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**INDIAN AND CHINESE ARMIES LOOK AT A ROADMAP**

Consensus on disengagement: Planned in stages in each sector, no timeline yet

Corps Commanders discussed friction areas: Galwan, Hot Spring, Pangong Tso**SUSHANT SINGH & KRISHN KAUSHIK**
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE MEETING between Corps Commanders of the Indian and Chinese armies ended Monday with "mutual consensus to disengage" with detailed discussions on the modalities of a sector-wise, stage-wise disengagement on the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

But no timeline for the disengagement process was finalised at the meeting between XIV Corps Commander Lt General Harinder Singh and South Xinjiang Military Region Commander Major General Liu Lin.

Hosted by the Chinese side at the Moldo border point opposite Chushul, the meeting lasted nearly 11 hours.

On Tuesday, Army chief General MM Naravane reached Leh on a two-day visit to Ladakh. He visited the Military Hospital, Leh and met the soldiers injured in the Galwan Valley clashes with Chinese troops on June 15 in which 20 Indian personnel were killed.

General Naravane, scheduled to visit forward areas in Ladakh Wednesday, was accompanied by Northern Army Commander Lt Gen YK Joshi who was in Delhi for the Army Commanders Conference. Over two days, the

Army Commanders reviewed the situation on the northern and western fronts.

An official told *The Indian Express* that the Monday meeting at Moldo built on the understanding reached at the previous meeting of the Corps Commanders on June 6, and involved detailed discussions on "all the friction areas," i.e., Galwan Valley, Hot Springs and Pangong Tso areas.

No timeline for the process has been decided yet, which will involve further meetings between local military commanders. The local commanders will decide the details based on the roadmap discussed at the Monday meeting, the official said. Dates for the meeting at the local commander level will be decided after mutual consultation by both sides later this week.

At the meeting Monday, Lt General Harinder Singh was accompanied by Major General Abhijit Bapat, GOC 3rd Infantry 'Trishul' Division, and IG Deepam Seth who commands ITBP's North West Frontier. Brig Rajeev Kapur, Brig Bhavish Kumar, Brig Puneet Ahuja, Brig Adarsh Verma and Brig HS Gill were the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**MORE REPORTS**
PAGE 6**Army Chief General M M Naravane with injured soldiers at the Military Hospital in Leh. ANI**

China watching, Jaishankar says: respect law, partner's interests

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

WITH HIS Chinese counterpart watching via a video link, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said Tuesday that the "leading voices of the world must be exemplars in every way" and that the "challenge today is not just one of concepts and norms, but equally of their practice".

Jaishankar was speaking at the Russia-India-China (RIC) virtual meeting on Tuesday. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**S Jaishankar with Sergey Lavrov (top) and Wang Yi at the RIC virtual meeting on Tuesday. ANI**

To target PM or not: CWC meet shows strains within

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE CONGRESS on Tuesday kept up its attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying his statement denying any Chinese intrusion had far-reaching implications, but the meeting of the party's Working Committee revealed the strain within — and indicated that the internal issues it has been grappling with since the Lok Sabha election defeat are far from resolved.

At the meeting, Congress president Sonia Gandhi said there was a "growing feeling among the people that the government has gravely mishandled the situation". She said she hoped that "mature diplomacy and decisive leadership will inform the government's actions in protecting our territorial integrity".

During the discussion that followed, however, RPN Singh, a leader from Uttar Pradesh, said the Congress should target Modi's "policies and wrong decisions", but the attack on him should not appear personal. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

First time after 2001, India cuts Pakistan mission strength by half

Says Pak officials caught spying, will cut Islamabad mission 50 per cent**SHUBHAJIT ROY**
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

INDIA ON Tuesday asked Pakistan to reduce the strength of its High Commission in New Delhi by half, and said it would do the same at its own mission in Islamabad within a week.

The last time a 50 per cent downgrade of the two High Commissions took place was in December 2001. Following the terrorist attack on Parliament, then External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh had asked for the reduction in strength to be completed within 48 hours.

Tuesday's move by India came after two Indian High Commission staffers were detained by Pakistani authorities for several hours on June 15, and released only after New Delhi lodged a protest.

India had last month expelled two officials of the

**Officials of Indian mission in Pakistan who returned on Monday. Source ANI**

Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi for spying.

Ten months ago, Pakistan had downgraded bilateral ties after India revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370.

India had retaliated, and both countries had withdrawn their High Commissioners. Tuesday's decision, conveyed to the Acting High Commissioner of Pakistan who was summoned to the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Trump extends ban on H1B, other work visas; tech firms say damaging to the US

AASHISH ARYAN
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

EARLY ON Tuesday India time, United States President Donald Trump signed an executive order extending the ban on immigrant and non-immigrant worker visas until the end of this year.

Work visas, including the coveted H1B and H2B, as well as certain other categories of H4, J, and L visas too shall remain suspended until December 31, 2020, an official release said.

The ban on the entry of non-immigrant workers with H1B visas is likely to have the biggest impact globally, and especially on Indian information technology (IT) companies and workers.

The order also replaced the current system of awarding H1B visas by lottery with a system that privileges applicants who are paid more than others. While Indian IT firms have progressively cut down their depend-

EXPLAINED
H1B still matters to Indians

SINCE THE arrival of Donald Trump in the White House, Indian IT companies have progressively reduced their dependence on workers with H1B visas. Indian IT workers, however, still corner a lion's share of all H1B visas approved every year. These highly skilled workers form a significant talent pool from which global tech giants such as Google and Amazon hire.

ence on H1B visas, their margins will be put under pressure by the changed system.

Many big global tech **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Delhi riots: HC grants bail to Safoora Zargar

PRITAM PAL SINGH
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE DELHI High Court Tuesday granted bail to Jamia Coordination Committee Media Coordinator Safoora Zargar in a case related to the Delhi riots in February, after Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Delhi Police, said he has no objection to her release on purely "humanitarian grounds".

The 27-year-old, who is pregnant, was arrested by the Delhi Police's Special Cell on April 10 and

**Safoora Zargar was arrested on April 10**

is facing a UAPA case in connection with the communal violence in Northeast Delhi. In her bail plea, she had submitted pregnancy as one of the grounds for relief.

In its status report filed on Monday in the High Court, the Delhi Police had opposed the application, saying pregnancy cannot be a ground to grant her bail. Police had also stated that as many as "39 deliveries have taken place in Delhi prisons in the last 10 years".

On Tuesday, on the SG's submission, Justice Rajiv Shakdher ordered Zargar's release from jail and directed her to furnish a personal bond of Rs 10,000 with a surety of the like amount.

Mehta submitted that **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Expanding ambit, ICMR says all symptomatic persons may be tested

KARISHMA MEHROTRA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE INDIAN Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Tuesday revised its Covid-19 testing strategy to include "all symptomatic individuals in every part of the country".

The strategy, as of May 18, advised testing symptomatic individ-

uals, but restricted it to those in hospitals, containment zones and hotspots, contacts of a confirmed Covid-19 case, healthcare and frontline workers, and those with history of international travel.

A member of the epidemiology and surveillance task force under ICMR told *The Indian Express* this was the first time **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

LOCKDOWN DAY 91 **CASES: 4,40,215** **RECOVERED: 2,48,189** **DEATHS: 14,011** **TESTS: 71,37,716** **DOUBLING RATE: 19.86****



| KEY STATES TO WATCH | TOTAL CASES | SURGE IN 24 HRS | 7-DAY AVG. GROWTH* | DOUBLING RATE** |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| ■ Maharashtra | 1,35,796 | 3,721 | 2.96% | 24.36 |
| ■ Gujarat | 27,879 | 562 | 2.10% | 34.28 |
| ■ Delhi | 62,655 | 2,909 | 5.59% | 12.89 |
| ■ Tamil Nadu | 62,087 | 2,710 | 4.21% | 17.08 |
| ■ Haryana | 11,025 | 390 | 5.22% | 13.80 |
| ■ West Bengal | 14,358 | 413 | 3.23% | 22.30 |

* Compounded Daily Growth Rate over last 7 days ** Calculated over 7-day growth

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| CONCERN TELANGANA: Rapid rise in 3 days as number of tests grow; 3,500 cases in last week. | CAUTION KERALA: Still discovering large number of cases. Second surge not yet contained. | A GLIMMER WEST BENGAL: Slowed down in last one week. Growth below the national average now. |
|--|--|---|

Based on daily data by Centre, ICMR, state governments

WITNESS IN DELHI RIOTS CHARGESHEET

'I heard people shouting Kapil Mishra's men set pandal on fire'

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M & MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE CHARGESHEET filed by police in the murder case of head constable Rattan Lal during the February riots in Northeast Delhi includes the statement of a witness claiming that he had heard people at an anti-CAA protest site shout that a pandal had been "set on fire by some of (BJP leader) Kapil Mishra's people".

According to the statement, the witness — identified as Najam ul Hasan — was present at the protest but "did not see" the alleged incident on February 24, and only heard others shout about it.

Hasan has been listed in the chargesheet among "important

**BJP leader Kapil Mishra**

witnesses" who were "fully aware about the conspiracy and planning" of the protests at Chand Bagh.

Delhi Police have named 164 witnesses, including 76 police personnel and seven local residents, in the chargesheet.

Hasan's statement was recorded under Section 164 of the CrPC, which is evidence admissible during the criminal trial. It says: "...pandal mein Kapil Mishra ke kuch logon ne aag laga di. Maine yeh dekha nahin, par log aisa shor macha rahe the (The stage was set on fire by some of

Kapil Mishra's people. I did not see it happening, but people were shouting about it)."

Mishra did not respond to calls and texts from *The Indian Express* seeking comment on the allegation.

He had previously responded to allegations about his role in the violence by denying that his supporters had pelted stones and claiming that his presence at the site was to "release pressure" as the "people were very angry" that the protests had blocked two roads that are "the lifelines of this area".

Mishra's role in the escalating tension surrounding the anti-CAA protests in Northeast Delhi sparked outrage after he held a counter-rally near the Jaffrabad Metro Station on February 23.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Govt procurement portal asks sellers to specify country of origin

PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE MINISTRY of Commerce and Industry's platform for online procurement of goods and services by government departments — the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal — has made it mandatory for sellers to clarify the country of origin while

registering any new product.

The GeM portal also has a 'Make in India' filter now to allow buyers to choose products that meet the minimum 50% local content criterion, the ministry announced Tuesday.

A senior official told *The Indian Express* that the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is also actively examin-

ing a proposal put forth by a group of traders that the 'country of origin' tag be made a must for products listed on private e-commerce platforms as well.

Senior DPIIT officials are scheduled to meet executives of **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

RELATED REPORTS
PAGE 15**EXPRESS NETWORK****TRADER, SON DIE IN POLICE CUSTODY, TAMIL NADU TOWN PROTESTS**
PAGE 9**PAGE 1 ANCHOR****VIVEK DESHPANDE**
NAGPUR, JUNE 23

WHEN SHE went missing, it was a winter morning in 1979, "probably January 20". The Shingne family looked for Panchfula, then 53, for two years, before giving up.

For 41 years, Panchfula lived less than 500 km away. Given her mental disability, she couldn't tell the Muslim family that took her in about her home; and the Shingnes had few resources to track her down, in the time before mobile phones and Google.

Last week, a sudden name Panchfula dug out of her mem-

ory, a quick Internet search, and some photos and videos shared over the phone reunited her, now 94, with her family.

From the Shingne home in Nagpur to the Khan household in Kotatala village in Damoh district of Madhya Pradesh, the story of the miracle is being shared over and over six days later.

Esrar Khan, 40, talks about how his father Noor Mohammad, a truck driver, stumbled upon Panchfula just outside their village Kotatala, lying by the roadside and stung by honeybees. "He took her to a doctor. After she recovered, he tried to find out who she was,

but she was not coherent. She would utter words like 'Khamia Nagar', 'Nagpur', 'Medical'. My father even went to Nagpur, but police could not help," Khan says.

Over the years, Panchfula became a member of the large family — Khan has two brothers and four sisters — with everyone addressing her as "mausi (aunt)". Panchfula called Noor "Chaturbhuj bhaiyya". Khan recalls how, at every meal, she would keep aside one *roti* in a basket, saying it was for either "Bhaiyyala" or "Chaturbhuj" — the names of her son and brother, as the Khans now realise.

In May, Khan, who works

**The Shingne family with Panchfula, reunited after 41 years, at their home in Nagpur. Vivek Deshpande**

with an organisation that organises cleft-lip corrective surgery camps for the needy, says he heard Panchfula utter a new word, 'Parsapur'. "I was not sure if she had ever taken that name before. So, I immediately Googled it, to find there was such a place in Amravati district of Maharashtra. Further search led me to a name, Kanishka Online, from the same place with a phone number. When I called up, a person called Abhishek picked up, and I asked if there was a place called Khamia Nagar nearby. He said there was one Khanjam Nagar, about 3 km away. I sent him some photos

and videos of Panchfula, requesting him to search if she had any kin there."

Soon, Abhishek got back: yes, Panchfula originally belonged to that village in Amravati and continued to have relatives there. They in turn got in touch with her family settled in Nagpur. On June 17, Bhaiyyala's son, Pruthvi Bhaiyyala Shingne, arrived in Kotatala to meet his grandmother.

Khan says they were heartbroken when they realised Pruthvi wanted to take her back. "I told him you can come to meet her whenever you want, but please don't take her away. But, he was insistent. So I said he had

to accord us the privilege of conducting her last rites as per our tradition, when the time comes, to which he agreed."

The whole village turned up to see Panchfula off. The Khans were in tears. Panchfula herself was content, once told it was Bhaiyyala who had come to get her, Khan says.

Bhaiyyala, Panchfula's only child, died in 2017. Pruthvi says her husband Tejpal passed away in 1995, and Chaturbhuj six months ago. Over at Kotatala, Noor too is dead, having died of heart problems in 2007.

The families can't say if **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

3 THE OUTBREAK THE CITY

2,000 beds at new Covid facility ready this week

Makeshift centre at Chhatarpur

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

A LARGE section of the upcoming makeshift Covid facility at Chhatarpur's Radha Soami Satsang Beas centre will be operational this week, with the assistance of ITBP personnel, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Tuesday.

In the first phase, there are likely to be 2,000 beds at the centre, an MHA official said. A private mattress firm is providing beds and mattresses in the first phase.

The facility has been named Sardar Patel Covid Care Centre and Hospital, said District Magistrate South B M Mishra.

"Dear Kejriwal ji, it has already been decided in our meeting 3 days back, and MHA has assigned the work of operating the 10,000 bed Covid Care Centre at Radha Swami Beas in Delhi to ITBP. The work is in full swing and a large part of the facility will be operational by June 26," Shah tweeted, responding to reports that Kejriwal has invited him to

visit the centre and sought deployment of health staff from the ITBP and Army.

In his response, Kejriwal said the armed forces, doctors, social organisations, Centre and the Delhi government have been working together to tackle the pandemic. "I am hopeful that we will together defeat corona. Thank you for supporting the people of Delhi and the Delhi government in these difficult circumstances," he tweeted.

In another tweet, Shah said, "I would also like to inform the people of Delhi that a 1,000 bed full-fledged hospital with 250 ICU beds is being developed for Covid patients. DRDO and Tata Trust are building the facility. Armed forces personnel will man it. This Covid care centre will be ready in next 10 days."

He added that armed forces personnel will be deployed for medical care of patients who will be shifted to the railway isolation coaches and that "8,000 additional beds have already been placed at Delhi government's disposal for making Covid care centres, as per requirement".

CAPITAL RECORDS CLOSE TO 4,000 CASES ON TUESDAY

Nearly impossible to ferry all patients to Covid care centres: Sisodia to L-G

SOURAVROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE NEW rule mandating individuals testing positive to show up at Covid care centres for further assessment is "nearly impossible" to enforce, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said on Tuesday, urging L-G Anil Bajjal to roll it back.

In a letter to Bajjal, Sisodia wondered where ambulances to transport so many patients to care centres would be arranged from, especially against the backdrop of the capital registering over 3,000 cases a day. "In a situation like this, how are ambulances to transport so many patients going to be arranged? For the district administrations and the health department already stretched to the limit in carrying out testing, tracking and containment measures, this is a near impossible task," he wrote.


On Tuesday, the city reported 3,947 new cases and 68 deaths. The total number of cases are 66,602, with the toll at 2,301.

With only around 170 vehicles operating directly under the fleet of CATS (Centralised



Ambulances with suspected Covid patients at Lok Nayak Hospital, Tuesday. *Praveen Khanna*

CORONAVIRUS IN THE CAPITAL



TOTAL CASES: **66,602** | NEW CASES: **3,947**

| | Cases | Recovered | Deaths | Tests |
|---------|---------|-----------|--------|----------|
| June 21 | 3,000 | 1,719 | 63 | 18,105 |
| June 22 | 2,909 | 3,589 | 58 | 14,682 |
| June 23 | 3,947 | 2,711 | 68 | 16,952 |
| Total | 24,988* | 39,313 | 2,301 | 4,01,648 |

*Total active cases

Accident and Trauma Services), ambulance services, which were

outsourced to a private firm in 2016, the city is highly depend-

ent on private operators, which had to be roped in to cater to rising demand.

In the first week of June, Delhi Chief Secretary Vijay Dev had ordered immediate requisition of 328 ambulances with private operators. Ola and Uber also extended their services to ferry patients, but these vehicles cannot be used in case patients need oxygen and other critical support.

As per the new patient management SOPs released by the Delhi Directorate General of Health Services on June 22, patients testing positive through lab-based RT-PCR method will have to be taken to a care centre in an ambulance for assessing eligibility of home isolation.

While the patient is at the care centre, a team under the district surveillance officer will visit his/her home to check if there are at least two rooms with a separate toilet for the patient. In case facilities are in place, the person will be sent back for home isolation, and if facilities are found to be inadequate, the patient will be admitted at the care centre.

If the patient has mild symptoms with underlying conditions

such as diabetes, hypertension or is "immuno compromised", he or she will be shifted to Covid health centres or hospitals.

Sisodia said since the new system was put in place by Bajjal in his capacity as chairperson of the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA), patients have been facing difficulties: "When a person tests positive, the question that arises is how he or she is going to travel to the quarantine centre. And on being found eligible for home isolation, how will the person return?"

"This new system does not benefit anyone. So far, on being found positive, teams of government doctors used to visit the homes and give advice over the phone daily. This system was working in a very robust manner. Is it alright to discontinue this and force patients to queue up at quarantine centres? I say this based on ground feedback that the new system has been a source of trouble for people," he said.

The government requested the L-G to convene a meeting of the SDMA to change the norms, with Sisodia stressing that it may result in major chaos in the city.

Staff 'rapes' woman in CBI court

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

POLICE HAVE arrested a man for allegedly raping a woman in her 30s in the special CBI court at the Rouse Avenue court complex. The accused worked as a court staffer. Police received a complaint from the woman on Monday evening and sent the accused to judicial custody.

According to police, the woman, a resident of Old Delhi, said she knew the accused for the past six months and alleged he called her to meet him. "In her complaint, she alleged that he took her inside court room number 308 and sexually assaulted her. A PCR call was received at IP Estate police station on Monday regarding the rape," said a senior police officer.

A case has been registered under IPC Section 376 (rape) and further probe in the matter is underway, said police. DCP (Central) Sanjay Bhatia said, "We have registered an FIR and arrested the accused." Siddhartha Nanwal, Secretary, Rouse Avenue Bar Association, said, "The facts of the case are not yet clear. There will be a trial in this case, and the court will decide. If such an incident has happened, then we condemn it."

BRIEFLY

NE Delhi riots: HC tells govt to process applications for compensation

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court has directed the Delhi Government to process the applications for compensation submitted by the victims of Northeast Delhi riots. The single judge bench of Justice Navin Chawla also directed the state government to accept such applications on its presentation without insisting on furnishing a copy of the FIR. The order was passed in a writ petition seeking the court's direction. The petitioners also wanted the court to direct the state government to release Rs 25,000 each into the bank accounts of the petitioners immediately pending acceptance/evaluation of their claims.

School owner arrested in new riots case

New Delhi: The owner of a school, who was granted bail by a trial court in connection with a Northeast Delhi riots case before the Delhi High Court put the order on hold, informed the HC Tuesday that he was arrested in another case related to the riots Monday evening and remains in jail. Faisal Farooq, owner of Rajdhani Public School, was granted bail by the trial court on June 20. Delhi Police, however, moved the High Court challenging the same. Putting the trial court order on hold on Monday, the HC ordered that if he is "still in custody, he shall not be released" and listed the matter for hearing Tuesday.

Man opens fire over rent

New Delhi: Two men were arrested on Tuesday for allegedly opening fire at a tenant after a quarrel broke out between them over non-payment of rent in Southeast Delhi's Shaheen Bagh area. Police said the incident, which took place on Sunday, was a result of an ongoing dispute between Faizan Ali, the landlord, and Mohsin, his tenant. **ENS**

GTB hospital guard 'attacked' over virus fear

SOMYA LAKHANI
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

A 35-YEAR-OLD man employed as a guard at GTB hospital was hit on the head with a brick, allegedly by a neighbour, who reprimanded him for "spreading coronavirus in the colony by standing on the terrace of his house".

An FIR was registered against the accused at Northeast Delhi's Harsh Vihar police station, and he has been arrested, said DCP (Northeast) Ved Prakash Surya.

The incident took place on the evening of June 19 when Vijay Kumar was taking a stroll on the terrace of his house in Harsh Vihar before leaving for his night shift at the hospital. His mother, Usha Devi, told *The Indian Express*, "Vikas, who lives in the lane behind ours, was on his terrace when he saw my son, and asked him why he was out in the open since he works in a hospital where coronavirus patients are admitted. The two got into a verbal spat and my son told him that the virus won't reach his terrace from ours."

Devi alleged that Vikas reached their house minutes later with four-five men, who pulled her son out and beat him up. She alleged the accused hit



Vijay was hit on the head with a brick by a man who claimed he was spreading the virus

Kumar on the head with a brick, pushed her around, and tore her son-in-law's clothes and beat him up too with a belt.

"They beat my son up and left him bleeding outside the house. We rushed him to a private hospital and dialled 100 as well. He has received eight stitches and has been advised bed rest. We have never faced this kind of a problem in the last three months. My son is a hardworking man who is putting his life at risk daily by working at a hospital in the middle of an epidemic... What is his fault?" asked Devi.

Kumar has been working as a guard at GTB hospital for three years now. The medical superintendent of the hospital said, "I have not been informed of any such incident." DCP Surya said a case under sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 341 (wrongful restraint) and 34 (common intention) of the IPC has been registered against the accused.

Stop adverts comparing Corona beer to Covid: HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE DELHI High Court has passed an injunction order restricting publication of advertisements likening Corona beer with the coronavirus.

The order was passed by the single judge bench of Justice Rajiv Shakdher in favour of the company that manufactures Corona beer (Cerveceria Modelo de México, S. de R.L. de C.V.), which alleged that a former distributor, Whiskin Spirits, in Delhi had taken out advertisements on Facebook likening coronavirus to the beer.

The court noted, "It appears the plaintiff's statutory and commercial interests will get jeopardised if an interim injunction is not granted in its favour."

The court has directed that till the next date of hearing, "the defendant, its employees, agents, officers, affiliated entities and all others acting for and on its behalf are enjoined from reproducing, broadcasting, communicating to the public, screening, publishing and distributing the impugned advertisement on any media or platform including the social media platforms."

Jails testing video call facility for inmates

SOMYA LAKHANI
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

FAMILY VISITS or mulaqat of inmates have been stopped across Tihar, Rohini and Mandoli jails in Delhi since March. However, come July, "video-calling" facilities will likely be rolled out for inmates.

Delhi Prisons DG Sandeep Goel told *The Indian Express*, "A

video-calling option is being tested on National Prison Portal. It has not been used by Delhi prisons before. We are checking how effective it is, the roster of inmates, among other issues."

The model is being tested on prison officials as of now. A prison source said one or two computers per jail will be used to facilitate video-calling between inmates and their families.

Explaining the mechanism, Goel said, "An inmate's family member will make a request on the NIC software, which we will accept and a link will be generated. The link will be shared and then the call will take place."

On March 19, the weekly mulaqats were halted across the three prisons. Each inmate was allowed to meet two-three approved family members

twice a week. The mulaqat would take place Monday to Friday, and across the three prisons. Goel said at least 600 mulaqats would take place each day. A prison source said, "With the video calling option, this number may not be possible. Instead of twice a week, the e-mulaqat might happen once a month per inmate due to lack of systems. We are figuring out all details."

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Umesh Yadav
Indian Cricketer and RBI Employee

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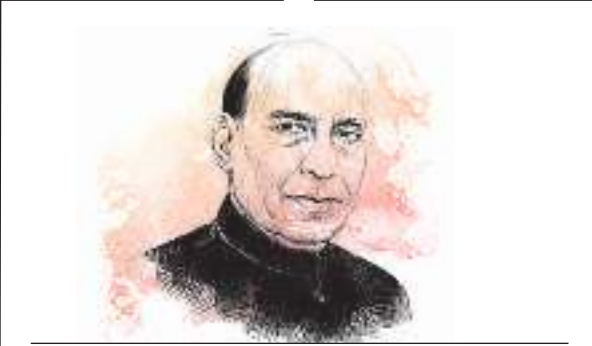
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6 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI **CONFIDENTIAL**



LONG DETOUR

THE DISRUPTION in international flights due to the pandemic forced Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to make an additional stop on the way to Russia on Monday. Singh, who is on the first international visit by a minister in Covid-19 times, took an Indian Air Force aircraft to reach Moscow. As the plane avoided Pakistani airspace, the aircraft — with a smaller fuel tank than regular commercial planes — required a refuel and made a pitstop in Iran, making the journey longer. Singh is in Russia to attend the 75th Victory Day celebrations, which had been postponed from May 9 because of the pandemic.

TENSE MOMENTS

AMID THE tense political situation in Manipur, the central BJP leadership has indicated that the N Biren Singh-led government will be salvaged without sacrificing the Chief Minister. When three BJP MLAs resigned last week, and four ministers of BJP ally NPP withdrew support before the Rajya Sabha poll, both the Congress and BJP engaged in hectic lobbying. Former CM Okram Ibobi Singh demanded a floor test. The BJP sent its troubleshooter Himanta Biswa Sarma, with Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma in tow, to assuage disgruntled MLAs. Sarma has been flying from Guwahati to Imphal to remedy the situation. Congress sources, meanwhile, say they are confident of support, despite the CBI move against Ibobi Singh.

HERITAGE PUSH

THE GOVERNMENT'S focus on ancient Indian knowledge is well known. The first review of NCERT textbooks that was undertaken resulted in the addition of paragraphs on ancient Indian philosophy, ayurveda, yoga, teachings of Upanishads and scientific achievements of ancient India in areas like astronomy and metallurgy. The draft New Education Policy also stresses the importance of teaching students about ancient India's knowledge systems. The HRD Ministry is now going the extra mile to establish an exclusive research division for Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), which will be tasked with spreading the country's heritage and traditions. Last week, the ministry advertised three contractual posts for this division, calling applications for the same.

Double blow for RJD as 5 MLCs quit party, senior leader quits post

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, JUNE 23

FIVE RJD MLCs resigned from the party on Tuesday, days before elections to nine seats of the Bihar Legislative Council.

Meanwhile, RJD national vice-president Raghuvansh Prasad Singh stepped down from his post in protest against the reported attempt of his Vaishali rival and former MP Ramakishore Singh to join the RJD. Ramakishore Singh had reportedly met RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav recently.

The RJD had eight MLCs. Five of them — Qamare Alam, Dilip Rai, Radhacharan Seth, Sanjay Prasad and Ranvijay Singh — leaving the party means they will not face provisions of the anti-defection law. According to sources in the JD(U) and RJD, the move was orchestrated by a senior JD(U) leader close to the chief minister.

Now that the RJD is left with three MLCs, including former CM Rabri Devi, the addition of three MLCs in the upcoming polls will not prevent Rabri Devi from losing the position of Leader of Opposition in the Upper House. The RJD needs eight members in the House of 75 to get the post.

Leader of Opposition Tejashwi said: "I wish all five of them good luck. CM Nitish Kumar might have some political gain out of it, but how will it help the people of



Raghuvansh Prasad Singh

Bihar? Now I know what he was up to during self-confinement in CM House for 90 days. The CM was needed to meet the poor and address unemployment and migration issues."

The JD(U) has announced its three MLC candidates — Ghulam Gous, Bhisma Sahni (an EBC) and Kumud Verma (OBC). The RJD has not announced its candidates, but the names of Sunil Singh and Farooq Shekh are doing the rounds. The BJP has sent its names to Delhi. The last date of filing nomination is June 25.

Raghuvansh Singh's resignation also comes as a big blow to the RJD. Party spokesperson Mrityunjay Tewary said: "Raghuvansh babu is our guardian and founder member. There is still no word on Ramakishore Singh joining us. He is a true socialist leader and will continue to be our support system."

Raghuvansh, who had contested against Ramakishore from Vaishali unsuccessfully in 2014, has been lying low in the RJD. His compatriot Jagdanand Singh was recently made Bihar state president.

Retired Army officer appointed as security adviser to Punjab Police gets DIG rank

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, JUNE 23

THE PUNJAB government Tuesday accorded on Brig Gautam Ganguly the rank and pay of DIG in Punjab Police for three years, a day after the Council of Ministers cleared the retired Army officer's appointment as security adviser to DGP Dinkar Gupta.

Ganguly is another addition to the army of advisors in the state government, often scoffed at as being a burden on the exchequer. Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh also has a security advisor Khubi Ram. Ganguly is considered close to the DGP.

The appointment has been made to further strengthen the Special Operations Group (SoG) of the Punjab Police with im-

Assured of timely delivery on all military contracts: Rajnath

KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

INDIA HAS been assured by Russia that despite the pandemic it will deliver on all ongoing military contracts, and can even hasten the delivery in certain cases, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said in Moscow on Tuesday.

Singh, who is in the Russian capital to attend the 75th anniversary of the Victory Day celebration to mark the end of Second World War, said, "All our proposals have received positive response from the Russian side. I am fully satisfied with the discussions."

China's Defence Minister General Wei Fenghe is also in Moscow for the Victory Day event, but a Defence Ministry official said Singh will not hold any discussions with his Chinese counterpart.

During the discussions, Singh is learnt to have reiterated that India is a peace-loving country and has never looked at other people's territory. He said, "We are for resolving all disputes by dialogue, (but) if there are any questions on India's sovereignty and territorial integrity, our resolve to protect or interest at any cost cannot be doubted."

Making a statement after meeting Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Yuriy Borisov, Singh said that India and Russia share a special and privileged strategic partnership, and stressed that "our defence relationship is one of its important pillars". The minister said he reviewed defence relationship between the two countries with Borisov, and the discussions were "very positive and productive".

Singh said, "I have been assured that ongoing contracts will be maintained — (in fact) not just maintained, in a number of cases they will be taken forward in a shorter time."



Rajnath Singh pays tribute to Mahatma Gandhi at the Indian Embassy in Moscow. ANI

India had signed a contract worth over \$5 billion in 2018 to buy five regiments of the S-400 Triumf missile system from Russia. Its delivery is expected to begin by the end of this year.

Singh said that he can state "with confidence" that the traditional friendship between India and Russia remain strong, and mutual interests of both nations are "solid". "We look to future co-operation in the spirit of our special friendship," he said.

Conveying his greetings on the occasion of the 75th Victory Day Parade, Singh said the people of Russia have contributed much to the two countries' common security.

Pointing out that his trip is the first foreign visit from India of an official delegation after the coronavirus pandemic broke out, Singh said, this is a "sign of our special friendship". He said India is looking forward to hosting Russia's President Vladimir Putin later this year.

Earlier in the day, Defence

Secretary Ajay Kumar held discussions with Russia's Deputy Defence Minister Col General Alexander Fomin on "bilateral defence cooperation issues and issues of regional development."

Meanwhile, Russia on Tuesday ruled out mediating between India and China following the violent clashes in Ladakh's Galwan Valley, PTI reported from Moscow. Following a virtual conference with his Indian and Chinese counterparts, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said, "I do not think India and China need any help, any kind of assistance specifically aimed at helping them to resolve disputes."

"As soon as the border incidents took place, meetings were held and contact was established between the military command on the ground and the foreign ministers," Sputnik News quoted Lavrov as saying. "As I understand, these contacts are ongoing..."

Reports on 40 PLA deaths false: China

Beijing: China on Tuesday termed as "false information" the reports that more than 40 Chinese soldiers were killed in the face-off in eastern Ladakh. "As for Indian media reports that cite Indian officials as saying at least 40 Chinese soldiers were killed, I can tell you responsibly that this is false information," said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian, who parried questions on the casualties suffered by the PLA. "China and India are resolving the issue on the ground through military and diplomatic channels," Zhao said. **PTI**

In 5 days, over 40,000 Chinese searches for vulnerabilities in Indian cyberspace: cops

MOHAMED THAYER
MUMBAI, JUNE 23

THERE HAVE been more than 40,000 cyber probes or searches for vulnerabilities in the Indian cyberspace in the last five days, originating from Chengdu city in China's Sichuan province, according to the Maharashtra Police cyber wing.

Most of these searches were

targeted at the infrastructure, information technology and banking sectors, according to the cyber wing. "We have collated information on cyber attacks and found that suddenly, there have been a large number of attacks on India's cyber resources like infrastructure, IT and banking sectors. Majority of these attacks are from Chengdu city," IG (Cyber) Yashasvi Yadav said.

"As per the data we have,

there have been around 40,300 probes in the last four to five days," Yadav said, adding that these searches were primarily classified under three categories.

An advisory issued by the Maharashtra cyber wing on Tuesday stated that a fake email ID could be used for phishing attacks with the subject line — "Free Covid-19 testing for all residents of Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai and Ahmedabad".

Muslim Koser, co-founder of Volon Cyber Security, said, "Whenever there are any disputes between two countries, a corresponding attack on the digital space has been seen... Last month, during the India-Nepal boundary issue, a person claiming to be a Nepalese hacktivist had released Aadhaar data on the dark web. There is also a sharp rise in cyber attacks between Pakistan and India on August 14 and 15..."

Bihar raises concerns over Nepal stalling repair works on barrage, embankment

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, JUNE 23

THE BIHAR government has raised concerns over Nepal stalling repair work on the Gandak barrage as well as a key embankment on the Lalbakeya river.

The state has taken up the matter with the External Affairs and Jalshakti ministries.

As per a long-standing arrangement, the Bihar government maintains the Gandak barrage afflux on both sides of the border. India and Nepal share 18 gates each of the barrage.

Even though most of repair work has been done as per specifications of flood-fighting measures, Bihar Water Resources Department officials have to monitor the afflux for any possible breach in embankment during the flood seasons in June and October.

Water Resources Minister Sanjay Kumar Jha told *The Indian Express*, "We firmly believe the matter would be resolved amicably as it is a local issue. For last 10 days or so, our employees have not been allowed to monitor the western Gandak afflux. At times, they would ask for Covid-negative certificates. We under-

stand there had been caution because of coronavirus on both sides, but our employees have to repair and do maintenance (of the barrage) in flood season."

The minister said that another point of concern is Nepal not allowing India to complete repair work on a 500-metre patch of embankment on Lalbakeya river on the Nepal side. "Nepal had allowed us to do repair and maintenance work, but work on a crucial 500-metre final phase is not being allowed. Our main concern is to avoid any flood situation because of any possible breach. Such issues have been resolved at local levels in

the past."

Jha, however, appreciated Nepal government for co-operating with most flood-fighting works on western Gandak afflux during the lockdown.

Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Prasad Yadav criticised the Bihar government for not taking serious action. "As monsoon is set to arrive, people living along Kosi and Gandak are concerned. They suffer loss of cattle and property every year and also face displacement. But the state government has hardly done anything in last 15 years," he tweeted.

Cong takes on govt over Covid 'mismanagement', sliding economy

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

SLAMMING THE Centre for its handling of the coronavirus pandemic, the Congress on Tuesday said the absence of a coherent strategy to reduce fatalities, increase testing and contact-tracing of patients reporting confirmed with the virus even after four months is astonishing.

Addressing the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting, party president Sonia Gandhi said the Indian economy is now hurtling toward a recession for the first time in 42 years.

"The pandemic is not being tackled with the courage, magnitude and effort needed," former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said.

While former Union Finance minister P Chidambaram briefed the CWC about the economic situation, former Health minister Ghulam Nabi Azad spoke on the pandemic.

Sonia said "mismanagement of the pandemic will be recorded as one of the most disastrous failures of the (Narendra) Modi government". She argued that the need of the hour is a massive fiscal stimulus, putting money directly in the hands of the poor, protecting and nurturing the MSMEs, and stimulating demand.

"Instead," she said, "the government announced a hollow financial package that had a fiscal component of less than 1 per cent of GDP. The government has added insult to injury by mercilessly raising petrol and diesel prices for 17 consecutive days at a time when world prices of crude have fallen."

"The result is that a sliding economy is now hurtling toward a recession for the first time in 42 years."

Sonia said, "I am afraid there will be high unemployment,



Sonia Gandhi addressing the CWC on Tuesday. PTI

falling incomes and wages, and lower investment. Recovery is likely to take a long time, and that too only if the government corrects its course and adopts sound economic policies."

The CWC also hit out at the government for the "repeated and unjust" increases in petrol and diesel prices and excise duty, and accused the government of "profiteering by fleecing people".

On the pandemic, its resolution said the Covid-19 curve is rising exponentially, thereby testing the health infrastructure and overburdening health workers. "And the Union government seems to have abandoned its responsibilities and passed the buck to states, without offering adequate support," it stated. The CWC asked the government to cap prices for treatment and ensure price control and easy availability of drugs that are approved as lines of treatment.

The CWC said even after four months, there is no nationwide data on available hospital beds and ventilators, and no clarity on future capacity planning. "There is absolutely no sense of urgency or a credible plan to expand our beleaguered health workforce with quick recruitment of young doctors, nurses and health workers," it said. The PM CARES fund, it said, "continues to be woefully under-utilised and administered without any transparency whatsoever."

Cong demotivating forces, getting sadistic pleasure out of it, says BJP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

SOON AFTER Congress president Sonia Gandhi, while addressing the CWC meeting, asked questions about developments along the India-China LAC in Ladakh, the BJP on Tuesday wanted to know why the party is keen on "demotivating" the forces, and alleged that the opposition party derives "sadistic pleasure" from it.

The ruling party said the Congress should not use "misfortunes like coronavirus and face-off with China" for political purposes.

BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said the Congress should not use such misfortunes on the country as a "launchpad" for the falling career of its "prince", a reference to Rahul Gandhi.

Patra said: "Sonia Gandhi has issued a statement after the CWC meeting. This is shameful. It has become Congress's policy to lie about the Army. I want to ask Sonia, why does she have to convene the CWC at a time when the Army is strengthening itself in Leh? You say we (government) have surrendered our land. Do you want to wrestle with the



Sambit Patra

Army?"

The Chinese, he asserted, "have not occupied an inch of land. If China has occupied anything, it is the heart and mind of the mother-son duo (a reference to Sonia and Rahul) after signing MoU. Why does the Congress want to derive sadistic pleasure by demotivating the Army with their statements?"

"Every day, Congress leaders say India is not performing well; that India is losing; Indian Army has surrendered; Prime Minister Narendra Modi is weak and has surrendered," he said, adding that the Congress party has "surrendered its shame to China".

Addressing the CWC, Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday said, "India has been hit by a terrible economic crisis, a pandemic of huge proportions, and now by a full-blown crisis on the borders... Much of each crisis is attributable to the mismanagement of the BJP-led NDA government..."

In MP, Cong claims foul play in BJP seat win

MILIND GHATWAI
BHOPAL, JUNE 23

CITING A media interview of senior BJP leader Kailash Vijayvargiya in which he purportedly claimed to have spent a lot of money without the party candidate's knowledge, the Congress on Tuesday approached the Election Commission and demanded that election for Mhow Assembly constituency be revoked.

In a video clip shared by



Spent money on Mhow victory, Vijayvargiya purportedly said in interview

Narendra Saluja, media coordinator of former CM Kamal Nath, Vijayvargiya is shown as allegedly

claiming that he had assured the party high command that he would ensure Usha Thakur's victory from Mhow by at least 10,000 votes. "I spent a lot of money without her knowledge. I used to go there at 2 am to do setting (fix the game)," he purportedly claims.

Vijayvargiya was not available for a comment despite repeated attempts. An aide of Thakur promised that she would speak after two hours but did not return calls.

Thakur won from Indore-3 in 2013 but was shifted to Mhow in

2018. Vijayvargiya's son Akash was fielded from Indore-3 and won by 5,751 votes. Thakur defeated Congress's Antar Singh Darbar by 7,427 votes.

BJP spokesperson Rajneesh Agrawal said Congress should wait for the EC's decision.

Darbar, who lost to Vijayvargiya in 2013 from Mhow and challenged the election in court, accusing abuse of money power, said, "I could not prove my charges but he has himself admitted it now."

7 THE OUTBREAK

No Haj for Indians this year due to corona, announces govt

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE GOVERNMENT on Tuesday announced that this year, no pilgrims from India will travel to Saudi Arabia for Haj.

Addressing a press conference, Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said this move was to honour the decision of the Saudi government because of "serious challenges of the corona pandemic and keeping in mind the health and well-being of the people".

Naqvi said he received a phone call from Saudi Arabia Haj and Umrah Minister Mohammad Saleh bin Taher Benten on Monday, who said that pilgrims from India refrain from Haj this year due to the pandemic.

He added that the government had received 2,13,000 applications for this year's Haj.

"The process to refund the full amount of money deposited by the applicants for Haj has been started immediately without any deduction. The money will be refunded through online DBT mode into bank accounts of the applicants," Naqvi said. He also said the women who applied to perform Haj without Mehram (male companion) for this year will be allowed to go next year.

As Telangana ramps up testing, five days make up a third of total cases

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, JUNE 23

IN JUST five days since Telangana scaled up testing to around 3,000 a day, the number of positive cases has spiked, leaving health officials alarmed and doctors concerned about rising number of Covid-19 patients in hospitals.

As on June 22, the number of Covid-19 cases in Telangana stood at 8,674, with the last five days alone accounting for 2,999 cases or 34.57 per cent of total cases in the state. Of the cases detected in the last five days, 2,053 were asymptomatic. The balance 946 exhibited SARI-like (Severe Acute Respiratory Illness) symptoms. Since 356 showed only mild symptoms and did not have any comorbidity, they have been advised home isolation. The rest have been admitted to Gandhi Hospital in Hyderabad.

The state government had, on June 17, assured the High Court it would ramp up testing, and undertake 50,000 random tests on vulnerable groups in high risk and containment zones in 30 Assembly constituencies in and around Hyderabad. The 50,000 tests were to be con-



A coronavirus help desk at a Hyderabad hospital. AP File

ducted over 10 days.

But given the sharp spike over the last five days, the state has curtailed testing to under 3,500 a day against the required average of 5,000 daily tests.

G Srinivas, Director, Public Health, attributed the increase in cases to targeted testing. "The testing is going on in containment zones and high-risk zones where previous cases have been reported. Healthcare personnel and vulnerable groups like sanitation workers who are exposed are also being tested," he said.

While the number of positive cases spiked, the fatality continued to be in single digits during

the previous five days, adding up to 25. The total number of Covid-19-related deaths in the state stood at 217 as on June 22.

Telangana recorded its first positive case in Hyderabad on March 2. It conducted 22,842 tests till May 14, averaging just about 300 tests a day. From May 14 to June 17, it conducted 23,069 tests, averaging 700 tests a day. In the last five days, June 18-22, the state tested 14,332 people in high-risk and containment zones, of which 2,999 turned positive results. The highest number of positives—872—was recorded on June 22.

Public health expert Dr G Ved Prakash said it was too little, too

RISING NUMBERS

| | Tests per day | Positive cases |
|---------|---------------|----------------|
| June 17 | 1,096 | 269 |
| June 18 | 2,181 | 352 |
| June 19 | 2,477 | 499 |
| June 20 | 3,188 | 546 |
| June 21 | 3,297 | 730 |
| June 22 | 3,189 | 872 |

late. "The government should have increased testing long ago. Even now, it is not enough. The spike in cases shows how fast it has spread already," he said. Dr Prakash is a member of Doctor for Sewa, an organisation of public health specialists, which had red-flagged low testing in Telangana in the first week of April.

Dr Suneetha N, a specialist on infectious diseases at Apollo Hospitals, said this had started putting pressure on hospitals now. "The problem should have been acknowledged much earlier. By the time you realise it, it is out of control. The hospitals are filling up with sick people," she said. Telangana had conducted 45,911 Coronavirus tests till June 17, one of the lowest in the coun-

Gujarat: Retired IPS officer dies of Covid

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, JUNE 23

RETIRED IPS officer-turned-politician A I Saiyed succumbed to Covid-19 in Ahmedabad on Tuesday. He was 72.

Saiyed was admitted to Apollo Hospital a few days ago when he had developed severe symptoms of Covid-19 and was shifted to ventilator support.

A native of Patan in Gujarat, Saiyed joined Gujarat IPS cadre in 1978, retired from the police force in 2008 from the post of Director General of Police (Administration).

"He was first admitted to a private hospital in Juhapura eight days ago along with his wife and son, when all the three had developed Covid-19 symptoms and were tested positive. A few days ago, his condition had



After retiring, A I Saiyed joined BJP

worsened and he was shifted to Apollo Hospital and kept on ventilator support. He is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter," said a distant relative of Saiyed.

In 2010, two years after his retirement, Saiyed entered politics and was one of the contestants for BJP in the municipality polls in Ahmedabad. He was fielded by the BJP in the then civic body polls in Gujarat under the then Chief Minister Narendra Modi and was even considered as the potential mayor of Ahmedabad. However, Saiyed lost that election and in 2011, he was elected uncontested as Chairman of Gujarat Waqf Board.



SAFETY MATTERS

A policeman sprays disinfectant inside Bengaluru's Cubbon Park police station Tuesday. PTI

Govt asks Ramdev to explain Covid medicine claim

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, JUNE 23

YOGA GURU Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurved Ltd on Tuesday launched what they claimed was the first Ayurvedic medicine to cure Covid-19. However, the AYUSH Ministry has sought details about the medicine and Ramdev to stop advertising such claims.

At the launch in Haridwar, Ramdev claimed that 'Coronil tablet', 'Swasari Vati' and 'Anu Taila' had shown "100 per cent favourable results" during clinical trials on Covid-19 patients. He claimed that a clinical controlled study was done in Delhi,

Ahmedabad, Meerut and other cities. During the trial, he claimed, 69 per cent patients recovered in 3 days, while the recovery rate over a period of seven days was 100 per cent.

Taking cognizance of the news, The AYUSH Ministry in a statement said, "Facts of the claim and details of the stated scientific study are not known to the Ministry."

The statement says that Patanjali Ayurved Ltd has been asked to provide at the earliest the details of the name and composition of the medicines being claimed will treat Covid-19; the site(s)/hospital(s) where the research study was conducted; protocol, sample size, Institutional



Ramdev

Ethics Committee clearance, CTRI registration and results data of the study(ies) and to stop advertising/publicising such claims till the issue is duly examined.

The ministry has also requested the Uttarakhand State Licensing Authority to provide

copies of the license and product approval details of the Ayurvedic medicines which the company has claimed will treat Covid-19.

On June 2, the AYUSH Ministry had issued a circular to the principal secretaries of all states to take necessary action "against instances of misleading information, fake claims and misbranding".

"I would like to inform that the following activities are tantamount to contravention of legal provisions: false claims and publicising so called approval of research study or product manufacturing about COVID19 control," the circular, signed by AYUSH Ministry Additional Secretary Pramod Kumar Pathak

stated.

The ministry also directed that "a warning may be issued and if not complied in one week time, FIR may be filed in blatant cases of violation".

During the launch Tuesday, Ramdev also claimed that the medicine, manufactured by Haridwar-based Divya Pharmacy and Patanjali Ayurved Ltd, is the result of a joint research of Patanjali Research Institute and National Institute of Medical Sciences and Research, NIMS University, Jaipur.

NIMS University chairman Balbir Tomar said all the parameters of research were followed.

— WITH ENS, DELHI

Decision on CBSE Class XII exams likely by today, SC told

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

A DECISION on whether or not to scrap the remaining exams for Class XII conducted by CBSE is likely to be taken by Wednesday, the Supreme Court was informed on Tuesday.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told a bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna that discussions on the matter were at an advanced stage. He said they were aware of the anxiety of students, and would soon arrive at a decision.

In a related development, the bench also heard a separate plea on scrapping of exams conducted by the Council for the ICSE in view of the Covid-19 situation.

The lawyer for ICSE told the bench that the body will broadly follow the government's decision regarding CBSE exams.

The bench, however, observed that ICSE is free to take an informed decision.

The SC also clarified that the decision on CBSE exam is not binding on ICSE.

The bench will hear the matters on June 25.

A group of parents had last week moved the Supreme Court praying that CBSE cancel the remaining papers scheduled to be held from July 1 to July 15 in view of the Covid situation. The parents expressed concern over the safety of the students and requested the court to quash the CBSE's May 18 notification by which the date sheet was declared and to stay it till the plea is decided by the court.

NON-AVAILABILITY OF COMPONENTS HIGHLIGHTED

Only 6% ventilators under PM-CARES manufactured so far

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

WITH ONLY 6 per cent of the total 50,000 'Made in India' ventilators under PM-CARES fund manufactured so far, the race to secure the machines for the country's Covid-19 response has exposed a handicap in the component production ecosystem for medical equipment.

NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, DPIIT Secretary Guruprasad Mohapatra and DRDO Chairman Dr Satheesh Reddy acknowledged this challenge in India at a government-industry interaction, which was also attended by Principal Scientific Advisor D Vijayaraghavan, on June 11, according to sources. The e-conference, organised under the chairmanship of Kant, also saw participation from senior officials, representatives of ventilator and component manufacturers, and start-ups.

Bottlenecks in domestic manufacturing of ventilators were highlighted during the conference, sources said. Top officials acknowledged that the delay in delivery of ventilators was due to non-availability of critical components, according to minutes of the e-conference, accessed by *The Indian Express*.

Meanwhile, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office on Tuesday stated that of the total 50,000 'Made in India' ventilators under PM-CARES fund, 2,923 have been manufactured so far, "of which 1,340 ventilators have already been delivered to the States/UTs". "The prominent recipients include

Maharashtra (275), Delhi (275), Gujarat (175), Bihar (100), Karnataka (90) and Rajasthan (75). By the end of June 2020, additional 14,000 ventilators will be delivered to all States/UTs," it said.

During the meeting on June 11, Mohapatra told participants, "After a demand assessment, the government had placed orders for 60,000 ventilators with four Indian ventilator manufacturers. However, the delivery of these orders was getting delayed due to non-availability of critical components on which India is import dependent."

DPIIT officials also highlighted the problems faced by Indian ventilator manufacturers in procuring specific components such as AC/DC converter, miniature general-purpose filter, thermo electric device, pressure pumps, sensors, optical encoders, oxygen sensors, flow sensors and substance valves, sources said.

Kant said several parts are not manufactured in India and being imported, causing severe delay in the production and supply of ventilators, according to the minutes of the e-conference.

According to sources, the DRDO Chairman pointed out specific parts which are highly import-dependent. He reiterated the need to create a component ecosystem in the country, sources said.

Ventilator manufacturers mentioned problems in domestic manufacturing. Indian firms, including those which have got orders for supplying ventilators under PM-CARES fund, expressed disappointment over the quality of components being supplied by a top component manufacturer.

Before virus spread at Kanpur shelter, officials flagged overcrowding

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, JUNE 23

DAYS BEFORE 57 girls of a government-run Kanpur shelter home tested positive for novel coronavirus, the district Child Welfare Committee (CWC) had flagged the issue of overcrowding several times. The latest alert was sounded on June 11.

Among the 57 Covid-positive girls, five are pregnant.

"We have regularly been raising the issue of overcrowding at the shelter home in Kanpur with the director of the Women Welfare Department and the district probation officer. The last time we raised the issue was on June 11 after an inspection," said Rajendra Kumar, a member of Kanpur's CWC.

Kanpur District Magistrate Brahma Deo Ram Tiwari said he too had alerted the government about the shelter home running beyond its capacity, but efforts to decongest it were stalled due to the nationwide lockdown that began in the last week of March.

Against a capacity of 100 inmates, the home had 171 girls. These girls, aged between 10 and

18, were brought to the home on the direction of the CWC.

The state has four girls' shelter homes — in Kanpur, Auraiya, Meerut, and Agra. The Kanpur one caters to 22 districts.

"Kanpur's shelter home has four big halls where girls sleep. Since overcrowding, arrangements to sleep girls are made in three other rooms meant for study and cultural activities," added Kumar. One of these rooms was kept for pregnant girls and mentally challenged girls.

Admitting the problem, Director (Women Welfare) Manoj Kumar Rai said they have decided to soon shift some of the girls to a women protection home to decongest the shelter home.

Meanwhile, Kanpur District Magistrate formed a two-member probe team. The team will inspect the facilities, its management, upkeep and the issue of overcrowding.

The inquiry team comprises Sub-divisional Magistrate (SDM) of Kanpur Collectorate, Meenu Rana, and Nazirabad Circle Officer Gitanjali Singh.

Rana said they will probe all angles, including the source and spread of the virus.

Garment units reopen in Bengaluru, but it is still a slow restart

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, JUNE 23

THREE DAYS after the Covid-19-linked lockdown was lifted in Karnataka, a group of rural women employees of an export-oriented garment factory near Bengaluru gathered at a bus stand in the Mandya region, around 50 km from the factory, and protested the lack of transport to take them to work despite Arvind Mills arranging for passes on state buses for their transportation.

"We have been at the Mandya bus stand since 6 am. We have been given bus passes by the Arvind Mills company. We tried to board a state bus this morning but only two of us were allowed due to social distancing. We want bus services to function like before to take us to work. It is a struggle this way to manage our home and work," one of the workers said in a video message uploaded on so-

cial media by the Karnataka Garment Workers Union (KOOGU).

The garment industry which employs nearly 3.5 lakh people — mostly women — in over 1,200 units at industrial estates around the city of Bengaluru has resumed operations, but social distancing norms and fear of the spread of Covid-19 has restricted the transport options for women workers who rely on company and state transport systems to commute.

In the Bommanahalli and Begur industrial regions of Bengaluru where a few of the former Covid-19 hotspots of the city — like Hongasandra and Mangampanpalya — are located, garment units like Shahi Exports, Aditya Birla Fashion, SK Garments have all begun operations with whatever staff are reporting for work and with a freeze on new hiring.

The streets of this industrial region are abuzz since the lifting of



the lockdown unlike the neighboring Electronic City where the big IT companies are located and the streets are deserted as most workers are now working from home. Outside a Shahi Exports unit on the Begur Road, vegetable vendors wait with wares every day to attract the women workers who will pour out of the factory doors when their shift ends every evening.

"Production has started again. Our firm is in better shape than some others. But we expect 10 to 25 percent cut in the salary of staff depending on seniority," said a senior employee of Shahi Exports.



Women wait for a bus in Mandya region to go to work at a garment factory near Bengaluru. Express

"They do not want any new recruitment. There is a fear that the virus will spread especially since this is a region where there have been many cases. They are asking people to leave if they have not been coming since the past two weeks," said another employee at

the firm's Hongasandra unit.

"We are back to normal production. A few workers who have gone home are missing but work is continuing like normal," says Govind Kumar, a migrant worker from UP at a complex a few metres down the Hongasandra main

road which houses units of Aditya Birla Fashion and SK Garments.

The garment units in the Bengaluru factories produce clothing for international brands like Tommy Hilfiger, Gap, HM, Levis, Jockey etc. The companies have increasingly created facilities on the outskirts of Bengaluru and its rural parts to access the low cost labor afforded by rural women.

"All companies have re-opened — some even worked in the lockdown. A few units of some companies shut down during the lockdown. In most companies, those who came to work during the lockdown by whatever means possible are being retained. Those who have returned to work after June are not being allowed irrespective of their service," said Prathiba R, President of the Garment and Textile Workers Union in Bengaluru.

One of the units that was shut down during the lockdown was

that of the firm Gokaldas Exports in the Srirangapatna area of the Mandya district — around 100 km from Bengaluru — which employed around 1,200 women from villages around the region. "Around 400 of the workers have resigned but as many as 800 women are protesting the illegal layoffs at the unit," said the GATWU president. "The companies are saying that the international brands they serve have not placed new orders. We are trying to bring issues to the notice of the international firms as well."

One of the reasons the workers are not being provided transport is because the company wants them to quit, says the KOOGU union general secretary T S Swamy.

While many of the factories had not paid wages for April and May they have now done so, say garments workers union officials. "The wages for April were not paid till May but they were later paid

in full but for May only 50 percent has been paid by some firms," said T S Swamy the general secretary of the Karnataka Garment Workers Union (KOOGU).

"We have paid full wages for the entire lockdown month of April 2020 in two tranches, the first prior to May 12, 2020, and the second prior to May 25, 2020. All the workers were informed in advance about this payment process. This approach has been adopted to tide over cash flow issues faced during the nationwide lockdown," Shahi Exports officials said on the company website.

With retail operations gradually opening in the western market the next six months is critical, said a manager at a Bengaluru garment factory.

Some units like Arvind Mills have pivoted operations during the lockdown to make masks, PPE kits and special clothing with anti viral material to combat Covid-19, said a company official.

2 JeM militants, 1 CRPF man killed in J&K encounter

ADIL AKHZER
SRINAGAR, JUNE 23

TWO JAISH-E-MOHAMMED (JeM) militants and a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) head constable were killed in an encounter in South Kashmir's Pulwama on Tuesday morning. The encounter broke out in Bundzoo village after joint forces launched a cordon-and-search operation in the area. Police officials said during the encounter, one CRPF man received critical gunshot injuries and later succumbed to his injuries. A CRPF spokesperson identified him as Head Constable Sunil Kale, a resident of Maharashtra's Solapur district.

"During the search operation, as the presence of terrorists got ascertained, they were given the opportunity to surrender. However they fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party, which was retaliated, leading to an encounter," a J&K Police spokesperson said.

IGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar told The Indian Express, "An operation was launched today in Pulwama which resulted in the killing of two JeM militants. We lost one brave head constable of CRPF. No other collateral

CEASEFIRE VIOLATION IN KUPWARA BY PAK

Srinagar: The Indian Army said Pakistani troops violated the ceasefire in Kupwara district's Machil sector on Tuesday afternoon. "On 23 Jun 2020, in the afternoon hours, Pakistan initiated an Unprovoked Ceasefire Violation along the LoC in Machhal Sector by firing Mortars and other weapons. Befitting response is being given," said an Army statement. **ENS**

damage."

Officials said that local youth also gathered near the encounter area and clashed with the security forces.

A defence spokesperson said two AK-47s recovered during the operation.

J&K Director General of Police Dilbag Singh said Tuesday's operation was "another successful operation". "Operations are happening at a regular frequency now...", he said.

He said police have reports that the militants, "especially JeM is again planning to have some big IED incident".

TAMIL NADU

2 die after 'torture' in custody, shops to be shut today in protest

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, JUNE 23

SEVERAL PEOPLE took to the streets in Sathankulam, a town near Thoothukudi, on Tuesday to protest against the alleged torture and death of a man and his son in police custody.

P Jeyaraj (63) and his son J Fenix (31), both traders, were taken into custody on Friday for allegedly violating lockdown rules. After allegedly being tortured in the police station lock-up, they were shifted to a sub-jail and then to hospital, where they died.

As protesters gathered in Sathankulam, Tamil Nadu Traders Association declared that all shops in the state would be shut on Wednesday.

A senior police officer said, "Our preliminary inquiry shows there were serious lapses by the local officers. On Friday, a police team visited the victims' shop and warned them about following lockdown timings in running their business. They obeyed, but allegedly made some critical remarks. An auto driver overheard their comments and informed a police officer, which led to their custody and severe torture."

Subsequently, his office said two sub-inspectors have been suspended and all officers of Sathankulam station including constables transferred.

A relative of the victims said they have filed a petition with the DSP of Sathankulam seeking action against 13 police officers who allegedly took part



Trader union bodies, political outfits, activists and residents staged protests in parts of Sathankulam. Express

in the torture. Opposition parties also reached the spot and demanded action in the matter.

A senior police officer said, "Our preliminary inquiry shows there were serious lapses by the local officers. On Friday, a police team visited the victims' shop and warned them about following lockdown timings in running their business. They obeyed, but allegedly made some critical remarks. An auto driver overheard their comments and informed a police officer, which led to their custody and severe torture."

An officer under the district administration said both father and son were tortured.

The local officer said an inquiry by the SP office revealed that there were 13-15 officers at the station when the incident happened. "When the inspector and other officers started beating the father, his son questioned this. There are two versions — one that the son was beaten when he questioned the attack on his father, and another version saying the son tried to stop the inspector from using force to prevent the

torture on his father. However, this led to a brutal torture session on father and son at the station. They were remanded in Kovilpatti sub-jail under Sections 188, 383 and 506 (II). Then they were shifted to Kovilpatti government hospital as their condition worsened. The son died on Monday night and the father died early Tuesday," the officer said.

A relative of the victims told The Indian Express that the police inserted a baton into Fenix's private parts, leading to severe bleeding till his death. "His father Jeyaraj was also thrashed, and suffered multiple kicks on the chest. His wife has moved a petition in the Madras High Court seeking court intervention in the probe."

Leaders of opposition parties led by DMK and CPM, and ruling AIADMK's ally BJP, have been camping at the spot. DMK's Thoothukudi MP Kanimozhi urged District Collector Sandeep Nanduri to take strict action against the culprits and demanded compensation for the victims' family. DMK chief M K Stalin said the CM should take responsibility for the deaths as he holds the home portfolio.

In politically turbulent Manipur, CBI summons Cong ex-CM in graft case

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

Amid a tense political situation in Manipur, where the BJP government led by N Biren Singh is facing trouble, the CBI has summoned former state CM and Congress leader Okram Ibobi Singh in a case of alleged corruption.

Sources said a CBI team has already reached Manipur and will question Singh and some other accused in the case on Wednesday.

The development comes days after Congress staked claim to form the government in Manipur under Ibobi Singh following resignation of three BJP MLAs and withdrawal of support by Conrad Sangma's National People's Party. The Congress had last week submitted an application with Governor Najma Heptulla to bring a no-confidence motion against the Biren Singh government.

On November 22 last year, the CBI had conducted searches at the residence of Ibobi Singh in connection with a case of misappropriation of government funds it had registered against him and three former chief secretaries of the state. The case pertains to alleged misappropriation of state government funds



Okram Ibobi Singh

worth Rs 332 crore in the Manipur Development Society (MDS), where Singh was chairman during his 15-year tenure as chief minister.

"Ibobi Singh will be questioned tomorrow and in due course some other accused as named in the FIR and some witnesses will be questioned," a CBI officer said.

Defending the timing of Singh's interrogation, the officer said, "This is not the first time we are questioning people in the case. Earlier, too, teams have been sent to Manipur in connection with the case — searches had been conducted and people questioned. Our investigations had got stalled in between due to lockdown."

Last November, the agency had raided nine location across Aizawl (Mizoram), Imphal (Manipur), and Gurgaon (Haryana) and claimed to have recovered Rs 15.47 lakh cash and demonetised bank notes of the face value of Rs 36.49. Sources said demonetised currency of Rs 26.49 lakh face value and Rs

CBI books Videocon's Venugopal Dhoot in corruption case

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE CENTRAL Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked Videocon Industries Ltd chairman Venugopal Dhoot in a corruption case for allegedly duping a consortium of banks, led by the State of Bank of India, to the tune of millions of US dollars.

Along with Dhoot, who has been booked under charges of corruption, cheating and criminal conspiracy, the CBI has also booked unknown officials of the consortium of banks.

The case is related to an oil block in Mozambique where Videocon had interests, and it had taken a loan from Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) in London. This loan was repaid by the SBI-led consortium against the Mozambique assets, but the consortium did not take charge of the assets and Videocon continued to avail credit facility from SCB on the block. The block was finally sold to ONGC Videsh Ltd and Oil India Ltd in 2014 for \$2.5 billion.

The FIR is a result of the completion of a 'preliminary enquiry' (PE) that the CBI had opened earlier against unknown officials of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, ONGC Videsh, Oil

India Ltd, Bharat Petro Resources Ltd and the consortium of banks. The agency had alleged that these entities had "colluded with the directors and promoters of M/s Videocon Mozambique Rovuma 1 Ltd (VMRL), a subsidiary of M/s Videocon Hydrocarbons Holding Ltd (VHHL) (a company registered in Cayman Islands) with intent to cause undue pecuniary gain to Videocon Industries Limited".

According to the CBI, the PE indicated that in 2008, VHHL acquired 10 per cent participating interest in the oil and gas block in Rovuma Area 1 Block Mozambique from M/s Anadarko (a US-based petroleum company).

In April, 2012, the consortium of banks sanctioned a Standby Letter of Credit (SBL) facility of \$2.7 billion to VHHL for appraisal and development of overseas oil and gas assets in Mozambique, Brazil and Indonesia, and other funding requirements. The SBL facility at \$1.1 billion was refinanced, which includes an outstanding amount of \$400 million of Standard Chartered Bank, London, the CBI has alleged. "The first charge on VIL's oil and gas asset was a part of SCB security," the CBI has said.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Film project on Malabar revolt leader sparks controversy

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JUNE 23

A FILM project on a prominent Muslim leader of the Malabar uprising of 1921 has triggered sharp reactions by the Sangh Parivar and demands to scrap production of the film in Kerala.

The Malabar rebellion, also known as Moplah rebellion, was an uprising of Muslims tenants against the British authorities and their Hindu allies. It has been often perceived to be one of the first nationalist uprisings in southern India. The episode led to the large-scale killings of Hindus in the Malabar region and remains a debated topic among historians.

Actor-director Prithviraj Sukumaran on Monday announced a film on Variyamkunnath Kunjahammed Haji, who was shot dead by British police in Malappuram. "Shooting of Variyamkunnath would begin next year, marking 100 years of the Malabar revolt, which has been deliberately pushed into oblivion", he said on social media.

However, the announcement sparked a hate campaign against the makers on social media.

Amid the controversy, BJP leader and filmmaker Ali Akbar also announced a film "to expose the true face of the uprising". Referring to Hindus killed during the uprising, he said, "They are the heroes, who were not ready to change religion, those who gave Ram's name to the enemy. Those who fought till the last minute..."

Sasikala, Kerala president of the Hindu Aikya Veda, an umbrella outfit of pro-BJP organisations, said, "We (Hindus) would react and that would be a different reaction, which would not be on your expected lines. Like the Hindus of 1921, the Hindus of 2021 are not ready to get annihilated."

Director Ashiq Abu said, "The Malabar rebellion has a history which has been deliberately concealed. There could be more than one film on the same topic." Two more films on the topic were announced by different makers on Monday.

PhD student missing since June 13 joined Hizb: J&K Police

ADIL AKHZER
SRINAGAR, JUNE 23

A PHD student from Srinagar missing since June 13 has joined the Hizbul Mujahideen, a top Jammu and Kashmir Police officer said on Tuesday.

Hilal Ahmad Dar, a resident of Srinagar's Bemina, who is enrolled as a PhD student in Kashmir University's management studies department, went missing on June 13 when he went on a trekking expedition to Ganderbal district's Naranag area. While his friends reached home, he didn't. Soon afterwards, his family members lodged a missing report.

On Tuesday, IGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar said, "As per report... he has joined Hizbul Mujahideen. If his parents bring him back, we won't arrest him."

Dar's family has been staging protests in Srinagar and asking police to locate him. They have also said that he has no connection with militancy.

Following an encounter in Srinagar on Sunday, in which three militants were killed, reports on social media claimed that Dar was among the slain. However, his name did not figure on the list of militants killed identified by police sources.

Two UP judges 'attacked' on way to court, probe ordered

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, JUNE 23

A CAR carrying two additional district judges was allegedly attacked by unidentified miscreants near Dibiyaapur in Auraiya while on their way to the district court on Tuesday morning.

Police said that the two judges — Additional District Judges Rajesh Chaudhary and Ram Net — escaped unhurt.

While an FIR has been lodged against unknown people at Dibiyaapur police station, police have also started a probe into the absence of a gunner (security personnel) — who had been earlier assigned to one of the judges.

"The two judges, who live on the outskirts of the district, were going to the court in their private car... when a window pane of the car was broken. In the complaint, the judges said that while they were travelling, they heard noises and the window broke. The judges said that the car was attacked by an unidentified person from the car's left side," Superintendent of Police (Auraiya) Suniti.

"They also raised doubts that one of the two judges is hearing a case that could have led to the attack," said the SP.

Police have roped in forensic teams — one from Kanpur and another from Lucknow — to inspect the car and help them in their probe.



YATRA IN COVID TIMES: Jagannath Rath Yatra commences in Puri on Tuesday. Temple and police personnel who were part of the ritual were tested on Monday. PTI

GUJARAT HC REITERATES STAY ON RATH YATRA

Pandemic situation in Ahmedabad can't be compared to Puri: Court

SOHINI GHOSH
AHMEDABAD, JUNE 23

GUJARAT HIGH Court on Tuesday reiterated its stay on the Rath Yatra procession in Ahmedabad, with a bench constituted past midnight headed by Chief Justice Vikram Nath observing that the "situation in Ahmedabad on account of pandemic of Covid-19 cannot be compared with the situation in Puri or in the State of Orissa".

Several third party interveners — including a builder and BJP media cell representative, Gujarat government, Patan Jagannath mandir, "a devotee", and the mahant of the temple of "Lord Jagannath's uncle (mausal)" in Saraspur — approached the HC till as late as 11 pm on Monday seeking permission for the procession, all of which were rejected.

In an order issued around 2 am Tuesday, hours before the procession was to begin, the court said, "Despite the fact that assurance being given by the State and all other applicants we still do not find any good ground to recall or



A symbolic yatra being held on the premises of the Jagannath temple in Ahmedabad on Tuesday. Javed Raja

modify our order dated 20.06.2020. All Civil Applications are accordingly rejected."

The district of Ahmedabad has recorded more than 3.5 times the number of Covid-19 cases recorded in the state of Odisha.

A division bench of the HC, comprising Chief Justice Nath and Justice JB Pardiwala, had on June 20 directed that there would be no Rath Yatra in Ahmedabad or any district in Gujarat this year on account of the coronavirus pandemic, following two applica-

tions moved for urgent hearing.

By Monday, the HC was swamped with applications largely propelled by the Supreme Court's decision to modify its own order of June 18 where it had stayed the procession in Puri, Odisha.

With pleas for modification from several quarters, a bench of the Chief Justice and Justice Pardiwala was constituted around 12.45 am Tuesday and hearing began 1 am. As the state argued, the bench remained resolute in its decision.

NATIONAL SECURITY, DEFAMATION TOP REASONS CITED

Google sees surge in requests to remove content

KARISHMA MEHROTRA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

ALONGSIDE THE Centre's decision to withdraw special status to J&K under Article 370, passing of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in Parliament and the subsequent onset of nationwide protests, the second half of 2019 saw the highest-ever requests by Indian authorities to remove content items from Google, mostly on YouTube, according to a report from the company.

Two-thirds of 7,029 items requested for removal from Google

came from police forces, and a larger chunk than ever was for "national security" reasons, the company's latest transparency report shows.

While "religious offense" and "national security" as reasons for content removal have been growing in the last couple of years, a third of these requests to Google were over alleged "defamation", the largest cited reason for content removal (2,383 out of 7,029 requests for content takedowns).

Religious offence as a category first saw a huge spike in requests in the second half of 2018 (2,545 out of 5,922). It emerged as rea-

son for 26 per cent — 1,868 out of 7,029 — of the requests last year.

"National security" — a category that had 542 requests in the second half of 2017 — had 1,318 listed content removal requests in the latter half of 2019, according to Google's report.

In that period, Google did not comply with more than half the requests from police and most of the company's non-compliance was because there was "not enough information", the transparency report stated. The vast majority (6,472 out of 7,029) of these items that the authorities wanted removed were on

YouTube. With 4,422 items requested for removal in the first half of 2019, Indian authorities in all requested for 11,451 content pieces to be removed from Google. In contrast, content removal requests to Facebook seem to have taken a dip in 2019 — to 2,091 (down from 19,237 in 2018).

Together, Google and Facebook saw 13,542 items requested for removal.

However, Facebook received far more requests for user information than Google. Last year, the company received requests for information on 72,988 ac-

counts, according to Facebook's transparency report. The number of requests from the authorities to Google for user information has also increased over the years.

The authorities are also resorting to larger bulk requests to the Internet giant for content removal. While requests on average would target 45 items since 2009, last year saw fewer requests (790), but they were on average requesting removal of 80 items. Since 2009, Indian authorities have sent Google over 8,200 removal requests with over 43,000 items.

EXPRESS

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10



THE INDIAN EXPRESS, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2020

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

WHEN BANKS FAIL, IT IS SELDOM BANKERS WHO
STARVE —TERRY PRATCHETT*The Indian* **EXPRESS**

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

THE SHRINKING

Trump decision to suspend new work visas could dim
'American dream', may also delay recovery of US economy

ON MONDAY, US president Donald Trump signed an order to temporarily suspend new work visas, including the H1-B visa for highly skilled workers, in order to bar the entry of new immigrants into the country — the suspension will be effective till the end of the year. The decision has ostensibly been taken to help American workers during this extraordinary upheaval in the labour market caused by the disruption in economic activities due to the spread of COVID-19. However, the move, as well as its timing, suggest that Trump is using the COVID pandemic as an opportunity to harden immigration laws — an issue that has been a cornerstone of his administration's agenda, which blames "outsiders" for a range of problems ranging from unemployment to crime — in the run-up to the US presidential polls in November. A recovery in the labour market, he calculates, could strengthen his chances of reelection. That may or may not be true, but decisions driven by narrow and short-term political considerations often ignore the larger costs over the long run. For a country that has long championed the cause of globalisation, and the benefits that flow from embracing diversity and the free movement of capital and labour, a halt to immigration, even if temporary, marks a reversal of long cherished ideals. Even as it thickens the shadow over the "American dream", it is likely to hurt innovation and delay the recovery of the US economy.

The economic arguments most often made against immigration in the US are straightforward, and simple-minded: Immigrants take away jobs from American workers, their influx leads to lower wages, and they take advantage of the generous welfare benefits. The evidence, however, suggests overwhelmingly that immigrants have contributed to the country's economic success. As a major recipient of the best and the brightest from across the world, the US tech industry is likely to bear the brunt of the new restrictions. Not surprisingly, major US tech firms have already begun to speak out against against the visa policy. "Immigration has contributed immensely to America's economic success, making it a global leader in tech, and also Google the company it is today," said Alphabet CEO, Sundar Pichai, himself an immigrant, on Twitter. "Very much disagree with this action. In my experience, these skillsets are net job creators," said Elon Musk.

Suspending work visas may not even help American workers in the labour market. As some have argued, these visas are needed to recruit workers for jobs that local American workers are either unwilling or unable to do. US-based firms may face difficulties in filling up positions that require specific skills in sectors that drive economic activity and which in turn contribute to expanding employment opportunities for local labour. Thus, these restrictions are neither good for America, nor for India, which is likely to suffer disproportionately — Indians had applied for as many as 1.84 lakh, or 67 per cent of the total H-1B work visas, for the current financial year ending March 2021. India must put forth its concerns, Trump administration must reconsider its decision.

MUMBAI SLOWDOWN

Decline in Covid growth rate in Maharashtra is heartening.
State mustn't lower guard, there are lessons for other hot spots

M AHARASHTRA HAS BEEN the bellwether state in India amid the coronavirus pandemic. It is heartening, therefore, to see the state report a slowdown in the spread of the disease over an extended period of time. The decline in the cumulative daily growth rate of coronavirus numbers in Maharashtra, which began in May, has continued through June, and has dragged down the national growth rate as well. There is evidence to suggest that some interventions by the state government in the last two months might be showing a positive impact. Creation of large makeshift hospitals in Mumbai has partly addressed the shortage of beds in the city. A large proportion of the new bed capacity created by the state is equipped with oxygen support which can prove to be life-saving in critical patients. Mumbai authorities also seem to have done well in identifying and tracing the primary contacts of infected patients. Dharavi, at least for now, is not turning into the nightmare that it could have been.

As Delhi looks set to overtake Mumbai as the city with the maximum number of infections, there can be important learnings that the national capital could borrow, and indeed other hot spots can emulate as well. Provision for oxygen-supported beds, mobile dispensaries and neighbourhood flu clinics, door-to-door surveillance and tracing of primary and secondary contacts are some of the things that Mumbai seems to have done with some success, that need to be replicated elsewhere. Delhi appears to be struggling right now, and has one of the fastest growing COVID numbers. It needs to act fast.

At the same time, the battle is not yet won for Mumbai and Maharashtra. Far from it. Apart from the fact that the trends can change anytime, there is also the problem of misinterpreting data. The numbers that get reported everyday — new cases and deaths — are not the numbers for that particular day only. There is often a time lag in reporting cases, and therefore a lot of the backlog gets added every day. Spotting growth trends with this kind of data can prove to be erroneous. Also, there is the issue of nearly stagnant testing numbers in Mumbai — it is quite possible that a large number of positive cases are not getting captured and reported. Maharashtra, therefore, needs to build on its efforts and continue to consolidate the small gains, carefully. The time for lowering the guard has not yet come.

A DIFFERENT FRAME

Joel Schumacher was a film director who played by his own
rules, loved to mix it up

JOEL SCHUMACHER WAS part of one of the first all-black big-studio films (*The Wiz*), and gave his first hits with consummately white teenager movies such as *The Lost Boys*. He started out as a costume designer for Woody Allen, but is mostly credited with one of the biggest wardrobe malfunctions of all time, for a Batman film. The film director, who died of cancer at the age of 80 on Tuesday, loved to mix it up.

Schumacher's career, which can be traced to screenwriting stints that go back to 1976, included critical successes (*8mm*) and duds (*Batman and Robin*), newcomers (Matthew McConaughey) and old talent (Robert De Niro), Vietnam (*Tigerland*) and musicals (*Phantom of the Opera*). But, as happens with filmmakers who play by few rules except their own, and who get tagged with titles such as stylish and fun, he never broke into the awards league — a few nominations that didn't turn into statuettes. Not that it ever bothered Schumacher, who was openly gay and, as evident in the tributes that poured in, hilarious and witty. His dalliance with Batman perhaps tells that story best. Schumacher was brought to the franchise after Tim Burton's two films on the caped crusader. Burton's world is far removed from Schumacher's. And the latter didn't disappoint — as has been said, Batman, in their respective hands, moved from being eerie to energetic.

But neither of Schumacher's two Batmans passed the fan-atic test — despite Val Kilmer's full lips and George Clooney's chiselled chin, frankly the only two features that matter under the mask. All people noticed were the nipples on Schumacher's Batman's costume. To the end, Schumacher remained unapologetic about it, saying in an interview, "Such a sophisticated world we live in where two pieces of rubber the size of erasers on old pencils, those little nubs, can be an issue. It's going to be on my tombstone, I know it." Time for a rewrite.



JAHANGIR AZIZ

THERE IS A well-established pattern to economic crises in emerging markets (EMs). In the years preceding the crisis, because of loose fiscal and monetary policies, the economy goes into a demand overdrive that spikes inflation and widens the current account deficit, which is financed by foreign capital chasing the promise of even higher growth and asset prices. At some point, the overdrive is perceived as unsustainable, which triggers a reassessment of growth, inflation, and financial stability. Domestic and foreign investors stop new investments, large capital outflows ensue, and banks stop giving new loans and rolling over old ones on fears of worsening credit quality. Growth collapses and a full-blown economic crisis follows.

The 1995 Mexican, the 1997 Asian, the 1999 Russian, the 2008 sub-prime, and the 2013 Taper Tantrum are all examples of such crises. In the case of India, the 1981-82, the 1991-92, and the 2013 crises all had the same characteristics.

There is also a well-established pattern to responding to such crises. The first response is to restore confidence in policy-making, which typically means large increases in interest rates, massive withdrawal of liquidity, and deep cuts in fiscal deficit. The second step is to restart the economy by restructuring the tattered balance sheets of banks, firms, and households where the asset side had been severely overvalued on inflated views of growth, profits, and income prior to the crisis. This means debt restructuring and bank recapitalisation aided by privatisation, closures, and mergers. These measures often need to be bolstered by structural reforms with the economic crisis making it easier to forge the political consensus for them.

The pandemic is not such a crisis. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, far from overheating, India was already struggling with slowing growth, falling incomes and profits, and a financial system that had virtually shut off the flow of credit as it wrestled with its bad debt burden. This is not an instance of a financial crisis turning into an economic shock

This crisis is different

Response must also break with pattern: Cut interest
rates, increase liquidity, allow fiscal deficit to widen

weighed down by damaged balance sheets. Instead, this is an instance of an economic shock that could turn into a financial crisis if the damaged balance sheets are not repaired.

So what is the first response in this case? Do the opposite of what is done in a typical EM crisis: Cut interest rates, increase liquidity support, and allow the fiscal deficit to widen. The RBI has done the first two generously, although with the coming disinflation, it needs to cut interest rates much more. The government's approach to fiscal policy, however, seems ambivalent. As it should be clear by now, the overall fiscal support from the government will be limited to 2 per cent of the GDP because that is the line on the sand it has drawn for itself. So all the revenue shortfall and the pandemic-related budgetary support must add up to 2 per cent of the GDP. If the revenue shortfall is more than 2 per cent of GDP, then total spending will need to be cut.

As in a typical crisis, what happens to the economy's balance sheets also becomes critical. Except the causality runs opposite. Balance sheets will be damaged not because of prior excesses but because of the collapse in incomes during the lockdown. Consequently, debt doesn't need to be restructured to resume the flow of credit and get the recovery going. Instead, what is needed is adequate income support to households and firms to provide the needed time and space for the recovery to take hold, which, in turn, would repair much of the damage to the balance sheets. But the fiscal response so far has been inexplicably restrained.

As in a typical crisis, what happens to the economy's balance sheets also becomes critical. Except the causality runs opposite. Balance sheets will be damaged not because of prior excesses but because of the collapse in incomes during the lockdown. Consequently, debt doesn't need to be restructured to resume the flow of credit and get the recovery going. Instead, what is needed is adequate income support to households and firms to provide the needed time and space for the recovery to take hold, which, in turn, would repair much of the damage to the balance sheets.

But the fiscal response so far has been inexplicably restrained. In the last few weeks, one rating agency has downgraded the country's rating while another has reaffirmed it. If one looks under the hood of the two agencies' reports, then the only difference between them is a 1 ½ per cent-point gap in their medium-term growth forecasts. The one with the more sombre forecast downgraded the rating while the one with the marginally higher projection reaffirmed it. It wasn't because one rating agency projected a higher deficit for 2020-21 than the

other.

Just like in any other EM economy, what matters today is the assurance of medium-term growth and not a few higher or lower points of GDP in this year's fiscal deficit. To do that, the government needs to allow the deficit to rise to accommodate not just the decline in revenue but also provide adequate income support such that the recovery is not hamstrung by impaired balance sheets. Some have argued that the government, instead, needs to offset the decline on private demand by increasing public spending. This is an odd argument. One would have thought that using the same resources to ensure that private demand did not decline was the more natural and efficient response rather than letting it collapse and then compensating it with higher government spending.

The RBI, too, has a very large role to play. As elsewhere, it is now the only entity that has a strong enough balance sheet to provide any meaningful support. Apart from keeping markets flush with liquidity and low interest rates, which it is already doing, the RBI needs to undertake extensive quantitative easing to keep bond yields from spiking given the likely large increase in deficit.

Because of the depth of the growth shock, bad debt will rise. The natural instinct of banks is to cut back credit because of worsening credit quality. To prevent this from happening, the RBI will need to extend substantial regulatory forbearance on accounting norms, provisioning rules, and, if needed, even capital requirements. In addition, like the US Fed and the ECB, the RBI might also need to provide liquidity directly to corporates, instead of through banks supported by government guarantees as proposed now.

These proposals are likely to raise more than just eyebrows. However, this is not a crisis like the ones before. This time around, we need to weigh not the cost of taking these measures but the cost of not taking them.

The writer is chief emerging markets economist, JP Morgan. Views are personal



BHUPENDER YADAV

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION is the bedrock of a successful and vibrant democracy. Debates, discussions and a healthy exchange of ideas go a long way in strengthening the foundations of democratic systems. Countries across the globe took to newer modes of public communication even as their democracies kept evolving. With the advent of the printing press in the 15th century, science and knowledge found the fuel to spread from one corner of the world to the other. These printing presses also played a major role in the Renaissance that swept through Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries.

The first experiment with public gatherings to take political ideas to people happened when the 19th century was drawing to a close. William Ewart Gladstone, who got elected as Britain's prime minister in 1892, had made public gatherings the medium to communicate his political ideas. Around the same time, leaders in America too were engaged in similar experiments.

During India's freedom struggle, the trend of using newspapers and magazines for communication picked up. Post-Independence, political parties continued to use them to further their political discourse. In fact, newspapers and magazines became a tool for politicians to convey their ideas to the masses.

Around the same time, radio emerged as a medium that not only provided a platform for political debates but also helped to spread social awareness even in distant villages. Radio

THE NEW PUBLIC SPHERE

Digital media is redefining modes of political communication and mass contact

programmes on farming, women empowerment and other indigenous issues were received well by people.

The entry of television triggered a huge transformation. The presence of visuals was television's biggest advantage. It is for this reason that TV has remained a medium for debates between political parties.

The advent of new mediums, however, has in no way rendered the old modes of communication redundant. Even in this era of social media, print, radio and television remain relevant in several ways. Programmes such as "Kaun Banega Mukhyamantri" and political exit polls keep people glued to television. Radio continues to be widely popular among the urban youth. Newspapers have undergone changes to meet the requirements of changing times.

Home Minister Amit Shah's Bihar jansamvad rally has introduced us to a new experience of digital communication. The digitally-held rally saw the participation of crores of people. The experiment was also important from the point that it allowed such a huge programme to be organised with such little resources and so little time.

The digital mode of communication is now the most effective mode of communication. Tweets and Facebook posts are sources of information even for the so-called mainstream communication channels. However, the discussions happening on these platforms seldom result in ideas that last.

The situation emerging from the coronavirus pandemic signals changes in the ways of public communication and mass contact. With social distancing norms becoming mandatory amid the growing need for public communication, media has emerged as a powerful platform. Since India is a multi-party democracy, political parties are expected to keep channels of communication open even

during difficult situations.

Home Minister Amit Shah's Bihar jansamvad rally has introduced us to a new experience of digital communication. The digitally-held rally saw the participation of crores of people. The experiment was also important as it allowed such a huge programme to be organised with such little resources and so little time. Because a large number of people turn up at public rallies, a lot of resources are spent in managing the logistics. And it is only natural for the public to join public communication programmes with enthusiasm.

The success of these digital innovations in public communication has opened the doors for its increased use in the times to come. This has also been possible because of the growing penetration of digital technology in India's rural areas. There is no doubt it will aid in strengthening public participation in India's democracy.

As India enters a technology-driven world, changes in the country's political discourse are natural and communication between parties and people will become simpler. It is also possible that the use of banners, posters and pamphlets will reduce in the near future and there is likely to be greater acceptance of campaigning through digital means. The country is, without a doubt, entering a new phase of political public communication.

The writer is general secretary, BJP, and Rajya Sabha MP



JUNE 24, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

SANJAY GANDHI DEAD

SANJAY GANDHI DIED this morning when the plane he was co-piloting crashed in Chanakypuri. Gandhi and his co-pilot Subhash Saxena died instantaneously when the plane meant for stunt flying nose-dived and crashed after hitting a tree. By the time, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi reached the accident site, both bodies had been placed in an ambulance. The Prime Minister asked for the red blanket covering Sanjay Gandhi's body to be removed and when she saw the mangled remains, she broke down and wept. After the initial shock, she regained her composure and though she wept now and then,

for the most part, she hid her grief behind her dark glasses.

A SPIN CAUSED IT AVIATION EXPERTS WHO examined the crash site have said preliminary investigations indicated that the plane crashed while the pilot was performing a spin and was about to pull up. Experts said the plane had probably drifted lower than the minimum prescribed height of 500 feet to 1,000 feet. That the plane had crashed while performing a spin is evident from the fact that it did not drag for a long distance after hitting the branches. The crash site was barely a few

hundred metres away from where a trainer aircraft had crashed a few years ago.

PARLIAMENT ADJOURNED THERE WAS AN atmosphere of stunned silence in Parliament as the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha met briefly to mourn the death of Sanjay Gandhi. The Lok Sabha heard the announcement of the death in the quivering voice of Speaker Balram Jakhar. The adjournment of the Rajya Sabha was without precedent. The Chairman M Hidayatullah played a glowing tribute to the Prime Minister's younger son, who he said had come to represent the younger generation.



New Delhi



THE IDEAS PAGE

India, China, the red lines

China must recognise that India too has non-negotiable core concerns, aspirations, interests. The principle of equal and mutual security is fundamental



NALIN SURIE

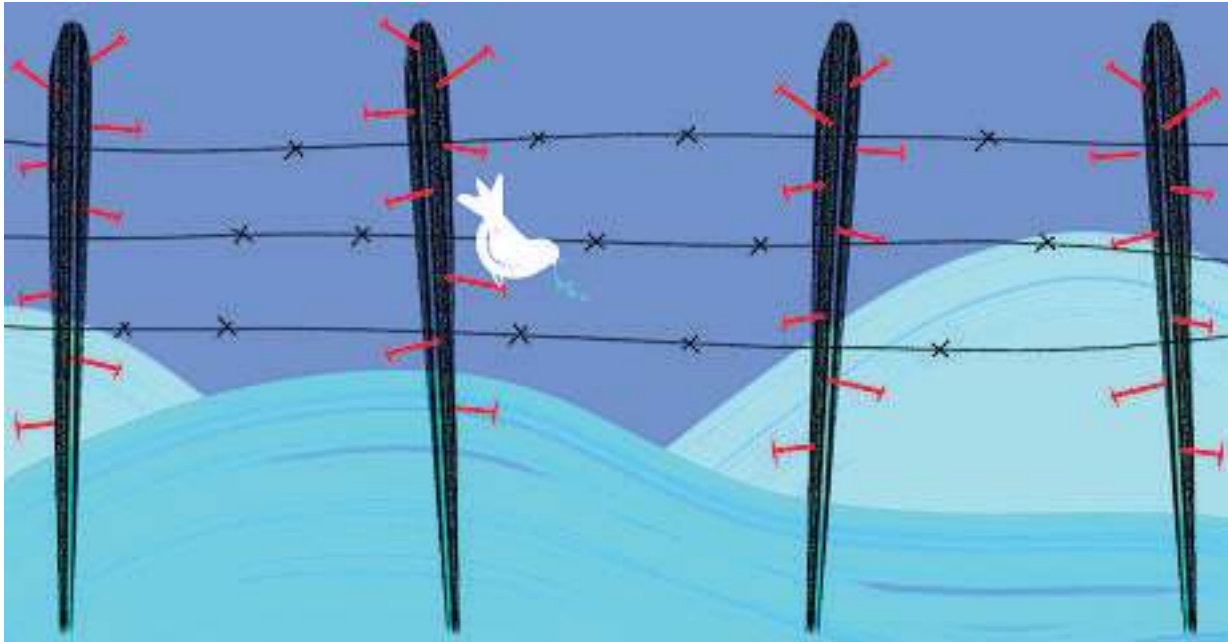
IN ONE FELL swoop, China, with Xi Jinping in the core leadership position of the CPC and with ultimate responsibility as the Chairman of China's Central Military Commission, has effectively destroyed the edifice of bilateral relations so painstakingly built post the Chinese aggression of 1962. Hubris, internal insecurities in China, the COVID-19 pandemic and the complex and confused external environment have led to caution being thrown to the winds. Perhaps, the anticipated medium and long-term competition posed by India from the ideological, strategic and economic points of view began to loom larger and Beijing felt that this was a good opportunity to once again assert its self-proclaimed territorial claims in Ladakh. That may have been a grave error of judgement. Military adventures like the recent barbaric one unleashed by the Chinese in Galwan have a habit of ending up with nasty surprises.

Parallels are being drawn between what happened in 1962 with recent events in eastern Ladakh. These do not bear scrutiny. However, China's recent military actions in Ladakh clearly violate the signed agreements of 1993, 1996, 2005, etc on maintaining peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control. These actions are in violation also of other signed agreements, including at the highest level, and contradict positions taken by Xi himself at the informal Wuhan and Chennai summits in 2018 and 2019.

In June 2003, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Premier Wen Jiabao signed a Declaration on Principles for Relations and Constructive Cooperation between our two countries. The third principle states: "The two countries are not a threat to each other. Neither side shall use or threaten to use force against the other." This was more than reiterated in the agreement signed in April 2005 on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for settlement of the India China boundary question. Article 1 states, inter alia: "Neither side shall use or threaten to use force against the other by any means."

In past years, Chinese intrusions along the LAC were sustained despite the agreements referred to earlier but peace and tranquillity was maintained. A qualitative change though occurred in Chinese perceptions after the Doklam face-off. That necessitated the first informal summit at Wuhan in April 2018. The underlying effort then was to ensure that peace and tranquillity in the border areas are maintained while placing serious difficulties on the back burner. One important outcome of that summit was the agreement to continue to meet at the highest level and to enhance trust and strengthen strategic communication.

The second informal summit between Xi and Narendra Modi in Chennai in October 2019 took place in the aftermath of the revocation of Article 370 by India and China's unnecessary and unsuccessful attempt to raise the issue in the UN Security Council. By then, many other developments — both internal and external — had added pressure on China. The Chinese had said that the Chennai



CR Sasikumar

summit would enable a candid and in-depth exchange of views on bilateral relations and major international and regional issues of common concern. With hindsight, one can argue that the deception began there.

China's state-run news agency Xinhua, on October 12, 2019, provided the Chinese version of the outcome of the Chennai summit. It quoted Xi as having told Modi that "maintaining and developing good relations between the two countries is China's unwavering policy" and that "we must — inject a strong endogenous impetus to bilateral relations". Xi also made it clear that some of the problems between our two countries are serious and require both sides to "correctly view each other's development and enhance strategic mutual trust". He pointed to a lack of appreciation of each other's core interests and the need to "prudently deal with" such issues. He sought support for the BRI and CPEC.

At Chennai, the Chinese undoubtedly drew some red lines. Which of these does China feel India has crossed? Why does China fear India crossing these lines? And why did China not follow up on Xi's call for greater strategic communication and enhancing trust?

Ironically, the warning signals began during Xi's own visit to India in September 2014 when he publicly announced that China was a neighbour of South Asia and announced assistance packages for countries in the region. (CPEC became a part of BRI during Xi's subsequent visit to Pakistan in April 2015).

One fundamental red line is China's long-held and strategic interest in parts of Jammu and Kashmir that border Xinjiang and Tibet and allow connectivity between the two. We in India have wrongly argued that it is Pakistan that is the issue in J&K. China is as big an issue but has quietly hidden behind Pakistan's cover. That is no longer feasible as democratic India becomes economically and otherwise stronger.

The trust between our leaderships and nations has been seriously impaired by the events in Ladakh. The next casualty will be the effort to enhance strategic communication. The so-called Strategic and Cooperative partnership of 2005 and the Closer Development Partnership of 2014 can now be buried.

Ironically, the warning signals began during Xi's own visit to India in September 2014 when he publicly announced that China was a neighbour of South Asia and announced assistance packages for countries in the region. (CPEC became a part of BRI during Xi's subsequent visit to Pakistan in April 2015). One fundamental red line is China's long-held and strategic interest in parts of Jammu and Kashmir that border Xinjiang and Tibet and allow connectivity between the two. We in India have wrongly argued that it is Pakistan that is the issue in J&K. China is as big an issue but has quietly hidden behind Pakistan's cover. That is no longer feasible as democratic India becomes economically and otherwise stronger.

The Special Representatives process to address the boundary question seems stalemated and its usefulness needs review. The 2005 agreement contains the necessary parameters for a boundary settlement but there is obviously not adequate common ground. Some positivity can, however, be brought in if the LAC clarification process is revived and completed in a time-bound manner. But this is easier said than done in the prevailing circumstances. Patrolling procedures will need to be revised, preferably by mutual agreement.

The current nature of the economic partnership between India and China is not sustainable. India's annual trade deficit with China in recent years virtually finances a CPEC a year! China has still not fulfilled all its commitments to India on joining the WTO in 2001. Indian business and industry must stop taking the easy option. Some costs will no doubt go up but there can be environmental advantages of switching to other sources of technology and equipment. There is more than one available source of financial investments in Indian ventures.

Bilateral dialogue mechanisms will continue their desultory course. On issues of interest to India such as terrorism, we get no support from China. Cooperation on river waters has not evolved. On the global agenda, on issues such as climate change, dialogue and cooperation will continue in multilateral fora depending on mutual interest.

The response of the government of India to China's recent actions in Ladakh must be an all-of-government one, indeed an all-India one — covering all sectors including heightened security and be coordinated, consistent and implemented with spine. This is not a question of nationalism or patriotism but of self-esteem and self-respect.

Bilateral relations between India and China cannot progress unless there is peace on the borders and China recognises that India too has non-negotiable core concerns, aspirations and interests. The principle of equal and mutual security is fundamental. No country can have a veto on India's relations with any other country or group of countries.

The writer is a former ambassador to China and is currently Distinguished Fellow at the Delhi Policy Group. Views are personal

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"CPEC is too important to be embroiled in needless controversies by officials who revel in a culture of non-disclosures. Now that phase two of CPEC is about to commence, transparency should be a key priority for all stakeholders."

—DAWN

Securing the future

Army must revisit strategies on northern borders. Real time intelligence, surveillance equipment must be available to field formations



RAKESH SHARMA

THE NEW CHINA, as a "responsible (sic)" Great Power, is muscular, aggressive and determined to force its way to the top of the world stage. The Central Military Commission (CMC) assumes responsibility for the security and military-related foreign affairs and plans employment for the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). The all-important Chinese Communist Party's decision-making bodies, the Politburo and Politburo Standing Committee, have a clearly dominant role. The PLA of today is an ultra-nationalistic actor, under the CMC headed by its Chairman, also the General Secretary of the party's Central Committee and the President of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Unlike most democracies, the PLA, functioning under the CMC, has total control over defence policy as also significant influence over foreign policy.

As events over the last six decades — more so in the last eight years, especially the last two months — clearly show, the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is a grievously flawed concept. India and China have had parleys since 1981, meetings of Joint Working Groups from 1988 to 2005 and 22 rounds of Special Representatives talks, in addition to many summit-level meetings. Despite nearly four decades of discussions, with CMC/PLA at the helm of the defence and foreign policy decision-making, delineation and demarcation of the boundary has not been possible. The Chinese have deliberately ensured that the nebulous nature of the LAC is retained as a leverage against India, to undertake premeditated aggression at regular intervals. The intrusion at Finger 4/5 of Pangong Tso and the transgression up to LAC in Galwan are instructive. Out of the blue, most inexplicably and without any historical basis, the official Chinese statement came out seeking the "estuary" of Shyok and Galwan rivers. In no way can such a hegemonic ambition be allowed to be nurtured.

The PLA is at the threshold of achieving its interim modernisation goals of informatised, integrated joint operations by 2021, the centenary of the CCP's founding. It is well likely that the events of Eastern Ladakh of May-June 2020 are part of a larger testbed. Over the years, the face-offs have witnessed PLA's jostling and pushing, posse of horses intruding, and scant disregard for the treaties with India. Pangong Tso and Galwan showed a new picture. PLA troops used spiked and barbed wired rods, knuckle-dusters and the like, all well prepared, as if PLA units were officially issued and trained for use. There were no military ethics in the barbarism at display by the PLA.

The major recipe for disaster that affects public and military opinion, is what is served by know-all "experts" and politicians. While debating issues is one issue, but to argue that the troops in contact were not acclimatised or trained is pure heresy.

The unit in contact at Galwan, 16 BIHAR, has completed two years of tour of duty in that super high altitude area. It was well trained and had undertaken extensive winter patrolling and domination of the Dapsang Plateau. The troops, who have dominated the area for years, understand the LAC on ground better than what experts describe with fancy slides or satellite imageries. Details of location and type of intrusion or transgression are better known to the commanding officers and commanders in Eastern Ladakh, much more than experts who decipher and over-read events in studio debates or tweets! To ascribe motivations or challenge military decisions taken by troops and commanders in contact with the enemy, basically by innuendo targeting political parties, is deliberately undermining the confidence of those battling adversities at the LAC.

For the Indian Army units and formations in Eastern Ladakh or elsewhere facing the PLA, there are limits to adherence to good faith and honour, against a devilous and most untrustworthy PLA. The Indian Army has to strategise and should revisit its rules of engagement on the Northern Borders, mindful that troops in tactical situations cannot be shackled by past treaties, which the PLA deals with disdain. The Indian Army does not have to stoop low to knuckle dusters, but remain prepared to militarily handle the situations that will arise.

At political level, there are representative forums like Parliament, the committees and regular briefings to seek clarifications, which is the right of politicians. However, in the instant case, wherein the political parties were briefed of the ongoing situation and prognosis, the summing-up remarks of the Prime Minister were taken out of context. Though the PM was referring to the incidents in the Galwan River area only, his remarks were extrapolated to apply to the entire sector, causing intense disquiet. These were clarified in detail later and this should put the issue to rest. On national security issues, there must be national unity. There ought to be faith in those at the helm that the issues of national security will not be soft-pedalled or obscured on the altar of politics. Similarly, within the norms and constraints of national security, the establishment must keep the nation informed, to avoid an information vacuum that leads to rumour-mongering.

PLA has always shown extraordinary interest in Eastern Ladakh, especially Daulat-Beg-Oldi, the Chip-Chap river, Track Junction and Karakoram Pass. The management practices for the Northern Borders have to be revisited, like placing the nearly division-sized force of ITBP in Eastern Ladakh under the army operationally. Real-time intelligence, surveillance equipment and satellite imageries must be available to field formations that need to act on it. This should not be delayed by the bureaucratic maze.

We need to strategise for the future, including the modern manifestations of non-contact, non-kinetic warfare. We must avoid unnecessary nitpicking on semantics of statements made in a particular context. This will be a great service to the soldier on the ground.

The writer is former GOC of Leh-based 14 Corps



SUANSHU KHURANA

IT'S A HUMBLING moment when human beings have to take the difficult decision to hide in their homes to save themselves. When it happened earlier this year, with the COVID-19 calamity turning into a pandemic, the world turned to the arts — earnestly, urgently and even as a remedy. Be it the Italians and Spaniards singing and performing from their balconies, or the citizens of Wuhan chanting from their windows or numerous musicians singing, dancing and playing instruments in their homes and reaching our living rooms through the internet, there was the hope that it would help alleviate the load that was constantly piling up — the fears around work, life, survival and even death.

The morbidity of these thoughts has been difficult. In all the science, numbers and politics surrounding the virus, the one thing that has been a significant source of comfort is the arts. Music and dance have given a sense of self-awareness, community, identity and solidarity. We, the people of the world, have a song for every occasion. Like birth and death, the pandemic is also being sung about. In this scheme, as surreal as the pandemic is, it is not special. And when it isn't special, it is likely not to be insurmountable.

When famed American cellist Yo Yo Ma sits in his living room and performs live on

A song for the pandemic

In different places, at different times, art has helped when nothing else has

the internet, the warmth, the despondency and the joy of it all makes one want to get out of bed and go about a fabricated routine, in the hope that things will be normal one day. He may not know it himself, but it's remarkable to watch how a great cellist is looking after the mental health of so many people all over the world. Or when Carnatic classical vocalist Bombay Jayashri Ramnath allows us to enter her music room, letting us be a part of her riyaz and teaching session — that world of Muthuswami Dikshitar compositions wasn't available to us like this before. Concerts are a different ball game.

"Sing it out baby... Just remember, we're gonna get through it," said Jon Bon Jovi in one of his recent videos. And right after, he strummed his guitar and gave us a song. If you can't do what you do, do what you can. In the vacuum of lives at this point, it stuck. Then there was the art of movement that strummed the heartstrings in another way. When New York-based ballet dancer and performer Ashlee Montague stepped out onto an empty Times Square in New York to dance in March, in a gas mask, her grace lingered. "Art will endure. Art will survive. Art will thrive," she wrote on Instagram.

Flipping through the pages of world history, one finds that music and disease

have always been joined at the hip. In the 16th century, during the second wave of the plague pandemic in Europe, the Archbishop of Milan, Carlo Borromeo, asked citizens to sing from their doors and windows during quarantine. He was concerned that processions could encourage the transmission. A hymn, Stella celi extirpavit (Star of heaven), a plea to Virgin Mary, appears in various documents and has references to "ulcers of death", inflammation — one of the symptoms of the Black Death. In the early 16th century, when the plague prompted Henry VIII to shut his court and be quarantined in Windsor, he chose his doctor and the court organ player Dionisio Memo to stay. The German composer Johann Sebastian Bach, in 1723, wrote his Cantata No. 25, titled There is Nothing Healthy in My Body, a year after the great plague of Marseille, France, which had left 1,00,000 people dead including his wife and half of his 20 children. In this, Bach called the world "a hospital". The piece is not just documentary evidence of what transpired but also a musical expression of what the world was going through.

So why was music deemed so important? Probably because art has helped when nothing else has managed to get through to the crevices of our self.

But if we fathom the significance of art,

how do we not consider the artistes worthy? We may say emphatically, that we do. But the situation on the ground is different. The artiste has been deemed "non-essential". With some of the most notable concert halls shutting down all over the world, a lot of them permanently, orchestras and classical musicians out of work, folk musicians are struggling to make ends meet. It's turning into an extremely challenging situation, especially in India where coronavirus packages don't mention artistes.

But the arts may help with COVID 19 too. Scientists at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), are attempting to understand the pandemic and the structure of the coronavirus by setting it to music. The spikes made of amino acids have been assigned a note in a musical scale, thus mapping the virus's movement in the form of a music score to better understand the pathogen and make the world hear what it cannot see. This understanding may help us find a life that isn't marred by the coronavirus. To me, it attests to the fact that in the high stakes battle that the entire world is fighting, the arts are fighting alongside — in an attempt to give hope, to tell the world to "have faith", hang in there. We'll make it out of the maze. Just hang in there.

suanshu.khurana@expressindia.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WORK TOGETHER

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Step up the fight' (IE, June 23). The country has witnessed about 2.2 lakh cases in three weeks (June 1 to 21). And this COVID surge could well be a precursor of the peak, which is expected in July-August. What Delhi and the entire country needs is Centre-state coordination to face the virus head-on.

SS Paul, Nadia

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Step up the fight' (IE, June 23). Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) are the need of the hour. The Centre needs to incentivise the private sector to augment public health infrastructure. Atmanirbhar Bharat can get a quick start with the local manufacture of test kits. Collaboration is essential for saving the NCT region from becoming the "COVID capital".

Anjali Bhavana, Thiruvananthapuram

OLD TRICK

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'An in-dominatable resolve' (IE, June 23). The efficacy of the abrogation of Article 370 is unknown yet, like everything about J&K, thanks to the stringent measures by the Centre. Now that there is only one flag in the country, the government must release Mehbooba Mufti. If it was so fundamental to the ideology of the BJP, why did it abrogate Article 370 in its second term? Sardar Patel was one of the first

IDEAS ONLINE

ONLY IN THE EXPRESS

● THE EPIDEMIC WE ARE OVERLOOKING: POOJA SARAFF

● LOWER TAXES TO SPUR CONSUMPTION: SUNDEEP BAJORIA

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people in the Congress to accept the Partition. Nehru, like Gandhi, was averse to the idea. Calling Mukherjee's death a "sacrifice for J&K" is an overstatement. Indirect swipes at political nemeses through a remembrance of some rightist figure is an old trick by BJP members.

Yusuf Ghazali, Patna

FACE-OFF

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'In all fairness' (IE, June 23). No doubt Black Lives Matter has jolted the binary of light and dark, promoted by the likes of Johnson & Johnson and Unilever through their fairness creams and face-whitening products.

LR Murmu, Delhi



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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

Why has the US accused Air India of unfair practices?

PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE US Department of Transportation (DOT) has levelled allegations against India of being “unfair” and engaging in “discriminatory practices” with regard to repatriation flights. The DOT has restricted flights operated by Air India, saying it will need specific authorisation from the DOT to conduct any such flights.

What are the allegations being made?

The US DOT has said the Government of India has “impaired the operating rights of US carriers” and has engaged in “discriminatory and restrictive practices with respect to US carrier services to and from India”. It added the Indian government has prevented US carriers from conducting India-US passenger charter operations involving direct sales to individual passengers or through other distribution systems. “For its part, the

United States has not placed any limitations on US-India charter operations, and Air India has been and remains free to conduct the full complement of passenger charter services...”, its order of June 22 read. It also said Air India’s repatriation flights have gone beyond the purpose “at least on the India to the US segments” and involved sales.

How does this affect fliers booked to travel to the US?

Air India flights for repatriating Indian citizens from the US are slotted till July first week. The US order has said that effective 30 days from the service date of the order, Air India won’t be allowed to exercise the “third and fourth freedoms of flight”. Pending an agreement, the decision could affect those planning to fly back pm flights in the fourth phase of Vande Bharat.

Has the US conveyed this to India?

According to the order, on May 19, an official from the US DOT had advised Air India

of the concerns that some, if not all, of “Air India’s so-called evacuation charters have gone beyond true evacuations and involved sales to any member of the general public able to enter the United States”. On May 26, Delta Air Lines, via a letter, requested permission from the Indian Ministry of Civil Aviation to run repatriation charter services. To date, Delta has not received approval, the US DOT said. Further, the US registered its objections through engagement by the US Embassy in New Delhi on May 28. However, the Indian government “has thus far failed to remedy the situation”.

How many flights has Air India operated to the US under Vande Bharat Mission?

The Vande Bharat Mission was announced in April to bring Indian citizens back from several countries. On June 3, Air India released a schedule for additional repatriation flights that includes 49 US-India round-trip charter flights between June 10-July 1. On June 13, it announced 10 additional repa-

triation flights between June 20-July 3. Prior to the lockdown, Air India operated 34 round-trip flights per week to the US. The US has noted that with 59 flights advertised for the period June 10-July 3, Air India would be performing charter operation at 53% of the operations it previously performed. “As such, it appears that Air India may be using its passenger repatriation charters as a way of circumventing the Gol-imposed prohibition of all scheduled services. This situation... creates a competitive disadvantage for US carriers vis-à-vis Indian carriers,” it said.

What action is being taken by the US?

The DOT has “determined that this situation calls for close scrutiny, on a case-by-case basis, of Air India passenger charter operations until this issue has been satisfactorily resolved”. It has ordered that prior approval be sought for all Air India repatriation flights.

How has India responded?

In a statement on Tuesday, the Ministry of Civil Aviation had said: “... DGCA granted permission to around 870 chartered flights, transporting around 2 lakh passengers, both inbound & outbound... Major airlines including Qatar Airways-81, KLM Dutch-68, Kuwait Air-41, British Airways-39, FlyDubai-38, Air France-32, Jazeera-30, Air Arabia-20, Gulf Air-19, Sri Lankan-19, Biman Bangladesh-15, Korean Air-14, Delta-13, Saudia-13 & Air Nippon-12 took part in the operations. Additionally, Airlines like Air New Zealand-12, Thai Air Asia-11, United Airlines-11, Iraqi Airways-11, Oman Air-10,

Ural Airlines-9, Lufthansa-8, Somon Air-8, Condour-8, Emirates-5, Etihad-5, Aeroflot-4 & Virgin Atlantic-4 also took part in the chartered operations.”

What are the third and fourth freedoms of air?

These pertain to a set of rights accorded to a country’s airlines to enter or land in another country’s airspace or airports. According to the International Civil Aviation Organization of the UN, there are nine freedoms of the air. These rights, generally, operate on a bilaterally reciprocal basis. However, in certain cases some handicaps are imposed on capacity allowed from one country to another. The third and fourth freedoms essentially allow basic international service between two countries. The third freedom accords the right to an airline to carry passengers or cargo from its home state to another, while the fourth allows it to bring passengers or cargo from another country to its home state.

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

How H1-B pause will hit Indians

The US has blocked H1-B and certain other non-immigrant worker visas until the end of the year. A look at who all use these visas, and how the move will impact Indian firms who send workers to the US

AASHISH ARYAN
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

ON MONDAY, the US administration extended its 60-day suspension of non-immigrant worker visas until the end of 2020. Besides the popular work visas such as H-1B and H-2B, certain categories of H-4, J, and L visas will also remain suspended until December 31.

What are H-1B and other work visas?

To fill a vacuum of highly skilled, low-cost employees in various domains, the US administration issues a certain number of visas in various categories each year, which allows companies from other countries to send their employees to work in the US.

Of these, H-1B is the most popular among Indian IT companies and Indian IT workers. An H-1B visa is given to an individual “to work in a specialty occupation”. The US has a cap of 85,000 H-1B visas for each year. Of these, 65,000 are issued to highly skilled workers. The other 20,000 can be allotted to highly skilled workers who have a higher education or master’s degree from a US university.

L1 visas allow companies to transfer highly skilled workers to US for a period of up to seven years. H-2B visas allow food and agricultural workers to seek employment in the US. A J-category visa gives interns, trainees, teachers a chance to work in the US.

Why did the US suspend H-1B non-immigrant worker visas?

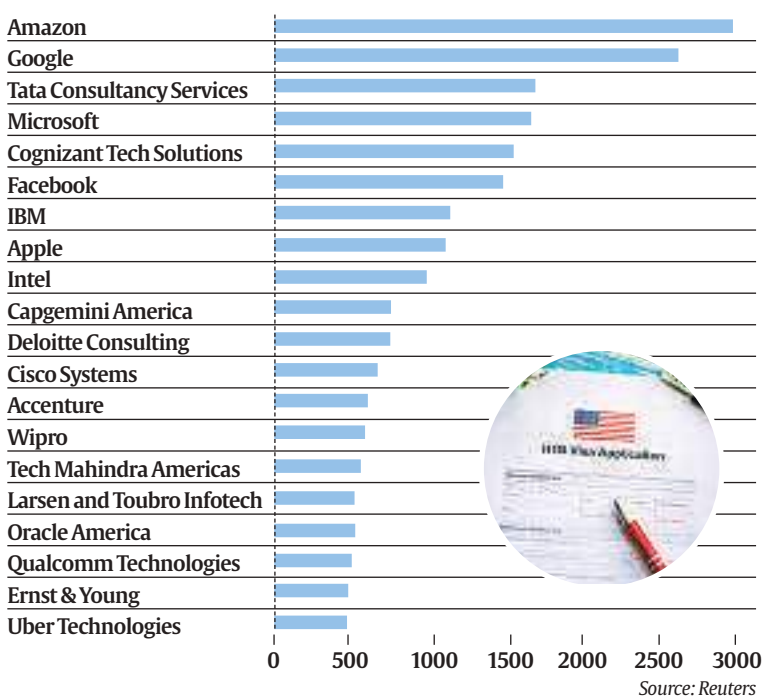
The H-1 visa scheme, started in 1952, has since undergone many changes and revisions to allow or disallow certain categories of skilled workers in the US, depending on the economic situation of the country.

The technology boom coupled with the arrival of the Internet and low-cost computers in countries such as India and China saw a large number of graduates willing to work at a relatively low pay in the US. However, the H-1B visa regime has often been criticised for bringing low-cost labour at the expense of domestic workers. In January 2017, after taking over as President, Donald Trump had said low-cost workers were hampering the economy and undercutting jobs of citizens. He had hinted at reforming the “broken” H-1B visa system.

Amid the economic contraction due to

H1-B VISA APPROVALS

INITIAL APPROVALS FOR H1-B VISAS IN 2019



WHO IS H-1B FOR?

“H-1B: Person in Specialty Occupation: To work in a specialty occupation. Requires a higher education degree or its equivalent. Includes fashion models of distinguished merit and ability and government-to-government research and development, or co-production projects administered by the Department of Defense.” — TRAVEL (US DEPARTMENT OF STATE)

Covid-19, Trump first banned the entry of non-immigrant workers till June 23, and has now extended it till December 31.

The US Citizenship and Immigration Services has in the recent past significantly increased Requests for Evidence (RFE) before issuing H-1B visas. “The percentage of completed cases with RFE increased from 22.3% in 2014-15 to 40.2% in 2018-19. (An) RFE is generally issued for want of more information before granting final H-1B visa and adds to compliance costs for IT services companies. More restrictive administration policies have increased denials for H-1B petitions significantly, with denial rates rising from 6% in

2015-15 to 21% in 2018-19 for new H-1B petitions,” ratings agency ICRA said in a note.

Who does it impact?

Since the ban is effective immediately, the processing of all new H-1B, H-2B, J, and L visa categories stand suspended. This means those who do not have a non-immigrant visa as of June 23, and are outside the US, will not be allowed to enter the country until December 31.

Workers in essential services in the food sector have been given some reprieve, and their entry shall be decided by the consular officer of immigration services. H-1B, H-2B,

J and L visa holders, their spouses and children already present in the US will not be impacted by the new worker visa ban.

Students planning to go for higher studies in the US will not be impacted, said Sumeet Jain, co-founder and higher education expert at Yocket, an online platform for students travelling abroad. “Students are not affected by this at all. For the incoming batch or Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2021 or later, this should not be a problem. There are very high chances that this executive order will be changed or ended even before December,” Jain said.

How does it impact Indian and global IT companies?

Indian IT companies have, since the 1990s, cornered the lion’s share of H-1B visas issued each year. As of April 1, the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) had received about 2.5 lakh H-1B work visa applications, according to official data. Indians had applied for 1.84 lakh or 67 per cent of the total H-1B visas for the current financial year.

The executive order has also made sweeping changes to H-1B norms, which will no longer be decided by the currently prevalent lottery system. The new norms will now favour highly skilled workers who are paid the highest wages by their respective companies. This could have a significant impact on margins and worker wages of Indian IT companies that send thousands of low-earning employees to the US. Though the large Indian IT companies have cut down their dependency on H-1B and other worker visas by hiring as much as 50 per cent of staff locally, they still rely on these visas to keep costs in check.

For Indian IT companies, the higher wage structure could also result in them not being able to hire entry-level programmers to work on client sites in the US due to higher compliance costs.

The move could also impact US-based tech giants such as Google, Apple, Facebook, and Twitter which hire from a pool of skilled IT workers who look to change employers after the initial period of three years to continue their stay in the US. In 2018-19 alone for example, Google, Facebook, and Apple hired more than 13,000 highly skilled IT employees with H-1B work visas, either directly or from existing H-1B visa holders looking to change jobs in the US, according to the data available from the US Department of Labour.

Victory Day: why Russia celebrates WWI triumph on a different date

KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

DEFENCE MINISTER Rajnath Singh is on a three-day trip to Russia to attend the 75th Victory Day. India has sent a tri-services contingent to participate in the Victory Day Parade on Wednesday. China’s Defence Minister and troops will also be present.

What is Victory Day?

Victory Day marks the end of World War II and the victory of the Allied Forces in 1945. Adolf Hitler had shot himself on April 30. On May 7, German troops surrendered, which was formally accepted the next day, and came into effect on May 9.

In most European countries, it is celebrated on May 8, and is called the Victory in Europe Day.

Why does Russia not celebrate Victory Day on the same date?

The erstwhile Soviet Union had not wanted the surrender to take place in the

west, and wanted that such a significant event should reflect the contribution of the Red Army and the Soviet population. According to military historian Antony Beevor’s definitive book on World War II, Joseph Stalin, premier of the Soviet Union, wanted Germany to also sign a surrender in Berlin.

The Act of Military Surrender was signed by Chief of the Operations Staff of the Armed Forces High Command General Lieutenant Alfred Jodl and General Admiral Hans-George von Friedeburg in the early hours of May 7 in France at Rheims, which was the headquarters of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEPF). The surrender was to come into effect a minute past midnight on May 9.

But, Beevor writes, “Stalin could not let the final ceremony take place in the west, so he insisted that the Germans sign another surrender in Berlin, at one minute past midnight on 9 May, the moment the capitulation agreed at Rheims came into effect”. Though the document was signed, Beevor



Russian soldiers rehearse for the Victory Day Parade in Moscow. AP

says that British Prime Minister Winston Churchill “cabled Stalin to explain that, since crowds were already gathering in London to celebrate, Victory in Europe Day celebration in Britain would take place on 8 May, as they did in the United States”.

This did not convince Stalin, who argued that “Soviet troops were still fighting” the German forces in many areas. German sol-

diers did not surrender in East Prussia, Courland Peninsula, Czechoslovakia till later. “Victory celebration, Stalin wrote, could therefore not begin in the Soviet Union till 9 May,” Beevor says in his book.

Since then May 9 has been celebrated at Victory Day in Russia.

If May 9 is Victory Day, why is it being celebrated on June 24?

This year, the celebrations this year were pushed to June because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In November 2019, Russian President Vladimir Putin had invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the Victory Day celebration which were due to be held on May 9.

Modi could not travel to Moscow, but he wished Putin on May 9 through a tweet: “India stands with Russia in solemn remembrance today, on the 75th Anniversary of Victory Day. Tens of thousands of Indian soldiers also made the supreme sacrifice in the Second World War. My warm greetings to President Putin and the Russian people on this occasion.”

Is the June 24 date particularly significant?

Yes, it is. After winning the war and having its own Victory Day on May 9, Stalin wanted to commemorate the victory with a military parade. On June 22, 1945, he ordered: “In commemoration of the victory over Germany in the Great Patriotic War, I appoint to hold the parade of the regular Army, Navy and the Moscow garrison — Victory Parade June 24, 1945 in Moscow’s Red Square.”

Hence the first Victory Day Parade took place on June 24 in Moscow.

However, since then, the Victory Day Parades have taken place on May 9.

Who is participating in the parade on Wednesday?

The parade will last for around 90 minutes and see the participation of military personnel from 19 countries, including India and China. The celebrations are expected to include 64,000 participants. In Moscow, 14,000 military personnel will march through Red Square. Additionally,

50,000 more troops will march through 27 other cities that have military units.

Have Indian politicians taken part in such celebrations earlier?

Yes. Indian leaders have attended several Victory Day Parades. At the 70th anniversary Victory Day celebrations in 2015, then President Pranab Mukherjee went to represent India. Manmohan Singh had attended the 60th anniversary in 2005 as the then Prime Minister of India.

Mukherjee had attended the celebrations earlier as well. In 1995, as the External Affairs Minister, he was present at the 50th anniversary celebrations. However, he noted in his memoirs that he had objected to India’s participation before P V Narasimha Rao, the Prime Minister at that time, as “there were several reasons why the government should not participate in Victory Day celebrations for the Second World War”. He had stated that the Indian National Army of Subhash Chandra Bose had fought the Allied Forces and that leaders of Congress were jailed during the war for their protests.

TOP OF THE WORLD



The crash in Karachi killed 97 people. *Reuters*

PAKISTAN PIA plane crash due to human error: probe report

Islamabad: The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane crash last month was caused by the negligence of the cockpit crew and the air control tower and not due to any technical fault, according to a preliminary investigation report on the tragedy that killed 97 people onboard. The flight from Lahore to Karachi crashed near Jinnah International Airport in Karachi on May 22. A probe was commissioned with the commitment that the initial report would be shared with Parliament on June 22. But Aviation Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan handed the report to PM Imran Khan instead of Parliament.

CHINA Final satellite in GPS-like Beidou system launched

Beijing: China on Tuesday launched the final satellite in its Beidou constellation that emulates and may seek to compete with the US Global Positioning System, marking a further step in the country's advance as a major space power. The launch of the satellite onboard a Long March-3 rocket was broadcast live from the satellite launch base of Xichang, deep in the mountains of southwestern China, shortly before 10 a.m. About half an hour later, the satellite was deployed in orbit and extended its solar panels to provide its energy. An initial launch scheduled for last week was scrubbed after checks revealed unspecified technical problems.

MEXICO 15 killed in attack on indigenous village in Mexico

Mexico City: Assailants killed 15 inhabitants of an indigenous village in southern Mexico that has been plagued by local disputes, authorities said on Monday, in one of the most brutal attacks to shake the countryside in recent years. State prosecutors in the state of Oaxaca said the bodies of 13 men and two women were identified as victims of the attacks over Sunday night and Monday morning in the municipality of San Mateo del Mar, east of the Pacific port of Salina Cruz.

MORE COUNTRIES EASE CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS

As global cases mount, Saudis curb Haj; UK set to reopen pubs, hotels

AP & REUTERS
WELLINGTON, LONDON,
JUNE 23

THE NUMBER of global coronavirus cases continued to surge Tuesday in many large countries that have been lifting lockdowns, including the US, even as new infections stabilised or dropped in parts of Western Europe.

Saudi Arabia said this year's Haj will not be cancelled, but only "very limited numbers" of people will be allowed to take part. The Haj traditionally draws around 2 million Muslims from around the world for five days of worship and rituals in Mecca.

"The number, God willing, may be in the thousands. We are in the process of reviewing so it could be 1,000 or less, or a little more," the kingdom's Haj Minister Muhammad Benten said.

While the decision to drastically curb this year's Haj was largely expected, it remains unprecedented in Saudi Arabia's nearly 90-year history and effectively bars all Muslims from outside the kingdom from travelling there to perform the pilgrimage.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on pubs, restaurants and hotels could reopen in England early next month, easing the lockdown that has all but shut the economy.

In other signs of a gradual return to normal life, hairdressers will also open again, along with tourist attractions like theme parks, but nightclubs, indoor gyms and swimming pools will have to stay closed.

On Tuesday, Johnson said with infection rates falling and little current threat of a second



REOPENING PHASE 2 IN NEW YORK: People dine in parking spaces on the street outside restaurants on the first day of the phase two reopening of businesses following the outbreak of Covid-19, in Brooklyn, New York, on Monday. Phase two involved offices welcoming back their employees and restaurants offering outdoor dining. *Reuters*



Today we can say that our long, national hibernation is beginning to come to an end."

— BORIS JOHNSON
BRITAIN'S PRIME MINISTER

wave of Covid-19 cases, he could reopen swathes of the economy and try to get life in England back to something like normal.

"Today we can say that our long, national hibernation is beginning to come to an end," he told Parliament.

Britain, and many other

countries, have been incrementally reopening their economies that were shuttered by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hospitals in Pakistan are turning away patients, but with the economy there teetering, the government remains determined to reopen the country.

New cases have also been rising steeply in Mexico, Colombia and Indonesia.

Brazil, with more than 1.1 million cases and 51,000 deaths, has been affected more than anywhere but the US.

Singapore will head to the polls on July 10 after its prime minister said he was satisfied a ballot could be held safely despite criticism that such a move might endanger voters during the coronavirus pandemic. The city-state, which has one of Asia's highest tallies of Covid-19, eased strict lockdown rules last week that were in place for over two months.

EU says it may bar US travellers as it reopens borders, citing failures on virus

MATINA
STEVIS-GRIDNEFF
BRUSSELS, JUNE 23

EUROPEAN UNION countries rushing to revive their economies and reopen their borders after months of coronavirus restrictions are prepared to block Americans from entering because the United States has failed to control the scourge, according to draft lists of acceptable travellers seen by *The New York Times*.

That prospect, which would lump American visitors in with Russians and Brazilians as unwelcome, is a stinging blow to American prestige in the world and a repudiation of President Trump's handling of the virus in the United States, which has more than 2.3 million cases and upward of 120,000 deaths, more than any other country.

European nations are currently haggling over two potential lists of acceptable visitors based on how countries are faring with the coronavirus pandemic. Both include China, as well as developing nations like Uganda, Cuba and Vietnam.

Travellers from the US and the rest of the world have been excluded from visiting the EU since mid-March. But a final decision on reopening the borders is expected early next week. **NYT**

Trump says will issue executive order to protect US monuments

JEFF MASON &
LISA LAMBERT
WASHINGTON, JUNE 23

PRESIDENT DONALD Trump on Tuesday said he will issue an executive order regarding US historical monuments, as the movement to remove memorials that activists consider racist gains momentum, part of wider national protests over racial injustice.

"They're not taking down our monuments," Trump told reporters at the White House. "I will have an executive order very shortly and all it's going to really do is reinforce what's already there, but in a more uniform way."



Protesters try to bring down the statue of former US President Andrew Jackson in Washington DC. *Reuters*

Trump also on Tuesday announced an authorisation "effective immediately" to arrest anyone caught hurting a commemoration to an armed services member on federal land and threatened to use force on protesters in Washington.

Late on Monday protesters

tried to topple a statue of former President Andrew Jackson near the White House. Jackson enslaved Black people as a plantation owner and is remembered for the Trail of Tears, a forced removal of Native Americans from the South that killed thousands. **REUTERS**

US Army soldier admits to plotting with neo-Nazi cult to kill troops in his own unit

ALAN FEUER
JUNE 23

AN ARMY private confessed to sharing secret information with a satanic neo-Nazi group in a plot to attack his own unit while it was overseas and cause "the deaths of as many of his fellow service members as possible," federal prosecutors in Manhattan said on Monday.

The private, Ethan Phelan

The plot was foiled in late May before it could be carried out and the soldier was arrested, prosecutors said

Melzer, was charged in an indictment unsealed this week with collaborating with the Order of the Nine Angles, or O9A, a group that prosecutors described as

"an occult-based neo-Nazi and racially motivated violent extremist group."

"Ethan Melzer, a private in the US Army, was the enemy within," said Audrey Strauss, the acting United States attorney in Manhattan, a job she moved into over the weekend after her predecessor, Geoffrey S Berman, resigned under pressure from Attorney General William P Barr. Melzer, Strauss added, had tried "to orchestrate a murderous

Houthis say they launched missile attack on Riyadh

Yemeni group claims it struck targets, but Saudis say they blocked assault

MAHER CHMAYTELLI &
AZIZ EL YAAKOUBI
DUBAI, JUNE 23

YEMEN'S IRAN-ALIGNED Houthi movement said it launched a large missile and drone attack deep in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday that struck the defence ministry and a military base in Riyadh, but the kingdom said it blocked the assault.

The Saudi-led coalition that has been battling the group for five years said it intercepted a ballistic missile fired by the Houthis towards Riyadh. There was no immediate confirmation by the coalition or Saudi authorities about specific targets.

A Reuters witness in the capital heard two loud blasts and saw billows of smoke in the sky over Riyadh close to dawn. There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties.

"A large number of winged ballistic missiles and drones targeted the capital of the Saudi enemy ... pounding military headquarters and centres including the defence and intelligence ministry and (King) Salman Air Base," Houthi military spokesman Yahya Sarea said in a televised speech.

EXPLAINED Violence surges as Covid truce ends

THE SAUDI-LED coalition intervened in Yemen in 2015 after the Iran-backed Houthi rebels ousted the Saudi-backed government. The war has since claimed thousands of lives and led to Yemen facing one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. With the onset of the pandemic, the two sides had agreed on a six-week ceasefire. However, with that having now expired, Houthi missile attacks and Saudi airstrikes have surged even as cases of the coronavirus increase in the region. However, successful attacks on the Saudi capital are rare and risk further intensifying the war.

He said attacks were also launched against military sites in the Saudi cities of Najran and Jizan that border Yemen. **REUTERS**

Probe finds Australian former top court judge harassed six women

DAMIEN CAVE &
ISABELLA KWAI
SYDNEY, JUNE 23

FOR YEARS there were private whispers and warnings from young women about a pattern of abuse by one of Australia's most powerful men — a judge on the country's highest court.

Now, an internal court inquiry has found that the judge, Dyson Heydon, had indeed sexually harassed at least six young women on his staff, reigniting #MeToo outrage in a secretive, proudly masculine country where many women are still calling for a fuller reckoning.

The findings led Chief Justice Susan Kiefel to issue a statement Monday confirming the investigation's conclusions. "We are ashamed that this could have happened at the High Court of Australia," she said. "We have made a sincere apology to the six women whose complaints were



Dyson Heydon

borne out."

Though nonstatutory and lacking the ability to mete out punishment for the now-retired Heydon, the internal findings have already prompted promises of reform. Chief Justice Kiefel said the investigation included a series of recommendations that would be adopted by the High Court.

Through his lawyers, Heydon, 77, who retired in 2013, has denied "any allegation of predatory behavior or breaches of the law," according to a statement. **NYT**



Almazbek Atambayev

Former Kyrgyz president sentenced to 11 years in prison

REUTERS
BISHKEK, JUNE 23

A COURT in Kyrgyzstan sentenced former president Almazbek Atambayev to 11 years and two months in prison on Tuesday on corruption charges, which he denies.

The court found Atambayev guilty of ordering a convicted criminal released from prison, in a case his supporters have dismissed as driven by a political conflict between Atambayev and his successor, President Sooronbai Jeenbekov. Atambayev, 63, ran the Central Asian, ex-Soviet republic of 6.5 million between 2011 and 2017, having previously taken part in revolts that toppled two presidents. He backed then-ally Jeenbekov in the 2017 election but the two fell out shortly after the new president took office.

Police detained Atambayev last August after storming his country house and exchanging fire with his supporters.

THE CROWN PRINCE HAS DETAINED THE CHILDREN OF SAAD AL-JABRI, A FORMER INTEL OFFICIAL NOW LIVING IN CANADA

Exiled Saudi official eluded MbS, but now his relatives are paying a price

REUTERS
LONDON, JUNE 23

AS SAUDI Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman moved to tighten his grip on power over the past few years, detaining senior royals and opponents, one person has eluded him: a former top-ranking intelligence official who was close to a key rival to the throne.

In recent months, the crown prince — known by the initials MbS — has increased pressure on

relatives of Saad al-Jabri, including detaining his adult children, to try to force his return to the kingdom from exile in Canada, the former intelligence official's family say. In the crown prince's sights are documents Jabri has access to that contain sensitive information, according to four people with knowledge of the situation.

Jabri was a long-time aide to Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, who the crown prince ousted as heir to the throne in a 2017 palace coup that left MbS the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia, the world's



Over the past few years, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has detained several senior royals

top oil exporter and a key US ally. Saudi authorities detained bin Nayef and two other senior royals on March 6, the latest in a series

of extraordinary measures seen aimed at consolidating MbS's strength within the ruling Al Saud family and removing per-

ceived threats to his power ahead of an eventual succession upon the king's death or abdication.

Multiple top Interior Ministry officials were also detained in March, said two of the people with knowledge of the situation — both well-connected Saudis.

Days after bin Nayef's detention, according to Jabri's family, Saudi authorities arrested two of his children, 21-year-old Omar and 20-year-old Sarah, in a dawn raid on the family home in the capital Riyadh. That was followed by the detention of the former intelli-

gence official's brother in early May, the family said.

According to the four people with knowledge of the situation, the crown prince believes he could use the documents in Jabri's possession against current rivals for the throne. He also fears they contain additional information that could compromise him and his father, the king, the four people said.

The documents include information on bin Nayef's assets abroad, which also potentially could be useful to MbS in putting pressure on his predecessor, said

the two well-connected Saudis and a former regional security official. Jabri also has access to sensitive files relating to the financial dealings of senior royals, including King Salman and MbS, said one of the well-connected Saudi sources, the former regional security official and a diplomat.

The diplomat said some of the information related to land deals and transactions, without elaborating beyond saying that they related to King Salman during his time as governor of Riyadh. **REUTERS**

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
APPLICATION NOTICE

On behalf of President of India, DRM (Commercial), E.C. Railway, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Division invites applications for all new and innovative ideas, concepts, proposals, themes, etc. from interested parties i.e. Railway Public Sector/ Outside agencies (such as NGOs, self-help groups, co-operative societies, etc.) for stations over Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya division under NINFRIS (New Innovative Non Fare Revenue Ideas Scheme). Detail is as under:-

- 1. Name of work with its location and completion period : i) Installations of Covid 19 prevention Kiosk for automatic vending of 3 ply Face Masks and NP5-200-280 sanitiser 100 ML bottles. ii) Any others innovative ideas/proposals/concepts fit for present scenario of Covid-19
- 2. Application Fee (Non-Refundable) : Rs. 1000/- 3. Date & Time for submission of application : Up to 13.07.2020 at 15.00 hrs. 4. Website particulars where complete details available : www.ecr.indianrailways.gov.in

Divisional Railway Manager (C)
E.C. Railway, DDU
PR/341/DDU/COM/L N/20-21/36

दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लिमिटेड
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(GSTIN No. 09AACCD06950125)
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● विद्युतीकरण यो डीवीओएनएल-एनएय/3003-2020: विमान सार्जों के M.S. Top Cover Plate को आपूर्ति धरोहर राशि : ₹ 1,90,000/-, निविदा खतने की दिनांक: 02-07-2020, निविदा शुल्क: ₹ 5,000/- (सो.प्र.नो. सॉल), निविदा शुल्क केवल अमानत।
● DVVNL, AGRA को वेबसाइट www.dvvnl.org के मुख्य पेज हो स्कोर किया जाएगा। विचार के लिए कृपया निविदा प्रश्न खतपूर्वक पूछ लें। उपरोक्त निविदा निर्धारित दिनांक को समय 13.00 बजे तक अनिवार्य अपरलेट की जा सकती है। निविदा प्रश्न 16.00 बजे खोली जायेगी। निविदा प्रश्न 30/07/2020 तक के ई-प्रोक्वेस्ट पोर्टल <http://etender.up.nic.in> पर अकाउंट की जायेगी, जहाँ से निविदा प्रश्न डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। इसका ई-अधीक्षण अभियन्ता (माउण्ड)-I, "राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचाये" (सं. 1687) संकेत/चिह्न/प्रतीक-1/संस्था/विभाग/22.06.2020

e-Tender Notice No.JHS-DY-CEE-C-T-03-2020

E-TENDER NOTICE

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer (Construction), North Central Railway, Jhansi for and on behalf of the President of India invites in open tender on prescribed forms on line (e-Tendering). Tender offer can be submitted on line up to 15:00 hours of 28.07.2020 on website <http://ireps.gov.in>. The details of the tenders are as under:-

| S N | Tender No. | Description of Work | Approx. Cost | Earnest Money (₹) |
|--|---|--|--|-------------------|
| 01 | e-Tender Notice No.JHS-DY-CEE-C-T-03-2020 | "Modification/shifting of 11KV/440 Volt Electrical power line crossing of State Electricity Board by laying underground HT/LT XLPE cable at Thana kapura, Banmore Rly. Station & at near Heamant Store Cutting Banmore, in connection with Conversion of NG to BG Track in Gwalior-SheepurKaian section of JHS Division" | ₹ 72,25,426 | ₹ 1,44,660 |
| Completion Period : 6 (Six) Months including harvest & Monsoon Period, Cost of Tender form : ₹ 5,350. Date of opening : 28.07.2020. Validity of offer : 45 days. | | | Note : For complete details and submission of tender please see Indian Railway's website http://www.ireps.gov.in . 683/20 (5) | |

Tender Notice No. 1220202021 E-TENDERING TENDER NOTICE Dated: 17.06.2020

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering) North Central Railway, Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites the following E-tendering process for the following works up to 13.30 hrs. on 15.07.2020. The details of the tender is as under :-

| S N | Tender No. | Name of Work | Approx. Cost of work (₹) | Earnest Money (₹) |
|--|------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 59 | Annual Zonal ordinary civil repairs and maintenance works and minor new works in staff quarters and service building for period ending 30.06.2021 between "Zone Raulabud to Chandan Station" in the section of SSE/Works/NCR/ITP under Asst. Divl. Engineer North Central Railway/Fatehpur. | 85,16,900/- | 1,66,300/- |
| Cost of Tender Form (₹) : 5,000/-, Completion Period : 30.06.2021, Date of Closing of tender : 15.07.2020, Eligibility criteria for "Similar work" : Any Civil Engineering Work. | | | | |
| Note : 1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on website www.ireps.gov.in up to 13.30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 15.07.2020. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2008. 3. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form / letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. 4. The tenders shall submit a copy of certificate as given in tender document in standard format for all items without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily rejected. 5. The supplier/contractor of goods and/or services would be subject to GST Act. and Rules as applicable from time to time. 6. Credentials in the name of firm applying for the work will only be considered. 7. The tenderer who has offered lower total cost as compared to tender value by more than 10%, shall be required to submit additional Performance Guarantee of value equal to percentage of tender value by which offer is lower than 10%. 8. Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 9. This tender notice has been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in . 10. Payment of Earnest Money deposit (EMD) and Tender Document Cost (TDC) in respect of E-Tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. The tenderer(s) should note that, in any case, Tenders without Tender Cost and Earnest money shall be summarily rejected. 11. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 12. Tender on line can be submitted up to 13.30 hrs. on 15.07.2020. 13. The calculation of Earnest Money is as per ireps.gov.in web site. 674/20 (5) | | | | |

E-TENDER NOTICE Date : 19.06.2020
For & on behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W), Prayagraj North Central Railway, Prayagraj invites E-Tenders in prescribed forms from reputed contractors with adequate experience and financial capability for the under mentioned work up to 15:00 Hrs of Date of opening of tender :-

| SN | E-Tender Notice no. | Name of work | Tender System | Tender Value | E.M.D. (₹) | Cost of tender Form | Period of Work | Date of publishing on IREPS website | Date of opening of tender |
|----|--------------------------|---|----------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | NCR-M-PHYJ-CNM-WRP-09-23 | Operation and maintenance of Water recycling plant at A.D. coaching Depot for three years | Single packet system | ₹ 2151701.22 | ₹ 43666 | ₹ 3000 | 03 Years | 23.06.2020 | 15.07.2020 |
| 2 | NCR-M-PHYJ-MH-DEP-10-23 | Work of Material Handling and Housekeeping of ICDDR for one year. | Two packet system | ₹ 7446602.25 | ₹ 149300 | ₹ 5000 | 01 Year | 23.06.2020 | 15.07.2020 |
| 3 | NCR-M-PHYJ-CNB-PCR-11-23 | Pest and Rodent Control in Railway passenger Coaches maintained at FRYJ coaching Depot & CNB Coaching Depot of Prayagraj division and rodent control in coaching depot Yards and premise of Prayagraj & Kampur For a period of Four Year. | Two packet system | ₹ 8115913.30 | ₹ 162400 | ₹ 5000 | 48 Months | 25.06.2020 | 22.07.2020 |

SN 1: Similar work definition for minimum Eligibility Criteria : NA, SN 2: Similar work definition for minimum Eligibility Criteria : "Work of material handling and/or cleaning for Indian Railways of Govt. of PSU" SN 3: Pest and Rodent Control work executed in Railway Coaches/Station premises, registered housing societies, warehouses, godowns & reputed hotels etc.
Note-1: The complete information along with tender booklet of above E-Tenders will be available/ uploaded since Date of publishing on IREPS website and shall be remained on Website www.ireps.gov.in up to 15:00 hrs on the due date of tender opening. 2-Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2008. 3-Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. 4-Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 5- This tender notice has been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. 6- Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Document Cost (TDC) in respect of e-Tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. For E-Tender at SN 1:- Any firm recognized by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) as "Startup" shall be exempted from payment of earnest money deposit detailed above. For E-Tender at SN 2 & 3:- MSMEs registered with District Industries Centres, Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Khadi and Village Industries Board, Coir Board, National Small Industries Corporation, Directorate of Handicraft and Handloom, and other body specified by Ministry of MSME for items tendered or Startups as recognised by Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion shall be exempted from payment of minimum EMD detailed in the bid and shall be supplied such tender document free of cost on confirmation (Xerox copy) of their evidence to this effect. 7-In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 8-Online E-Tender can be submitted up to 15.00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening. 681/20 (5)

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

INDIAN RAILWAYS
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)
E-Tender No. 2019RSI8743TC
CORRIGENDUM No. 2

1.0 Tender quantity of e-Tender No. 2019RSI8743TC may please be read as 1,11,183 Nos. CTRB instead of 37803 CTRBs.
2.0 Tender will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 13.07.2020.
3.0 All other terms and conditions of the tender will remain unchanged.

Director, Railway Stores (W),
Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, New Delhi 1410/20

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CHHATTISGARH RURAL ROAD DEVELOPMENT AGENCY PROJECT CIRCLE NO.01 JAGDALPUR

E-Procurement Tender Notice

NIT No. 144/TS 1242/CGRRDA/2020 Jagdalpur Date:-19/06/2020
Superintending Engineer, CGRRDA, Project Circle No.01 Jagdalpur, Distt. Bastar invites the percentage rate bids on SOR of PMGSY enforced from 22.02.2018 amended till date in electronic tendering system for B.T. Renewal with 5 years routine Maintenance and MOW/Patch Repair Works of Rural Roads constructed under PMGSY in Bastar and Dantewada districts for 18 number of roads (in 02 Packages) for length of 99.16 kms with Total Estimated construction Cost Rs. 516.84 lakhs from the eligible contractors registered with unified registration system in Chhattisgarh (e-registration). Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement : 25/06/2020 after 17:30 Hours. Last Date/Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement as per time schedule. For further details please log on to <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>. In future any related corrigendum would be seen in the notice section of the website.

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer
Chhattisgarh Rural Road Development Agency
Project Circle No.01 Jagdalpur Distt. Bastar
E mail ID:-circle1jdp@gmail.com
25761

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION OF CARDIAC CATHETERIZATION LAB SYSTEM dated : 24 June 2020
2302MS/Non Exp/2020-21

NOTICE INVITING AUCTION
Sealed bids are hereby invited from bidders having experience in auction of Medical Equipments. Auction of Medical belonging to ARMY HOSPITAL (RESEARCH & REFERRAL) DELHI CANTT-110010 "ONASIT WHERE BASIS".

| Description of Equipment | |
|--|---|
| Non-working NIV22DG/19388 Single Plane Flat Panel Digital Cardiac Catheterization Lab System Artis Zee Floor (S.N. 133380) | |
| Date & Time of submission of bid | 16 July 2020 up to 1400 Hrs |
| Date & Time of bid opening | 16 July 2020 at 1430 Hrs |
| Place of Auction | Depth of GI Surgery, Ground Floor, Army Hosp (R&R) Delhi Cantt-110010 |
| Earnest Money (EMD) | Rs 20,000.00 |

AUCTION TERM AND CONDITIONS

- Bid should be addressed to the Commandant, Army Hosp (R&R) Delhi Cantt-110010 indicating thereon "Auction of Cardiac Catheterization Lab System" and submitted to the office of DGLP Procurement Cell, CTVS building under sealed cover failing which bid shall be rejected.
- The persons interested to participate in the auction to purchase the scheduled asset shall deposit earnest money (EMD) of Rs. 20,000.00 by way of cash/DD drawn in favor of "Commandant Army Hospital (R & R) Delhi Cantt" and deposit the same with the authorized officer before commencement of auction. The persons who have deposited the EMD as above are alone eligible to participate in the auction.
- The eqpt would be sold "ON AS IT WHERE BASIS" condition to the bidder who offers highest price. However the Army Hospital (R & R) Delhi Cantt 110010 reserves its rights not to accept the bid or cancel the sale without assigning any reason. The successful bidder/purchaser will have to deposit 25% of the bid amount within 48 hrs from the date of auction itself, with the authorized officer and the balance amount within 15 days.
- If the 25% of the bid amount is not paid within 48 hrs from the date of auction itself or balance amount is not paid within 15 days or if the successful bidder fails to adhere to the terms of the sale, time or commits default in any manner, the earnest money deposit will be forfeited and the bank will be at liberty to sell the property again without any notice.
- The vendor/parties interested in bidding for the beyond economical repair (BER) equipments and items can inspect during office hrs between 0900 hrs to 1600 hrs on any working day after obtaining prior permission from the concerned authority of Army Hospital (R&R) Delhi Cantt 110010. (Lt Col Vivek Guleria Contact No- 7831078560) and obtain the list of BER equipments/items for which amount will be bidded.
- The bidder should quote in figures as well in words the amount of bid quoted by him alteration/overwriting unless legible attested by bidder shall disqualify the bid.
- Any action on the part of bidder to influence anybody in the said institute will be taken as an offence. He will not be allowed to participate in the auction and his bid will not be opened.
- All the liabilities regarding Taxes/levies if any, will be upon the successful bidder only.
- The selected bidder shall have to start lifting of auctioned items on very next day after depositing full bid amount and will clear the site within fifteen days failing which the EMD will be forfeited.
- Bidders submitting bids would be considered to have accepted all the terms and conditions. No enquiry verbal or written shall be entertained in respect of acceptance or rejections of the bid.
- Any damage to the property of Army Hosp (R&R) if noticed, due to the fault of successful bidder during lifting the items shall be recovered from the concerned bidder and the decision of the Commandant Army Hosp (R&R) shall be binding on the bidder.
- Bidders will read and understand the terms and condition of auction before bidding.
- The decision of the Commandant Army Hospital (R&R) Delhi Cantt 110010 regarding sale of the eqpt is final, binding and unquestionable and he reserves its right to cancel or postpone the sale without assigning any reason.

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
For Commandant
Army Hospital (R&R)

Date: 24 June 2020

WESTERN RAILWAY - AHMEDABAD DIVISION

VARIOUS ENGINEERING WORK
E-TENDER NOTICE NO. 8 YEAR 2020-21 DATE: 20.06.2020

| | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|
| 01 | e-Tender No. DRM-ADI-114-2020-21 | Name of Work Gandhidham colony - Annual maintenance contract for providing manpower for various day to day maintenance works at for one years. | Approximate NIT Cost Rs. 59,90,504.00 | EMD Cost Rs. 1,19,800.00 |
| 02 | e-Tender No. DRM-ADI-115-2020-21 | Name of Work All ordinary & miscellaneous repairs up to Rs. 5 Lakhs for Bridge Zone no. 21 of 2020-21 under Assistant Divisional Engineer-Palanpur, Divisional Engineer (North)-Ahmedabad's jurisdiction. (Re-invited) | Approximate NIT Cost Rs. 70,91,908.30 | EMD Cost Rs. 1,41,800.00 |
| 03 | e-Tender No. DRM-ADI-116-2020-21 | Name of Work Viramgam Samakhiali (SL & UP), CTR (P) = 14.458 Kms. | Approximate NIT Cost Rs. 44,26,669.87 | EMD Cost Rs. 3,72,600.00 |
| 04 | e-Tender No. DRM-ADI-117-2020-21 | Name of Work Jhund Samakhiali Section : Supply of potable drinking water by road tanker at station Vedavliya, Khakhrechi, Maliya Miyana, Indirangar, Surbari, Wadhava, Katarhiya, LC NO 67, LC 68, LC70, LC71, LC 73, LC 75, LC 76, LC 79, LC 80, LC 82, LC 84, LC 85, LC 86, LC 87, LC 88, LC 90, LC 91, LC 93, LC 95, LC 97, LC 98, LC 99, LC 100, LC 103, LC104, LC 105, LC107, LC 108, LC 110, LC 112, LC 113 (for two year) (Re-invited) | Approximate NIT Cost Rs. 45,62,671.55 | EMD Cost Rs. 91,300.00 |
| 05 | e-Tender No. DRM-ADI-118-2020-21 | Name of Work Ahmedabad Viramgam Jhund Samakhia Section: Supply of potable drinking water by road tanker on LC No 11 B to 40 and gate quarter of Ahmedabad Viramgam section and Jhund station & LC No 1 between VG-JN at Km 563/12-13 and manned LC No 14, LC 15, LC 17, LC20, LC21, LC23, LC24, LC25, LC26, LC29, LC33, LC34, LC36, LC38, LC40, LC41, LC 44, LC45, LC46, LC47, LC48A, LC48C, LC51, LC52, LC54, LC55, LC56, LC57, LC58, LC59, LC60, LC61, LC 62, LC63, LC64, LC65 & LC 66 of Jhund Samakhiali section under jurisdiction of Divisional Engineer (West) Ahmedabad (for two year). | Approximate NIT Cost Rs. 20,81,289.91 | EMD Cost Rs. 41,600.00 |
| 06 | e-Tender No. DRM-ADI-119-2020-21 | Name of Work Hiring of Truck for maintenance of track for Senior Section Engineer (P-way) Katosran Road under jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Engineer Viramgam (for Two years). | Approximate NIT Cost Rs. 22,14,398.82 | EMD Cost Rs. 44,300.00 |
| Closing date & time of e-tender | | Date: 21.07.2020 Time: 15:00 Hrs | | |
| Opening date & time of e-tender | | Date: 21.07.2020 Time: 15:30 Hrs | | |
| Office Address | | Sr. Divisional Engineer(coordination)-Ahemdabad, D.R.M. Office, Near Chaudamba Bridge, opposite New Swadeshi Mill, Naroda Road, Amdapura, Ahmedabad-382345 | | |
| Website for participating e-tender | | www.ireps.gov.in ADI-53 | | |
| Like us on | | Facebook: www.facebook.com/WesternRly Twitter: www.twitter.com/WesternRly | | |

परिचालन विद्युत वितरण निगम लि.
लिथि विस्तार सूचना

इस कार्यालय द्वारा आमंत्रित की गयी अतिअल्पकालीन निविदा संख्या- 21 व 22/ वि. कार्यशाला मं/ मेरठ/ 20-21, जो दिनांक 25.06.2020 को खोली जानी प्रस्तावित थी, की लिथि किन्हीं अपरिहार्य कारणों से दिनांक 29.06.2020 तक विस्तारित की जाती है। अन्य नियम एवं शर्त अपरिवर्तनीय रहेगी। अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत कार्यशाला मण्डल, पंचवि.नि.लि. मेरठ पत्रांक 1327/ वि. कार्यशाला मं/ मेरठ दिनांक 22.06.2020

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Open Tender through E-Tendering 2020
NIT No. : 13-LWS-OPN-FSA-2020.
Name of work : Fire & life safety Audit of Diesel Loco & Wagon Workshop North Western Railway Ajmer (As per scope of work). Estimated cost of work : Rs. 4,72,500.00/- Earnest Money to be deposited : Rs. 9500/- (Only through net banking or payment gateway on IREPS Portal). Last Date and time for submission and opening of E-Tender : 17.07.2020 up to 15:00 PM E-Tender will be opened at 15.15 PM on same day. Due to indispensable reasons bid opening schedule may change.. Website particular where complete details of e-tender can be seen and participated : www.ireps.gov.in 597-SP/20
Please join us on www.facebook.com/NWRRailways

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER CONSTRUCTION DIVISION, U.P. JAL NIGAM, BAGHPAT CORRIGENDUM

Letter No. 877/निं-एटी Date : 23.05.2020
U.P. Jal Nigam, online percentage Rate E-tenders were invited "for making house connection in different villages of District Baghpat under Jal Jeevan Mission" through Letter No.-780 / निंवि 6 / 61 Date: 05-05-2020 Terms and Condition at Serial no 18 of the NIT is "The amount of work awarded to L 1 bidder is at least 25% of the work. If L2 and so on bidders agreed to do so on the same quoted rate of L 1 bidder, then remaining work will be distributed among them" with reference to this condition it is inform that mentioned condition at Serial no 18 is null void and i.e. L 1 will execute whole work under particular package. In addition to that, due to unavoidable circumstance following important dates have been revised. Date for :- (1) Uploading Bid document at website : 27.06.2020 at 17:00 hrs. (2) Submission of E-tender fee/ Earnest money would be deposited by RTGS : 27.06.2020 to 05.07.2020 at 15:00 hrs. (3) Online submission of e-bids : 27.06.2020 to 06.07.2020 at 10:00 hrs. (4) Opening of technical bid for pre-qualification : 06.07.2020 at 12:00 hrs.

उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार
सूचना एवं जन सम्पर्क विभाग (सोशल मीडिया)
संख्या: 04/सू.प्र.स.वि. (सो.प्र.)-701/2020
लखनऊ, दिनांक: 23 जून, 2020
ई निविदा सूचना (सूचित काल)

उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार के विकास कार्य के प्रचार-प्रसार एवं ग्राहिक के लिए प्रशिक्षण बी.आर. एन.सी. के चयन हेतु पंजीकृत फर्मों से प्राप्त ई-निविदा अनिवार्य दिनांक 24.06.2020 के अपरान्त 12.00 बजे से दिनांक 30.06.2020 के अपरान्त 03.00 बजे तक ई-टेंडरिंग की वेबसाइट <http://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड/अपलोड की जा सकती है। ई-निविदा को तकनीकी बिड दिनांक 01.07.2020 को अपरान्त 03.00 बजे तक निविदा योग्यता के साथ, निविदापत्राज्ञा की उपस्थिति, अनुपस्थिति में सूचना निदेशालय, 6-पाक रोड बलरवाली, लखनऊ में खोली जाएगी।
ई-निविदा मूल्य रुपये 100000/- का डिमांड ड्राफ्ट तथा अनैट मनी रुपये 05.00 लाख डीडी/एफडीआर/बीवीसी के रूप में निदेशक, सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, लखनऊ के पास में देय होना। ई-निविदा को हार्ड कॉपी डीडी/एफडीआर/बीवीसी मूलरूप में सूचना निदेशालय, लखनऊ में तकनीकी बिड खोले जाने से पूर्व जमा करना अनिवार्य होगा।
ई-निविदा से संबंधित विस्तृत विवरण, निविदा प्रश्न, नियम एवं शर्त वेबसाइट <http://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। निविदापत्र के पास सर्टिफाइड डिजिटल सिग्नेचर (DSC) होना अनिवार्य है। किसी भी प्रकार के चार्ज-रिवार्ड की दशा में न्याय क्षेत्र लखनऊ होगा। ई-निविदा को ऑफिश एल एवं फर्म: निरस्त करने का अधिकार सूचना निदेशक के पास सुरक्षित होगा।
हस्ता./- (सिहिर)
सूचना निदेशक

आर.ओ. संख्या- 152768 दिनांक: 23.06.2020
www.upgov.nic.in

DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS KULGAM (J&K) KASHMIR
Phone/Fax No. 01932160253 E-mail: dpokulgam@jkpolice.gov.in

e-Tender No. 02 of 2020
Dated: 17.06.2020

Subject: e-tendering for supply of defense material, Building Material and stores.

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K Union Territory, Superintendent of Police Kulgam invites e-tenders from Suppliers/ Authorized Dealers, Registered Firms and manufactures for supply of **defense material, building material and stores**.

- The NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in from 19.06.2020 (1000 hrs.).
- The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above website from 19.06.2020 (1000 hrs.) to 29.06.2020 (1600 hrs.).
- The bid uploaded on the web Site up to due date and time will be opened on 30.06.2020 (1100 hrs.) or any other convenient date in the Office of SP Kulgam.
- The intending bidders should keep a check on bid website for any change in quantity/quality/specifications/ terms and conditions, if any.
- The Tenders should be accompanied with CDR worth 1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lac only), cost of Tender documents worth Rs. 3,000/- pledge Accounts Officer District Police Kulgam.

Sd/- (Gurinderpal Singh- IPS)
Superintendent of Police, District Kulgam.

No. Accnts/E-tender/2020/23299-304
Dated: 17.06.2020 DIPK-NB-873

कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, केन्द्रीय भण्डार
उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान
जल भवन, 'बी' ब्लॉक, नेहरू कॉलोनी, देहरादून

पत्रांक 151 / ई-निविदा / 2020-21 **ई-निविदा सूचना** दिनांक 23.06.2020

उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान की ओर से केन्द्रीय भण्डार, देहरादून द्वारा निम्न कार्यों हेतु ई-निविदा, टू-बिड सिस्टम (तकनीकी बिड एवं कॉमिशियल बिड) आधार पर निम्नानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती है।

| निविदा सं. | कार्य विवरण | घरघर धनराशि रु. | निविदा प्रश्न डाउनलोड करने की तिथि एवं समय | ई-निविदा द्वारा निविदा प्रश्न जमा करने की तिथि एवं समय | तकनीकी बिड खोले जाने की तिथि एवं समय | निविदा की वैधता | बि-बिड सीटिंग की तिथि एवं समय |
|--|---|-----------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 7 | Item दर अनुबन्ध पर, SITC of Energy Efficient Centrifugal Pumpssets at MPS Dev Nagar and IPS 1 st Bhandar Gaon Pumping Stations under Chamba Pumping W/s Scheme, Distt. Tehri Garhwal. | 1,50,000.00 | 25.06.2020 from 11.00 am | 06.07.2020 upto 5.00 p.m. | 07.07.2020 at 11.00 a.m. | 90 Days | 30.06.2020 at 11.00 a.m. |
| अर्हता:— Only manufacturers or dealer authorised by manufacturer for this tender and who have experience in supply and installation of Energy Efficient Centrifugal Pump set of required duties and efficiency are allowed to take part in the tender. | | | | | | | |
| 8 | Item दर अनुबन्ध पर, SITC of Energy Efficient Centrifugal Pumpssets at MPS Dev Nagar, IPS 1 st Chhopriyali, IPS 2 nd Sabli and IPS 3 rd Pant Nagar Pumping Stations under Ranichori Pumping W/s Scheme, Distt. Tehri Garhwal. | 2,00,000.00 | 25.06.2020 from 11.00 am | 06.07.2020 upto 5.00 p.m. | 07.07.2020 at 11.00 a.m. | 90 Days | 30.06.2020 at 11.00 a.m. |
| अर्हता:— Only manufacturers or dealer authorised by manufacturer for this tender and who have experience in supply and installation of Energy Efficient Centrifugal Pump set of required duties and efficiency are allowed to take part in the tender. | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Item दर अनुबन्ध पर, SITC of Energy Efficient Centrifugal Pumpssets at IPS Ind Kutha Pumping Station under New Tehri Pumping W/s Scheme, Distt. Tehri Garhwal. | 1,81,000.00 | 25.06.2020 from 11.0 | | | | |



GOLD

₹48,931



RUPEE

₹75.66



OIL

\$43.19



SILVER

₹49,548

Note: Gold, silver rates at spot market in Delhi; gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Brent crude as of 2300 IST

TRADE WATCH
IMPORTSAmid border tension,
Chinese consignments
face Customs hurdle
at Chennai, MumbaiAANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

AMID THE ongoing border dispute between India and China, import consignments from the neighbouring country at ports such as Chennai and Mumbai are learnt to be facing hurdles, with clearances being held up by the Indian Customs authorities. The disruption in clearances is reported to have emerged over the last fortnight, even as there are no written or verbal instructions from the customs authorities or the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), three persons aware of the development said.

It is understood that the Customs authorities have hinted at delays without citing any specific reason to the importers. A Chennai-based importer said the Customs officials have advised not to deliver any container that has arrived from China, even if Out of Charge (OOC) order for clearance has been issued.

Customs clearance involves several procedures and in case no discrepancy is found in the consignment after examination, then 'Out of Charge' order is issued for the clearance of the goods from the custom area. A Mumbai-based industry source said that clearances are being skipped for Chinese consignments, especially non-essential goods. "Certain categories of goods from China are taking more time to get cleared since customs authorities are not immediately checking those containers. They have categorised goods as essentials and non-essentials and the containers with non-essentials have been pushed into the background for examination at a later day. So they are not saying that we won't examine but not giving it importance as imported items from other countries," the person said. Since the consumption pat-

WHAT IS HAPPENING?

The disruption in clearances is reported to have emerged over the last fortnight, even as there are no written or verbal instructions from the Customs authorities or the CBIC, sources said.

tern won't change immediately, the delay in clearances especially for non-essential goods such as toys, electrical equipment are being seen as a nudge for importers to change their import pattern from China. "There is nothing direct about the instructions from customs authorities. But the implicit message for importers is that importing non-essentials will take longer for clearances. It has taken some days for the importers to realise the reasons for the held up consignments. With the delays in Customs clearances, the demurrage charges will go up, and it is likely to offset the gains from the imports from China for such importers, thus, disincentivising them," the source said.

A senior official in the Chennai Customs zone said Customs authorities examine certain types of cargo based on intelligence inputs as part of routine inspection and some of the import consignments under question are from China. Queries e-mailed to the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) and Ministry of Finance on this issue went unanswered till press time.

Possible curbs on imports from China in the form of tariff or non-tariff barriers are being discussed with the government said to be considering a list of imported items for the various restrictive measures. China accounts for around 14 per cent of India's total imports.

CENTRE TO SET UP TRAVEL BUBBLES BETWEEN COUNTRIES

US curbs repatriation flights: Govt says
examining American carriers' requestsPRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

FACED WITH allegations levelled by the US that the Indian government has permitted Air India to fly commercial passengers on out-bound legs of repatriation flights, while not permitting US airlines to operate flights to India, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said Tuesday it was in negotiations with various countries to establish "travel bubbles" or unrestricted corridors between countries, including the US. Accusing India of being "unfair" and engaging in "discriminatory practices", the US Department of Transportation (DOT) has restricted repatriation flights being operated by Air India, saying that the national airline will need specific authorisation from the department to conduct such flights.

"... Effective 30 days from the service date of this Order, it shall

AI Express seeks nod to
fly passengers to Dubai
on Vande Bharat flights

New Delhi: Following a statement by the Dubai government allowing foreign nationals holding residency visas issued in Dubai to return to the emirate starting June 22 and tourists from overseas beginning July 7, Indian low-cost airline Air India Express has approached the authorities there seeking permission to fly passengers from India to Dubai on the out-bound legs of Vande Bharat flights there. **ENS**

not perform any Third- and/or Fourth-Freedom charter flights unless the Department has granted it specific authority in the form of a statement of authorisation to conduct such charters," the

US DOT said in an order dated June 22. The main contention of the US administration is that Air India is flying commercial passengers on flights to the US without the Indian government allowing US airlines to operate in a similar fashion.

The order also noted that on May 26, Delta Air Lines requested formal permission from the Indian authorities to perform repatriation charter services similar to those provided by Air India. To date, Delta has not received approval to perform the requested repatriation charters, the US DOT said. Further, the US government registered its objections with the Indian government through engagement by the US Embassy in New Delhi on May 28. However, it said the Indian government "has thus far failed to remedy the situation".

Responding to the accusations, the Civil Aviation Ministry said in a statement: "We have received requests from concerned authorities in several countries in-

cluding the US, France, Germany among others requesting that their air carriers be allowed to participate in the transportation of passengers along the line being conducted by Air India under Vande Bharat Mission. These requests are being examined".

It added: "We have also had one round of negotiations with the US on June 15, with representatives of the US Department of Transportation and the US Embassy on this issue. They were invited to submit precise proposals in this respect. A communication has now been received on June 19, 2020 detailing these requests".

The concept of travel bubbles was first proposed by countries like New Zealand that managed to contain the COVID-19 outbreak and wished to establish corridors between their home state and the country that has also been able to deal with the pandemic.

"As we move from controlled

Govt imposes
anti-dumping
duty on certain
steel products
from China,
S Korea, VietnamENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE GOVERNMENT Tuesday imposed anti-dumping duties for five years on the imports of flat rolled and plated steel or those coated with aluminum and zinc alloy from China, Vietnam and South Korea. The duty was imposed after the Directorate General of Trade Remedies was convinced that these countries had been exporting the products to India "below its associated normal value". This means the countries were exporting the items at prices lower than their own markets.

The duty ranges from \$13.07 to \$173.10 per metric tonne. In a separate notification, the Finance Ministry exempted certain products from Customs duties in excess of the 15-50 per cent in-quota tariff rates imposed on them.

COVID IMPACT

'Inequality gap to narrow
down post pandemic'

Post the COVID-19 pandemic, the inequality gap in the country will narrow down, as income of rich states is likely to decline more than the poor states, according to an SBI research report - Ecowarp



AT ALL INDIA LEVEL, per capita income (PCI), which is a measure of the earnings per person in a nation or geographic region, will decline by 5.4 per cent in FY21 to Rs 1.43 lakh

Outlook on recovery: The country will clearly have a 'statistical V-shaped recovery / Swoosh' in FY22 primarily due to favourable base effect

WORST HIT: In Delhi (-15.4 per cent) and Chandigarh (-13.9 per cent), the decline in PCI is almost thrice than the decline at all India levels (-5.4 per cent)

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: The nationwide lockdown has led to layoffs and salary cuts in various segments. This is expected to result in a reduction in income levels of people and lower consumer spending and a decline in GDP. The Centre and industry will have to gear up to bring per capita income of people to growth trajectory again

Source: SBI Research/PTI

Irdai allows
short-term
COVID policies
of 3-11 monthsENSECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JUNE 23

THE INSURANCE Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) on Tuesday allowed health and general insurers to offer short-term health insurance policies of three months to 11 months that will give coverage against the COVID-19 infection.

"Short-term policies may be issued for a minimum term of three months to a maximum term of eleven months. In between three months and eleven months, the policy term shall be in multiples of completed months," it said while issuing the guidelines. However, a policy term less than three months is not permitted. Irdai asked the insurers to devise inclusive short-term health insurance products "where waiting periods are part of the product, such waiting period shall not exceed 15 days." "It is considered that short-term health insurance policies providing coverage specific to COVID-19 is the need of the hour," it said.

Production of
crude oil falls
7.1%, natural gas
by 16% in May
on virus impactENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

INDIA'S CRUDE oil and natural gas production last month May fell by 7.1 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively, compared to May 2019 due to the impact of COVID-19 on production of ONGC, Oil India and private producers of oil and natural gas, as per data released by the Petroleum Ministry on Tuesday.

Total crude oil production in May was 2,602.4 thousand metric tonnes (TMT), 3.5 per cent lower than the production target of 2695.6 TMT. Total natural gas output stood at 2,300 million metric standard cubic metres (MMSCM), 11.32 per cent below the monthly production target of 2,593.7 MMSCM. Lower crude oil production was largely a result of a fall in the output of private sector firms producing crude under production sharing contracts.

BRIEFLY

Petrol, diesel
rates hiked

New Delhi: Petrol price was hiked by 20 paise per litre and diesel by 55 paise.

L&T to cut down
on China products

New Delhi: L&T said it is committed to reducing dependence on imported products from China.

Adani Power to
buy into OPGC

New Delhi: Adani Power will acquire The AES Corporation's 49 per cent stake in Odisha Power Generation Corporation for \$135 million.

NAA on
Whirlpool of India

New Delhi: The NAA has found Whirlpool of India guilty of not passing on GST rate cut benefits. **PTI**

J&J damages
cut to \$2.12 bn

New York: AUS court rejected J&J's bid to throw out a jury verdict in favour of women who blamed their cancer on its talc products, but reduced damages to \$2.12 billion.

Wirecard ex-boss
Braun arrested

Munich: Wirecard's former boss, Markus Braun, has been arrested on suspicion of falsifying its accounts. **REUTERS**

DHFL auditor reports fair value loss
of ₹18,853 cr, ICD dues of ₹3,786 croreGEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, JUNE 23

THE AUDITOR of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation (DHFL), which is under moratorium, has reported a fair value loss of Rs 18,853 crore as of March 2020, mismatch of Rs 3,018 crore and stated that recoverability of inter-corporate deposits (ICDs) of Rs 3,786.24 crore "is yet to be ascertained".

According to the auditor, KK Mankeshwar & Co, DHFL's wholesale loan portfolio aggregating Rs 49,585 crore (after classification of this portfolio to "held for sale" in the previous year ended March 2019) has been "fair valued" as of March 2020 at Rs 30,732 crore, with the resulting fair value loss aggregating Rs 18,853 crore. "Out of this, fair value loss aggregating to Rs 5,986 crore has been accounted up to December 2019 and balance loss of Rs 12,867 crore

"The process of identifying and mapping of this amount to any scheme under which they were disbursed and further steps to be taken basis findings, are being addressed as a part of CIRP and the same is underway,"

KK MANKESHWAR & CO

has been charged to the statement of profit and loss for the quarter ended March 2020," it said.

On November 20, 2019, the RBI superseded the board of directors of DHFL — managed by the Wadhawans — owing to governance concerns and defaults in meeting various payment obligations and appointed an Administrator to run the company. Subsequently, the National Company Law Tribunal (Mumbai Bench) ad-

mitted the application filed by the RBI and commenced insolvency process of the company under IBC.

The auditor said there's a mismatch amounting to Rs 3,018 crore that is yet to be identified and mapped to individual parties. "The process of identifying and mapping of this amount to any scheme under which they were disbursed and further steps to be taken basis findings, are being addressed as a part of CIRP and the same is underway," it said.

DHFL has reported a loss of Rs 13,575 crore (including comprehensive income) during the year ended March 2020. This has rendered it unable to comply with regulatory requirements of the National Housing Bank (NHB) in respect of the net owned fund, which also resulted in multiple contraventions of the provisions of NHB Act, 1987 and guidelines.

Full report on www.indianexpress.com

Compliance
norms for
FPIs relaxed

New Delhi: Relaxing compliance requirement for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs), Sebi Tuesday allowed scanned copies of documents for renewing registration till August 31. Earlier, this relaxation was given till June 30. **PTI**

preferential issue in such eligible companies will be exempt from making an open offer if the acquisition is beyond the pre-

EXPLAINED
E.
Aim is to help raising capital

THE FRAMEWORK is aimed at helping stressed companies raise capital through timely financial intervention.

scribed threshold or if the open offer is warranted due to change in control in terms of takeover regulations.

Rural jobs rise,
unemployment
rate eases to
pre-lockdown
level: CMIEENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE in the country has eased to pre-lockdown single-digit level of 8.5 per cent, with significant improvement seen in rural unemployment rate to 7.3 per cent in the week ended June 21 from 10.96 per cent a week ago due to better Kharif sowing and higher MGNREGA activities, data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) showed.

Unemployment rate had peaked to 27.1 per cent in the week ended May 3 and then it moderated to 20 per cent in the last week of May. In the first three weeks of June, the unemployment rate dropped sharply to 17.5 per cent, then 11.6 per cent and now 8.5 per cent, the CMIE said.

The main reason for the easing unemployment rate is in rural India, which "may see bigger gains in the months to come or at least sustain the current gains", the agency said.

"While relaxation of the lockdown has helped in alleviating the unemployment stress in general, rural India has apparently gained by the massive sudden increase in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) activities and also by a sharp increase in Kharif sowing this year," it said.

The person-days of jobs created in May 2020 shot up to 565 million, 53 per cent higher than the 370 million person-days of jobs created under the scheme in May 2019 or 2.55 times the average monthly person-days of jobs created in 2019-20.

FinMin: Govt taking structural reforms
to support green shoots in economyENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE FINANCE Ministry Tuesday said various indicators suggest that the Indian economy has started recovering and that the Centre is taking more structural reforms to support the 'green shoots'.

It presented select data points including wheat procurement, railway freight traffic, toll collections and fertiliser sales among others to indicate that the economy is recovering from the slump induced by the economic lockdown to prevent the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. Analysts and various economists, however, expect India to record a steep contraction in GDP in the April-June quarter and experience a recession this year after a long gap.

"Agricultural sector remains the foundation of the Indian economy and with a forecast of a normal monsoon, should support the rebooting of the Indian Economy. Though the GDP contribution of the sector may not be very large (in relation to Industry and Services), its growth has a very positive

India 3rd largest
economy on PPP
basis for 2017

New Delhi: India has retained and consolidated its position as the third-largest economy after China and the US in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) for 2017, said the government on Tuesday quoting the World Bank data. "India is also third-largest economy in terms of its PPP-based share in global actual individual consumption and global gross capital formation," an NSO release said. **PTI**

mal monsoon, should support the rebooting of the Indian Economy. Though the GDP contribution of the sector may not be very large (in relation to Industry and Services), its growth has a very positive

₹4,985 cr assistance given
to construction workersENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

OVER 2.5 crore building and other construction workers (BOCW) across India received cash assistance of Rs 4,958 crore during the lockdown against COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Labour & Employment said on Tuesday.

Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu and Puducherry were the regions that did not provide any cash relief to construction workers during the same period, data released by the Ministry showed.

Among these six states/UTs, Bihar and Puducherry did not pro-

vide any cash relief to these workers, while Chhattisgarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu provided food packages only.

About 1.75 crore transactions were done directly into the bank accounts of the workers through direct benefit transfer. Apart from cash benefits ranging from Rs 1,000 to Rs 6,000 per worker during the lockdown, some states like Karnataka also provided food and ration to workers. According to the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996, a cess is levied and collected at the rate of 1 per cent of the cost of construction by the state governments.

Sensex rallies
519 points on
global cues,
capital inflows

Mumbai: Stock markets and the rupee Tuesday gained ground on capital inflows and strong global cues, amid indications of a steady recovery in the economy of many countries. The Sensex rallied by 519 points to 35,430.43 and the NSE Nifty index rose 160 points to 10,471 despite the US ban on H-1B visas. The rupee closed 37 paise higher at 75.66 against the dollar after trading in the range of 75.64 to 75.89 during the day.

The news of disengagement between India and China, after days of heated arguments, relieved market participants. **ENS**

SPORT

Burnley issues apology for plane flying crude banner

Burnley apologised and vowed to hand out lifetime bans to those responsible for an aircraft flying over Etihad Stadium during the English Premier League match against Manchester City, trailing a banner that read "White Lives Matter Burnley".

Novak tests positive for Covid-19 Govt considers salary cut for foreign coaches; federations up in arms

Djokovic and wife tested on return to Belgrade from Adria Tour

SHAHID JUDGE
MUMBAI, JUNE 23

"OH BOY." Eight minutes after Patrick McEnroe's tweet, Nick Kyrgios, posted the exact same message. But the Australian's "Oh boy" was attached to a news headline that read: "World No. 1 Novak Djokovic has tested positive for coronavirus."

Before last Sunday, it seemed that tennis had isolated itself from the virus successfully. After all, there was just one case of an active player, when Brazilian youngster Thiago Seyboth Wild tested positive just before lockdown. Since the weekend though, there have been four more players, and Djokovic has become the most high profile athlete across sports to be infected. "The moment we arrived in Belgrade, we went to be tested. My result is positive, just as Jelena's (his wife), while the results of our children are negative," the Serb said. "Everything we did in the past month, we did with a pure heart and sincere intentions.

"We organised the tournament at the moment when the virus has weakened, believing that the conditions for hosting the Tour had been met. Unfortunately, the virus is still present, and it is a new reality that we are still learning to cope and live with. I am hoping things will ease with time so we can all resume lives the way they were. I am extremely sorry for each individual case of infection.

"I hope that it will not complicate anyone's health situation and that everyone will be fine. I will remain in self-isolation for the next 14 days, and repeat the test in five days."

Crucially, the four new positive cases in tennis – which includes Djokovic, former world No. 3 Grigor Dimitrov, world No. 33 Borna Coric and former world No. 12 Viktor Troicki – have come after the players took part in Djokovic's charity exhibition event, the Adria Tour.

Interestingly, Djokovic, who has been vocal against vaccinations or even being tested, did not get his test done until after he travelled back to Serbia. The event was designed to be played as two-day events across four different countries, starting with Belgrade, Serbia, then the most recent one in Zadar, Croatia. But the final of the Zadar leg was cancelled, and the Adria Tour, on Tuesday evening, called off the rest of the tournament.

The charity exhibition event has been heav-



Novak Djokovic has become the most high-profile athlete across sports to be infected. Reuters

ily criticised as no restrictions were put in place.

The players – the likes of Djokovic, world No. 3 Dominic Thiem (who won the first leg in Belgrade), world No. 7 Alexander Zverev, world No. 14 Andrey Rublev and 2014 US Open champion Marin Cilic – engaged in exhibition basketball and football matches, attended after-parties, and spectators were neither required to maintain social distancing, nor wear masks.

Criticism for Djokovic however, had started much before the Adria Tour launched. The 17-time Grand Slam champion had initially been critical over the US Open organisers' proposals of hosting the major with heavy restrictions.

The 33-year-old called them "extreme" and "impossible." He was particularly worried that only one member of support staff would be allowed through the tournament. On Friday, however, he changed his stance, saying he was "extremely happy" with the arrangements.

Meanwhile he defended the Adria Tour, saying, "We followed the rules and measures laid down by the government and public health institutions from day one. We didn't cross the line. We went through all these processes, and the overall result was fantastic."

It wasn't till Sunday however, around 30 minutes before the final of the second leg in Zadar, between Djokovic and Rublev, that things started to unravel. Dimitrov, who had pulled out of the second leg, announced that he had tested positive for the virus. The final

EIGHT MORE MEMBERS TEST POSITIVE, BUT PCB INSISTS ENGLAND TOUR IS ON

Kolkata: Pakistan's tour of England is on, insists PCB, even as eight more members of the touring party – seven players and a support staff – tested positive for coronavirus. Fakhar Zaman, Imran Khan, Kashif Bhatti, Mohammad Hafeez, Mohammad Hasnain, Mohammad Rizwan and Wahab Riaz, and masseur Malang Ali tested positive.

This came on top of three Covid positive results – Haider Ali, Haris Rauf and Shadab Khan – yesterday. In an extended 29-member squad, 10 players have now been sent to self-isolation, although apart from Rizwan, others aren't Test regulars.

"The tour to England is on track and the side will depart as per schedule on 28 June. Fortunately, all the first-choice red-ball squad, barring Mohammad Rizwan, are negative, which means they can start training immediately after they have been tested and given the all clear when they arrive in England," PCB chief executive Wasim Khan said. **ENS**

was suspended as a precaution.

When "around 100 people were tested," according to tournament director Djordje Djokovic (Novak's younger brother) who was quoted by *Reuters*, Coric, Djokovic's fitness trainer Marko Paniki and Dimitrov's coach Kristijan Groh came positive. Troicki, who played at the Belgrade event but did not travel to Zadar also tested positive.

The new cases are bound to change the way organisers of the US Open and French Open – the latter especially, since they made it clear they will hold the major with fans allowed in the stadium – will go about staging their respective events when the tour restarts in August. In another Twitter post on Tuesday, McEnroe had some advice to offer.

"We know that there's nothing fool-proof in our return in any walk of life, to normal life, after this or during this virus," he says. "Nothing is fool-proof, but don't be foolish."

MIHIR VASAVDA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE GOVERNMENT is considering a salary cut for the foreign coaching staff and high-performance directors working with various national teams owing to the economic crisis brought about by the pandemic. The 'thought' was put forward during an e-meeting between sports minister Kiren Rijiju and top federation officials on Tuesday.

However, it was opposed unanimously by the sports bodies, who argued that such a move could see a mass exodus of coaches in an Olympic year. The federations have, instead, demanded that the contracts of the coaches be extended till 2022 since India will be competing in three major events in a span of 12 months, starting with the 2021 Olympics followed by the 2022 Commonwealth and Asian Games.

The Sports Authority of India (SAI) has close to 40 foreign coaches and high-performance directors on its payroll, with salaries ranging from \$4,000 per month to as high as \$15,000 per month.

Almost every Olympic team has a foreign coach attached to it. Contracts of all foreigners are set to expire on August 31, since that was initially the end of the Olympic cycle before the Tokyo Games got postponed.

Budget cut

With the Olympics now likely to take place from July 23 to August 8, 2021, the federations are seeking extensions for the coaches. A federation official said negotiations are already underway and the sports ministry's suggestion took them by surprise.

The government even hinted at a budget cut for sporting activities.

"It was a conversation. It is a thought within the government that because of the current economic situation in the country, there should be a salary cut for the foreign coaching staff. They shared their thought with us. However, we rejected any such idea," an official present at the meeting said.

According to the official, the federations told the ministry that even a tiny reduction could see the coaches leave the

RFI launches probe after 22 rowers fail dope test

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

THE ROWING Federation of India (RFI) on Tuesday launched an investigation into the failed dope tests of 22 junior national team scullers as the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) called for the body to 'introspect'.

The rowers, all aged under 18, tested positive for probenecid, a drug used to treat gout. Probenecid is slotted as a masking agent banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency. Their samples were collected in July last year during a training camp in Hyderabad. Pointing at the 11-month gap between sample collection and test results, RFI secretary MV Sriram said a procedural lapse could not be ruled out.

However, NADA director general Navin Agarwal dismissed the theory. "That (the 11-month gap) does not matter. It happened because soon after we collected the samples, the National Dope Testing Laboratory was suspended and we had to send the samples to a laboratory outside India," Agarwal said. "What is important is that 22 rowers have tested positive. The federation should introspect and find out what went wrong."

The rowers have waived off their right to get their B samples tested since that process will be carried out in Doha, where their urine samples were analysed. For a B sample test, athletes have to be present

themselves and the international travel restrictions rule out that possibility.

The federation, however, has defended the rowers and said the failed tests could possibly be because of contaminated supplements. "It has to be the food supplements used which has resulted in 22 positive cases out of the 32 tested. We are also perplexed by the findings. All due procedures will be followed and we will find out what went wrong," Sriram said.

The administrator added that the supplements consumed by the rowers were recommended by the coaches and approved by Sports Authority of India. The athletes were included in the national training camp following their performances in last year's Khelo India Games, Sriram said.

Agarwal did not rule out contamination of supplements. "I don't know who has given this argument but it could be one of the possibilities. At the same time, they may not have taken due care in selecting the supplement. The federation has to examine what went wrong," he said.

Since probenecid falls under the 'specified substance' category of the WADA, the rowers could escape with a lenient sanction and not the four-year ban imposed otherwise. WADA defines prohibited substances as 'specified' and 'non-specified' to 'recognise that it is possible for a substance to enter an athlete's body inadvertently.'

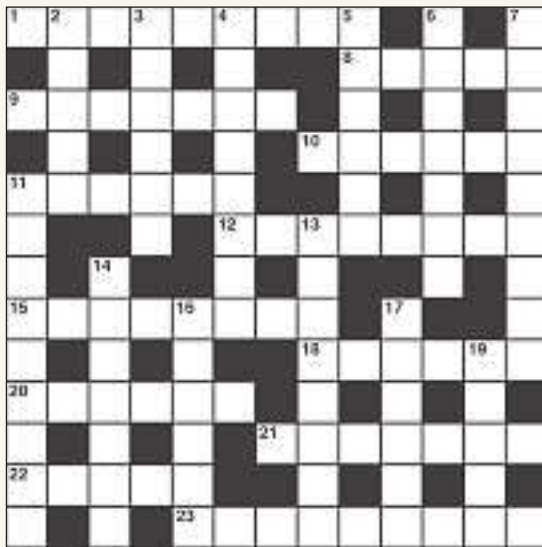
country and make it nearly difficult for them to find a decent replacement in such a short period.

"This is a time when the government has to support the federations and announce bailout packages even for them since a lot of sports will find it tough to get corporate sponsorship. If they can't do that, they should at least not take away what we have. If a coach leaves us now, how will we get a replacement so close to the Olympics and that too at a lower budget?" another official reasoned.

Tuesday's meeting was attended by Rijiju, sports secretary Ravi Mittal, Sports Authority of India director general Sandip Pradhan as well as presidents and secretary generals of the Indian Olympic Association and 15 Olympic disciplines.

The federations have also been asked to plan their calendars and consider the possibilities of having domestic tournaments. It is learnt that a few federations are planning to organise tournaments September onwards if the coronavirus situation improves by then.

CROSSWORD 4152



ACROSS

- People are known to hit them (9)
- A rope-spinning display on stage (5)
- SOS from freemasons for a privileged citizen (7)
- An intriguing arrangement? (6)
- Soft illumination produces a difficult situation (6)
- I am conclusively shown to be better (8)
- I plan too haphazardly but it's a matter of choice (8)
- Cathy's disorganised craft (6)
- Bills going to one receiving a shrub (6)
- Red wines turn scarlet (7)
- They have a central meeting place (5)
- A fruit centre in a turmoil (9)

DOWN

- Enter the lists? (5)
- Profoundly improve a channel of communication (6)
- Doing nothing but fighting (8)
- Possibly score a hundred in football (6)
- Book store? (7)
- They mark time (9)
- Play records with swank (8)
- Versatile languages master? (8)
- Leaves high and dry on beaches (7)
- Dress I put on about spring (6)
- Does he play for scratch teams? (6)
- Giant bird on a pole (5)

Solutions Crossword 4151: Across: 1 Buffalo, 4 Rumba, 7 Gull, 9 In camera, 10 Emigration, 12 Uplift, 13 Hanson, 15 Disbelieve, 18 Only just, 19 Rise, 20 Madam, 21 Shelley, Down: 1 Bugle, 2 Fallible, 3 Ornate, 4 Reasonable, 5 Mien, 6 Anagram, 9 Traffic jam, 11 Especial, 12 Uniform, 14 Abuses, 16 Elegy, 17 Clod.

JUMBLLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

Either write something worth reading or _something worth _____. - Benjamin Franklin (2...7)

HNIOR



AITYDN



DHOIT



AELNGW

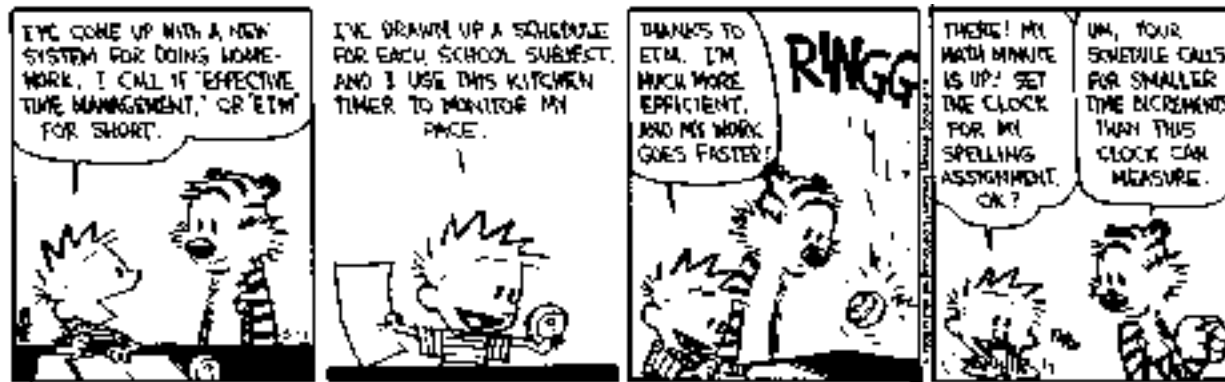


SOLUTION: RHINO, DHOIT, DAINY, WANGLE
Answer: Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 4149

Difficulty Level 2s

Instructions

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4148



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

There's a slight relaxation in the planetary situation which indicates that you can pay less attention to family pressures. You're also entering a high-stakes financial cycle, so calculate the odds very carefully before taking chances. Remember – a good gambler never loses.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

You may well feel as if people at home are too clever by half. What relatives will fail to realise is that they are confusing their feelings with their thoughts. You may give them more space to work out their own desires, and even provide some practical back-up.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

The best way to handle your feelings is to talk about them. Family members could be surprisingly responsive, and you'll clear up some of your own uncertainties in the process. Financial concerns may be given a rest, perhaps because there are fresh figures to come in.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

Your emotional security is an important issue, and you should be aware that financial worries can be a substitute for coping with deeper concerns. Bear in mind that family decisions are now in the pipeline, and that you really can't finalise your plans until partners know what they're doing.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

The Moon is now due to step up its emotional presence, which will account

for an increase in the romantic temperature. There is nothing to be gained from keeping your feelings to yourself, but you must be clear about your motives – because, if you're not, then you can't expect anyone else to understand you, either.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

You can afford to be secretive, especially as far as family plans or domestic matters are concerned. Nobody has a right to probe into your affairs, and you must choose the time and place to tell others how you feel. Of course, once you've decided what you want to say, you have to find the right words.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

Lift your social horizons and be prepared to make friends with new people. Even at work, your personal skills will come in useful, especially if you can get other people on your side, making valuable allies for the future. There's a great deal to be said for listening to wiser, more experienced people, by the way.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

You should now be prepared to take responsibility for others, although it won't be easy. It's better to see yourself as serving humanity. In love, it's important to be as generous with others as possible. If you count the cost now, then they'll remember it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

Lunar alignments today are almost ideal for classic activities, like getting together with people who understand you, body and soul. Everything tends to emphasise your optimism and desire to explore life's highways and byways. Once you've worked out the odds, you may even put your innate caution to one side.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

This is certainly a moment to look at business options. If you're in the housing market, or otherwise planning large domestic purchases, you will have doubts, perhaps very useful ones. Press ahead with caution, guarding your rear and bearing in mind that there may be surprises around the next corner.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

If you have been taking people for granted, you are about to be woken up with a jolt. You will discover, as so many others have before you, that complacency is a dangerous condition. Keep your wits about you and you'll sail through smoothly.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Your self-sacrificing instincts will be stirred today, so you will have to draw a line between performing favours and being exploited. Stay busy and you'll discover that work can be emotionally fulfilling. Just make sure that your efforts don't go unnoticed.