leader carrying a reward of Rs 1 on his head has surrendered before the police in Odisha's Malkangiri district declaring that he wanted to return to the social mainstream, the state police said on Monday. The rebel leader identified as Mahadev Madkani surrendered before Malkangiri superintendent of police Risikesh D Khilari saying he had realised the "futility" of the violent path adopted by Maoists. The government had announced a reward of Rs one lakh on the head of the surrendered Maoist, Mr Khilari said. Operating as an active member of the Darva division of the banned outfit in Malkangiri and neighbouring areas, he was allegedly involved in several cases.

## PM-Cares to fund 2 hospitals in Bihar

**New Delhi:** The PM-Cares Fund Trust will finance two 500-bed Covid-19 makeshift hospitals in Bihar, the Prime Minister's Office said, asserting that this will go a long way in improving the Covid care in the state. The PMO tweeted, "PM-Cares Fund Trust has decided to allocate funds for fight against Covid-19 by way of establishment of 500-bed Covid-19 Makeshift Hospitals at Patna and Muzaffarpur, Bihar by DRDO." While the 500-bed hospital at Bihta, Patna, will be inaugurated today, the 500-bed hospital at Muzaffarpur will be inaugurated very soon. These hospitals have 125 ICU beds with ventilators and 375 normal beds each, it said. —PTI

## Rahul Gandhi's backroom control

■ **Continued from Page 1**  
remained unavailable. Insiders claim that during the Madhya Pradesh crisis whenever senior leaders tried to reach out to former Congress leader Jyotiraditya Scindia, he categorically told them that he would speak with Mr Gandhi. The result was that Mr Scindia staged a coup, resulting in the fall of the state government. During the lockdown, the Congress constituted a team to give suggestions on how to tackle the pandemic. Former Union health minister Ghulam Nabi Azad was a member of the team. But the very next day he was unceremoniously dropped from the team. This led to major resentment amongst senior leaders. At various other levels also senior and junior leaders were slighted by those close to Mr Gandhi. This was visible in a meeting of Rajya Sabha MPs with Mrs Sonia Gandhi when Rajeev Satav hit out at the senior leaders for the position the party finds itself in presently. Major resentment was also brewing due to the Rajya Sabha nominations earlier this year. The nomination of K.C. Venugopal, former Kerala Lok Sabha MP to Rajya Sabha from Rajasthan, raised many heckles in the party. Also, sending a one-term former Lok Sabha MP, Rajeev Satav, to Rajya Sabha from Maharashtra backfired on the party. Both these leaders are said to be close to Mr Gandhi.

## New Cong chief polls in 6 mths

■ **Continued from Page 1**  
shallow and manufactured issues. The CWC further noted that inner-party issues cannot be deliberated through the media or in public fora. Over 23 Congress leaders had in the letter, called for "effective leadership" that will be "visible" and "active" in the field. While calling for "honest introspection", it suggested reforms, including decentralisation of power; empowerment of state units and organizational elections at every level. The letter also said that the Nehru-Gandhi family will "always remain an integral part of the collective leadership" of the Congress Party. The meeting began Monday morning on a highly acrimonious note with reports suggesting that Mr Gandhi accused the leaders who wrote the letter of being on the side of the BJP. Mr Gandhi also questioned the timing of the letter and attacked them for going public against the leadership, saying differences need to be discussed in party platforms and not the media. He said the letter came at a time when Sonia Gandhi was hospitalised and the party was fighting with the BJP in Rajasthan to save its government, sources said.

9 dead in Gujarat due to showers ■ Met forecast raises flood fears  
Heavy rain likely in Odisha, Bengal

**New Delhi, Aug. 24:** Incessant rains claimed nine lives in Gujarat on Monday and flooded major rivers in the state, prompting 1,900 people to move to safety, even as the IMD forecast heavy showers for parts of north India, Bengal and Odisha. In Uttar Pradesh, light to moderate rains and thundershowers occurred at many places, with the Met department predicting similar weather for Tuesday too. Heavy rains continued to pound Gujarat, especially the Saurashtra region, flooding low-lying areas and disrupting normal life. With many rivers in



▶ **MAMATA BANERJEE** expressed displeasure over the embankment repair work done after cyclone Amphan, which hit the state in May

▶ She said already some places have got inundated as embankments have been breached

spate in the state, over 1,900 people in Ahmedabad, Mehsana, Sabarkantha, Patan, and Mehsana districts were shifted to safer places. Of the nine rain-related deaths in the state, two were due to collapse of houses in Junagadh and Tapi districts, while seven drowned in separate incidents in Mehsana,

Bhavnagar, Junagadh, Tapi, Narmada and Morbi, officials said. In the east, a low-pressure area has formed over the north Bay of Bengal that can bring heavy to very heavy rains in most parts of Odisha and south Bengal, raising fears of floods, landslide and waterlogging. The IMD issued an

"orange" coloured warning for Gangetic Bengal and Odisha's Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts. A "red" colour warning has been issued for Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapada, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal, Angul and Deogarh districts of Odisha for Tuesday and Wednesday. West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee has expressed concern at the possibility of floods and asked officials to be prepared to deal with the emerging situation.

Speaking to district officials from state secretariat, Ms Banerjee said already some places have got inundated owing to overflowing of some rivers and breaches in embankments. She said that while there is a forecast for heavy rain in some districts over the next few days, rivers have already crossed the danger-mark in Malda and some other places. Ms Banerjee called for proper planning to ensure that hospitals and health-care centres are not flooded if the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) releases water from its dams in Jharkhand. —PTI



Sonali Jaitley, daughter of late Arun Jaitley, pays floral tribute to her father on his first death anniversary at B.K. Dutt Colony in New Delhi on Monday. — PTI

## Miss my friend a lot: PM on Jaitley's death anniversary

**New Delhi, Aug. 24:** The BJP paid rich tributes to party stalwart Arun Jaitley on his first death anniversary on Monday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying that he misses his friend a lot and that his late Cabinet colleague diligently served India.

Top BJP leaders, including home minister Amit Shah, defence minister Rajnath Singh and party chief J.P. Nadda, fondly remembered Jaitley, who was the voice of the party on various issues for decades and was seen as its main trouble shooter. The Prime Minister tweeted, "On this day last year, we lost Shri Arun Jaitley Ji. I miss my friend a lot. Arun Ji diligently served India. His wit, intellect, legal acumen and warm personality were legendary. Here is what I had said during a prayer meeting in his memory." He posted a video of his speech at the condolence meeting held here for Jaitley last year. Remembering Jaitley, Mr Shah said he was an outstanding politician, prolific orator and a great human being who had "no parallels" in Indian polity. He was multifaceted and a friend of friends, who will always be remembered for his towering



Narendra Modi

legacy, transformative vision and devotion to the nation, the former BJP president added. Mr Nadda said Jaitley's huge contribution in nation-building will always be remembered. He also inaugurated a blood donation camp organised at AIIMS in Jaitley's memory and said that the late leader's family members are serving society as he did. The defence minister tweeted, "Remembering Arun Jaitley ji on his punyatihi. Jaitleyji was a stalwart who made a big contribution towards BJP's growth and rise to power..." A key BJP leader and a crucial member of the party's brain trust for decades, Jaitley was an articulate champion of the saffron party's policies and ideology, and his warm personality and affable manners won him friends across the political spectrum. —PTI

## CBI team to grill Rhea in Sushant death case soon

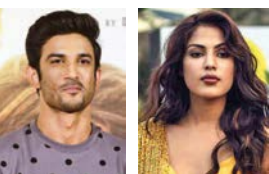
**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
MUMBAI, AUG. 24

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) will grill prime accused Rhea Chakraborty soon in connection with the suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. The officials are meanwhile weeding out the discrepancies that allegedly were found in the statement of Rajput's cook Neeraj Singh, flat mate Siddharth Pithani and house help Deepesh Sawant. The CBI also visited a resort in Mumbai where the actor had stayed for a couple of months before shifting to his Bandra flat that he had rented out.

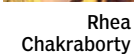
The probe agency also questioned Rajput's former chartered accountant Rajat Mewati in connection with the actor's finances. Mewati was subsequently replaced by Chakraborty as per the statement of Sushant's family along with the allegations of fraudulent withdrawal of ₹15 crore from his account.

"The statement of all those persons who were present in and around the house will be recorded before the Chakrabortys are summoned," said an officer.

The officials questioned the staffers at the Waterstone Resort in Andheri about the actor's stay. The CBI asked the staff about who was accompanying him and if there were any visitors whom he met during his stay. They are also verifying if there is any relevant CCTV camera



Sushant Singh Rajput



Rhea Chakraborty

## Lawyer: Rhea &amp; family didn't get CBI summons

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
MUMBAI, AUG. 24

Actor Rhea Chakraborty's lawyer has requested people to avoid speculations and has clarified that the actress will visit the CBI office whenever she will receive summons in the Sushant Singh Rajput death case. Chakraborty's lawyer Satish Maneshinde issued a statement on Monday as some reports earlier in the day claimed that the actress and her father Indrajit have been summoned by the CBI. The statement read, "Dear Friends, Rhea Chakraborty & family have not received any summons from CBI so far. No sooner she receives it, she & family will attend as they did before Mumbai police and ED as law abiding citizens. No speculations are necessary."

footage that could be useful to the probe.

Several teams of the probe agency are looking into various angles in connection with the incident.



A CBI team probing the Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case, leaves from the DRDO office at Shantacruz in Mumbai on Monday. — PTI

## 'Statements attributed to Geelani false, fabricated'

**YUSUF JAMEE**  
SRINAGAR, AUG. 24

Kashmiri separatist patriarch Syed Ali Shah Geelani's family on Monday said that all the statements attributed to him in the recent past are false and fabricated.

It also requested media and social media users not to drag the ailing leader or his kin into "unnecessary controversies" but give them some breathing space and allow them to attend to his medical needs.

The statement signed by his sons Nayeem Geelani and Naseem Geelani and son-in-law Zahoor-ul-Haq Geelani said that Mr Geelani is in advanced age and suffering from multiple ailments and, therefore, needs round-the-clock medical as well as personal attention. "He has throughout his life faced hardships, both



Geelani

▶ **GEELANI'S FAMILY** requested media and social media users not to drag the ailing leader or his kin into 'unnecessary controversies' but give them some breathing space and allow them to attend to his medical needs

physical and mental, for his beliefs and conviction," the statement asserted, adding that his health condition has "stressed" his family members and supporters. The statement while making an appeal for giving the 91-year-old leader "some amount of relaxation" and his family space to attend on him in a better way "at this critical juncture" said that circulation of "repeated and fabricated letters in his name and posts, comments and imaginary stories" through sections of media and social media platforms is "disturbing him and affecting his health badly".

Targets govt for detention of Akhil Gogoi  
Another regional outfit to float political party in Assam

**MANOJ ANAND**  
GUWAHATI, AUG. 24

After AASU and AJYCP the Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) has announced to float a new political party to challenge the growth of saffron brigade in Assam.

Regretting that the present government was not allowing its leader — RTI activist Akhil Gogoi — to come out of jail by implicating him in various charges, the KMSS president Bhasco D. Saikia said the organisation has already prepared the agenda and Constitution of the party.

The party will nominate candidates in the upcoming elections and, for this purpose, the KMSS will sit with all the organisations with which it collaborated during the recent joint movement against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019.

It is significant that in 2015, the KMSS had also

▶ **REGRETTING THAT** the present government was not allowing its leader - RTI activist Akhil Gogoi - to come out of jail by implicating him in various charges, the KMSS president Bhasco D. Saikia said the organisation has already prepared the agenda and Constitution of the party.

launched a political outfit with the name 'Gana Mukti Sangram Asom' to which they have dissolved. The new party will have a new name which the KMSS will make public soon.

The KMSS president said that if their leader Akhil Gogoi comes out of jail by the year-end, then the new party will project him as its chief ministerial candidate. "But if he fails in the legal battle, we will chalk out a different strategy," he added. Pointing out that the

new political outfit will be a regional political force that will represent the people of every caste, religion and tribe of Assam, he said, "It will not compromise on any issue related to the interests of Assam and Assamese people."

The KMSS president also clarified that they would also welcome the creation of a united regional political force in the state to put up a joint fight in the forthcoming Assembly elections.

Apart from KMSS, AASU and AJYCP, there has been an attempt to float more political outfits in the run-up to 2021 assembly polls but newly-elected Rajya Sabha MP Ajit Kumar Bhuyan who floated the Anchalik Gana Morcha (AGM), has been trying to merge these forces by pushing hard to bridge the gap among regional outfits with the common goal of dethroning BJP from power.

Around 70 feared trapped in debris of 5-storeyed building  
1 dead as building collapses in Maha

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
MUMBAI, AUG. 24

A man was killed after a five-storeyed residential building collapsed in Maharashtra's Raigad district on Monday, with around 70 people feared to be trapped under the debris.

The Tarek Garden building, which was around 10 years' old, collapsed at Kajalpura in Mahad tehsil around 7 pm, the official said. There were around 45 flats in the building, an official said, adding 25 persons have been rescued and shifted to a local hospital at Mahad, which is around 170 km from Mumbai.

Teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been moved to the spot for rescue operations.

Chief minister Uddhav Thackeray spoke to the district officials and asked them to expedite the rescue and relief work. A



Rescue operations underway after a five-storeyed residential building collapsed in Raigad district of Maharashtra on Monday. — PTI

viral video of the collapse showed a plume of dust rising from where the building had stood. Raigad district collector Nidhi Chaudhari informed that initially, only the top three floors of the 10-year-old multi-storey building had col-

lapsed. "Initially the top three floors of the building collapsed when some people came out. We have been able to bring out 15 persons. The injured have been sent to a government hospital," Ms Choudhari said. Commenting on the inci-

dent, Union home minister Amit Shah said that he spoke to the director-general of National Disaster Response Force to provide all possible assistance. The NDRF teams are on the way and will be assisting with the rescue operations as soon as possible.

## Pak violates ceasefire again, Army retaliates

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
SRINAGAR, AUG. 24

The Army on Monday said that the Pakistani troops again targeted the Indian forward areas with small arms and mortar guns in Rajouri district along the Line of Control (LoC) earlier during the day.

A defence spokesman in winter capital Jammu said that the Indian Army retaliated "befittingly" to the "unprovoked ceasefire violation" by using the same caliber weapons.

The spokesman said that the firing and shelling from across the de facto border in Soudarban sector of Rajouri started at 1.30 pm and was going on when reports last came in. "Pakistan initiated the unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and shelling with mortars," he said.

## Online classes for arts, science students at JU

**Kolkata, Aug. 24:** Amid the pandemic situation, Jadavpur University on Monday started holding arts and science classes of the previous semester, which had to be suspended due to lockdown in March, a university official said.

In the classes held virtually, downloadable soft copies of notes and audio and video clips of lectures are uploaded to the university website, and students need to log in to their respective classes to get access to the study materials, the official told PTI.

Those not having net connectivity or smart phones will be able to access the materials from a friend who has a suitable device, or a cyber cafe.

The audio and video clips can also be shared between friends via blue tooth which is available in almost all types of phones, he said. Those having net con-

nectivity may also get the materials via email and WhatsApp and the faculty concerned can be contacted directly, the official said. "The same procedure will be used for the first semester classes to begin in September. We do not want to delay the academic calendar anymore," he said.

When contacted, JU Vice-Chancellor Prof Suranjana Das said, "We are ensuring there is no digital divide among students."

There cannot be an alternative to attending classes in the campus, he said. "We have no other alternative but to make the best arrangement which can be of help to every student," Das said.

The VC said that the university authorities and students unions separately conducted surveys to ascertain the number of students who do not have phones with net connectivity. —PTI

## Opp. uproar rocks Raj House, hits out at Joshi

**Jaipur, Aug. 24:** Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore was on Monday briefly barred from taking part in the proceedings of the Rajasthan Assembly after he got into a heated argument with Speaker C P Joshi.

At the Speaker's request, the House approved by voice vote a proposal for Mr Rathore's removal for the remainder of the session. However, the House withdrew the motion later in the day after the BJP legislator expressed regret over his behaviour.

The House was adjourned sine die in the evening after passing 13 Bills.

Mr Rathore had argued with the Speaker complaining that Opposition members were not allowed enough time to speak on the Bills.

BJP members had also trooped into the Well of the House, shouting slogans. Amid the din, the House was briefly adjourned four times.

During the discussion on the Rajasthan Rehabilitation of Beggars or Indigents (Amendment) Bill, 2020, the Speaker asked BJP MLA Madan Dilawar to confine himself to the Bill, saying it was not a general debate.

When BJP MLA Kiran Maheshwari was also asked to stick to the Bill, Rathore intervened, asking the Speaker to let the members speak.

The Speaker then asked Opposition members to return to their seats. When Rathore challenged the Chair, the Speaker asked Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shanti Dhariwal to move a proposal for his removal from the House.

Opposition members continued their protest and squatted in the Well of the House even after the Congress-dominated House passed the motion. —PTI



## THE ASIAN AGE

25 AUGUST 2020

### Letter a wake-up call to Congress on its future

The serious issues and concerns raised in a letter by a galaxy of senior Congress leaders, including several former Union ministers and former CMs, to Mrs Sonia Gandhi earlier this month are far-reaching, and how the party handles it will be crucial not only to its own future but to the state of our polity. While Mrs Gandhi was quick to call a meeting of the CWC to discuss the matter on Monday, the questions it raised are too wide-ranging to be resolved at one meeting.

The letter flagged the sense of drift in the party that many raised of late, and sought a “full-time” and “effective” leadership that will be “visible” and “active”. To an extent this could be seen as criticism of Mrs Gandhi’s stewardship for the past 12 months as interim president. But it would be wrong to regard her as its target – Mrs Gandhi is hugely respected by all sections of the Congress – and the letter’s primary aim might have been to deter any attempt to reinstall her son Rahul as Congress president, interim or otherwise. Mr Gandhi’s two-year term as chief wasn’t a great success, though he did lead it to a string of Assembly victories, before presiding over the Congress’ second successive Lok Sabha debacle in mid-2019, after which he swiftly resigned. Many Congressmen are unhappy that though not having any formal role, he plays an active role behind the scenes and takes decisions that “create confusion”. Many are upset that he doesn’t listen to them or they don’t have any access to him.

It’s undeniable that the Gandhis – Sonia, Rahul and Priyanka – are the Congress’ only nationally recognisable figures. All others are identified with a state or region. That gives them a unique standing. But that said, the Congress must also accept that if the Gandhis – for whatever reason – want to pass on the mantle, India’s only national Opposition party must make other arrangements. If it showed wisdom, it would be a huge mistake to treat the letter’s signatories as dissenters or rebels – let alone accuse them of playing the BJP’s game. Most have served the Congress for decades, many all their lives. It would do well to treat the letter as a wake-up call, on how to revitalise India’s grand old party so it can take on the BJP as well as several regional rivals.

Six years after it lost power to the Narendra Modi-led BJP, and again last year, the Congress failed to make any honest introspection on the reasons for successive defeats. Any problem cannot be tackled until one acknowledges it in the first place, but the Congress prefers to brush all inconvenient truths under the carpet. That is no solution. In any democracy, dissent, discussion and debate only strengthens a party, not weakens it. Congress leaders could look towards America’s Democratic Party, for instance, on how widely divergent views, freely expressed, built a stronger organisation to focus on the removal of Donald Trump. In India, the issues are many – the government’s handling of the economy, the pandemic, the Chinese intrusion, what stand to take on the Ram Mandir – which the party should discuss in depth before taking on the BJP. A stronger Congress means a stronger Opposition, which is vitally needed in India so that a government with a sweeping parliamentary majority can be kept in check.

### Politics over vaccine race

It’s like a repeat of the space race of the 1960s as the world waits expectantly for the promised silver bullet of a vaccine against the coronavirus. The first nation to produce an effective, mass-produced vaccine could help their people achieve near normality while shedding a morbid fear of the virus. Most governments have failed to contain Covid-19 as evidenced in mounting caseload and their only hope is to get their hands on “the holy grail”, the hunt for which is, however, being driven by politics more than science.

Vladimir Putin of Russia jumped the gun in claiming success first but far from giving Russia another Sputnik moment brought only scepticism and West-inspired rumours that his daughter who got vaccinated had died. For obvious reasons, Donald Trump wants a working vaccine before Election Day (November 3). Narendra Modi had put out a teaser hinting at Independence Day heralding a magic “Made in India” moment. On the other hand, China is already vaccinating thousands of health care and other workers on an urgent basis through a mass programme run by the military.

Authoritarian governments in Russia and China can hand out hurriedly developed vaccines or even placebos to its people. The free world must let science take the lead in passing careful judgment on the 78 vaccines that are confirmed as “active” now. USA’s Moderna with its mRNA-based vaccine and UK’s Oxford University-Jenner Institute with their adenovirus variety are the scientific leaders in developing a vaccine that can be franchised to production lines in record time once third phase clinical trials have evaluated their safety.

Realistically, a vaccine is months away, which gives time for countries to plan on how to achieve an equitable distribution. India is lucky to have the world’s largest vaccine manufacturer and so access should not be a problem. However, given the play of divisive politics, the fear is over how well we will manage the big task of inoculating over 100 crore people.

#### THE ASIAN AGE

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Aakar Patel

### Why are we so obsessed about a Bollywood actor’s death?

The Central Bureau of Investigation has deputed five teams to investigate the death of an actor who killed himself. I do not know why the CBI is investigating this case nor do I understand why there is such great public interest in this issue.

I have been told that this is because of some political reason linked to the election in Bihar. If there is, I am not able to understand what it is. Bihar is the one of the oldest political entities in India, going back to the time of Chandragupta Maurya and Chanakya.

Are Biharis so naïve as to vote based on this sort of material? Perhaps they are, and I will be disappointed to know if this is the case. Bihar is one of the poorest parts of the world. The state has been governed by two parties that have been in charge for a decade. Will the voter determine whether or not to vote for them based on a Bollywood event? If so, it is amazing. Two other reasons have been put forward as possible reasons for the pushing of this story.

First, that it is targeted at the son of the Maharashtra chief minister. Second, that it is aimed in some fashion

**On Covid-19, the data is clear. We are number three in the world in terms of the number of cases, we are number one in terms of the number of daily cases and we will likely end up with the most infected people in the world sometime soon. This is not the record of a government and a PM who is popular.**

on the Muslim actors of Bollywood. That seems to me to be more reasonable given our times. This government is hostile to Muslims and will use any lie to attack them, including this one.

But to return to the question of voter interest, it was written last week by my friend Shekhar Gupta that the Prime Minister would return to power in 2024 unless he inflicted damage on himself. Gupta’s argument so far as I have understood it is that the damage inflicted on the voter is not relevant because

the voter doesn’t care about such things as the collapse in the economy, the record unemployment, the occupation of our land by the Chinese and the inability of this government to contain the Covid-19 pandemic.

Gupta did not explain in detail how he had come to this conclusion, but he said that a survey that had a previously good track record showed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was at the peak of his popularity.

Again, I do not know if this is the case, but it would be quite interesting if this were to be so. Our GDP has been declining since January 2018 for nine successive quarters, based on the Modi government’s own data. Unemployment has been the highest that it has ever been recorded in India, again according to the government’s own data. It is unclear who believes Mr Modi when he says that there has been no Chinese intrusion, I hope it is not the Prime Minister himself because that would be a sign of delusion.

We are currently engaged with the Chinese in trying to get them to withdraw from our land, and our generals have had over half a dozen

meetings with them already. Presumably, these meetings are being held because what Mr Modi says (or believes) is untrue. There is no reason to negotiate with them if they are not on our property.

On Covid-19, the data is clear. We are number three in the world in terms of the number of cases, we are number one in terms of the number of daily cases and we will likely end up with the most infected people in the world sometime soon.

This is not the record of a government and a Prime Minister who is popular.

In another nation, this would be signal disaster politically. Is it the case that for all or most Indian voters, their political affiliation is unrelated to their actual life? Could it be that we vote as we do a Facebook like or Twitter forward? Is our political action through voting and support of a party based not on its performance but on its image? Surely this is not true, and even if it is true for many, it cannot be true for all. Certainly, it is not true for me.

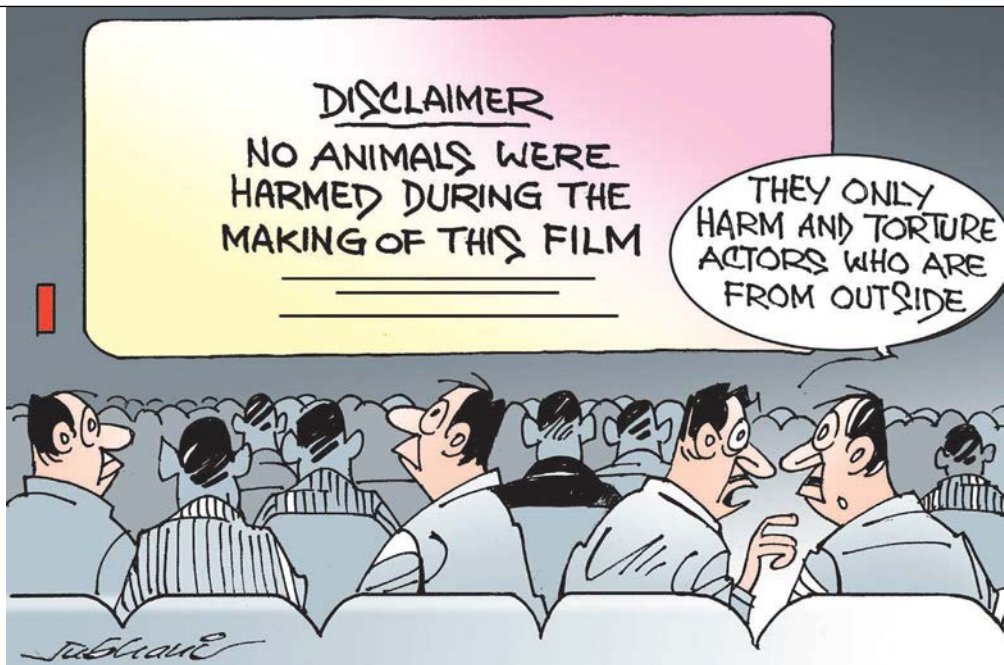
But how many people think normally in this way? If there were many, then we would not have the

circus that we do on a Bollywood actor’s death at a time which is the worst that I can remember, and I am not a young man. I cannot remember a time in my life when we had such economic strife, such levels of unemployment, a national epidemic and the enemy inside our house, and such little interest in these and a focus on Bollywood and temples and such things.

Is this who we really are as citizens, individuals and voters? I should hope not. I do not think that our young generation of this time certainly or the next will be so unconcerned about their politics. The question is whether the current generations of our time do not care about the nation’s security, their health, their employment and their future and whether they are more interested in Bollywood. I do not have the answer to this, but it is an answer that we will know for certain fairly soon.

Aakar Patel is a senior journalist and columnist

Subhani



## India’s eco challenges: A matter of philosophy



Mohan Guruswamy

The divide between the Keynesians and the Chicago School is as intense and often antagonistic as the Sunni-Shia, Catholic-Protestant or Thelakarakai-Vadakarai-Iyengar divides.

Now the only dispute on national income is how much will be the contraction. The finance ministry hopes there won’t be any. The IMF has officially said it will be 4.5 per cent. The rating agencies predict a contraction of 6.8 per cent, while many are suggesting something closer to 10 per cent. How do we deal with it now? The government tends to be “conservative” in its outlook and has made no serious suggestion on an economic stimulus. What it calls a stimulus isn’t actually one. The problem is more philosophical.

Keynesian economics is a theory that says the government should increase demand to boost growth. Keynesians believe consumer demand is the primary driving force in any economy. As a result, the theory supports expansionary fiscal policy. The Chicago School is a neo-classical economic school of thought that originated at the University of Chicago. Its main tenets are that free markets best allocate resources in an economy and that minimal or zero government intervention is best for economic prosperity. They abhor fiscal deficits.

The only reason why the actual stimulus package is only Rs 63,000 crores is the obsession with fiscal deficits by Chicago economists like Raghuram Rajan and Krishnamurthy Subramanian, now chief economic adviser. They are true disciples of the Washington Consensus to judge countries like India by their fiscal

deficit size. The instruments used to beat countries like India into submission are ratings agencies like Moody’s, which just downgraded India. We shouldn’t lose too much sleep over it. India is a hardly a borrower abroad and is more of a lender, holding \$490 billion as reserves.

That’s why the CEA, asked about a big stimulus, said: “There are no free lunches!” That’s exactly what Milton Friedman said. But they quite happily ignore the fact that America is the biggest deficit financed economy in the world. Dr Rajan told Rahul Gandhi on his videoconference that a stimulus of Rs 65,000 crores would suffice in today’s situation. Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee and former CEA Arvind Subramanian suggest a stimulus package like the US or Japan. The US has announced a stimulus of over \$3.5 trillion, or over 15 per cent of GDP. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s stimulus is just 0.3 per cent of GDP.

Many serious economists see fiscal deficits in a positive way. The great John Maynard Keynes believed deficits help countries climb out of economic recession. Fiscal conservatives, however, feel governments should avoid deficits and ensure balanced budgets.

The fastest growing economies in the world, and its biggest – the United States, China, Japan and most of western Europe – have the highest debt/GDP ratios. Japan’s debt/GDP is over 253 per cent before the latest stimulus of 20 per cent of GDP. China’s debt is over 180 per cent of GDP. America’s debt/GDP is near 105 per cent, yet it is raising \$3 trillion as debt to escape the Covid-19 quagmire. India’s debt/GDP ratio is a modest 62 per cent, but

**Getting money to move India again isn’t a huge problem. What stands in the way are the philosophical blinkers.**

still it intends to pump in just 0.3 per cent of GDP as stimulus?

Pump priming the economy by borrowing is by itself not bad. It’s not putting the debt to good use that is bad. Nations prosper when they use debt for worthwhile capital expenditure with assured returns and social cost benefits. But we in India borrow to give it away as subsidies and to hide the high cost of government. To give an analogy, if a family must make a choice of borrowing money to fund the children’s education or to support a man’s drinking habit, the rational choice is obvious. The children’s education will have a long-term payback, while the booze gives instant gratification. But unfortunately, our governments always make the wrong choices.

If borrowed money is used productively and creates growth and prosperity, it should be welcomed. What we want to hear from the government is not about fiscal deficit targets, but economic growth, value addition, employment and investment targets.

What can Mr Modi do now to get us out of this quagmire? If the government abhors a stimulus financed by deficit financing, there are other options. But the PM is hamstrung with a weak economic management team with novices as the two key players, the finance minister and the RBI governor.

India has over \$490 billion nesting abroad earning ridiculously low interest. Even if a tenth of this is monetised for injection into the nation’s economy, it will mean over ₹3.5 lakh crores. At last count, the RBI had about ₹9.6 lakh crores as reserves. This is money to be used in a financial emergency. We are now in an emergency

like we have never encountered before. Even a third of this is about ₹3.2 lakh crores.

There are other sources of funds too but tapping these will entail political courage and sacrifices. Our cumulative government wages and pension bill amounts to about 11.4 per cent of GDP. After exempting the military/paramilitary, which is mostly under active deployment, we can target one per cent of GDP just by cancelling annual leave and LTC and rolling back a few DA increases.

The government can also sequester a fixed percentage from bank deposits, say five per cent of deposits between ₹10-100 lakhs and 15-20 per cent from bigger deposits for tax-free interest-bearing bonds in exchange. The 10 biggest private companies alone have cash reserves of over ₹10 lakh crores.

There’s money in the trees: all it needs is a good shakeup to pick the fruit. The pain of the lockdown mustn’t be borne by the poor alone. The government can easily target 5-6 per cent of GDP, or around 10-12 lakh crores, for the recovery fund as an immediately achievable goal.

This money can be used to immediately begin a limited basic income scheme, by transferring ₹3,000 monthly into Jan Dhan accounts of BPL people for the financial emergency period; fund GST concessions to move the auto and engineering sectors; begin emergency rural reconstruction projects to generate millions of new jobs and get our core infrastructure sectors like steel, cement and transportation moving again.

Getting money to move India again isn’t a huge problem. What stands in the way are the philosophical blinkers. Call it Chicago economics or the Gujarati mindset.

*The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.*

#### LETTERS

#### CONGRESS CRISIS

The possibility of a shift in leadership seems like a bright option. Of course, there is a difference of opinion within the Congress itself. While there is a section that wants new leadership, there is another that wants the Gandhis to continue being the flag bearers. But, what we’ve to take note of is the fact that Rahul Gandhi himself

pitched for a Non-Gandhi leadership after their 2019 defeat. His sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also reflected on his views. When leaders with such power choose to stand for a revolution in the party, it is definitely something to think about. The turmoil that the Congress Party is currently experiencing is one that should’ve happened earlier. Sonia Gandhi stepping down as interim party president opens up an all new path for Congress to rebuild/rebrand itself.

Subhashini Ramasamy  
Mumbai

#### ICC LIST

**IT IS** heartening to note that three cricketers were inducted into the ICC Hall of fame. Jacques Kallis, Australian women’s cricket team captain Lisa Sthalekar and former Pakistan batsman Zaheer Abbas were inducted into the elite list. We all know that Kallis was the number one all-rounder and helped out South African side in crises. Sthalekar led the Australian side to great heights. But the best was the choice of Zaheer Abbas, who dominated Pakistan cricket with his seasoned batting display at the international level and in county cricket.

C.K. Jayanti Mani  
Mumbai

#### INDIA’S POVERTY

**SIXTY-EIGHT** per cent of the population lives on less than \$2 a day. Sometimes, it compels them to commit suicide or illegal deeds. It is not only the responsibility of the government and rich people to contribute towards poverty alleviation.

Babu Tanda  
Rampur

Every Monday the best letter of the week wins ₹500. Email: letters.asianage@gmail.com.



## IN BRIEF

## Austria expels Russian diplomat

**Berlin:** Austria said Monday it is expelling a Russian diplomat, a decision that Russia said was “unfounded” and would draw a response from Moscow. The Austrian Foreign Ministry confirmed that a diplomat at the Russian Embassy is being ordered to leave, saying only that his behavior was not compatible with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the Austria Press Agency reported. The ministry said it would not give further details. Austrian daily newspaper *Kronen Zeitung* reported that the Russian diplomat has until September 1 to leave and said, without citing sources, that he allegedly had been engaged for years in economic espionage at a technology firm with the help of an Austrian citizen. In a statement posted on its website, the Russian Embassy said it was “appalled by the unfounded decision of Austrian authorities”.

## June '21 set for Iran Prez poll

**Tehran:** Iran's constitutional watchdog on Monday set June 18 as date for the country's next presidential election, a vote that will choose the successor to President Hassan Rouhani who has served two four-year terms in office. The watchdog, the Guardian Council, approved the date, Iranian election headquarters chief Jamal Orf told the official *IRNA* news agency. Candidates hoping to run in the balloting are to apply in early April for approval; the final list is to be announced in early June. Under Iranian law, an incumbent president cannot run for a third term if he has already served for two consecutive terms in office. Rouhani was first elected in 2013 and re-elected four years later. Rouhani has been under increasing pressure from the US sanctions since President Donald Trump two years ago pulled America out of the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers.

## Trump adviser Conway resigns

**Washington:** US President Donald Trump's top adviser Kellyanne Conway has resigned abruptly and will leave the White House this month to focus on her children, giving them “less drama, more mama”. Conway, 53, is among the key speakers on day three of the Republican National Convention (RNC) which begins on Monday, according to a list released by the Trump campaign. Now it is unclear if she would still speak at the convention, which will formally nominate Trump as the party's presidential candidate in the November 3 election, the US media reports said. In a statement, Conway said: “I will be transitioning from the White House at the end of this month. George (her husband) is also making changes”. Her husband George Conway, a vocal critic of President Trump, also made a similar statement on Twitter. “I'm withdrawing from Project Lincoln to devote more time to family matters. And I'll be taking a Twitter hiatus.”

## POMPEO: ARAB WORLD, ISRAEL TIES LIKELY

**Jerusalem, Aug. 24:** US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said he hoped other Arab countries would also establish diplomatic relations with Israel as he kicked off a Mideast tour on Monday to press the momentum of the Trump administration's Arab-Israeli peace push. Pompeo spoke at a joint press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, the first stop on a multi-country tour of the region following the August 13 announcement of the historic agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, brokered by Washington, to establish diplomatic ties.

“I am hopeful that we will see other Arab nations join in this,” Pompeo said. “The opportunity for them to work alongside, to recognise the state of Israel and to work alongside them will not only increase Middle East stability, but it will improve the lives for the people of their own countries as well.”

The Israel-UAE agreement delivered a key foreign policy victory to President Donald Trump as he seeks reelection and reflected a changing Middle East in which shared concerns about archenemy Iran have largely overtaken traditional Arab support for the Palestinians.



Police and military secure the site of an explosion in the town of Jolo, Sulu province, Philippines on Monday. — AP

# Philippines bombings: 14 dead, 75 wounded

Twin strikes in island that is stronghold of Islamist militants

**Jolo, Philippines, Aug. 24:** At least 14 people were killed and 75 wounded — including members of the security forces and civilians — in twin bombings Monday involving a suicide attacker on a southern Philippine island that is a stronghold of Islamist militants, officials said.

The apparently coordinated attacks happened in Jolo in Muslim-majority Sulu, where government-backed security forces have long been fighting the Abu Sayyaf group.

Seven soldiers, a police officer, and six civilians were killed in the two bombings, the first at around midday when an improvised explosive device attached to a motorcycle parked outside a supermarket

blew up, Lieutenant General Corleto Vinluan said.

That was followed by a second blast a short time later in the same street when a suicide attacker blew herself up as security forces cordoned off the area, Vinluan said.

A soldier had been trying to apprehend the bomber when she detonated her explosives, he added. A total of 48 civilians were also wounded along with 21 soldiers and six police.

A soldier saw a person leave the motorbike outside the grocery store “where there were a lot of people” including members of the military. It immediately detonated, Lieutenant Colonel Ronaldo Mateo said. “Our soldiers are conducting security opera-

tions. That was the time that the improvised explosive device detonated,” he said. Abu Sayyaf was “most probably” behind the double bombing, Mateo said.

Listed by the United States as a terrorist organisation, Abu Sayyaf is a loose network of Islamic militants blamed for the Philippines' worst terror attacks as well as kidnappings of foreign tourists and Christian missionaries.

They also have ties to Islamic State militants seeking to set up a caliphate in Southeast Asia. Monday's attacks come after the arrest earlier this month of an Abu Sayyaf leader on the southern island of Mindanao.

Security forces had been

on alert for possible reprisal attacks after detaining Abduljihad Susukan, who is accused of kidnapping and beheading several foreigners. He has been charged with 23 murders, five kidnappings and six attempted murders, police have said. President Rodrigo Duterte's spokesman Harry Roque condemned the “dastardly attacks” and issued condolences to the families and loved ones of those killed.

“We call on the residents of Jolo to stay vigilant and report suspicious personalities and unattended items in their areas,” Roque said. The Philippine Coast Guard issued a “red alert” for Sulu and several other areas in the restive south. — AP

## Protest erupts after Wisconsin police shoot man from behind

### One killed after 3 shot inside Lexington mall

**Lexington (US), Aug. 24:** Three people were shot inside a Kentucky mall Sunday, and one of them was later pronounced dead, police said.

The Lexington Police Department said in a post on social media that the shooting occurred around 4 p.m. outside of a store at the Fayette Mall.

Police said later that the shooting did not appear to be random.

“It appears from the

information that we've gathered thus far that the persons involved knew each other.”

Lexington Police Chief Lawrence Weathers told reporters. “We know at least the intended target may have known the suspect.”

Officers evacuated the mall and checked each store. Three people were taken to a hospital, Weathers said.

— AP

### THREE POLICE OFFICERS SHOT WHILE RESPONDING TO CALL IN MARYLAND

**Hyattsville (US), Aug. 24:** Three police officers were shot while responding to a call Sunday evening in Maryland, police said.

The shooting happened around 6:30 p.m. in Hyattsville, a city about 32 miles (52 kilometres) southwest of Baltimore, the Prince George's County Police

Department said on its Twitter page.

Police returned gunfire, and two men were in custody. The men were not struck, police said. The injured officers have been transported to a hospital for treatment. The conditions of the officers were not known. — AP

## China launches advanced warship for Pakistan Navy

**Beijing/Islamabad, Aug. 24:** China has launched first of the four advanced naval warships it is building for Pakistan, amid deepening economic and defence ties between the two all-weather allies. The launching ceremony for the first warship was held at the Hudong Zhonghua Shipyard in Shanghai on Sunday.

Pakistan-China defence ties turn a new chapter with the launch of the first ship of Type-054 class frigate, Pakistan's state-run APP news agency reported. The Type-054 class, equipped with the latest surface, subsurface, anti-air weapons, combat management system, and sensors will be one of the technologically advanced surface platforms of the Pakistan Navy fleet, the report said.

Pakistan signed a contract with the China Shipbuilding Trading Company Ltd. (CSTC) for the delivery of two Type-054

A/P frigates in 2017. Last year, the Chinese official media reported that under a major arms deal between the two all-weather allies, China would build four advanced frigates for Pakistan Navy.

The terms of the deal and the price of the ships were not revealed. The launching of the ship coincided with the 2nd strategic dialogue between Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi and his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi held at the Chinese holiday resort of Hainan on August 21.

Meanwhile in Islamabad, Foreign Minister Qureshi said on Monday that China and Pakistan were strategic partners.

He said the cooperative relationship between Pakistan and China was an answer to objections regarding the ambitious \$60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). — PTI

### PAK: S. ARABIA DIDN'T DEMAND MONEY BACK

**SHAFQAT ALI ISLAMABAD, AUGUST 24**

Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi Monday said that Saudi Arabia had not demanded of Pakistan to return loan neither Riyadh had stopped oil supplies.

Speaking at a news conference here, there was no change in the stance of Saudi Arabia on Kashmir.

“Both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are discussing different proposals. The OIC (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) has several times passed unambiguous resolutions in support of the Kashmiri people,” he added.

## FB to pay \$125 million in back taxes to France

**Paris, Aug. 24:** Facebook's French subsidiary has agreed to pay 106 million euros (125 million) in back taxes and penalties following persistent government efforts to get online giants to pay more taxes where they make their money.

The agreement came after French tax authorities carried out an extensive audit of a decade of Facebook's operations in the country, from 2009-2018, a company spokesperson said Monday.

The spokesperson, who was not authorized to be publicly named according to Facebook policy, said the company takes

its tax obligations seriously wherever it operates.

The French tax department would not comment on the deal, citing the right to tax secrecy.

Facebook's French revenues soared last year after the company decided to include advertising income from French companies in its local accounting declarations, instead of declaring them in low-tax Ireland, where Facebook's international operations are based.

As a result, Facebook will pay 8.4 million euros in profit taxes in France this year, about 50% more than last year, the

spokesperson said. That change came in the wake of efforts from French President Emmanuel Macron and his government to press online powerhouses like Facebook, Google and Amazon to pay more taxes locally.

The push has led to a tit-for-tat tax battle with the United States.

France imposed a 3% digital services tax on global technology giants, and last month the Trump administration announced plans to impose taxes on 1.3 billion worth of French imports, including handbags and makeup, in retaliation. — AP

## 3 Belarus Oppn activists detained

### BORDER ROW WITH LITHUANIA OVER BALLOONS

**Minsk (Belarus), Aug. 24:** Belarusian authorities on Monday detained three leading opposition activists who have helped spearhead a wave of protests demanding the resignation of the country's authoritarian president of 26 years following his reelection that opponents say was rigged.

The Coordination Council established by the opposition to negotiate a transfer of power said police detained members Sergei Dylevsky and Olga Kovalkova in Belarus' capital, Minsk. Later in the day, the opposition also reported the detention of Alexander Lavrinovich, the leader of striking workers at a major industrial plant.

The police actions signal President Alexander Lukashenko's determination to stifle massive post-election demonstrations that have entered their third week. He toted an assault rifle in a show of force as he arrived at his residence by helicopter on Sunday while protesters rallied nearby. Last week, he warned that the opposition council's members could face criminal accusations. — AP

**Vilnius, Aug. 24:** Lithuania and Belarus on Monday traded accusations over their border after the release of balloons during a demonstration in Lithuania in solidarity with Belarusian protesters. Lithuania said a Belarusian military helicopter crossed the European Union and NATO state's border minutes before thousands of people linked hands in a human chain stretching from the capital Vilnius to the border with Belarus on Sunday.

“The Belarusian ambassador was summoned to the foreign ministry and a protest note was handed over the state border violation,” the ministry said in a statement.

The Belarusian defence ministry said it had countered an “attempted violation” of its airspace by “a probe made up of eight balloons with anti-government symbols”. — AFP

## NEW FINDINGS

Instances of people discharged from hospitals and testing positive again reported in China

## HK reports first documented Coronavirus re-infection

**Hong Kong, Aug. 24:** A Hong Kong man who recovered from Covid-19 was infected again four-and-a-half months later in the first documented instance of human re-infection, researchers at the University of Hong Kong said on Monday. The findings indicate the disease, which has killed more than 800,000 people worldwide, may continue to spread amongst the global population despite herd immunity, they said.

The 33-year-old male was cleared of Covid-19 and discharged from a hospital in April, but tested posi-

tive again after returning from Spain via Britain on Aug. 15.

The patient had appeared to be previously healthy, researchers said in the paper, which was accepted by the international medical journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

He was found to have contracted a different Coronavirus strain from the one he had previously contracted and remained asymptomatic for the second infection.

“The finding does not mean taking vaccines will be useless,” Dr. Kai-Wang To, one of the leading

authors of the paper, told *Reuters*. “Immunity induced by vaccination can be different from those induced by natural infection.” To said. “(We) will need to wait for the results of the vaccine trials to see if how effective vaccines are.”

World Health Organisation (WHO) epidemiologist Maria Van Kerkhove said on Monday that there was no need to jump to any conclusions in response to the Hong Kong case.

Instances of people discharged from hospitals and testing positive again for Covid-19 infection have

been reported in mainland China. However, in those cases it was not clear whether they had contracted the virus again after full recovery — as happened to the Hong Kong patient — or still had the virus in their body from the initial infection.

The preliminary number of patients in China who tested positive again once being discharged from hospital was 5%-15%, Wang Guiliang, an infectious disease specialist in China's expert group for Covid-19 treatment, said during a press briefing in May. One explanation was

that the virus still existed in the lungs of patients but was not detected in samples taken from upper parts of the respiratory tract, he said. Other possible causes were low sensitivity of tests and weak immunity that could lead to persistent positive results, he added.

Jeffrey Barrett, an expert and consultant with the Covid-19 Genome Project at Britain's Wellcome Sanger Institute, said in emailed comments to *Reuters* that it was very hard to make any strong inference from a single observation.

### VITALLY IMPORTANT TO GET CHILDREN BACK TO SCHOOL: UK PM TO PARENTS

**London, Aug. 24:** It is vitally important to get children back into schools after the lengthy Covid-19 lockdown as being kept away from classrooms for a longer period would be far more damaging than the deadly virus, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in a direct appeal to parents on Monday.

His appeal comes as different parts of the country prepare for the end of the summer break and the sta-

rt of a new school term, with Scotland and Northern Ireland first in line followed by England and Wales from next week.

Reiterating a joint statement issued by England's Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and his counterparts from different parts of the United Kingdom over the weekend, Johnson said the risk posed to children from the deadly virus is very small. — PTI



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	38,799.08	0.95
Nifty 50	11,466.45	0.83
S&P 500*	3,420.46	0.69
Dollar (₹)	74.31	0.71
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.24	1.55
Euro (₹)	87.81	0.72
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,668*348	0.67
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	44.99	0.64
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.221	0.082
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.627	-0.013

\* As of 9:30 PM IST

Happiest Minds Tech proposes ₹110 crore IPO

Bengaluru-based IT services firm Happiest Minds Technologies has received market regulator Sebi's approval to float initial public offer. The offer comprises a fresh issuance of shares worth ₹110 crore and an offer for sale of up to 3.56 crore equity shares, according to the draft red herring prospectus. Its promoter Ashok Soota was also the founding CMD of Mindtree. Prior to this, he was the vice-chairman of Wipro.

Facebook to pay \$118 m to France in back-date tax



Facebook's French subsidiary has agreed to pay more than 100 million euros (\$118 million) in back taxes, including a penalty, after a ten-year audit of its accounts by French tax authorities, the company said on Monday. France, which is pushing hard to overhaul international tax rules on digital companies, has said the big tech groups pay too little tax in the country where they have significant sales.

Centre extends driving licence's validity to Dec. 31

The government has extended the validity of expiring driving licence and other motor vehicle documents until December 31 in view of rising Coronavirus cases in the country. This is the third such extension after the earlier advisories issued on March 30 and June 9. Earlier, the validity was extended till September 30. The government said this step aims to help out the citizens in availing transport-related services.

Vietnam tech firm sues TikTok over copyright

Vietnamese technology firm VNG is suing TikTok saying it does not have adequate licences for the songs being used in its videos, sources said on Monday. VNG is accusing the Chinese company of using audio tracks owned by Zing, a VNG subsidiary, without the company's consent, sources said. A petition seeks damages from TikTok and demands that it ceases use of Zing's music.

— Reuters

Kalyan Jewellers plans ₹1,000-cr public issue

■ DRHP filed; promoter to offload shares worth ₹250 cr

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 24

Kalyan Jewellers has filed a draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) with SEBI to raise ₹1,750 crore through an Initial Public Offering, which could be one of the largest IPOs in the jewellery retail segment.

The IPO comprises of equity shares of face value of ₹10 each of Kalyan Jewellers aggregating up to ₹1,750 crore, comprising a fresh issue of ₹1,000 crore and an offer for sale of ₹750 crore, comprising up to Rs 250 crore by promoter T.S. Kalyanaraman and up to ₹500 crore by Highdell Investment, a portfolio company of Warburg Pincus.

The net proceeds from the fresh issue will be utilised towards working capital requirements and for general corporate purposes.

The Kerala-based company now has a pan-India presence with 107 showrooms across India as well as 30 showrooms located in the Middle East as of June 30, 2020.

Promoters currently hold 76 per cent stake in the company while rest of the 24 per cent is held by Warburg Pincus. Warburg Pincus had invested Rs 1200 crore in Kalyan Jewellers in 2014 and had pumped in another Rs 500 crore in 2017.

In FY20, revenue from operations of Kalyan Jewellers stood at ₹10,100 crore, of which 78.19 per cent was from India and 21.81 per cent was from the Middle East.

PNB to raise funds via market

NEW DELHI, AUG. 24:

The country's second largest state-owned lender Punjab National Bank on Monday said that it does not envisage approaching the government for capital support rather it intends to raise funds from the market, which seems to have appetite for the public sector banking space.

The bank has shareholders' approval for raising ₹14,000 crore, comprising ₹7,000 crore of the equity alone, from the market to meet COVID-related impact and finance growth, Punjab National Bank managing director S.S.



WE ARE confident of going to the market with respect to Tier II and Tier I bonds during Q2 and Q3 while we are looking at the end of Q3 or during Q4 for QIP (qualified institutional placement)."

S.S. MALLIKARJUNA RAO, Chairman, PNB

Mallikarjuna Rao said in a virtual interaction.

"As on today, it does not appear (approach government for capital). If you look at market appetite also there is intent to contribute to public sector space in general," he said.

This is evident from the recent issuance of Tier II bonds of Bank of Baroda and PNB as coupon rates were reasonable, he said.

"There is an appetite in the market. So, unless we test in the market, it would not be appropriate for us to think of government for contribution... We are confident of going to the market with respect to Tier II and Tier I bonds during Q2 and Q3 while we are looking at the end of Q3 or during Q4 for QIP (qualified institutional placement)," he said.

— PTI

Aug. deals at 10-year high

NEW YORK, AUG. 24: Companies raised the most funds in global equity and debt markets for August in a decade as homebound bankers spend their summer fixing deals off the back of trillions of dollars of stimulus worldwide to fight the pandemic.

Companies have raised \$65.5 billion through IPOs and high-yield bond issuances globally so far in August, the highest for that month in at least 10 years, according to Refinitiv data. They raised \$98.6 billion in July

and \$126.5 billion in June, which was the highest in 20 years.

It comes as governments and central banks have made at least \$15 trillion of stimulus available to help economies withstand the fallout of the coronavirus pandemic.

The fact that bankers and investors were working during the traditional August holiday month, due to coronavirus travel restrictions, also made it easier for deals to be executed, corporate advisors said. "The liquidity in

financial markets is the key point driving the number of deals we have seen in August," said Rishi Jalan, Citigroup's co-head of Asia debt syndicate, noting the pandemic had helped speed up the corporate deal process in some ways.

"People have adapted to the current environment. Roadshows have been turned into calls and investors are making themselves available quickly, people are engaging with deals at short notice," he said.

— Reuters

Stamp duty cut to boost realty

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, AUG. 24

In order to boost real estate transactions during the festive season, some of the states are planning to cut stamp duty rates and registration charges.

Maharashtra and Karnataka are mulling a reduction in stamp duty and registration charges this festive season beginning with Ganesh Chaturthi, according to Anarock Property Consultants.

Stamp duty charges in Karnataka are five per

cent for properties costing more than ₹35 lakh, 3 per cent for properties priced between ₹21 lakh to ₹35 lakh and two per cent for properties up to ₹20 lakh. A lower stamp duty for affordable properties was announced in the last state budget and it might be extended to properties above ₹35 lakh as well.

In Maharashtra, stamp duty charges are five per cent in key cities like Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur and Nashik and six per cent in others. A 2-3 per cent reduction in rates

will result in significant savings for homebuyers.

Stamp duty rates in other major states largely hover anywhere between 5-8 per cent, but states like Delhi, UP, Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana offer relaxation of 1-2 per cent in stamp duty for women buyers.

"To ease inventory pile-up and cost overruns, many players have already topped off discounts with added incentives such as booking amount refunds, statutory fees waivers, cash-back

Four SBI MDs vie for bank's chairman post

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, AUG. 24

With the tenure of incumbent chairman of State Bank of India (SBI) Rajnish Kumar ending on October 7, the government has reportedly scheduled a virtual interview for the post on August 28.

As per a top source in the finance ministry, all the four managing directors (MDs) of the bank will appear for the interview on August 28.

"Earlier, three candidates—the bank's managing directors Arijit Basu, Dinesh Khara and SC Setty—were asked to attend the interview. After Ashwani Bhatia, who has

recently resigned as SBI MF MD, took over as fourth SBI MD on August 24, he was also told to appear for the interview," the source said.

"Although all the aspiring candidates have been intimated by the concerned authority over telephone, no official communication for the inter-

Mittal hints at hike in mobile data tariff

NEW DELHI, AUG. 24: Bharti Airtel chairman Sunil Mittal on Monday hinted at an increase in mobile services prices in the next six months, saying that data at low rates is not sustainable for the telecom industry.

He said that 16 GB data consumption a month for ₹160 is a tragedy. "You either consume 1.6 GB of capacity per month either at this price point or you may prepare to pay a lot more. We are not wanting \$50-60 like the US or Europe but certainly \$2 for 16 GB a month is not sustainable," Mittal said at an event.

Mittal also said that the average revenue per user (ARPU) is expected to cross ₹200 in six months on digital content consumption. ARPU is the measure of revenue gen-



Sunil Mittal

erated per user for a telco. "We need a ₹300 ARPU in which you will still have lower end at ₹100 a month with decent amount of data. But if your consumption is largely around watching TV, movies, entertainment and depriving other vital special services networks, then you need to pay for that," Mittal said at the launch of a book written by Bharti Enterprises execu-

tive Akhil Gupta.

Airtel reported an increase in the ARPU to ₹157 in the first quarter ended June 30, 2020. The rise in ARPU came after the tariff hike by Bharti Airtel in December 2019.

Mittal said that while telecom operators have served the nation during the difficult times, the industry needs to invest in 5G, more optical fibres, submarine cables etc.

"Businesses which are not in telecom, also need to adopt digital. You should see solid ARPUs building up in the next 5-6 months for the industry to be sustainable. We are down to 2-3 players now. India is a very price conscious market. In six months time, we should be crossing the mark of ₹200 for sure and ₹250 would be ideal," Mittal said.

Markets get boost from global cues

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, AUG. 24

Despite a higher number of new Covid-19 cases being reported across the world, market indices in the country moved up to a six-month-high owing to positive global cues, government announcement providing GST relief to smaller businesses, measures for unlocking of the economy and measures to protect domestic chemicals industry.

The Sensex gained 0.95 per cent or 364.36 per cent to close at 38,799.08 and the Nifty-50 gained 0.83 per cent or 94.85 points to close at 11,466.45. Nifty Bank index gained 2.39 per cent due large gains for HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank both of which rose more than 2.5 per cent.

Shrikant Chouhan, executive vice-president, Equity Technical Research, Kotak Securities said, "Global cues helped the Indian market to close in positive territory with the exceptional strength shown in US futures, Hong Kong and European markets. News of a stimulus package later in the week helped boost the overall sentiment."

The FDA approved the emergency use of antibody-rich blood plasma

● CONTINUING RALLY in the broader market has brought midcap and small-cap indices closer to their 52-week high levels.

● BSE SMALL-cap index gained 1.57 per cent closing at 14,855.09 while the 52-week high is 14,946.21. BSE Mid-cap index gained 0.44 per cent to close at 15,019.07 while the 52-week high is 15,930.78.

from recovered patients on Covid-19 patients which had a positive impact on global markets.

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Farm prospects have soared with rains most well-spread in three years, said Crisil Research adding "Early onset and good distribution of the south-west monsoon has paved the way for robust kharif output, raising hopes in hinterland."

MS to train faculty in quantum space

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, AUG. 24

Microsoft Corp. on Monday said that it will train the Indian teaching faculty in quantum computing skills through a training programme called "Train the Trainer".

The programme would be organised by Microsoft Garage in collaboration with Electronics and ICT Academies at Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur, and National Institute of Technology, Patna.

"This programme will train 900 faculty from universities and institutes across India through E&ICT Academies at

Institutes of National Importance such as IIT Kanpur, IIT Guwahati, IIT Roorkee, MNIT Jaipur, NIT Patna, IIIT-D Jabalpur, and NIT Warangal, equipping academics with the required skills to start building their quantum future," Microsoft said.

Quantum computing applies the properties of quantum physics to process information.

Quantum computers will enable new discoveries in healthcare, energy, environmental systems, smart materials, and beyond.

Microsoft is bringing the capabilities to develop for this quantum future, to the cloud with Azure Quantum.

PwC. "What Covid has accelerated is the sophistication of SWFs trying to build diversification and resilience into their portfolio — and hence looking for other asset classes."

Sovereign funds have been more bearish on property than public pension funds, another big investor in the sector, Global SWF found. While they have outstripped the pension funds in overall investment across most industries and assets this year, by two to one, that ratio is reversed for real estate.

— Reuters

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## SHORT TAKES

## Future Group out as IPL sponsor

**New Delhi:** Retail conglomerate Future Group, which is currently going through a restructuring phase, has pulled out of BCCI's central sponsorship list for the Indian Premier League. Future Group has been forced to pull out as the company is reportedly on the verge of a takeover and has suffered losses due to the prevailing hostile economic climate in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. "Yes, Future Group has pulled out of IPL central sponsorship and that's the reason their logo has been removed from the IPL website. At this point of time, I won't like to elaborate on the development," a BCCI veteran confirmed the development. "Future Group has been in bad shape since the start of Covid-19. It was bound to happen that they wouldn't have been able to spend ₹40 crore to be a part of BCCI's central sponsorship pool. Hence, the pull-out is not a surprise," the source said.

— PTI

## Rain halts James' 600-wkt chase

**Southampton:** England pacer Jimmy Anderson was frustrated in his bid to reach 600 Test wickets after seeing another catch spilled off his bowling on the fourth day of the third and final Test against Pakistan on Monday.

Pakistan was 41-0 in its second innings and trailing by 269 runs when more rain arrived at the Rose Bowl, prompting an early lunch to be taken.

The stoppage extended well into the afternoon because of a wet outfield, increasing Pakistan's chances of avoiding defeat.

It was a solid morning session for Pakistan openers Shan Masood (13) and Abid Ali (22), except for when Anderson — on 598 career wickets — found the edge of Shan's bat in the fifth over and the ball flew to wicketkeeper Jos Buttler.

Inexplicably, Buttler failed to get a glove on it, the ball hitting his midriff and bouncing to the ground.

The 38-year-old Anderson is looking to become the first fast bowler to reach 600 wickets. — AP

## Dustin seizes No.1 rank with PGA win

**New York:** Dustin Johnson seized the World No.1 ranking in emphatic style on Sunday, firing an eight-under par final-round 63 to win the US PGA Northern Trust by 11 strokes. Johnson finished with a 30-under par total of 254 at TPC Boston, with Harris English a distant second on 265 after a closing 69.

Johnson's 22-under third-round total had given him the largest 54-hole lead on tour this season — five strokes — and he was quick to build on it on Sunday.

He set the tone with an eight-foot eagle putt at the second, set up by a magnificent seven-iron over the water. "It is a big margin, and I'm definitely really proud of that. I played really good. I knew I was playing well and I knew the guys were going to shoot low," Johnson said after his emphatic victory. — AFP

## DONCIC MAKES QUICK WORK OF LA CLIPPERS

**Miami:** Luka Doncic wasn't about to let a sprained ankle slow him down, nailing a game-winning three-pointer at the buzzer to lift the Dallas Mavericks to a 135-133 overtime playoff win over the Los Angeles Clippers on Sunday. The 21-year old Slovenian phenom, who was playing with a tender ankle and missing his offensive sidekick Kristaps Porzingis, finished with 43 points, 17 rebounds and 13 assists to level the first-round NBA Western Conference playoff series at two games each. "This game was from another planet," said Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle of Doncic's heroics. Doncic made a basket with 50 seconds left to tie the score 130-130 then gave Dallas a two-point lead with a spinning move to the basket with 19 seconds remaining. — AFP

## MANKAD NOT A JOKE

## Vinoo's name unfairly used for run out, feels Karthik

**Abu Dhabi, Aug. 24:** Senior India wicketkeeper-batsman and Kolkata Knight Riders captain Dinesh Karthik finds it extremely unfair that the legendary Vinoo Mankad's name is used in a negative manner for a dismissal which is absolutely legal.

Mankad, during the 148th Tour of Australia, ran opposition batsman Bill Brown out at the non-striker's end after he backed up too far despite repeated warnings. The Australian media out-raged over it and called it "Mankading" even though Sir Don Bradman found the dismissal to be perfectly legal.

"There are two issues I have with this 'Mankad' run out. First is the implementation of it. Second is the name 'Mankad' run out," Karthik said.

"All the way from Don Bradman to Sunil Gavaskar, everyone has said it's completely within the rules. The ICC and MCC have also taken a stand that it is okay. So I don't see the reason why bowlers or any team that does it is looked at in a negative way.

"The person who did it first time was Vinoo Mankad. Interestingly, he was alert enough to do that dismissal. But more importantly, nobody remembers the batsman who got run out. It was Bill Brown," he pointed out.

Karthik's comments have significance because of Delhi Capitals coach Ricky Ponting's recent comments that he would have a chat with Ravichandran Ashwin and advise him that the dismissal is against the 'Spirit of the Game' referring to the India spinner running out of Jos Buttler during the last edition.

Karthik said the dismissal should not be called 'Mankading', especially when the ICC and MCC call it just a run out.

"If Mankad was the first person who did that run out, Bill Brown was the first person who got run out for being silly and walking out of the crease. Why is it that people remember Mankad and not Brown?" he asked.

Karthik suggested that the TV umpire should be called in to check whether the batsman is backing up too far and if so then that particular run should be disallowed. — PTI



Kings XI Punjab's captain Ravichandran Ashwin runs out non-striking batsman Jos Buttler of the Rajasthan Royals in an IPL match last year.

## Ashwin bats for free ball if batsman leaves crease

**New Delhi, Aug. 24:** Senior India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin on Monday suggested the introduction of a "free ball" for bowlers if non-strikers back up too far, sticking to his stand that there was nothing wrong with running such batsmen out.

Ashwin ran out Jos Buttler during an IPL match between Kings XI Punjab and Rajasthan Royals in 2019 when the Englishman left the non-striker's end much before the delivery was bowled, triggering an age-old 'spirit of the game' debate.

While what Ashwin did was well within the rules of the game, his new IPL team coach Ricky Ponting of the Delhi Capitals doesn't agree with this particular mode of dismissal.

"Make it a free ball for the bowler. If the batsmen gets out of that ball, the batting team will be

**Make it a free ball for the bowler. If the batsmen gets out of that ball, the batting team will be docked 5 runs. Free hit adds to the drama for a batter, let's give a chance to the bowlers too.**

— R. ASHWIN on Mankad debate

docked 5 runs. Free hit adds to the drama for a batter, let's give a chance to the bowlers too," Ashwin tweeted in response to Dinesh Karthik's assertion that it was unfair to link the dismissal to spirit of the game or call it 'Mankading' as it is permitted by laws of the game.

"As of now everyone watches the game hoping that 'the bowlers will get smacked today'," the off-spinner said.

His suggestion is similar to the concept of free hit, which allows the batsmen to score the maximum without the fear of being dismissed if the bowler delivers a front-foot no ball.

When a Twitter user asserted that the game is primarily for batsmen, Ashwin retorted, "Then take the run out on your chin and stay in!!!!".

What followed after Ashwin's tweet was a discussion on his timeline with former India cricketers W. V. Raman, S. Badrinath, Rohan Gavaskar and commentator Harsha Bhogle providing their opinion on the issue.

"I think the rule should be simple and take away any subjective element like 'normal delivery position' and just say 'non-striker stays in till the ball is released'," Harsha Bhogle said. — PTI

## ONE MISTAKE AND EVENT IS DOOMED, SAYS KOHLI

**Dubai, Aug. 24:** One mistake could "spoil" the entire tournament, Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli on Monday warned his colleagues in the IPL's first virtual team meeting, while imploring them to do all they can to keep the bio-bubble secure.

It was a team meeting like no other but Kohli meant business straight-away as he urged his colleagues to strictly follow the protocols put in place by the authorities in the UAE, the venue of the upcoming edition of IPL, in view of Covid-19 pandemic.

"We have followed what's been told to us and I would expect everyone to be on the same page in terms of securing the bubble at all times and making sure that nothing is compromised," Kohli said.

"...Because I think one mistake by any one of us could literally spoil the whole tournament. And none of us want to do that," he added.

RCB's director of cricket operations Mike Hesson, who was present in the meeting along with head coach Simon Katich, spoke about the consequences of violating the rules after Kohli posed him a question.

"It (violation) will be dealt with very seriously. For accidental breach, players will be removed and sent into isolation for seven days and then come back only after he tests negative. There will be strong consequences if players chose to do that. Players will sign a document which explains the consequences," Hesson said.

The Indian captain stressed on the need to develop a good team culture from the first day.

"I can't wait to get to our first practice session, something that we all are going to cherish. An opportunity to create a good team culture from Day 1," Kohli said. — PTI



Bayern's goalkeeper Manuel Neuer (centre) lifts the trophy after Munich won the Champions League final against Paris Saint-Germain at the Luz Stadium in Lisbon, Portugal, on Sunday. Bayern won 1-0. — AP

## Bayern best PSG, clinch CL trophy

**Lisbon, Aug. 24:** Kingsley Coman headed Bayern Munich to a sixth European Cup title, scoring against boyhood club Paris Saint-Germain to seal a 1-0 victory in the first Champions League final to be played without fans.

While Bayern won their first final since 2013 on Sunday, PSG have yet to lift the European Cup despite more than \$1 billion being spent on players in nine years.

More than \$500 million was spent on Neymar, Kylian Mbappe and Angel Di Maria but PSG looked far from formidable or threatening against the Bavarian giants who felt more assured on European club football's biggest stage.

As the costly front three were frustrated in front of goal, it was instead a winger who was born in Paris and started his career at PSG who inflicted the blow.

The 24-year-old Coman ghosted in at the far post unchecked by the PSG defense and was ready to meet a cross from Joshua Kimmich in the 59th minute.

It was Bayern's 43rd goal of a perfect European campaign that has seen Bayern become the first team to win all 11 Champions League matches.

They capped an incredible transformation this season under Hansi Flick, who emerged from the shadows in November, with a promotion to the top coaching job with Bayern fourth in the Bundesliga.

The European Cup joins the Bundesliga trophy — won for an eighth successive season and the German Cup.

Bayern join deposed champions Liverpool as six-time champions of

## \$500m STRIKE FORCE NEYMAR, MBAPPE FAILS

**Lisbon, Aug. 24:** Neymar and Kylian Mbappe sat side by side on Paris Saint-Germain's bench after the 0-1 loss to Bayern Munich in the Champions League final here.

While Mbappe stared at the field in despair, Neymar cried and covered his face on Sunday.

It wasn't the ending they had hoped for. PSG must go for yet another year without the Champions League title after lackluster performances by Neymar and Mbappe. The French team's biggest stars had disappointing performances after helping PSG to reach the final of the top European club tournament for the first time.

PSG paid big money — a combined 402 million euros (\$474m) on the pair in 2017 — to sign them in their bid to finally win the Champions League, but they couldn't come through in the decisive game.

Both Mbappe and Neymar failed to capitalise on first-half chances that could have changed the story of the game, and neither was effective in the second half when PSG needed to come back from a goal down. — AP

Europe, only behind AC Milan (seven) and Real Madrid (13). It was the first final to end 1-0 since Real Madrid beat Juventus in 1998, which was also the last final to feature teams who qualified as domestic champions. — AP

## BOLT GOES INTO QUARANTINE AFTER TAKING COVID-19 TEST

**Kingston, Aug. 24:** Eight-time Olympic champion former sprinter Usain Bolt on Monday said he is awaiting results of a COVID-19 test that he underwent during the weekend and has gone into self-quarantine as a precautionary measure. Bolt posted a short video on his Twitter page, addressing widespread speculation that he has tested positive for the dreaded virus after birthday celebrations on August 21 during which social distancing norms were reportedly not followed.

"...Social media says that I am confirmed COVID-19. Did a test on Saturday, trying to be responsible, stay in and stay away from my friends," the retired great, considered the greatest sprinter of all time, said.

"Also I have no symptoms, so I am going to quarantine myself and wait on the confirmation to see what is the protocol from the Ministry of Health. Until I get a confirmation, I want to tell my friends just to be safe and just to take it easy," he added. — PTI

## Dhoni &amp; Co. bond over virtual gaming

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR CHENNAI, AUG. 24

Forced to spend a week inside the four walls of their luxurious hotel rooms upon arrival in Dubai, Chennai Super Kings have found a way to connect with each other — through virtual gaming.

All IPL franchises have landed in the UAE for the 13th edition of the league, starting on September 19, but players and officials are currently on a week-long self-isolation to adhere to the bio-bubble protocols laid out by the

BCCI. During every IPL, Chennai Super Kings set up a 'team room' packed with a TT table, PlayStation and other indoor games, but now that the players can't step out of their individual rooms, virtual games such as PUBG and Call of Duty are keeping them entertained. It's no secret that M.S. Dhoni loves combat games and football.

A CSK official said the players are slowly getting used to the new normal.

"The first few days have been really challenging as we have to ensure that players follow all protocol

and at the same time keep themselves occupied. The rooms here don't have balconies which means they are totally cut off from each other," he said.

While a few led by Dhoni and his close friend Monu Kumar Singh connect through online gaming, some others kill time reading books and binge-watching movies and shows on OTT platforms. Shane Watson spends his time planning and shooting content for his vlog — T20 Stars.

The official said all players have been given customised indoor workouts

for the quarantine period. "For the first week, the hotel has provided small workout equipment in every room. Players have to train twice a day. The team trainer gives them feedback through videos," the official added.

Three-time champions Chennai Super Kings are staying at Taj Dubai, overlooking the spectacular Burj Khalifa.

The 55-member contingent, including their marketing and social media teams, are staying in a separate block with no access to outsiders. The BCCI has allotted two offi-

cials from the Anti Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) per franchise.

With the hotel providing South Indian food throughout the day, CSK are feeling very much at home.

"There is a set menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The food tray is left outside their room. The players are also ordering in their choice of food," the CSK official further added.

Senior players and coaches have been allotted suites that come with a fully-equipped kitchen.

## Ageing young, Anderson is a history in making



Hemant Kenkre Silly Point

Pakistan are faced with a mountain to climb,' screamed a news headline post the second day's play of their third and final Test match against England. The mountain in this case referred to the mammoth 583 runs that the hosts had put up thanks to a dedicated effort by Zak Crawley who notched up his first Test hundred (a workman-like 267 runs) in his eighth Test appearance.

More than the mass of runs that the Pakistanis will face (this is written

before the third day's play) the real mountain they will need to ascend is a tortuous terrain that goes by the name of James Michael Anderson. The 38-year old Lancastrian is currently standing on an achievement that will further his name in the history of Test cricket. Just four wickets from getting to the mark of 600 Test scalps, the fit, six footer will use every trick in his book to seal his deal with history over the next two days.

Playing in and against

England has been considered a major yardstick that tests a batsman's proficiency. And, over the last decade, playing the team in their back yard with Anderson in the eleven is a different ball game. When India last toured the British isles in 2018, skipper Virat Kohli was faced with two major tasks. The first being winning the Test series and the second being getting Anderson, his tormentor in the 2014 series, out of his way.

Just four notches from standing tall, atop a major peak, Anderson has come a long way from his rather humble beginnings in international cricket. For someone who was thrown directly into the deep end against Australia to make his debut in a One Day International in 2002,

Anderson has come a long way overcoming many personal hurdles. For starters, the 'Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' swing, from great to the ordinary on many occasions, had people wondering which avatar will step on to the field earlier in his career.

From starting his journey in international cricket alongside relative unknowns like Robert Kirtley and Craig White as fellow seamers, Anderson's rise to the top, bowling in tandem with current partner Stuart Broad has been remarkable. With 1107 Test wickets between them, this combination has been a major challenge for international batsmen to contend with in the longest format of the game. The impact these two have had

on English cricket over the last decade has been tremendous.

They say fast bowlers hunt in pairs. Anderson and Broad will go down in the annals of cricket as a lethal pair akin to Fred Trueman and Brian Statham of the old. Watching them speak to one another before the start of an over, where they dissect the batsman's weakness and exchange notes goes to show how solid the understanding between the two British homies is. Complementing each other is the hallmark of a great pair.

From Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson to Andy Roberts and Micheal Holding, cricket fans have been privileged to watch these greats keep challenging the greatest batsmen of

their time.

When Trueman passed (what was, in August 1964) an unbelievable achievement of 300 Test wickets getting Neil Hawke caught at slip by Colin Cowdrey against Australia at the Oval, he was asked if his record would ever be broken. "Aye, but whoever does it will be bloody tired," quipped the Yorkshireman who was known for his legendary quotes throughout his career.

Just two years away from 40, one wonders for how long Anderson will continue being England's go to man in Test cricket.

The way one is watching him bowl in the current series against Pakistan it looks like Anderson still has the mojo to keep kicking on like a Swiss watch.

The spring in his step is still as sprightly as it was when he started out. So are the tricks with the ball which flummox the best in the business.

His agility in the field is comparable to men much younger to him.

For a fast bowler/seamer, getting past the 600 mark in Test cricket is an amazing achievement.

With the top three slots of maximum Test wickets staying with spinners, Anderson is poised to become the first of his category to get in to the exclusive club. When England tours India (for a five-Test series) in February 2021 one does hope Indian fans will get an opportunity to see this magnificent warrior display his wares in the sub-continent for the last time.