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FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 2020, NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 16 PAGES

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My mother taught me that service to others gives life purpose and meaning... I know she's looking down on me from above... committed to values she taught



V-P CANDIDATE KAMALA HARRIS

US senator Kamala Harris accepts the Democratic vice-presidential nomination at the party's national convention, in Wilmington, Delaware, on Wednesday. *Reuters REPORT, PAGE 12*

29% have antibodies in 2nd Delhi sero survey, up from 23% last month

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

THE SECOND round of the serological survey in Delhi, the results of which were released on Thursday, showed that about 29 per cent of those surveyed had the presence of novel coronavirus-specific antibodies in them. The first round of this exercise, conducted between the last week of June and first week of July, had detected antibodies in about 23 per cent of the volunteers. That means that in the one-month period between the first and second rounds, the disease spread to just about an additional six per cent of the population.

This would indicate a very significant slowdown in the spread of the disease in the national capital. Though a slowdown is evident from the drop in the reported number of cases as well, the results of the latest survey do throw up a surprise because of the extent of the slowdown that would be required to make this possible. Most of the

EXPLAINED
E Can't let guard down

WHILE DELHI has seen a relative stabilisation in the detection of new infections and a significant decline in the number of deaths, the fact that around 70% of the population is still vulnerable to infection shows that the Capital can't let its guard down.

Continued on page 2

RELATED REPORT
PAGE 4

TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

171 DAYS SINCE PANDEMIC BEGAN
CASES: 28,36,925 RECOVERED: 20,96,664 DEATHS: 53,866
TESTS: 3,26,61,252 DOUBLING RATE: 29.53**



KEY STATES TO WATCH	TOTAL CASES	SURGE IN 24 HOURS	7-DAY AVG GROWTH*	DOUBLING RATE**
■ Maharashtra	6,28,642	13,165	1.97%	36.51
■ Tamil Nadu	3,55,449	5,795	1.76%	40.84
■ Andhra	3,16,003	9,742	3.16%	22.78
■ Karnataka	2,49,590	8,642	3.48%	20.71
■ Uttar Pradesh	1,67,510	5,076	3%	24.03

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

CASE FATALITY RATIO	POSITIVITY RATE	DAILY IN, DAILY OUT
7 DAYS EARLIER: 1.96 NOW: 1.90	7 DAYS EARLIER: 8.93 NOW: 8.69	DETECTED TODAY: 69,652 RECOVERED TODAY: 58,794

Deaths as a ratio of positive cases (in %); indicator of progress in averting deaths
Positives against number tested (in %); indicator of the spread of disease
Becoming sick vs recovering; more recoveries for 14 days may signal the peak

Data as on August 19, released by Union Ministry of Health, ICMR and states. Often daily numbers include data from previous days. As such, trends based on daily numbers are indicative, not definitive

COURT SETS AUGUST 24 FOR 'UNCONDITIONAL APOLOGY'

SC urges rethink, Bhushan stands firm: no apology, my duty to future

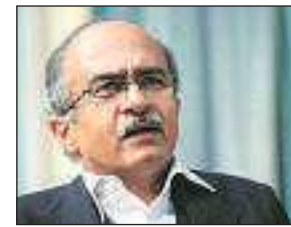
Court says sentence won't be activated until review decided

ANANTHAKRISHNAN
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

CONVICTED OF criminal contempt by the Supreme Court for two of his tweets, Advocate Prashant Bhushan Thursday firmly stood his ground making it clear to the court that he didn't want to apologise and in this "moment of history," this was his "responsibility to the future."

The court, after hearing arguments on the quantum of punishment to be awarded to Bhushan, reserved its order and gave him time to apologise.

"We have given time to the contemnor to submit unconditional apology, if he so desires.



Not likely that I will change my statement: Bhushan

Let it be filed by 24.08.2020. In case, apology is submitted, the case to be posted for consideration on the same, on 25.08.2020", the bench of Justices Arun Mishra, B R Gavai and Krishna Murari ordered.

"I find it hard to believe that the Court finds my tweet 'has the effect of destabilising the very foundation of this important pillar of Indian democracy. I can only reiterate that these two tweets represented my bonafide beliefs, the expression of which must be permissible in any democracy", Bhushan said in the statement.

Asked if he wanted to reconsider his statements and make any amends, Bhushan told the Bench: "I don't want to reconsider the statement...If your Lordships want to give me time, I welcome. But I don't think it will serve any purpose...It is not very likely that I will change my statement".

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Request not to punish Bhushan: Venugopal

AG speaks up for Bhushan, sought action over his tweets last year

ANANTHAKRISHNAN
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

ATTORNEY GENERAL K K Venugopal who on Thursday urged the Supreme Court to spare Prashant Bhushan from punishment for contempt over tweets against the judiciary had incidentally moved the court early last year to punish the advocate for posts allegedly "scandalising" the court and "denigrating" his office.

A month later, the AG had, however, told the Bench that Bhushan had communicated that it was a "genuine mistake" and he did not want to go ahead with the petition nor wanted any punishment for Bhushan.

This happened in February CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

'Judgments judges deliver, their conduct, determine public esteem, not a tweet'

RAKESH SINHA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

ON THE day the Supreme Court heard arguments on the sentencing of Prashant Bhushan, the advocate it convicted last week for contempt of court over two tweets, former Union Minister, journalist and author Arun Shourie told *The Indian Express*



Arun Shourie

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW

that if the Court is offended by a comment, it must, by law, give the person the opportunity to

prove his assertion since truth is a defence.

Incidentally, Shourie, along with Bhushan and journalist N Ram, had filed a separate petition before the Supreme Court, challenging the constitutionality of Section 2 (c) (i) of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971 which defines criminal contempt if one "scandalises or CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Farooq holds in-person meeting with NC leaders, says all-party meet soon

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, AUGUST 20

DAYS AFTER the Jammu and Kashmir administration told the High Court that no National Conference (NC) leader was under detention, a group of senior NC leaders met at party president Farooq Abdullah's Gupkar Road residence on Thursday.

This was the first in-person political meeting of the party after mainstream political leaders were detained at the time of the constitutional changes of August 5, 2019.

An all-party meeting would be convened soon, Farooq Abdullah told reporters. "We will have a meeting on the Gupkar Declaration; that is our core issue," he said.

A meeting of several political parties in J&K called by Farooq at



Farooq Abdullah in Srinagar on Thursday. *Shuaib Masoodi*

his residence on August 5, a year after the special status of the erstwhile state was removed, could not take place due to restrictions imposed by the authorities.

Mainstream parties had met at the same place on August 4, 2019, and issued the Gupkar Declaration resolving to stay united to protect the special status of J&K.

On Thursday, Farooq said he CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BUSINESS AS USUAL



ECONOMY

DREAM11 SET FOR NEXT FUNDING ROUND, TENCENT'S SHARE TO COME DOWN PAGE 13

WORLD

RUSSIAN OPPOSITION LEADER IN COMA AFTER SUSPECTED POISONING PAGE 12

Mumbai death: 4 cops suspended, family asks why did they beat him

SAGAR RAJPUT
MUMBAI, AUGUST 20

SOON AFTER the Mumbai Police told Raju Velu's family that he had been lynched by a mob in a robbery attempt, his brother tried accessing CCTV footage from when the incident happened. However, by then, the police had collected the digital video recorders of CCTV cameras in the Nehru Nagar slum area holding footage of the night of March 29-30.

Velu's mother Saira Devendra, who raised her four sons working at a food stall, says they already had their suspicions, because of the injury marks all over Velu's body and what locals had told them.

On August 17, the police informed the Bombay High Court that four constables had been



Raju Velu died in March

suspended — a month after acknowledging in court that the CCTV footage didn't show any mob lynching. Whether Velu had succumbed to injuries caused by police beating was a matter of further investigation, it said.

The constables, Santosh Desai, Digambar Chauhan, Ankush Palve and Ananda Gaikwad, are alleged to have misled Velu's family. In the complaint registered on March 31, the police had blamed eight unknown people for Velu's death, and later claimed that two had confessed to the crime. They CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Start-up from Kerala village wins govt's challenge to take on Zoom — and Rs 1 cr

PAGE 1
ANCHOR

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
AUGUST 20

ELEVEN YEARS ago, Joy Sebastian took a leap of faith. He wound up his career as a tech consultant in Kochi and moved to a village near Alappuzha where the state government had

set up a 66-acre Info Park. His dream: start an R&D centre for video-conferencing solutions. That leap has now landed the 44-year-old and his company Techgentsia Software Technologies Pvt Ltd on the national centre stage — and a prize of Rs 1 crore.

On Thursday, Techgentsia's Vconsol was named as winner of the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology's Digital India "Grand Challenge" that was rolled out on April 12 to de-



Joy Sebastian, 44, founder of Techgentsia

velop a world class video-conference solution — an Indian equivalent of Zoom in the time of Covid, according to officials.

For Sebastian, who hails from Pathirappally, a village near the backwaters and close to the Info Park, the challenge presented an opportunity — to showcase his dream to the world. "We decided to develop a product for the country. Now, that dream has materialised," he says.

"I started Techgentsia in 2009 with a friend, Tony Thomas. We

were classmates from school, and he has now moved to Australia. We have been focusing on R&D in video-conferencing solutions from the beginning, and have a few clients from the US, Europe and India for our B2B model. We have grown over the years, and now employ 65 people," says Sebastian, who completed his MCA from TKM College of Engineering in Kollam.

Developed in three months, Vconsol's USP is security, says CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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THE LONG INDIAN BATTLE FOR RECOGNITION IN AMERICA

With Kamala Harris becoming the first American of Indian descent to run for the post of vice-president alongside presidential candidate Joe Biden, the Indian-American community appears to have come a long way since its early days of political advocacy.

BENGALURU



GOWRI-GANESHA FESTIVAL AMID COVID

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TECH



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EXPRESS AUDIO

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NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

Today on the 3 Things podcast, we talk about how the online pharmacy market is expected to grow and the challenges that will come with it.

MAHARASHTRA
Registry keeps track of pregnant women with coronavirus

TABASSUM BARNAGARWALA
MUMBAI, AUGUST 20

A PREGNANCY registry since May is maintaining records of coronavirus-infected pregnant women, tracking them for six weeks after delivery, to assess how the virus affects both mother and newborn.

The National Institute of Research in Reproductive Health (NIRRH), a research arm of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), has tied up with 19 medical colleges in Maharashtra to feed data of each Covid-19 pregnant woman delivered in hospital.

The registry, called Pregcovid, has 54 investigators across Maharashtra. Over 1,000 pregnant women have been registered, of them at least 800 are from Mumbai's Nair hospital.

Jal Shakti minister Shekhawat tests positive for Covid

New Delhi: Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Thursday said he has tested positive for coronavirus. "I underwent a coronavirus test after developing symptoms and the report has come positive. I am getting hospitalised on the advice of doctors. I request all who have come in contact with me in the past days to isolate themselves and get tested," he tweeted.

The minister held two meetings on Tuesday. In the first, Punjab CM Amarinder Singh attended virtually while his Haryana counterpart ML Khattar was physically present with Shekhawat and his deputy Rattan Lal Kataria. Kataria was also present for another meeting — a virtual meet with Tamil Nadu Chief Minister E K Palaniswami. PTI

FROM PAGE ONE

Attorney General

2019 when the top court was seized of a petition challenging the appointment of IPS officer M Nageswara Rao as CBI interim director.

Then too, it were tweets by Bhushan that had sparked the row. In his petition to the Supreme Court, the AG had said that the lawyer's two posts, on February 1, 2019, "scandalise or tend to scandalise, and lower or tend to lower the authority of this Hon'ble Court". Venugopal had said the tweets could also "prejudice/interfere with" the case in the Court regarding Rao's appointment, while "denigrating the Attorney General of India, an officer of the Court, and interfering with the discharge of his duties".

The AG had said that Bhushan had tweeted that he had "confirmed" from Congress MP Mallikarjun Kharge that a meeting of the High-powered committee (HPC) headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had not held any discussion or taken any decision on the appointment of an interim CBI chief.

At the time, the Court was hearing a plea filed by NGO Common Cause, represented by Bhushan, that the committee "had not authorised the appointment of the interim/acting director of the CBI". The matter was heard by a Bench of Justices Arun Mishra and Navin Sinha.

At the hearing, Venugopal had submitted minutes of the HPC meeting held on January 9 and 10, 2019, showing that it had taken a decision to permit the Central government to "post a suitable officer to look after the duties of the Director, CBI, till the appointment of a new Director".

Venugopal had told the Court that despite this, in his tweets subsequent to the hearing, Bhushan wrote, "The govt appears to have misled the court and perhaps submitted fabricated minutes of the HPC meeting".

The AG had said that Kharge, who was part of the committee as the leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha, could not have been unaware of this. "Clearly, the... confirmation attributed to Shri Kharge could never have been made by him for the simple reason that he himself had signed the... minutes which also contained the final decisions of the High Powered Committee."

Venugopal had said that if Kharge wanted the HPC to name an interim director, he could have said so at the committee. But "no such suggestion was made by Mr Kharge as nothing to this effect is recorded in the minutes".

The AG had also referred to a letter of Kharge which Bhushan had tweeted and added that his allegation that the government may have submitted fabricated minutes "is a wholly false statement" and "an attempt to generate publicity through the press and social media...".

The petition had also requested the Court to consider whether Bhushan "should be per-

mitted to file or pursue such cases in the future" if found guilty.

LAC crisis

Anurag Srivastava, spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs, said the two sides had a "candid and in-depth" exchange of views on the existing situation in the India-China border areas.

"They reaffirmed that in accordance with the agreements reached between the two Foreign Ministers and the two Special Representatives (SRs), the two sides will continue to sincerely work towards complete disengagement of the troops along the Line of Actual Control in the western sector," he said.

"In this context, they agreed to resolve the outstanding issues in an expeditious manner and in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols. The two sides were in agreement that restoration of peace and tranquility in the border areas would be essential for the overall development of bilateral relations," he said. Srivastava said the two sides acknowledged the "need to maintain close communication through both the diplomatic and military channels so as to ensure complete disengagement".

"In this regard, they also agreed to continue their ongoing engagements including through meetings of the WMCC," he said. At the WMCC meetings, Naveen Srivastava, Joint Secretary (East Asia) in the Ministry of External Affairs, leads the Indian team. The Chinese are led by Hong Liang, Director General, Department of Boundary and Oceanic Affairs, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Chinese embassy in New Delhi, in a statement, said, "The two sides reviewed the recent situation in the border areas between China and India, positively evaluated the progress made in the disengagement of the frontline forces of the two countries, exchanged candid and in-depth views on the remaining issues on the ground, and enhanced mutual understanding."

"The two sides agreed to conscientiously implement the consensus reached between the two foreign ministers and the Special Representatives on China-India boundary question, continue to maintain dialogue and communication through military and diplomatic channels, further cool down the border situation, properly handle the remaining issues on the ground, and jointly maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas," it said.

Farooq

was in constant touch with PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti, and wanted her to be free. "That will be a great day for us," he said.

Farooq met with four of his senior party colleagues — NC general secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar, provincial president Nasir Aslam Wani, former J&K minister Abdul Rahim Rather, and

Muhammad Shafi Uri. "We have started a process and we will continue this," he said.

"People are in the most miserable condition. There's hardly anything to say, there's hardly any drinking water for people. Businesses are also zero, tourism is zero. There is suffering everywhere. On top of it, there's the coronavirus taking a heavy toll on people, and we still have a situation where the security is very tight," Farooq, who was flanked by his colleagues, said.

Thanking the courts, he added, "I hope that the leaders present here will now be free, not that they are allowed to step out for a day and then they are confined again. That shouldn't happen. We will continue to meet more party members so we discuss developments in the UT and for its people."

The party president, who spent seven months in detention at his home and was charged under the Public Safety Act, said "today, our meeting was only to see whether our colleagues could come out of their homes."

NC Members of Parliament Muhammad Akbar Lone and Hasnain Masoodi, party treasurer Shammi Oberoi, and political adviser to Farooq Abdullah, Mushtaq Guroo, were also present.

After the NC leadership sought the release of 15 of its leaders who had spent more than a year under house arrest without orders, IGP (Kashmir Zone) Vijay Kumar had told the court that the petitioners "at no point of time came to be detained by the respondents". Farooq has invited another batch of leaders to his residence for consultations on Friday.

Mumbai death

were released after eight days in detention. The government pleader also told the HC on August 17 that a preliminary inquiry had been initiated, to be followed by a chargesheet.

The four policemen had arrived at the 120 sq ft house in Nehru Nagar slum where Velu lived with his family around 9 am on March 30. The family was familiar with the local police officials as Velu, a small-time thief, had frequently had a brush with the law. "They told me Velu was lying drunk on a footpath nearby," says Saira, 51.

When she and Manikam rushed over to the spot, barely 200 m away, they found Velu unconscious. Saira says they wanted to take him to hospital, but the police discouraged them. When they got him home, they discovered the bruises on his body. She says they finally decided to go to hospital after Velu did not recover consciousness even after five hours. Cooper Hospital declared him dead on arrival.

The family says that the four Constables told Manikam some people had caught Velu red-handed as he was trying to enter a house and had brutally assaulted him, leading to his death. "They promised to catch the culprits soon."

However, a case was only registered the next day, after the family refused to take Velu's body home. Even as the family voiced its doubts, suspicious of police behaviour and circumstances of Velu's death, police detained eight persons from Chawl No. 5. By a couple of days later, they had claimed two had confessed.

One of the detainees told *The Indian Express* on condition of anonymity that on March 29-30 night, Velu had been caught by the four policemen as locals raised an alarm on spotting him trying to break into a house, and was beaten up as he tried to escape.

Lawyer in Santa Cruz helped Velu's family send letters to the Prime Minister's Office, Chief Minister's Office, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) and the Mumbai Commissioner of Police. Saira says that dependent on food and rations distrib-

Bhushan stands firm: no apology

The reply came as the bench repeatedly asked him whether he would like to look into his statement and make amends.

Justice Mishra remarked that the court would "like to give you time. Later on, there should not be a complaint that time was not given".

Bhushan said his statement was "well-considered and well thought of".

"We will give you two-three days time. Think over... You must think over", observed Justice Mishra.

This came even as Attorney General K K Venugopal urged the Supreme Court to spare Bhushan from any punitive action. "I will request you not to punish Prashant Bhushan", Venugopal told the court.

Justice Mishra told the AG "please don't argue on merits" and said it had never punished anyone without following due procedure. "We cannot consider your proposal unless he rethinks his statement... You please first go through his reply. Consider if that's a defence or an aggravation... Read it and then tell us what we should do," Justice Mishra added.

Turning to Bhushan's counsel Senior Advocate Rajeev Dhavan, Justice Mishra continued: "Mistake can happen from anyone... But the person should admit the mistake".

The AG then added: "I have a list of five retired judges of Supreme Court who said democracy has failed in SC. At least, nine former judges have said there is corruption in higher judiciary".

Intervening, the Bench said

the conviction order is already there and it is not hearing a review petition. Later, Venugopal clarified that he was not speaking on behalf of the government but responding to the notice issued to the office of AG. Incidentally, Thursday's court order does not mention the presence of the AG.

Earlier, Bhushan read out his statement. "I have gone through the judgment of this Hon'ble Court. I am pained that I have been held guilty of committing contempt of the Court whose majesty I have tried to uphold - not as a courtier or cheerleader but as a humble guard - for over three decades, at some personal and professional cost."

"I am shocked that the court holds me guilty of 'malicious, scurrilous, calculated attack' on the institution of administration of justice... I am dismayed that the Court has arrived at this conclusion without providing any evidence of my motives to launch such an attack..."

"We are living through that moment in our history when higher principles must trump routine obligations, when saving the constitutional order must come before personal and professional niceties, when considerations of the present must not come in the way of discharging our responsibility towards the future."

"I did not tweet in a fit of absentmindedness. It would be insincere and contemptuous on my part to offer an apology for the tweets that expressed what was and continues to be my bonafide belief."

"Therefore, I can only

humbly paraphrase what the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi had said in his trial: I do not ask for mercy. I do not appeal to magnanimity. I am here, therefore, to cheerfully submit to any penalty that can lawfully be inflicted upon me for what the Court has determined to be an offence, and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen."

Justice Mishra asked the AG if Bhushan should be given two to three days to think and come back to the court. Venugopal replied that it will be "good" if the court can give him some time and added that Bhushan had done some "tremendous good work" over the years.

On Wednesday, Bhushan had filed an application urging the court to defer Thursday's hearing on sentencing until he files a review petition against the August 14 conviction and it's decided.

Senior Advocate Dushyant Dave raised this before the bench Thursday. However the court rejected the prayer. "Can you argue consequential order should not be passed. Judgment will be complete only when it is totally pronounced", Justice Mishra said and added that if the court sentenced him, "We assure you that it will not be activated until the review is decided."

Justice Gavi said an impression should not go out that there is an effort to avoid the bench of Justice Mishra.

Dave replied that there should also not be any impression that the bench wanted to decide the matter before Justice Mishra retires.

Justice Mishra is due to retire in the first week of September.

Dave then contended that the question of sentence should be considered by a different bench. But the court disallowed this.

"It cannot be accepted", said Justice Gavi. Justice Mishra echoed this. "It is against established norms and procedure. Suppose if I am not demitting office, can it be ever thought of?", he said.

Dhavan said that the August 14 judgment would be severely criticised. "Don't worry about that. We don't mind fair criticism," said Justice Mishra.

Agreeing that the power to punish for contempt under Article 129 must be used only sparingly and with restraint, Justice Mishra said: "I have not taken contempt against a single person in my judicial career... Balancing and restraint are the real issues".

As Dhavan sought to express concern about how the history of the court would be written, Justice Mishra said: "Let us leave it for the future to see what history shows. Let us not predict...".

Dhavan said Bhushan's comments have been supported by former Supreme Court judges Justices RM Lodha, Madan B Lokur, Kurian Joseph and Madan B Lokur and asked if they, too, were in contempt.

Justice Gavi said Justice Lodha's comment was only about the procedure. Dhavan added that over 1000 lawyers had expressed support too. The bench said the court has taken up several cases via virtual hearings despite the lockdown.

uted by NGOs since the lockdown began, they had almost given up the fight for justice. "We thought we would raise the issue after our finances recovered. Then, in the first week of August, we got a call from an advocate saying he had raised the issue of police brutality in the Bombay High Court."

Sero survey

movement restrictions in Delhi have now been lifted and people-to-people interaction has increased manifold from the time the first survey was conducted.

The Delhi survey numbers also stand out when compared to results of similar exercises in Mumbai and Pune, two cities that have comparable case loads. The Pune survey reported antibodies in over 51 per cent of the participants, while Mumbai, where the exercise was conducted last month, had found about 40 per cent participants with antibodies.

Delhi Health Minister Satyendra Jain said, "The rise (in the spread of the disease), rather the exponential rise, is not there. So, it seems, people are taking safety precautions."

Since the first survey, there has been a sharp drop in reported cases in Delhi. For most of July and August, the daily number of recoveries have outnumbered new infections, with the active cases now dropping to below 12,000 now. The daily growth rate of cases dropped below one per cent in the third week of July, and has since remained there.

But as has been demonstrated repeatedly, the disease spreads mainly through asymptomatic carriers. The fact that the spread through undetected cases has also slowed down to this extent is what is striking. This can happen only in two scenarios - when there are strict isolation and containment measures in place, like during the first phase of lockdown, or when there is near universal adoption of physical distancing, masks, and other sanitation measures.

The survey was conducted in each of the 11 districts. The high prevalence of the disease was found in Southeast district, where 32.2 per cent of the participants were found with the antibodies.

with great difficulty. Why? So that the police would kill him one day?" the 51-year-old says.

Says the advocate, Bahraiz Irani, "Initially we wrote to the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court requesting he take cognizance of police brutalities happening all over the state, but then we were advised to file necessary proceedings as a letter was not enough. This led us to file a PIL. We relied on reports from CHRI, wherein the case of Raju Velu was highlighted."

Denying the family's allegations, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Santacruz Division, Subhas Raikar said, "They keep changing their statements. Velu was a history-sheeter who had been extorted in February. That night he had committed a theft and was nabbed by local residents. The four policemen happened to reach the spot then. The CCTV footage that we have managed to procure shows that the four assaulted Velu, due to which they have been suspended. We are investigating whether the locals assaulted him before that."

With no arrest five months after Velu's death, Saira says mere suspension of the policemen was no justice. "What did he do that they beat him so badly as to kill him?" she cries.

In 2016, one of Saira's other sons had died in a road accident. She raised them alone after her husband's death in 2002. Manikam, who has two daughters, works as a food delivery agent while Saira's other remaining son, Shankar, who has one child, is assistant to an electrician. The earnings of both have dwindled since the lockdown.

"Maine badi mehnat se inko paal-pos ke bada kiya. Kyun? Taaki ye police wale usse ek din maar dein (I raised my children

This was also the district that showed the biggest jump from last time, when it had recorded 22.2 per cent disease prevalence. More women (32.2 per cent) were found to have the antibodies than men (28.73 per cent).

During the previous survey, eight districts were found to have more than 20% prevalence of Covid, with Central, Northeast, North, and Shahdara districts with almost 27% prevalence. However, in the present survey, 10 out of 11 districts have more than 20% prevalence.

"In the first serological survey, Northeast Delhi was in the first position, and now the prevalence rate in the district has increased by only 6.7%. So, it has been observed that areas which were on top in the first survey are now at a lower position. Similarly, areas where the prevalence rate was lower in the first survey now have a higher rate," he said.

For the survey, over 15,000 volunteers were tested for presence of antibodies, and the results were analysed at the Maulana Azad Medical College (MAMC). "It is a relief to know nearly 29 per cent of the city's population has recovered after being infected... On the other hand, 70 per cent of people in Delhi have not developed antibodies, which means that we are still far away from reaching the stage of herd immunity..." Jain said.

Kerala start-up

Sebastian, "apart from all the features that are available on Zoom" in the premium option.

"Security has been pointed out as a problem with Zoom. Vconsoft has addressed it with tighter measures. Each participant will have a different password. And, to ensure that only those expected or invited are able to join the video-conference, an OTP verification code will be sent to mobile phones of participants," he says.

According to the IT Ministry, Techgensia, which was picked

from 1,983 applicants, will be provided with financial support of Rs 1 crore, and additional Rs 10 lakh for operation and maintenance for the next three years. The start-up made its way through a longlist of 12 applicants, who were provided with Rs 10 lakh each to develop a prototype. Then, it cleared a shortlist of five, who were provided financial support of Rs 15-20 lakh for "mentorship, testing and on-boarding" on the National Informatics Centre (NIC) cloud.

"In addition, the jury also selected products developed by three (other) applicants... and decided to offer a developmental contract to be supported by Rs 25 lakh each for further maturing their product within a period of three months," the Ministry said.

All four — Techgensia, Sarv Webs Pvt Ltd (Jaipur), PeopleLink Unified Communications Pvt Ltd (Hyderabad) and Instrive Softlabs Pvt Ltd (Chennai) — will be supported by various government tech arms, including CERT-In and CDAC. NIC, meanwhile, will facilitate their adoption on GeM, the government's e-market portal.

Announcing the winner, IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad referred to Prime Minister Narendra's Modi call for AatmaNirbhar Bharat and said: "We are committed to develop India's software product and mobile app economy in a big way and efforts like this will go a long way in that direction."

For the challenge, the jury and mentors included: Debjani Ghosh, NASSCOM chairman; Saurabh Srivastava, who heads Indian Angel Network, a grouping of investors; Sharad Sharma of iSpirit, a software think tank; and officials and experts such as Rajat Moona from IIT-Bhilai, Santanu Chaudhary from IIT-Jodhpur and Yatindra Nath Singh from IIT-Kanpur.

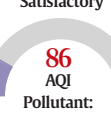
So what made them choose Sebastian's fledgling firm? "Confidence in our technology and the ability of our developers," he says.

झारखण्ड राज्य भवन निर्माण निगम लिमिटेड
(Govt. of Jharkhand Undertaking)
Corporation Identification No.-U45201JH2015SGC003325
Regd. Office:- Building Construction Department, Govt. of Jharkhand, Project Building, P.O.-Dhuruwa, Ranchi-834004, Jharkhand
Phone No.:- 0651-2446257/2446258/2446259, e-mail:-jsbcl@jharkhand@gmail.com
Notice No. JSBCL/RFE-01/2020-21/भवननिर्माण - 69/16-927 (नि) Date: 20.08.2020
NOTICE INVITING PROPOSALS NO. 03/2020-21
Jharkhand State Building Construction Corporation Limited (JSBCL) hereby invites proposals from eligible Engineering Colleges of National repute located in the state of Jharkhand and having Quality Control test laboratories in the State of Jharkhand for Empanelment in JSBCL as Third Party Quality Control/ Quality Assurance Consultants for their ongoing/new Building and Infrastructure Construction Projects.
The prospective bidder must be an individual legal entity who meets the eligibility criteria as specified in the RFE Document.
Copies of the RFE document can be downloaded from the e-tendering portal of i.e. www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in from 11:00 A.M. on 20.08.2020 to 11:00 A.M. on 13.09.2020. The Bidders shall have to deposit a refundable Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of Rs. 10,000.00 (Rupees Ten Thousand) only to JSBCL by way of a demand draft/pay order in favour of "Jharkhand State Building Construction Corporation Limited" drawn on a Scheduled Commercial Bank and Payable at Ranchi. The demand draft shall have to be submitted before 11.30A.M on 15.09.2020 without which the Proposal will not be evaluated.
Proposals may be uploaded from 11:00 A.M. on 28.08.2020 to 11:00 A.M. on 13.09.2020.
The bids will be opened in the office of Executive Director, JSBCL at 12:00 Noon on 15.09.2020.
Nodal Officer, e-Procurement Cell, Jharkhand State Building Construction Corporation Ltd., Ranchi. Telephone No. - 0651-2446259 e-mail- jsbcl@jharkhand@gmail.com PR 231911(Jharkhand State Building Construction Corp. Ltd.)20-21'D



0-50 Good

ANAND VIHAR Satisfactory



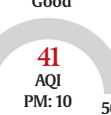
51-100 Satisfactory

ROHINI Satisfactory



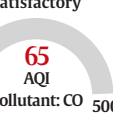
101-200 Moderate

SHADIPUR Good



201-300 Poor

IBBAS Satisfactory



301-400 Very Poor

401-500 Severe

BID TO BOOST REVENUE; GOVT SAYS L-G NOD NOT REQUIRED

Let hotels and restaurants serve alcohol, Sisodia tells excise dept

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

DEPUTY CHIEF Minister Manish Sisodia Thursday directed officials to allow restaurants and hotels in the city to serve liquor — a move, he said, will help meet revenue shortfall due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

“Bars will remain closed under the provisions of unlock guidelines of the Ministry of Home Affairs. However, several state governments including Assam, Punjab, Rajasthan etc have permitted service of liquor by license holders under the Excise Rules at the table in restaurants and clubs and in hotel rooms. Considering the revenue implications, Excise Department to issue necessary permission for service of liquor in restaurants and clubs by licensees at the table and in the hotel rooms,” Sisodia wrote to the Excise Commissioner.

The directions, given to the Excise Department and the



Restaurants in the capital were allowed to reopen on June 8, with conditions to ensure social distancing. Praveen Khanna

Finance Department, can be enforced only after orders are issued. The matter may also require the approval of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), headed by Lt-Governor Anil Baijal, a senior excise official said.

The official said the department will prepare a proposal in this regard and send it to the DDMA for approval. However, an

official in the CMO said, “This matter falls within the ambit of unlock guidelines and Delhi government can take a direct decision on it.”

On Wednesday, the DDMA had taken a decision to allow hotels in the capital to reopen. Restaurants were allowed to reopen on June 8, with conditions to ensure social distancing.

Last week, the National

Restaurant Association of India (NRAI) had written to the Delhi government stating that restrictions on serving liquor were acting as an impediment in revival of business.

Under the unlock guidelines of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, bars have to remain shut. However, the restaurant industry said serving liquor as part of dine-in facilities should not be equated with bars.

Anurag Katriar, president of NRAI, said: “The letter was part of our ongoing efforts in various states. If liquor was being sold at vends, then there’s really no reason for it to not be served in a controlled environment, like a restaurant which is maintaining all social distancing measures. It can be served hygienically, with no human touch involved, unlike a nimbu paani or lassi.”

“The serving of liquor at tables is a key component of any licensed restaurant’s revenue. It accounts for 40-odd per cent of the revenue of a restaurant, although that could vary. In the

case of a lounge, it could make up to 80 per cent of the revenue, whereas for a diner, it could account for about 30 per cent... It is also a crucial part of the whole eating out experience... If liquor is not available, many may choose not to eat out at all,” said Katriar.

Last month, the Delhi government’s decision to allow hotels to reopen was struck down by the DDMA headed by the L-G. The differences between the two sides on the issue was resolved on Wednesday, following which the nod to start operating was given to hotels across categories.

Like in other states, liquor is among the largest sources of revenue in Delhi. In the annual budget for the year 2020-21, the government had projected revenue of Rs 6,279 crore — 14% of total revenue projections — from state excise. In 2019-20, it had posted a revised estimate of Rs 5,480 crore as liquor revenue while it earned Rs 5,007 crore from the sale of alcohol in 2018-19.

Swachh survey: East MCD ranks 2nd from bottom

ABHINAV RAJPUT NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

THE EAST Delhi Municipal Corporation has been ranked 46 among 47 local bodies surveyed in the Swachh Survekshan 2020, in the category of cities with a population of over 10 lakh. The other civic bodies in Delhi, South and North, also ranked low, with the former at 31 and the latter at 43.

The results of the fifth edition of the annual cleanliness survey was declared by Union Housing Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Thursday.

The New Delhi Municipal Council, meanwhile, came third among 382 cities. It has been surveyed in the category of cities with a population below 10 lakh. Among the cantonment boards, Delhi Cantt bagged second position among the 62 cantonments that took part in the survey.

A senior official of the South MCD said, “The main factor is segregation of waste from the source, which is behind Delhi’s corporations not being able to score a good ranking.”

Rajiv Kumar Jain, superintending engineer and nodal officer of Swachh Bharat Mission of SDMC, said, “This time, cities with



Officials said waste segregation needs more focus. Archive

a population over 10 lakh and below 10 lakh were bifurcated, because of which it appears we are lagging behind. But if the marks scored is compared in the overall list, we are 120 among the 429 urban local bodies surveyed.”

Last year too, Delhi’s civic bodies had fared poorly with SDMC at the 138th position, North MCD at 282, and EDMC at 240, among the 425 local bodies surveyed.

A senior official of the East civic body said there needs to be more focus on waste segregation. Mayor of North DMC Jai Prakash said a meeting will be called to look into the issue and give a fresh push to waste segregation.

Waste segregation into wet

and dry is compulsory under the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. It is the responsibility of Urban Local Bodies (civic agencies) to remove dhalao (local waste collecting centres) and replace them with fixed compactors that will compress dry waste. Under the rules, it must also be ensured that organic waste collected from homes and nearby areas is composted, while waste in the form of plastic, metal, wood and glass is recycled. There are very few areas in Delhi where the rules are strictly followed.

AAP leader Durgesh Pathak said, “This is their own survey initiated by PM Modi. The MCDs are giving the PM a bad name.”

Cop shoots dead gym owner, held

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

A 47-YEAR-OLD Delhi Police head constable allegedly shot dead a 28-year-old man with his service pistol in Rohini on Thursday morning. The head constable, Surender, was arrested from his home in Narela.

Police said two shots were heard near Crown Plaza Hotel at 6.45 am. The head constable allegedly shot the victim, Deepak Gehlawat, and fled. Gehlawat, who owns a gym in Dwarka Mor, was found lying unconscious near his Brezza car with bullet injuries to his chest and left hand. He was rushed to a nearby hospital, where the doctors declared him dead on arrival.

PK Mishra, DCP (Rohini) said, “HC Surender has been arrested. He is posted at Shahbad Dairy police station and was going back home after his duty when the incident took place. He said it was a sudden provocation. We have already dismissed him from service.”

Delhi Police also released a statement, saying: “Delhi Police condemns the act of head constable Surender. We are committed to implement measures for the welfare of the staff and improve professionalism. But there can be no tolerance for such kind of deviant behaviour.”

During questioning, the accused policeman said he was in the same car with Gehlawat. A fight broke out between them near Budhh Vihar and he fired two shots at Gehlawat from his service pistol.

Police are still probing the motive behind the murder. They said the accused and the deceased were friends.

Board of Homoeopathic System of Medicine, Delhi (Govt. of NCT of Delhi)
4th Floor, B-Wing, Vikas Bhawan-II, Civil Lines, Delhi-110054
Recruitment Notice

Board of Homoeopathic System of Medicine, Delhi invites application for the post of Registrar on Contract basis initially for a period of one year with remuneration @ Rs. 55,000/- per month with Essential Qualification MD (Hom). Interested candidates having the prescribed eligibility parameter may give application with in a week of publish in news paper at office of the Chairman of this Board in prescribed format for appreciation and other contract terms & conditions are available at www.delhihomeoboard.in

Sd/- (Dr. K. K. Juneja) Chairman

DIP/Shabdarth/0236/20-21

Bundelkhand Institute of Engineering and Technology, Kanpur Road, Jhansi-284128 (U.P.)

Advt. No.: BIET-02/2020 **APPOINTMENTS** Dated: 20.08.2020

Applications are invited for the post of Director, Bundelkhand Institute of Engineering and Technology, Jhansi, (U.P.) in the pay matrix of Level-14, Entry pay Rs. 144200/- and allowances as admissible under government orders. The post shall be contractual in nature for 5 years.

Qualification and Experience: The Qualification and Experience for the post shall be as per AICTE Regulation notified on dated 01 March, 2019 (as amended from time to time by AICTE). For details please visit the Institute website: <http://www.bietjts.ac.in>
Age: The applicant should not be more than 57 years of age on the date of advertisement.
The eligible candidates may submit their applications on plain paper giving their complete BIO-DATA with attested copies of testimonials, certificate of age, administrative experience and research work etc. Applications of the candidates in service will be considered only if it is received through proper channel. However, such candidates may send an advance copy of their applications directly within prescribed time. The complete application along with documents should be sent to Chairman, Board of Governors, Bundelkhand Institute of Engineering and Technology, Kanpur Road, Jhansi-284128 (U.P.) latest by September 21, 2020. The name of the post should be clearly written on the envelope containing the application. Incomplete applications and applications received after the due date i.e. September 21, 2020 will be summarily rejected.

The selection process for the post started in terms of Advt. No.: BIET-07/2019 dated 05.10.2019 is hereby cancelled. Member Secretary, Board of Governors, Bundelkhand Institute of Engineering and Technology, Jhansi

This GANESH CHATURTHI

Bring your Ganesha home

In the fight against coronavirus, Celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi at home

No idol of Lord Ganesha shall be set up in the tent/pandal/public places.

People are advised to celebrate the festival at their homes.

Maintain social distancing of at least 2 yards.

Refrain from personal greeting.

If you step out of the house, wear a mask, carry a hand sanitizer and maintain social distancing.

Stay home and have a safe Ganesh Chaturthi!

E-mail to CP, Delhi at: cp.snshrivastava@delhipolice.gov.in | Write to CP, Delhi at P.O. Box No. 171, GPO, New Delhi

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FOR HELPLINE SERVICES CALL 1090

Trust us to deliver your parcels swiftly and surely

Northern Railway offers service of Parcel Cargo Express Trains (PCETs)

Northern Railway is doing everything to live up to its commitment to the nation and people by running various time-tabled parcel trains. Trains that deliver essential commodities like medicines, perishables and various commercial items to various destinations in the country during the current COVID-19 crisis. Northern Railway also undertakes delivery service to a specific destination if any party books an entire parcel train. Following are the details of the scheduled Parcel Cargo Express Trains (PCETs):

Parcel Spl. No.	Station From	Dep. Time	Station To	Arr. Time	Days of Run	Dates of Run
00401	Guwahati	00:30	New Delhi	13:15	Fri, Sun	upto 31.12.2020
00402	New Delhi	14:30	Guwahati	03:00	Tue, Thu	upto 31.12.2020
00463	Howrah	17:30	Amritsar	08:45	Mon, Sat	upto 31.12.2020
00464	Amritsar	18:00	Howrah	08:30	Wed, Fri	upto 31.12.2020
00465	Guwahati	00:30	Amritsar	19:45	Wed	upto 31.12.2020
00466	Amritsar	07:50	Guwahati	03:00	Fri	upto 31.12.2020
00467	Howrah	17:30	Amritsar	06:30	Thu	upto 31.12.2020
00468	Amritsar	20:40	Howrah	08:30	Mon	upto 31.12.2020
00621	KSR Bengaluru	17:00	Hazrat Nizamuddin	15:00	Wed, Fri	upto 31.12.2020
00622	Hazrat Nizamuddin	02:20	KSR Bengaluru	01:20	Mon, Sat	upto 02.01.2021
00761	Renigunta	05:45	Hazrat Nizamuddin	15:50	Daily	upto 31.12.2020
00762	Hazrat Nizamuddin	10:15	Renigunta	20:45	Daily	upto 31.12.2020
00763	Hyderabad Decan	19:00	Amritsar	09:15	Fri	upto 31.12.2020
00764	Amritsar	05:00	Hyderabad Decan	18:50	Mon	upto 31.12.2020
00901	Bandra Terminus	19:30	Jammu Tawi	08:00	Tue, Thu, Fri, Sun	21.08.2020 to 27.08.2020
00902	Jammu Tawi	18:30	Bandra Terminus	06:40	Tue, Wed, Fri, Sun	upto 26.08.2020

Commercial Control/Head Quarter
9717638775

Security Helpline No.
182

Commercial Control/Delhi Division
9717649915

Integrated Helpline No.
139

For more information about the Time -Table and running status of PCETs, please visit the website www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or App of National Train Enquiry System (NTEs)

NORTHERN RAILWAY

www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

College senior held for doctor murder in Agra

ASHNA BUTANI & AMIL BHATNAGAR
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

AT 4.10 pm Tuesday, Dr Yogita Gautam (31), who was on Covid-19 duty at Agra's SN Medical College, frantically called up her brother in Delhi and told him how she was being threatened with violence by another doctor. Shaken, Yogita's parents and brother immediately left for Agra. The threats were from Dr Vivek Tiwari, a college senior who had allegedly been pressuring her to marry him for years.

On Wednesday morning, Yogita's body was found at a desolate spot in Agra's Bamroli area — barely two km away from her rented house. On Thursday, Tiwari was arrested for allegedly killing her. Babloo Kumar, SSP Agra, said, "We have recovered CCTV footage of Gautam sitting in Tiwari's SUV car outside her house around 7.30 pm Tuesday. During interrogation, Tiwari told us that the two had been in a relationship for seven years, and he was visiting her from UP's Jalaun. He said the two used to argue a lot, and on Tuesday he killed her. He said he first strangled her, and then stabbed her to ensure she was dead. He then dumped her body in an empty plot."

Yogita's brother Mohindra said Tiwari was her senior during her MBBS days. "He liked her from the start but it was always a one-sided affair, she never reciprocated. In fact, his number was blocked on her phone. So he called Yogita's landlady and asked her about Yogita's whereabouts on Tuesday. After she refused, he landed up at her house and lured her out somehow," he claimed. This, as per police, was around 7.30 pm.

By the time Yogita's family



The accused, Dr Vivek Tiwari

reached Agra, she was missing. The family submitted a kidnapping complaint against Tiwari, after Yogita stopped responding to their calls and messages. "Hours after this, the body of a woman matching the description of the missing person was found. We asked the family to identify the body and it was Dr Gautam. We immediately contacted Jalaun Police, since the doctor hailed from the area, and the arrest was made. The accused has confessed to the murder and will be sent to judicial custody," said SSP Kumar.

Yogita completed her MBBS from a medical college in Moradabad and it was there that she met Tiwari. Her brother said, "She just turned 31 on August 11... On Independence Day, she got her postgraduate exam result. She was the first obstetrician in Agra to deliver the baby of a Covid-19 positive patient in April... It was a risk she took, even though at that time, there weren't any safety precautions such as PPE. She was recognised by the DM of the district for this... We were so proud of her," said Mohindra.

Yogita's family claimed she kept declining Tiwari's marriage proposal and in January, her father too spoke to Tiwari and told him that she didn't want to marry him.

SECOND SEROLOGICAL SURVEY RESULTS

Southeast district sees highest Covid prevalence, North & Central close behind

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

AT 33.2%, the Southeast district showed the highest prevalence rate of Covid-19, according to the second serological surveillance results. This is a 50% jump as compared to the first survey, when it reported a prevalence rate of 22.12%. The district is home to neighbourhoods such as Nizamuddin, Kalkaji and Sarita Vihar.

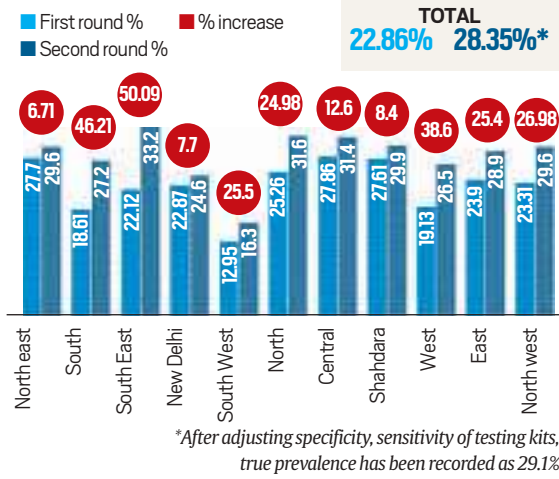
Overall, the results showed that 29.1% of those surveyed across the capital have already been infected and recovered, against the first survey which had a prevalence rate of 22.86%.

The second survey was conducted by the Delhi government in the first week of August. "The reason for a high jump of 50% in the sero survey prevalence rate in Southeast Delhi is because the areas which witnessed a low prevalence average are now seeing a higher rate. In one district, the rate was 27.7%, which has increased slightly to 29.6%," said Health Minister Satyendar Jain, while announcing the results on Thursday.

In the previous survey conducted by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) in July, Covid-19 prevalence of more than 20% was seen in eight districts. The Central, Northeast, and Shahdara districts showed the highest prevalence of over 27%, indicating that the population in these districts has been exposed to the virus to the largest extent.

However, in the present survey, 10 out of 11 districts have more than 20% prevalence. After Southeast, North and Central districts are at 31.6% and 31.4% respectively. Officials said the sample size

ACROSS THE 11 DISTRICTS



CORONAVIRUS IN THE CAPITAL

	Daily cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests
Aug 19	1,398	1,320	9	20,815
Aug 20	1,215	1,059	22	17,004
Total	11,271**	1,41,826	4,257	13,75,193

**Total active cases



The second serological survey was held in the first week of August. Abhinav Saha

for the survey was calculated as 15,000. Multi-stage sampling was done to select participants in each ward, within the area of Delhi government dispensaries and primary urban health facilities, through a team of local frontline health workers.

The median age of the participants was set at 32 years. Any individual who was included in the NCDC survey was not included in the second round. "The sample selection was completely scientific; the list of those whose samples would be collected was prepared by experts at Maulana Azad Medical College. This depicts the criteria of the area, age group, and the process of collecting samples... People belonging to every class were included in the sero-survey — those living in slums, the middle-class and upper-middle-class," said Jain.

In this round, participants were categorised based on age groups — 25% below 18 years; 50% between 18-50 years; and 25% above 50 years of age. A prevalence rate of 34.7% has been found in people below 18 years of age, 28.5% in people between 18-50 years, and 31.2% in people above 50 years.

"As per scientists, antibodies stay in your body for three-four months and can last up to seven-eight months. Along with this, T-cells or memory cells also develop. This means if a person has been infected by corona in the past, it is very probable that he/she will not get infected again," said Jain.

NCDC director Dr Sujeet Kumar Singh, however, said: "Having antibodies is the only protection. The question is as to how long these will be present... For that, we need to follow a person for at least six months or more."

Doubling rate over 100 days, fatality 1.4%: Delhi govt



The positivity rate has also fallen to 10.57%. Amit Mehra

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

THE DOUBLING rate of coronavirus infection in Delhi has gone up to over 100 days as against 28.8 days for the rest of India, the Delhi government said on Thursday. The case fatality rate in Delhi has also come down to 1.4 per cent, as against 1.92 per cent for rest of the country, it said, adding that the recovery rate in Delhi is 90.2 per cent as compared to 72.5 for the rest of the country.

"On July 1, the doubling rate of corona cases in Delhi was the same as the rest of India at 20 days. Since then, the doubling rate of Delhi has been steadily rising. It was 58 days on July 17, around 90 days on August 1, and

has currently increased to 101.5 days. In comparison, for the rest of India, the doubling rate has remained between 20 and 27 days since July 1," a statement from the Delhi government stated.

On Thursday, the city recorded 1,215 fresh coronavirus cases, taking the tally to 1,57,354, while the death toll from the disease rose to 4,257 with 22 deaths reported in the last 24 hours.

A drop has also been witnessed in positivity rate between June 18 and August 16, the statement said. On June 18, a total of 9,088 RT-PCR tests were conducted of which 2,804 were positive — a positivity rate of 30.85%. However, on August 16, out of total 4,106 RT-PCR tests conducted, 434 were positive — a positivity rate of 10.57%, as per data shared by the state government.

CBSE scoring scheme applicable for Class 12 improvement exams

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

THE DELHI High Court has held that the assessment scheme approved by the Supreme Court for CBSE class XII students — who couldn't take their exams as they were cancelled amid the Covid pandemic — will be applicable to those appearing for improvement examinations as well.

As per the approved scheme, students are to be awarded marks for the cancelled examinations and promoted based on the average performance in the examinations they appeared in.

The order was passed by a single judge bench of Justice Pratibha M Singh, who observed, "Assessment scheme approved by the Supreme Court would also be applicable to improvement students. Such students would also be entitled to avail of the scores as per the scheme or appear for the optional examination whenever it is held by the CBSE."

The petition was filed by Sanyam Gupta, a student of Sri Venkateshwar International School, Dwarka. He had appeared in the CBSE class XII exam held in February-March, 2019 and secured 95.25%. He decided to drop a year and improve his score to obtain admission in a premier college in Delhi University.

Delhi HC held that an improvement student is 'equally a victim of the pandemic just like a regular student'

The petitioner decided to re-take Accountancy, English Core, Economics and Business Studies exams. However, the Business Studies paper, which was scheduled for March 24, 2020, was cancelled due to the lockdown.

His lawyer, Rishi Manchanda, prayed that for the cancelled Business Studies, he should be treated on par with the regular students for whom there was an assessment scheme for cancelled papers.

Amit Bansal, counsel for CBSE, submitted that the board had taken a separate decision with respect to students who had appeared for the improvement examination. He said, "If an order is passed directing en bloc... it may put the students, who may not even have appeared for the improvement examinations or whose examinations were cancelled, at a severe disadvantage."

The court held that an improvement student is "equally a victim of the pandemic just like a regular student".

Woman among 2 held for husband's murder

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

A 30-YEAR-OLD woman and her boyfriend were arrested for allegedly faking her husband's murder as a suicide.

Police said the accused have been identified as Priyanka and Karan. Her husband, Kishan Tyagi (50), worked at a factory in Mayapuri.

On August 18, he was found hanging at the couple's home in Rohini's Budhh Vihar.

PK Mishra, DCP (Rohini), said, "After Tyagi's death was confirmed by the hospital, we spoke to his wife. She told us he was suffering from a chronic disease and died because of it. We checked the MLC and found that he died due to strangulation."

Police questioned Priyanka, who confessed to the crime. Police said she was married at the age of 15 and was allegedly spiked milk with poison and gave it to Tyagi.

After he fell unconscious, the duo took a stole and allegedly strangled him to death. They then called police and said Tyagi had committed suicide.



SKIES CLEAR, GROUND CLOGGED

After a spell of rain in Ghaziabad, Thursday. Several areas reported waterlogging that led to traffic congestion. Praveen Khanna

Clear dues to register for next sem: JNU

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

THE JAWAHARLAL Nehru University (JNU) administration has asked students to clear their mess and hostel dues as a precondition to registering for the next semester. The JNU Students' Union, as well as presidents of all 18 hostels on campus, have termed the move "unjust" as

most students had left hostel due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In a circular dated August 14, JNU Registrar Pramod Kumar said, "Students are required to pay all relevant dues such as tuition fees, hostel fees, and mess dues, etc." It also said "hostel fee will be charged at the old rate" despite the fact that hostels are closed for students now.

The JNUSU held an emergency meeting with the hostel

presidents on August 18 after which they wrote to the Dean of Students, saying "the charges are not logical".

It also said there were "huge discrepancies" in mess bills. "The residents who remain on campus have not been provided breakfast since the lockdown commenced, yet the mess bill exceeds what could be presumed reasonable... Even though the mess bills have been clearly inflated artificially,

the mess secretaries have not been given the opportunity to examine the mess bill for discrepancies..." they wrote, demanding the withdrawal of mess dues.

JNUSU has called for postponing registration process "till all existing issues faced by students are resolved."

Registrar Pramod Kumar and Dean of Students Sudheer Pratap Singh did not respond to calls and texts.

DUO HELD, BROKE INTO HOME WHEN FAMILY WAS AWAY FOR FUNERAL

3 states, boat ride amid heavy rain: How cops tracked two thieves

JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

A BOAT ride through a lake amid heavy rain in UP, navigating waterlogged streets in Bihar, questioning multiple people — two teams of Delhi Police had their task cut out trying to track down two burglars, who fled the capital after stealing gold jewellery and Rs 12 lakh in cash.

The complainant, Vedant

Pathak, had lost his father to Covid-19 in May and the family was in Ayodhya to perform the last rites when the accused broke into their house in Northwest Delhi's Subash Place on August 8.

His sister Sudha said: "Our neighbour asked if we had returned as the lights in the kitchen and backyard were on. I told him that we were still in Ayodhya... He checked the house and said it was ransacked. We were worried as our jewellery

and my father's savings were inside his room." The family came home to find their gold and silver jewellery and over Rs 12 lakh cash stolen.

DCP (Northwest) Vijayanta Arya said, "We received a complaint and sent our teams to scan CCTV cameras. Footage showed two unknown men entering the locality, carrying bags. We found that they went to Shakurpur after committing the crime." However, their faces were cov-



The accused with some of the recovered loot

ered and there were no eyewitnesses.

An officer in the investigating team said, "One of the accused in the footage looked like a local history-sheeter called Nageshwar, who is involved in multiple burglaries and robberies. We sent a team to his house, who posed as jail officials. Nageshwar's mother said he went to his village in UP."

Similar raids were conducted at Nageshwar's associate Chand Khan's house. Police found he too

went to his village in Bihar.

Two teams, headed by SHO Ashish Singh, were sent to Bihar and UP. In UP's Maharajganj, amid heavy rain, the team had to take boat ride to get to the village. "However, the boat toppled midway. We were scared but managed to get to a safe spot. We reached Maharajganj but locals told us Nageshwar had gone back to Delhi," said a police constable.

Similarly, the police team

that went to Bihar's Khagaria district faced issues due to waterlogged streets and no transport — only to find Khan had also left for Delhi.

After days of technical surveillance, on August 14, police found that the two men were at the railway line in Shakurpur. The duo had come to meet their friends and drink and were arrested. SHO Singh said the team went back to UP and recovered the stolen jewellery and cash.

BRIEFLY



The building at Gurgaon's Sector 46

House tilts due to rain

Gurgaon: A four-storey house in Gurgaon's Sector-46 tilted slightly due to the rain and a portion of IFFCO Chowk also caved in Thursday morning. From Tuesday to Wednesday, Gurgaon received 23 mm rainfall, with another 95 mm between 8.30 am and 11 am Wednesday, which, officials said is "six to seven times" the usual amount of rain received by the city.

Delhi BJP chief seeks L-G nod for Ramila

New Delhi: Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta Thursday wrote to Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal requesting permission to stage Ramila with social distancing in the capital. Gupta said that in a recent meeting with the organisers of Ramila in Delhi, everyone suggested organising Ramila by observing social distancing in the venues.

MCDs to launch dengue drive

New Delhi: All three municipal corporations in Delhi will jointly launch a campaign on the prevention of dengue and other vector-borne diseases on August 25, which will continue till September 30, officials said on Thursday. ENS

5 GOVT & POLITICS

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



AIRPORT POLITICS

SHASHI THAROOR has left the Congress leadership in Kerala red-faced. While the state Congress has opposed leasing out the Thiruvananthapuram international airport to Adani group, the Thiruvananthapuram MP has said the city needs a first-class airport worthy of its history, status and potential and argued that a private entity running the operations competitively is the only way the airport could flourish. Interestingly, many central leaders don't share his view. Jairam Ramesh tweeted that AAI could well mean "Adani Airports of India" since six airports have been "sold" to it. The Tharoor-Nishikant Dubey tussle too has not gone down well with some Congress leaders, who believe it has taken attention from the party's demand for a JPC probe into the Facebook issue.

PAYING TRIBUTE

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday paid his respects to former President Shankar Dayal Sharma on his birth anniversary. He was among the few BJP leaders who paid tribute. "Pay my respects to former President Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma on his birth anniversary. He will always be remembered for his contribution to nation-building," Jaishankar, who had served as the President's press secretary and speechwriter from 1992 to 1997, tweeted.

SUPPORTING INNOVATION

IN THE race to find solutions to the Covid-19 pandemic and issues faced by various sectors, hundreds of companies and academic and research institutions have initiated innovation and projects. The Department of Science and Technology has announced the Millennium Alliance Round 6 and COVID-19 Innovation Challenge Award, which has recognised 49 innovative solutions in five focus sectors of India. The department currently supports 150 technology business incubators with over 4,000 technology startups within these incubators across the country.

Swachh Survekshan 2020: Indore named cleanest city for 4th year in a row

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

INDORE HAS emerged as the cleanest city in the country for the fourth time in a row according to the Swachh Survekshan 2020, the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) said on Thursday.

The Swachh Survekshan 2020 is the fifth edition of the annual cleanliness urban survey conducted by the MoHUA in which 4,242 cities, 62 cantonment boards and 97 Ganga towns were surveyed, with feedback received from 1.87 crore citizens.

According to the survey, Indore was ranked first among the 47 cities with a population of more than one million, followed by Surat and Navi Mumbai. All the National Capital Region cities in this category performed poorly — Ghaziabad was ranked 19, followed by South Delhi (rank 31), North Delhi (rank 43) and East Delhi (rank 46). Patna, ranked 47, is at the bot-

tom of the list. Other cities that have performed poorly include Greater Mumbai (rank 35), Bruhat Bengaluru (rank 37), Amritsar (rank 39), Kota (rank 44) and Chennai (rank 45).

Uttar Pradesh's cities have performed slightly better, with Lucknow on the 12th place, Agra ranked 16, Prayagraj 20, and Kanpur 25. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's constituency of Varanasi is at rank 27. However, in a separate category of Ganga Towns having a population of more than 1 lakh, Varanasi has been ranked the cleanest among 46 towns.

Among cities with a population of 1-10 lakh, Chhattisgarh's Ambikapur has been surveyed as the cleanest city in the country, followed by Mysore and New Delhi. Bihar's Gaya with a rank of 382 is at the bottom in this category.

Maharashtra's Karad has been ranked as the cleanest in the category of cities with a population of less than one lakh, followed by Sasvad and Lonavala (also in Maharashtra).

As Cong reaches out to Dalits, Brahmins in UP, friction comes to the fore

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

IN THE political wilderness for more than three decades, the Congress in Uttar Pradesh is trying hard to woo Dalits as well as Brahmins simultaneously in an attempt to carve out a political space for itself in the state where dominant regional parties the SP and BSP are struggling. However, the moves are also revealing the frictions within the party.

At AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's instance, a delegation of Congress leaders led by Maharashtra minister and the party's SC department head Nitin Raut, state Congress president Ajay Kumar Lallu and AICC general secretary and Rajya Sabha MP P L Punia Thursday visited Azamgarh, where a Dalit village head was shot allegedly by upper castes.

The Congress had been trying hard to woo the SC community in



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi pays tribute to former PM Rajiv Gandhi on his 76th birth anniversary, in Delhi.

UP for long but with little success. The attempts go back to the days when Rahul Gandhi used to tour the state regularly. While the aggression has upset the BSP — visible in Mayawati's decision to reclaim her six MLAs from the Congress in Rajasthan, and her statements mentioning the Congress while attacking the SP and BJP in the context of atrocities against Dalits — it



UP HOUSE MEETS, WITH SAFETY NORMS

The three-day monsoon session of the Uttar Pradesh Legislature began under strict Covid-19 protocols on Thursday with obituary references for its present and former members, including ministers Kamal Rani Varun and Chetan Chauhan who succumbed to coronavirus. Express

RAJASTHAN

BJP summons 4 MLAs who missed confidence motion, seeks explanation

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, AUGUST 20

THE BJP on Thursday summoned four party MLAs in Rajasthan who had missed the Motion of Confidence moved by the ruling Congress in the Assembly on August 14, and sought an explanation about their absence.

The MLAs met Leader of Opposition Gulab Chand Kataria and subsequently party's state president Satish Poonia.

All four MLAs — Gopi Chand Meena, Kailash Chandra Meena, Harendra Ninama, and Gotam Lal — confirmed to *The Indian Express* that they were initially present in the Assembly the day but left after it was adjourned till 1 pm.

The four are among 18 MLAs sent by the BJP to Gujarat in the

run-up to the Assembly session, their absence is seen as having raised suspicion for the party.

BJP state chief Poonia said, "Apparently it was nothing serious but their absence counts. So I will have a meeting with the Leader of Opposition and we will decide (what to do next) and the intensity (of MLAs' action)."

Gopi Chand Meena, MLA from Aspuri (in Dungarpur district) said: "At the legislature party meet on August 13, it had been decided that the party will bring a Motion of No Confidence and all of us had signed for it. However, when we met in the Assembly — around 9.30 am on August 14 — (Deputy Leader of Opposition) Rajendra Rathore told us that we are not moving the motion since the Congress factions have reunited, and that coronavirus will be dis-

cussed in the Assembly." Meena said he was suffering from diarrhoea since August 7. "Constant travel ensured that I did not get proper rest. I was in Assembly until 11.45 am that day but... had to visit the toilet frequently, so I left for the MLA quarters, as I was told that nothing would happen in the Assembly," he said. "I took medicine, put my phone on silent, and went to sleep. Poonia called me up around 4 pm and asked about my whereabouts." Kailash Chandra, MLA from Garhi (Banswara), said: "My car was undergoing repair at a workshop. My driver didn't have money (to pay for the work), so when the House was adjourned I left for the workshop in an autorickshaw. I did not realise I will get stuck due to rain. I was constantly in touch with Kataria-ji and Poonia-ji."

Now, Dubey seeks Tharoor removal as chairman of House panel on IT

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

BJP MP and member of the standing committee on Information Technology Nishikant Dubey Thursday wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, seeking removal of Congress MP Shashi Tharoor as chairman of the standing committee.

Another IT panel member and BJP MP Rajyavardhan Rathore wrote to the Speaker, drawing his attention to the "violation of rules" by Tharoor.

Earlier, Dubey gave a notice of breach of privilege against Tharoor after the office of the chairman of the standing committee sent a letter to Facebook, seeking an explanation on *The Wall Street Journal* report which stated that a senior public policy executive of Facebook "opposed applying hate-speech rules" to at least four indi-



Tharoor, Nishikant Dubey

viduals and groups linked with the BJP even after they were "flagged internally for promoting or participating in violence". Dubey has alleged that Tharoor violated rules by not taking members of the committee into confidence before the standing committee chairman's office wrote to Facebook.

Tharoor, too, has given a notice of breach of privilege against Dubey, citing his "disparaging" remarks against him on social media.

Dubey has requested the Speaker to invoke Rule 283 — power of Speaker to give directions to the

House panel summons FB

New Delhi: The Parliamentary Committee on Information Technology has summoned Facebook on September 2 in connection with *The Wall Street Journal* report, sources said. On September 1, the committee will take presentations from Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Home Ministry and Jammu and Kashmir, among others, to discuss Internet shutdowns. ENS

committees — in relation to Rule 258 (3) of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha to choose another member

to act as chairperson of the panel. He alleged that Tharoor had been running affairs of the committee in a "thoroughly unprofessional manner and to serve his political agenda of spreading rumours and defaming" BJP and its members.

Tharoor's mention of a practice followed by The House of Commons in his notice also came under fire from Dubey. "Speaking in Spenserian English with a foreign accent does not give freedom to an individual not only to disregard our glorious parliamentary institutions/Organs to meet his own political ambitions but also to abuse our Constitution by referring to the House of Commons for establishing that while raising pertinent issues for regulating the affairs of Parliamentary Committee on Information and Technology as per established procedure, I have committed the offence of Breach of Privilege," he said.

Nepal proposes meeting of boundary work group by Sept

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

DAYS AFTER Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli called up Prime Minister Narendra Modi and unlocked the frozen bilateral dialogue amid the boundary dispute, Kathmandu is learnt to have proposed a meeting of the Boundary Working Group (BWG) in August end or early September. This was conveyed to New Delhi after the Prime Ministers spoke to each other on August 15.

Led by the Surveyor General of India, the BWG is different from the foreign secretaries meeting that is being sought to discuss the Kalapani border dispute, but it is an important mechanism to review the boundary work.

The BWG is a joint agency constituted by the governments of India and Nepal in 2014 to carry out works in the fields of construction, restoration and repair of boundary pillars including clearance of 'no-man's land' and other technical tasks.

The group so far has held six meetings. The last meeting was on August 28 last year in Dehradun.

In 2017, the two sides had finalised the comprehensive plan and modalities for execution and completion of boundary work in the next five years.

The BWG's inputs are critical as they are given to the governments on the basis of field-level survey.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Nepal counterpart KP Sharma Oli

The August 15 phone call between Prime Ministers Modi and Oli, followed by the August 17 meeting between senior officials on Indian government-assisted projects in Nepal, have smoothened the way for further dialogue. The two sides can now use modern technology, including satellite imagery and drone survey, to review the work done at the BWG.

The BWG meeting follows from the leader-level phone conversation where they had "agreed to continue discussions on bilateral matters in the future". This had signalled an outreach and willingness to take forward the conversation at the highest level to pragmatic conversation at the diplomatic level.

A meeting of the BWG, which is expected to take place through video conferencing, assumes significance in the wake of deterioration of ties between the two countries in the last three months.

Chandrika Rai, 2 other RJD MLAs join JD(U)

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, AUGUST 20

TWO DAYS after three RJD legislators joined the JD(U), three more MLAs, including former health minister Tej Pratap Yadav's father-in-law Chandrika Rai, Thursday switched to the JD(U) from the RJD.

Jayvardhan Yadav, Pali ganj (Patna) MLA and grandson of former Congress MP and ex-Union minister Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, and Faraz Fatmi, Keoti (Darbhanga) MLA and son of former RJD MP MAA Fatmi, were the other leaders who joined the JD(U) in the presence of senior party leaders and ministers Bijendra Prasad Yadav and Sravan Kumar.

Parsa (Saran) MLA Chandrika Rai said, "RJD has been a party of capitalists. Committed workers have not been happy with RJD leadership. I am impressed with social justice efforts by CM Nitish Kumar. We appreciate... zero tolerance policy against crime and corruption."

Faraz Fatmi, whose father is already part of the JD(U), sought



JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar with the MLAs in Patna. PTI

to know why the RJD ill-treated MAA Fatmi. "RJD has been airy-fairy... It is Nitish Kumar who has done something concrete for the welfare of Muslims. There have been several welfare schemes..."

Jayvardhan Yadav said he hardly got "the kind of respect" he "deserved". "I joined JD(U) because of development works being carried out by Nitish Kumar."

RJD spokesperson Mrityunjay Tewari said, "Chandrika Rai had announced his decision long ago. Some disgruntled and selfish individuals leaving us would make no difference. Those who care for social justice are with us."

'We cannot anchor our strategy only in saying what is wrong with BJP'

FORMER UNION minister and senior Congress leader ASHWANI KUMAR speaks to MANOJ CG about why the demands for internal elections are misplaced, and the way forward to rejuvenate the party.

There are demands for internal elections and elections to the CWC. Your comments?

Elections in their very nature, considering in particular the way Congress is structured, can be divisive and debilitating. I sincerely feel at this point of time, when the party is facing many challenges, we should not embark upon an exercise that is potentially divisive. Mrs Gandhi's leadership has unanimous approval within the party. It is only fair for us to trust her judgement... This talk of election is nothing more than shadow boxing because the result that is intended is not guaranteed be-



cause the constitution of the electoral college — namely the AICC — for elections to the CWC itself is

the result of a political consensus hammered within the party by the Congress president... You can't have elections for the sake of appeasing a particular set of people.

Shadow boxing, appealing some people — what is in your mind?

I hear some whispers of people insisting on elections. I am not against elections as long as they achieve a desired result of rejuvenating the party. But the way this campaign is being built, its timing, and considering that the end purpose doesn't seem to be clear... In the Congress's scheme of things, the entire structure is based upon political consensus hammered out at various levels from the block to the AICC. As long as the electoral college itself is not constituted through an election, what kind of an election result can you expect by having elections in the AICC?

Where is the party going wrong when it comes to raising issues?

We cannot anchor our political strategy exclusively in saying what is wrong with the BJP. Of course, that is an essential part of every opposition party's functioning... we have the duty to oppose, expose and depose... but alongside that we must give an alternative narrative. The real challenge is to have one core issue around which an alternative can be built. We can't lose ourselves in peripheral issues that have transitory resonance.

What is that issue?

That is freedom, inclusion, liberty, dignity and justice. We have seen in the last few years the entire atmosphere in the country is going in an undesirable direction.

FULL INTERVIEW ON www.indianexpress.com

VINAYAKA CHATURTHI

BJP, AIADMK in war of words after TN denies nod to festivities

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, AUGUST 20



Fisheries Minister D Jayakumar

A WAR of words has broken out between senior AIADMK and BJP leaders in Tamil Nadu after the state government denied permission for Vinayaka Chaturthi festivities citing the Covid-19 situation. State Fisheries Minister D Jayakumar on Thursday responded sharply to BJP national secretary H Raja's recent remark that the BJP government in Karnataka is "aanmatyulla arasu", meaning a "manly government". Raja was taking a dig at the AIADMK government denying permission to Hindu outfits to organise Vinayaka Chaturthi celebrations. Jayakumar said, "AIADMK is very much a manly party, ours is a manly government too. Do not rub us the wrong way." Jayakumar then recounted a previous incident in which Raja blamed his Twitter admin after a tweet from his handle triggered a row and when the BJP leader apologised before Madras High Court. "All of you know about Raja. We have already seen his greatness and manliness... Do people who post a tweet and go hiding have manliness?", the minister said. Jayakumar also took a swipe at the BJP's state social media convener CTR Nimal Kumar who recently tweeted that AIADMK hid behind the saree of a woman for 30 years—an apparent reference to former CM J Jayalitha. "Everyone knows who all were waiting at the residence of that woman leader years ago," Jayakumar said. Despite the Covid-19 surge in Tamil Nadu, state BJP chief L Murugan has been arguing that

Vinayaka Chaturthi festivities should go on. "It allowed liquor shops, and public worship in small places of worship," he has said. Murugan has said Maharashtra and Karnataka have allowed festivities and that the BJP will support any decision taken by Hindu Munnani—a fringe outfit. Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami Thursday asserting that the government will act as per the Madras High Court order. The court Wednesday refused to pass an order on the festivities, saying the state has in its wisdom already prohibited such activities. He added the state was following Centre's guidelines. The Covid-19 case count in the state has climbed to 3.61 lakh and it has reported over 6,200 deaths. According to senior AIADMK leaders, a statement by BJP state vice-president VP Duraisamy that BJP will lead the NDA alliance in Tamil Nadu since it is a national party is behind the AIADMK taking a strong stand against its ally. The leaders said the statement was a sign for the AIADMK leadership to send out a message that they would not be pushed around. "The result of our alliance with BJP was disastrous in the last Lok Sabha. There are many factors that force the leadership to maintain our alliance, but it is also necessary for us to make the right decisions for everyone, including traditional minority voters who used to support us," said a senior minister.

21 years after plea, NGT identifies 46.11 sq km land in Goa as pvt forest

Panaji: Twenty-one years after a petition was filed by NGO Goa Foundation, NGT Wednesday identified and accepted 46.11 sq km of land as private forest in Goa. In doing so, the tribunal rejected a Goa government report that had reduced the private forest cover to 41.2 sq km. The order by Justice Sheo Kumar Singh, Judicial Member, and Expert Member Dr Satyawand Singh Gabryal said that since the litigation had been pending in the Supreme Court and High

Court before being sent to the NGT, it should be taken as final. The NGT, having probed all reports, said, "...we are of the considered opinion that total of 46.11 sq kms (ie 41.20 sq km of the forest area demarcated by the Forest Department out of 67.12 sq km identified by Sawant Committee and Karapurkar Committee + 4.91 sq km private forest area identified by the Review Committee) is the private forest area in the state of Goa." ENS

Girl caught plucking flower, Odisha village boycotts all 40 Dalit families

AISHWARYA MOHANTY
BHUBANESWAR, AUGUST 20

FORTY DALIT families in Kantio Kateni village of Odisha's Dhenkanal district have been subjected to social boycott for the past two weeks after a 15-year-old girl from the community plucked flowers from the backyard of an upper caste family two months ago. After one family registered its objection, the matter snowballed into a confrontation between the two communities, eventually leading to the social boycott of the 40 Dalit families, local residents said.



Naik families in Dhenkanal district's Kantio Kateni village say they have been deprived of sharecropping and warned against taking out processions. Express

The girl's father Niranjana Naik said, "We had immediately apologised so that the matter could be resolved, but following the incidents, several meetings were called and they decided to boycott us. Nobody is allowed to talk to us; we are not allowed to participate in any social event of the village." The village, which has nearly 800 families, has 40 families from the Scheduled Caste Naik community. The community submitted memorandums to the district administration and the police station concerned on August 17. "The (local) PDS dealer and the provision store owner have stopped selling to us, forcing us to walk at least 5 km to buy es-

entials. Villagers have even stopped talking to us," Jyoti Naik, one of the villagers, said. The memorandum states that they have been deprived of sharecropping to make sure "that our people do not get apple work in the village" and have to move in search of work. "Most of our people are semi-literate and illiterate and work in the villagers' fields," it adds. Members of the community have also alleged that they have been warned against taking out any procession for weddings or funerals on the village road. "A diktat has been issued that our community's children cannot study in the local government school. Even teachers who belong to our community have

been asked to get themselves transferred elsewhere on their own," says the memorandum. While the village sarpanch and members of the committee that made these decisions agreed that the villagers have been asked not to talk to members of the community, they denied the other allegations. Harmohan Mallik, secretary of the village development committee, said, "It is true that people were asked not to talk to them, and it is because of their wrongdoings. But other allegations are baseless." Sarpanch Pranabandhu Das said, "It is an inter-community matter and will get resolved eventually. The majority community has problems that the

minority community implicates them in false cases and files police complaints under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. The incident which triggered this had led to an altercation and a minor brawl. For a couple of days, as per the committee's decision, the majority community had stopped talking with members of the Dalit community. The situation is now returning to normal." After the memorandum was submitted, two rounds of peace meetings have been held, but the matter has not been resolved, according to villagers. Bishnu Prasad Acharya, sub-collector of Kamakhya Nagar subdivision, said: "They had approached the local police but were not happy with the decision taken there. Then they came to me. I directed them to the subdivisional police officer. I will also attend a peace meeting with both communities and try to resolve the matter." The police are also waiting for another round of talks. Anand Kumar Ddungdung, inspector in-charge, Tumunganga police station, said: "We have tried to sort it out. They wanted to reach a compromise and not drag the matter further, which is why we did not file an FIR. We have called for another meeting with the leaders from both communities. If they do not resolve the matter, we will go ahead and file an FIR."

Briton who runs Odisha shelter home held for sexual abuse

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, AUGUST 20

ODISHA POLICE on Thursday arrested a 68-year-old British national on the charge of sexually abusing a minor boy who studied at a shelter run by him in Jharsuguda district. John Patrick Bridge provided free education to tribal children at the shelter, where over 400 students are currently staying. According to the police, an inquiry had been initiated by the Indian Embassy in New Zealand over alleged misuse of funds by the organisation. During the investigation in Odisha, the police discovered the alleged sexual assault and asked the boy to register a complaint. "If more students come forward, we will take action. Further investigation is underway," said Jharsuguda SP Rahul PR. The accused has been booked for wrongful restraint, and under the POCSO Act and the SC/ST Act.

No ED chargesheet for 60 days, DHFL's Wadhawan brothers get default bail

ED says Bombay HC counted date wrong

OMKAR GOKHALE & KHUSHBOO NARAYAN
MUMBAI, AUGUST 20

THE BOMBAY High Court on Thursday granted bail by default to DHFL promoters Dheeraj and Kapil Wadhawan, accused in the Yes Bank money laundering case, as it ruled that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had not filed a prosecution complaint or chargesheet within the stipulated 60 days of their arrest. However, the Wadhawans will remain in jail as there is another case against them, by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). ED sources said the agency will move the Supreme Court on Friday to challenge the HC order. An ED official said the court wrongly counted the date of remand as May 14, while calculating the 60-day period. "The Supreme Court in 2015

in the case of Raviprakash Singh versus the State of Bihar has clearly said that while computing the period of 60 days or 90 days for filing of chargesheet, the day on which the accused is remanded to judicial custody should be excluded and the day on which the challan is filed in the court shall be included. Going by the SC order, the last day for filing the chargesheet by ED was July 13. The agency filed the charge sheet in the Wadhawan case on July 13," said the official. While CBI is investigating Wadhawans in the same case, ED is separately probing other pending cases against them. A Special court in Mumbai had last month denied bail by default sought by Wadhawans. Thereafter, Wadhawan moved the HC. A single judge bench of Bharati H Dangle passed an order on their pleas on Thursday.

Congress expels son-in-law of Manipur CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

R K IMO, Congress MLA from Sagolband constituency in Manipur and Chief Minister N Biren Singh's son-in-law, was expelled from the primary membership of the Congress Thursday. Imo, along with former CM Okram Ibobi Singh's nephew Okram Henry, were issued showcause notices by the state Congress unit last month for cross-voting in favour of the BJP candidate during the Rajya Sabha polls in June. On August 10, during the monsoon session of the Manipur Assembly, Okram Henry and five other Congress MLAs submitted their resignations to the Speaker. Their resignations came at a time when Ibobi Singh had called for a trust vote against the BJP-led government. The resignations by the Congress MLAs ensured that the Congress did not have enough numbers to defeat the BJP in the no-confidence motion.

Centre says it has asked for Indian lawyer for Jadhav

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20



Kulbhushan Jadhav

INDIA ON Thursday said that it wants an Indian lawyer to represent Kulbhushan Jadhav in the Islamabad High Court. This is a new demand by New Delhi, apart from the existing demands — asking for relevant documents of the case and unimpeded consular access to Jadhav. This about a fortnight after the Islamabad High Court on August 3 said India should be given "another chance" to appoint a lawyer to defend him. Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said on Thursday, while responding to questions, "On this issue, we are in touch with Pakistan through diplomatic channels. For a free and fair trial in keeping with the letter and spirit of ICJ judgment, we have asked for Jadhav to be represented by an Indian lawyer. However, Pakistan has to first address the core issues — giving copies of relevant documents of the case and providing unimpeded consular access to Jadhav." More than four years after he was arrested by Pakistan in March 2016 and subsequently sentenced to death (in April 2017), the Pakistan court had ordered, "The government of Pakistan shall once again inform Jadhav regarding his rights... he shall be

specifically informed of his right to avail the statutory remedy... and to authorise the Government of India to arrange legal representation on his behalf." "Pakistan government shall communicate this order to the Govt of India, the latter shall be at liberty to make appropriate arrangements on behalf of Jadhav," it said on August 3. Jadhav, a retired Navy officer, was arrested allegedly on March 3, 2016, and India was informed of this on March 25, 2016, when the Pakistan Foreign Secretary raised the matter with the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad. New Delhi then moved the ICJ in May in 2017 against the "farical trial" by the military court of Pakistan against 48-year-old Jadhav. He was sentenced to death on charges of espionage and terrorism in April 2017. In July last year, the ICJ, in its verdict, had directed Pakistan to allow consular access and effectively review the death sentence. The court had observed that Pakistan had breached international law by not granting him consular access.

Cong on Bhushan case: Law has to be applied in fair, balanced manner

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

BREAKING ITS silence on the conviction of advocate Prashant Bhushan in a contempt of court case, the Congress on Thursday said that the law has to be applied in an "even handed, fair, balanced manner" and argued that the concerns raised by many after the judgment are not "false, frivolous or vexatious". Several opposition leaders and lawyers from across the country have expressed dismay over the conviction of Bhushan by the Supreme Court. While political leaders have argued that his conviction has caused "a chilling effect on free speech and expression of dissent", the lawyers have urged the top court to "take corrective steps to prevent miscarriage of justice". At a Congress press conference, spokesperson Abhishek Manu Singhvi said, "The con-

cerns raised by those after the judgment are certainly not in any manner false, frivolous or vexatious. They cannot be dismissed off hand. They deserve a lot of careful thinking because they include former judges of that very Court..." Singhvi said that he didn't think it would be right to associate the party with his statement, but added that he has no hesitation in saying from the Congress podium that the law has to be applied in an "even handed, fair, balanced manner". Referring to demands that the matter should be heard by a larger bench, Singhvi said, "Although there are technical issues which should be considered, there is no hurry and the speed also, I would say with greatest humility, is very worrying. The speed creates part of the problem. The right thing done in the wrong way, the wrong thing done in the wrong way, these are all facets to be seen."

Delhi Agricultural Marketing Board

(Govt. of NCT of Delhi)
9, Institutional Area, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058
Tel:- 28522085, 28525232, Fax:- 011-28522085, Email:- ambdl@nic.in, Website:- www.delagrmarket.nic.in

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

The following item rate e-tender are invited through e-tendering on behalf of competent authority :

S. No	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earnest Money	Time of compln.	Last date & Time of receipt of tenders through e-procurement	Tender ID no / NIT No
1	Providing Rain Water Harvesting System at Staff quarter Rohini	Rs 5,80,517/-	Rs. 11,700/-	2 months	28/08/2020 Up to 14.30 Hrs.	2020_DAMB_193561_1
2	Providing Rain Water Harvesting System 2 Nos. in NGM Najafgarh	Rs 9,02,843/-	Rs. 18100/-	3 months	28/08/2020 Up to 14.30 Hrs.	2020_DAMB_193556_1
3	Improvement of entry and exit gate at F&V Market Keshopur	Rs 19,97,544/-	Rs. 40,000/-	3 months	31/08/2020 Up to 14.30 Hrs.	2020_DAMB_193562_1

(i) To be opened online in the office of Executive Engineer-I :
(ii) Technical Bid opening at 15:00 Hrs. on 28.08.2020 for work at Sr. No. 1 & 2 & 31.08.2020 for work at Sr. No.3.
(iii) Terms and Conditions and details can be seen at website <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>

Sd/-
Executive Engineer-I
DAMB

DIP/Shabdarth/0238/20-21

FROM PAGE ONE 'Judgements, conduct determine public esteem'

tends to scandalise, or lowers or tends to lower the authority of, any court". They withdrew the petition later. Excerpts from an interview with Shourie:

The Supreme Court has held that the two tweets by Prashant Bhushan shake the faith of the people in the Supreme Court, that they undermine "the central pillar of democracy" in our country. And, therefore, must be dealt with severely. Bhushan does not agree, nor do several senior lawyers who have written strongly worded articles against the Supreme Court's judgment. On whose side do you come down -- the Supreme Court's or Bhushan's?

Not just that, they have said that his tweets will frighten the lower judiciary: 'If the SC can't protect itself, how will it protect us?' More than that: the two tweets will lower India's image abroad -- for India is looked up to as a democracy and these tweets undermine the central pillar of that democracy.

No advertising executive could have devised a better advertisement for the company that owns Twitter: 'Come, join Twitter: see, so powerful is our platform that with just two tweets you can undermine the central pillar of the largest democracy in the world'.

The judgment brings out not Prashant's view of this central pillar, but the view of the Judges: that this central pillar is now so hollowed out, that it is so fragile that a mere puff of two tweets can put it in jeopardy. Not the tweets but such remarks, coming as they do from three Judges of the Supreme Court, strain people's faith in the Supreme Court.

But when someone says that democracy has been undermined in the last six years and that the

Supreme Court, in particular the last four Chief Justices have been abettors in this undermining, does that not erode people's faith in the judicial system? What can the Court do in such circumstances?

First and foremost, it must look in the mirror. Has it been aiding and abetting the assault on democracy, its institutions and values or not? If it has, then the critic is a friend of the Court, he is alerting it to the wrong it is doing. If it has not, then he can go on ranting as he will, he is the one who will lose credibility, people will stop believing him. They will go not by two tweets but by the record of judgments and the conduct of the Judges.

Second, today truth is a defence. So, when the Court is offended by the comment of someone, it must, it is by law bound to give him the opportunity to prove his assertion.

■ Will truth not be admitted as a defence in a country whose national motto is Satyameva Jayate?

■ Whose 'Father of the Nation' said time and time again, 'Truth is God'?

■ But more than that, that truth is a defence, and therefore the alleged contemnor must be given the opportunity to make good his charge, is now the law

■ And that law has been upheld by a 5-Judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court, incidentally in my own case.

That is the law, and you will punish him without giving him a chance to prove what he has said?

The Supreme Court has also taken Bhushan to task for an interview he gave nine years ago. In that he had alleged that several judges, including Chief Justices, had been corrupt. Does that not manifestly lower the dignity of the Judges and the judicial system?

First, as I mentioned, you are

obliged to give him the opportunity to prove his assertion. The fact that some lawyers -- and they are in the best position to know -- feel that some judges are corrupt is a matter of record. The other day, Iqbal Chagla pointed out in The Indian Express that under his leadership the Bombay High Court Bar Association passed resolutions saying that five judges there were corrupt, that later it did so again in regard to a Chief Justice.

Second, what lowers the dignity of the judicial system in such instances is not a tweet, but

■ The facts

■ The procedure of dealing with such cases -- impeachment -- is completely inadequate, in the end, completely partisan

■ And completely opaque: as was the case in dealing with the allegation of misconduct against the previous Chief Justice.

■ Rectify these shortcomings rather than venting your anger at tweets.

Third, remember that 'corruption' does not mean only accepting money. An academic or a journalist may not be accepting money and yet be intellectually corrupt in that he habitually plagiarises from the work of others.

A person, say a judge or a political leader, may be thoroughly honest in monetary terms, but thoroughly corrupt morally: he may be proclaiming high principles in grandiloquent prose from the pulpit -- about fundamental rights, say, or bringing those who violate these to book, or helping the poor -- and yet when the time comes to put them into practice, may not do so. I can give you a pile of examples of this kind of corruption.

As for accepting favours in the narrowest sense, remember that under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, (sections 7 and 11), 'corruption' that is sought to be curbed is not just 'pecuniary gratification' or corruption

that is 'estimable in money', but any form of favour: the Act makes a clear distinction -- 'any valuable thing or pecuniary advantage' -- and it seeks to curb both.

If even the extreme and explicit comments that Bhushan made in the interview do not constitute contempt per se, what kind of words, what kind of action would constitute contempt? What should be the test?

The test has to be a precise and narrow one: is the person doing or saying something that actually interferes with the course of justice. For instance, is he threatening or bribing a witness or a judge? This business of 'scandalising' the court is just too vague, and too out-of-date. One of the greatest Judges of the 20th century, Lord Denning was called 'an ass' for a judgment he had given. And by no less a person than Michael Foot -- so the comment was sure to be widely noticed and publicised. But he never hauled up Foot or anyone else for contempt. And please remember, his judgments were as severely criticised as they were roundly applauded. In one case, he wrote an entire judgment -- and his judgments, which changed the course of law, used to be just a page or two long -- setting out why he would not haul up a person for contempt. I wish everyone interested in our courts would read what he wrote on why he would not, and why judges should not rush into hauling people up for contempt. It should be read out loud by judges before they begin dictating their own judgments on contempt.

But surely you are not condoning abuse?

The answer to that was set out by Gandhiji himself. 'After all, what is "abuse"?' he wrote. 'I find that the dictionary meaning is "misuse, perversion, bad use." When therefore we

call a thief a "thief" or a rogue a "rogue", we do not abuse him... Only the man using a particular adjective must mean it and be prepared to prove it.' Gandhiji went on to cite religious scriptures which, he pointed out, are full of adjectives and invective of the strongest kind against evil doers and the enemies of those they considered to be God -- like the Ramcharitmanas of Tulsidas, who, Gandhiji said, was 'the quality of mercy personified'. I would request every judge to read this article also before he dictates any judgment holding someone guilty of contempt. (Young India, November 17, 1921).

If even such explicit comments cannot lower the esteem in which courts are held by people, what determines the esteem in which people hold the courts?

The judgments that they deliver and the conduct of judges -- in and out of court.

You obviously disagree with everything that the Court has held. What would be your suggestions to Judges?

First, be a little more confident about your reputations and that of the institution.

Second, remember that the esteem in which you and your institution is held will be determined by your judgments and your conduct, not by some tweet.

Third, look upon criticism as caution, on the critic as your friend. If he is right, you would be well advised to alter your conduct. If he is wrong, if your judgments are learned, fair and wise, and he keeps saying you are incompetent to hold that office, people will stop believing him. In a word, before taking umbrage at something that's been said, before hauling someone up, always look into a mirror.

FULL INTERVIEW ON
www.indianexpress.com

BRIEFLY



At Alipore zoo. Employees of a private firm were installing a hoarding inside the zoo when they were electrocuted. *Archive*

WEST BENGAL
2 electrocuted in Kolkata zoo

Kolkata: Two employees of a private firm, engaged to install a hoarding inside Alipore Zoo, died on Thursday after coming in contact with a live wire, an official said. Alipore Zoo Director Asis Samanta said that another employee of the firm is in hospital and his condition is stated to be serious. West Bengal Zoo Authority has ordered a probe into the incident. A zoo source said the electrocution could have been caused due to heavy rain in Kolkata since morning. The private company's employees have been at work inside the zoo for the last few weeks, officials said. **PTI**

Kerala migrant workers forced to pay for quarantine — or go home

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUGUST 20

LAST MONTH, as the lockdown eased, Bikram Singha, 26, from West Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur, decided to return to Kozhikode in Kerala where he had been working as a daily-wage mason for four years. His plan was to head to the rented quarters where he had been staying earlier and go through the mandatory two-week quarantine before looking for a job.

But on July 19, when Singha got off at the Kozhikode station, revenue officials and police stopped him, told him the Covid situation in the state was bad, and that he would have to take the next train out of the state. The following day, Singha took a train back home.

Even as inter-state travel restrictions were eased and Kerala allowed migrants to return, the state's Covid numbers have been steadily increasing. The surge in cases has coincided with strong local opposition in the migrant hubs of Palakkad, Thrissur, Emakulam and Kottayam, especially in the rural areas, against returning migrants staying in quarantine centres in their midst.

Though the state government has tasked the revenue de-



Migrant workers in Kochi. *Express file*

partment with arranging for centres where people can be quarantined for free, in the face of resistance from residents, the workers are being asked to go back or, as in the case of Sohail Naziruddin Shaikh, forced to take up paid accommodation.

Shaikh, 32, from Anand in Gujarat, who did painting jobs in Kerala for 10 years, had gone home days before the lockdown. "I decided to come back when I heard about a job. The owner of the rented accommodation in Chathamangalam, 30 km from Kozhikode, where I had been staying, agreed to let me stay in quarantine there," he said.

But when he reached

Kozhikode, he was told to go back. "I then called my friends in Kozhikode, who got activists to intervene, after which the officials agreed to let me stay. But by then the house owner changed his mind, saying the locals weren't too happy, so I was forced to go to a hotel for Rs 900 a day," he said.

A senior official of the Labour Department said it's the responsibility of the contractors who bring migrant workers to the state to ensure quarantine facilities for them. In the case of workers who come on their own, district administrations have been told to quarantine them in free centres.

Prem Lal, tehsildar of

Kozhikode block in the district, said, "Migrant workers who cannot afford paid quarantine will have to go back. We are sending them back from the railway station itself," he said.

When told about the government's position allowing migrants to return, he only said, "This is the practice now."

At Paippadu, a panchayat in Kottayam that had around 12,000 migrants before the lockdown, residents have objected to workers returning to their cramped living quarters. They have now formed 'action committees', asking owners of buildings to ensure separate rooms or cubicles for migrants to ensure social distancing.

Kerala Labour Minister T P Ramakrishnan, however, said he was unaware of migrants being forced to return. "Kerala will never turn away any migrant worker. If labour contractors cannot provide quarantine facilities, the government will ensure that facility for workers," he said, adding that "if there are complaints, we will look into it".

Ashok Kumar, from Jalore in Rajasthan, had no one to complain to. He, along with three others, had taken the Delhi-Emakulam train to reach Kerala. "But we were told to go back. So we have booked return tickets. What option do we have? We have lost about Rs 20,000," he said.

Patna private hospital sealed for 'overcharging' coronavirus patient

Bihar govt seeks bill details of other pvt hospitals in city

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, AUGUST 20

THE BIHAR government Wednesday sealed a private hospital in Patna, which had allegedly billed a Covid patient Rs 6.34 lakh. Simultaneously, it has asked 28 remaining private hospitals in the state capital to submit a detailed report on the amount they charged for treating each and every Covid patient.

Not only has the private hospital - JDM Hospital in Kankerbagh - been sealed, but five of its functionaries including the Managing Director and a doctor, have been booked for wrongful restraint, cheating, criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust and also under provisions of the Epidemic Disease Act.

When contacted, Manoj Kumar, District Programme Officer, Patna, told *The Indian Express*, "We found that the hospital had not displayed its ventilator, ICU, room and other charges. It also did not maintain a register of patients admitted and discharged. We did not get satisfactory answers on how it charged Rs 6.34 lakh from the patient who had been admitted on July 30. The hospital had offered a hand-written bill without giving any clear break-up of treatment and facilities provided. We also learnt that patients would be confined and tortured if bills were not paid."

The hospital did not display the charges for Covid treatment at its premises. The district administration is likely to issue a Covid treatment rate list for private hospitals, official sources said.

The government acted against JDM Hospital following a complaint by a relative of a Covid patient, who had approached Manoj

Kumar. District Programme Officer. The DPO registered a case August 18 against JDM Hospital MD Raju Kumar Singh, Ajit Kumar, Assistant Manager, Dr RN Rashmi, Sunny Kumar, Lab Technician, and another staffer Jitendra Pandey under IPC sections 341 (wrongful restraint), 342 (wrongful confinement), 406 (criminal breach of trust), 420 (cheating) and 120B (criminal conspiracy) and under provisions of Epidemic Disease Act. No arrest has been made so far.

When contacted, Manoj Kumar, District Programme Officer, Patna, told *The Indian Express*, "We found that the hospital had not displayed its ventilator, ICU, room and other charges. It also did not maintain a register of patients admitted and discharged. We did not get satisfactory answers on how it charged Rs 6.34 lakh from the patient who had been admitted on July 30. The hospital had offered a hand-written bill without giving any clear break-up of treatment and facilities provided. We also learnt that patients would be confined and tortured if bills were not paid."

The nephew of the patient, who did not wish to be named, said, "The hospital did not tell us about ICU or ventilator charges and rather asked Rs 5,000 insurance charges per day. We paid them Rs 2.44 lakh. The hospital

gave us a handwritten bill and threatened us with dire consequences if we did not pay the entire bill."

JDM Hospital Managing Director Raju Kumar Singh, however, denied having given them any handwritten bill. "We have worked out a bill of Rs 4,26,300, of which they had paid Rs 2,44,000. Our bill clearly says that ICU charges are Rs 17,000 per day and ventilator charges are Rs 22,000 per day. These charges also include some allied facilities. The patient was diabetic and had been in ICU for six days and on a ventilator for three days," said Singh.

The relative of the patient, however, said they had not been given any computerised bill. "The handwritten bill said Rs 6.34 lakh," he said.

Patna District Magistrate Kumar Ravi, however, said, "JDM Hospital had not displayed its treatment charges as warranted under Clinical Establishment Act. A hospital has to display its rates for transparency. In the JDM Hospital case, the Covid patient should have been charged about Rs 2.5 lakh. Now, we have issued rates a private hospital can charge for Covid treatment. All Patna private hospitals are under 'A' category while hospitals of other district towns are under other categories."

MAHARASHTRA
DRI heroin case: Accused kills self

Mumbai: Over a week after the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) arrested three men from Delhi for their alleged involvement in the 1000-kg heroin seizure from Nhava Sheva port, one of the men was found dead in the toilet of the quarantine facility of Talaja central jail. Mohammed Nauman is suspected to have died by suicide in the early hours of Thursday. Nauman, suspected to be a middleman, was arrested on August 9 with importer Sarvesh Bhatia and logistics provider Mahendra Nigam from Delhi. **ENS**

GUJARAT
2006 blast accused held

Ahmedabad: The Gujarat Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) has arrested a man from West Bengal who was allegedly involved in facilitating the escape of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) operatives accused in the 2006 Kalupur Railway Station bomb blast case. According to officials, the accused, Abdul Razzaq Gazi, a resident of Basirhat in North 24 Parganas district, was arrested on August 18 by a Gujarat ATS team for his role in the multiple blasts in February 2006, in which 10 people were injured. They said Gazi had allegedly given shelter to LeT operatives including 26/11 terror attack plotter Zabiuddin Ansari alias Abu Jundal and Zulfiakar Faiyyaz Kagzi and facilitated their exit from India to Pakistan via the Bangladesh Border. **ENS**

KERALA
6 arrested for hunting bison

Kochi: Forest officers have arrested six people in connection with the hunting of a pregnant Indian bison, an animal protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Protection Act. The incident was reported in Chakkikuzhi area of Kalikavu Range of Nilambur South forest division. The arrests came after officials raided the residence of one of the accused following a tip-off on August 10 and seized 25 kg of meat, which was confirmed as a bison's. The accused live in a settlement around 1 km away from where the bison was killed. **ENS**

27.7% people in Punjab's containment zones have Covid antibodies: sero survey

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, AUGUST 20

ANTIBODIES AGAINST Covid-19 have been found in 27.7 per cent of people in Punjab's containment zones, indicating that they have already been infected by and recovered from the novel coronavirus, according to the findings of a sero-survey report.

The survey findings, submitted to Chief Minister Amarinder Singh during a Covid review meeting Thursday, showed the SARS-CoV2 antibodies prevalence in the containment zones to be the highest at 40 per cent in Amritsar district, followed by

35.6 per cent in Ludhiana, 33.2 per cent in SAS Nagar, 19.2 per cent in Patiala district and 10.8 per cent in Jalandhar.

This was Punjab's first exclusive survey, and was conducted in five containment zones from August 1 to 17, in systematically selected random sample population of 1,250. The earlier surveys were more generalised and were conducted by the state in coordination with ICMR, said a government statement.

The selected containment zones, which had reported the highest number of Covid cases, were one each in Patiala, SAS Nagar, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, and Amritsar districts. The sample

included 250 people from each zone. From each of the selected households, one adult was randomly chosen for the survey.

Health advisory expert group head Dr KK Talwar said a team of trained field assistants and laboratory technicians collected the data under the supervision of a medical officer.

After explaining the purpose of the survey, written informed consent was obtained, following which a laboratory technician collected a venous blood sample under aseptic conditions. The blood samples were taken to the district public health laboratory where rapid antibody tests were performed.

Back in force: Daily night curfew, weekend lockdown

Chandigarh: Amid a surge in coronavirus cases, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh Thursday extended weekend lockdown, with daily night curfew from 7 pm to 5 am, to all 167 cities and towns. Calling for a 'war-like preparedness' against Covid-19, he also ordered a ban on all gatherings except weddings and funerals across the state till August 31. **ENS**

CLASS X-XII COMPARTMENT EXAMS

Petitioner can challenge CBSE notification: SC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

THE SUPREME Court on Thursday dismissed a plea which sought direction to the CBSE to not force students of classes X and XII in the compartment category to sit for compartment exams in view of the Covid-19 situation.

A bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna, however, gave the applicant liberty to

challenge the August 6 notification by which the applicants claimed that the CBSE had rejected their prayer to cancel the exams.

On July 31, the court had asked them to make a representation on their grievance to CBSE. The applicants said they accordingly made a representation to the Board, saying that "in view of the rising cases of COVID Pandemic it shall be impossible for the CBSE to take the compartment examination soon" and requested it to cancel the exam.

ED: Bhushan Steel cleared goods without invoices amid NCLT proceedings

DEEPTIMANTIWARY
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) has claimed that the bankrupt Bhushan Power and Steel Limited (BPSL) clandestinely cleared finished goods worth over Rs 700 crore from its Odisha plant even as proceedings for its liquidation under the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) were on. This was allegedly done in connivance with a resolution professional from the NCLT.

The NCLT had last year approved the insolvency resolution of JSW Steel, clearing the way for BPSL's sale to JSW. The ED has been probing BPSL for alleged money-laundering for the past few years.

"In an ongoing investigation under PMLA involving siphoning and diversion of loan funds by Bhushan Power & Steel Limited

(BPSL), it was gathered that BPSL had engaged in clandestine clearances of finished goods from its Odisha Plant to its plants at Kolkata and Chandigarh," an ED statement said.

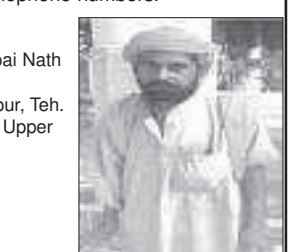
According to the agency, goods valued at Rs 700 crore had been cleared without payment of applicable taxes and duties and without issuance of any statutory invoice. "It was also gathered that this practice which was resorted to by the erstwhile management of the company had continued even after initiation of CIRP and some irregularities on part of Resolution Professional MK Khandelwal were also revealed," the ED said. It also claimed that huge cash payments to various individuals outside the books of accounts indicate siphoning and generation of cash from various concerns undergoing process of CIRP under NCLT.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR POLICE DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS JAMMU
0191-2561578 (O), 0191-254780 (F), email- sspjammu@jkpolice.gov.in
HUE AND CRY NOTICE
RULE NO. 712/191

SP City North, Jammu vide communication No. 9929-31/SPCN dated 14.07.2020 has intimated that accused Tarlok Singh @ Dipai Nath S/O Lakhman Singh R/O Ramnagar, Gangapur, Billari, Moradabad, Upper Pradesh is evading his arrest in case FIR No. 194/2019 U/S 302 IPC, P/S Bakshi Nagar, Jammu since the commission of crime.

As such photograph of the said absconder/accused person is being published for the information of Police establishments / Public in general having any clue related to the whereabouts / present location of the absconder/accused person, kindly communicate the same on the below mentioned contact / Telephone numbers.

- Description Roll:**
- Name : Tarlok Singh @ Dipai Nath
 - S/O : Lakhman Singh
 - R/O : Ramnagar, Gangapur, Teh. Billari, Moradabad, Upper Pradesh
 - Age : About 24 years
 - Height : About 5'6"
 - Build : Medium
 - Complexion : Wheatish
- Contacts/Telephone Numbers:**
1. DPO, Jammu : 0191-2547807, 0191-2561578
 2. SSP Jammu Mail I.D : sspjammu@jkpolice.gov.in
 3. PCR Jammu : 0191-2542000
 4. SP City North : 0191-2547038
 5. SDPO City West : 0191-2580252
 6. P/S Bakshi Nagar : 0191-2580102



For Sr. Superintendent of Police, Jammu
DIPJ-3475

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL, CHANDIGARH BENCH, AT CHANDIGARH
In CP (CA) No. 13 CHD/HR/2020
In the matter of the Companies Act, 2013

In the matter of Sections 230-232 read with Section 66 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Companies (Compromises, Arrangements and Amalgamations) Rules, 2016

And
In the matter of Scheme of Arrangement between Delta Propon Private Limited (Demerged Company / First Petitioner Company) and Namu Realtech Private Limited (Resulting Company / Second Petitioner Company) and their respective Shareholders and Creditors (hereinafter all the Companies collectively referred to as "Petitioner Companies").

NOTICE OF HEARING OF PETITION

A petition under section 230-232 of the Companies Act, 2013 ("Petition") for an order sanctioning the Scheme of Arrangement between Delta Propon Private Limited (hereinafter referred to as "Demerged Company" or "First Petitioner Company") [CIN: U45200HR2012PTC055969] and Namu Realtech Private Limited (hereinafter referred to as "Resulting Company" or "Second Petitioner Company") [CIN: U70110HR2012PTC075003] and their respective shareholders and creditors, was presented by the Petitioner Companies on 18.06.2020 and the Petition is fixed for hearing before the National Company Law Tribunal, Chandigarh Bench ("NCLT") on 07.10.2020. Any person desiring of opposing the Petition should send to the Petitioner Companies or its advocate at the address mentioned below, a notice of his/her intention, signed by him/her or his/her advocates, with his/her name, address, so as to reach the Petitioner Companies or its advocate and the NCLT, Chandigarh Bench, Corporate Law Bhawan, Sector 27, Chandigarh, not later than two days before the next date fixed for hearing of the Petition. Where he/she seeks to oppose the petition, the grounds of opposition or copy of his/her affidavit shall be furnished with such notice.

A copy of the Petition will be furnished by the Petitioner Companies or its advocate to any person requiring the same on the payment of prescribed charges for the same.

Date : 21.08.2020
Petitioner Companies:
Mr. Rambir, Advocate for the Petitioner Companies;
Authorized Signatory, Mr. Vaibhav Sharma
C/O Delta Propon Private Limited, Advocate
3rd Floor, Central Plaza Mall,
Sector-53, Gurugram 122002, Haryana Punjab and Haryana High Court
C/O Namu Realtech Private Limited, Chandigarh
461-462, Udyog Vihar, Phase-III, Gurugram, Haryana- 122016
Tel. No: 0124-4725017

GOVT. OF BIHAR
BIHAR COMBINED ENTRANCE COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION BOARD
I.A.S. Association Building, Near Patna Airport, Patna-14.
POST GRADUATE MEDICAL ADMISSION COUNSELLING (PGMAC)-2020
for MD / MS / PGD in Govt. / Private Medical Colleges of Bihar
Adv. No. - BCECEB(PGMAC)-2020/25 Dated : 20.08.2020
Notice for MOP UP Counselling (Medical)
In continuation to earlier all published concerned Advertisement of PGMAC-2020, this is to inform all NEET (PG)-2020 / PGMAC-2020 (Medical) candidates and all concerned that MOP UP Counselling for seat allotment / admission will be going to be held Offline. The venue for offline counselling will be BCECEB Board office, IAS Bhawan, Patna-14. Detailed programme and process for MOP UP Counselling of PGMAC-2020 (MD / MS / PGD Course) has been published through Adv. no. BCECEB(PGMAC)-2020/26 dt. 20.08.2020 which is uploaded on Board's website : bceceboard.bihar.gov.in. All concerned kindly go through the advertisement uploaded on Board's website and do accordingly.
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The Indian EXPRESS

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BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

The corona election

In Bihar, EC's challenge: To ensure level playing field in a mostly virtual campaign



S Y QURAISHI

FIGHTING TO WIN

There are early signs of improvement in COVID-19 situation. But coronavirus is unpredictable, battle is not over

THE COUNTRY'S CORONAVIRUS toll crossed 50,000 on Monday. More than 28 lakh people have been infected by the pathogen. India is the world's third-most COVID-19-affected country — in terms of mortality and number of infections — after the US and Brazil. But amid such dismal factoids, there are also early signs of the country getting an upper hand in its struggle against the contagion. For the first time since May, the positivity rate — the percentage of the virus carriers amongst those tested — has begun to come down. This figure had touched a high of 9 per cent on August 9 and has been on a decline ever since — it currently stands at 8.7 per cent. It is also heartening that the infection rate has remained stable even as tests have been scaled up in most states. The number of new positive cases has remained between 60,000-70,000 for two weeks now — much longer than it has remained in any other range.

There are, however, good reasons to temper optimism with caution. A breakdown of the national-level data suggests that some states have more work to do than others. Delhi has seen a continuous decline in the number of active cases for more than a month: From a high of about 28,000 at the end of June, the number of active cases has fallen to a little over 7,000 this week. Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu remain COVID-19 hotspots but the two states have managed to check the speed of transmission by ramping up testing and shoring up medical amenities. But such alacrity has been at a premium in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar and Telangana. Last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi pulled up these states for not conducting adequate number of tests even though they have a high positivity rate. Moreover, most states continue to test only those who show COVID symptoms, or their close contacts. Given that a substantial number of coronavirus carriers are asymptomatic, random tests could give a truer picture of the spread of the infection. Such tests could substantiate, corroborate and even disprove the results of the recent serological surveys in Delhi, Mumbai and Pune, which indicate the number of people exposed to the virus could be much more than suggested by the data on confirmed infections.

The pathogen will remain till there is a vaccine against it. In the past three weeks, COVID-19 clusters have resurfaced in countries that had flattened the transmission curve two months ago — France, Spain, the Netherlands, Australia, Germany and South Korea. Kerala — once the most successful state in containing the pandemic — has seen a spurt of cases in the past fortnight. The experience of the past six months will, no doubt, offer valuable lessons in combating the virus in the coming days and weeks. But the most important caveat remains: The coronavirus is unpredictable, and there can be no letting the guard down.

AMID THE CLAMOUR for postponing the impending Bihar assembly elections, the Election Commission of India has put its foot down and announced the timely conduct of elections to the 243-member legislative assembly, set to complete its tenure in November.

This is not the first time that the EC would be holding polls during the coronavirus pandemic. After a few months of postponement, the Commission, quite successfully, from June onwards, administered the Rajya Sabha and legislative council elections of various states under strict COVID-specific guidelines.

We have seen how as many as 34 countries have conducted their national assembly or presidential elections while fighting against COVID-19. The most successful examples have been of South Korea and, our immediate neighbour, Sri Lanka.

Taking its cue from other countries' management of their elections, the Election Commission has come up with its own set of rules that would be implemented during the Bihar elections. These include reduction of the number of electors per polling booth to 1,000 from the current 1,500; addition of 33,797 auxiliary polling stations to prevent overcrowding; and COVID-sensitive capacity-building of election officials. To avoid crowding at the counting centres, the counting tables have been reduced to seven per assembly constituency from 14, among other things.

The Opposition parties' fear of poor voter turnout in the state election due to the pandemic has been partly taken care of with the EC's decision to extend the postal ballot option to senior citizens over the age of 80, COVID-positive patients, persons with disabilities and voters in essential services, along with making use of its now famous SVEEP (Systematic Voter Education for Electoral Participation) programme and technological facilities to ensure voter education and mobilisation. If implemented well, the Bihar election could record a satisfactory voter turnout like in Sri Lanka, if not the highest, as reported in South Korea.

Even though speculation is rife that the EC might allow physical campaigning with a limited number of people, the political parties in Bihar are mostly likely to resort to digital campaigning, after months of protesting against it. The ball was set rolling in this direction by

the BJP back in June when Home Minister Amit Shah addressed the people of Bihar through a virtual rally. Virtual rallies are going to be a dominant feature of digital campaigning, besides social media. These rallies seem promising and innovative as they would keep the crowds at bay. Additionally, the bandwagon that follows a political leader visiting different constituencies would come to a halt, reducing both the campaign costs and the COVID risk.

Can the virtual rallies replace the door-to-door and large-scale physical campaigning that are the heart and soul of any democratic election? Not really. Virtual rallies have their own limitations, like inaccessibility to every nook and corner of rural, hilly and forest areas, with the internet penetration in Bihar being an abysmal 37 per cent. For online communication through smartphones, the situation is grimmer owing to sparse usage of smartphones in Bihar, which stands at just 27 per cent, and patchy mobile network even in the cities. Against this backdrop, with no expenditure ceiling for political parties, the parties will go for expensive communication devices like projection screens, among other things, to increase their voter base.

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This is where the issue of the level playing field is being raised by the Opposition parties. The arrangement of such facilities is evidently going to be a costly affair and the richer political parties will have a gala time in mobilising voters, putting small regional/local parties at a disadvantage. Under the winner-takes-all voting system like ours, missing out even a single household could have a negative effect on a party's winning chances.

The problem of equal opportunity also exists on the other mode of digital campaigning, social media. With growing influence of social media, the generally technologically challenged political leaders and their parties have quickly adapted to this youthful platform though it varies widely across political parties, depending on their financial position. During the Lok Sabha elections in 2019, the BJP reportedly spent the highest amount of Rs 27 crore on Google, Facebook and their sister platforms for political ads, while the Congress was the distant second with Rs 5.6 crore. Although at the national level, where thousands of crores are spent, this is not a big amount, one can guess how much the ruling

party must have gained by its higher investment in ads to woo the voters.

Other than social media funding, the Election Commission has another task in the realm of social media campaigning — fake news and hate propaganda. In both these areas, the Commission has been proactive. The recent example of its strict stance against hate propaganda came during legislative assembly elections of Delhi, when the Commission ordered Twitter to take down a communal post by a BJP leader (Kapil Mishra) and followed it up by asking the Delhi Police to file an FIR against him — setting a strong precedent. However, with the probability of physical campaigning being limited, the focus of all political parties and their candidates would be on the digital mode — allowing the social media platforms to be flooded with problematic posts.

The EC could, however, consider relaxing its stringent norms against old traditional methods like wall paintings, posters and flags. Maybe car, motorcycle and bicycle rallies with proper distancing could be encouraged for deep and wide reach with restricted costs.

Even though there exists a Voluntary Code of Ethics, issued by the EC in collaboration with social media platforms, allowing a direct engagement of the Commission and these platforms over problematic posts during election season, the recent revelations of The Wall Street Journal regarding Facebook have cast a shadow over the platform's neutrality. According to the report, Facebook India, on several occasions, was averse to removing derogatory posts uploaded by the ruling party's leader. Against this backdrop, the implementation of a Voluntary Code of Ethics will be scrutinised and questioned by the Opposition political parties.

The Bihar election could be an opportunity for the Election Commission to prove its efficiency once again to every sceptic out there. At a time when all countries of the world are looking at each other for lessons, Bihar could provide a leading example of successful election management, and the EC a leading electoral management body.

The writer is former Chief Election Commissioner of India and a Distinguished Fellow at Ashoka University

ACROSS THE SPECTRUM

Failure to fix contentious AGR issue in telecom sector has far reaching consequences

IN THE ONGOING case regarding payment of adjusted gross revenues (AGR) dues by telecom operators, the Supreme Court has questioned how spectrum can be sold by telcos, given that it does not belong to them. While sale of spectrum is allowed under the trading guidelines, provided prior dues are settled, questions were raised over the recovery of dues under the IBC process which treats government claims below those of secured and unsecured creditors. According to the resolution plan for RCom approved by lenders, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) will reportedly not get any proceedings following the resolution of the companies. Though these issues were raised with respect to the long-standing issue of AGR dues, how they are addressed will have far-reaching ramifications for other "natural public resource" dependent sectors.

There are several contentious issues here. First, while ownership of spectrum may not be a bone of contention, can the government revoke or cancel the licence? As per the IBC, in the moratorium period, a licence, permit, registration or clearance given by a government (central, state or local) shall not be suspended or terminated on grounds of insolvency, subject to the condition that there is no default in payment of dues for the use or continuation of the licence. Second, should the department of telecommunications be treated at par with creditors or is there a case for making an exception for a government department? Under Section 53 of the IBC, amounts due to government rank below those of secured and unsecured creditors. There are parallels between the issues raised in this case and the *Federal Communications Commission v. Nextwave Personal Communications, Inc.* in the US. In that case, following Nextwave's filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, the FCC had asserted that its licences were automatically cancelled, and available for auction. However, the Bankruptcy Court invalidated the cancellation of the licences as violating the code's provisions. NextWave's position that the FCC's cancellations were violations was subsequently upheld by the Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit, and the US Supreme Court.

At the crux of the issue is the failure of the government to fix the contentious AGR issue. Rather than intervene early on to address this issue, it has been driven by the desire of revenue maximisation, un mindful of the long-term implications on the sector. At a broader level, the implications of extending this argument to other sectors where government licences, permits etc are issued must be considered. This could, potentially, adversely impact those sectors' prospects by impinging upon the ability of companies to raise capital with banks/investors turning wary of investing in them.

SAVING A TREE

A community banded together to resurrect a 200-year-old Banyan in Goa, and showed the way

FOR DECADES, CLASS 7 students across India have been taught that "only God can make a tree". But the poem by Joyce Kilmer, included in the NCERT textbook, forgot to add that if enough people get together, they can bring one back to life. In Goa, as this paper reported, people from across the country and the world banded together to resurrect a fallen banyan tree. The tree was uprooted during a storm and thought to be dead. After much coordination, fundraising and multiple efforts, it was put back into place earlier this week. The dendrophiles involved in reviving "The Source" (as it is called by people who dance under and near it), are a diverse group — the owner of the land on which it sits, a local construction crew, experts who flew down from as far as Hyderabad, and people who had visited the site from across the world who donated money.

There is an intrinsic value to the 200-year-old tree — by sheer virtue of its size, it is a small ecosystem unto itself. But its true value, the reason so many people from such diverse backgrounds banded together to save it, is that it had become an organic part of the community. Apart from being home to a snake, the resting place for a bull and many other insects, birds and animals, it served as a source of income for the owner: She charged a modest fee for the tourists and expats who gathered around it. The "community" that led the restoration effort was bound together by the memories, stories, dance and music — culture, really — fostered around the giant banyan.

There is a lesson in the resurrection. Too often, "nature" is seen in opposition to people. The banyan at Arambol is just one tree. But perhaps, at a time when much of the world is isolated, it can serve as an example of how to build a better world, with people, not despite them.



RAHUL BAJORIA

TAILWIND FROM VILLAGES

Rural economy may do the heavy lifting in 2020

AS THE COVID-19 pandemic courses on, India has now become the third country to have more than a million confirmed cases, together with the US and Brazil. While outbreaks are being brought only slightly under control in some initial hotspots like Delhi, Chennai and Mumbai, a wave of renewed lockdowns is being imposed in cities like Bengaluru, Thiruvananthapuram, Pune and Guwahati.

Even as the geographical dispersion increases, COVID-19 remains largely an urban pandemic with large parts of rural India still mostly unscathed. The naturally distanced and less mobile rural India seems to show a stark divergence to the densely-packed, most urbanised parts of the country, which have seen the worst outbreaks. While the cities wrestle with the health crisis, a number of factors are combining to boost rural India's contribution to the revival of the overall economy.

The government's Rs 20-trillion economic package announced in May to mitigate the downside impact of the COVID-19 crisis has largely focused on providing relief for the rural population and economy. In addition to passing long-pending reforms such as easing norms with regard to the Essential Commodities Act, the government also announced a 10 per cent hike in minimum wages for MGNREGA, a 65 per cent rise in spending on public work schemes, and a six-month programme that will distribute free rations to around half of the households in the

country. Further, a strong start to the monsoon, along with high availability of water in reservoirs and large fiscal transfers, is helping improve rural growth prospects.

This confluence of factors shows up in the sowing activity at the beginning of the kharif planting cycle. As of July 17, the area sown had already crossed 66 per cent of overall arable area. While the area under sowing is eventually likely to come closer to more realistic numbers, an early sowing cycle should ultimately boost income perceptions for the farming sector, which should eventually support rural consumer confidence. Taken together, the organic farm growth and government measures are likely to raise the disposable income levels of rural households.

The combination of good production, better prices and large fiscal transfers may provide a material tailwind for the rural economy. With basic costs like spending on foodgrains being partly covered through fiscal transfers, rural savings have still risen, as evident from trends in Jan Dhan bank accounts. Further, government-support programmes may lead to the movement of workers from urban to rural areas and provide for a cheaper alternative to farm labour during the peak season.

We estimate that the agriculture sector could register double-digit nominal GDP growth in FY20-21. That compares with a 2 per cent contraction we estimate for the overall economy. This twin-speed recovery track is

also well reflected in high-frequency indicators — sales of tractors, fertilisers, and two-wheelers are improving, while the typical urban signposts of demand, like automobile sales, aviation traffic and fuel consumption are lagging. More importantly, this growth comes on the back of a third consecutive surplus monsoon, and amid relatively high food inflation.

However, a stronger rural sector will only be able to mitigate, not fully offset, the economic damage. The localised lockdowns continue to weigh on activity in the urban areas. Ultimately, health care management and disease resolution will dictate the pace of the economy's return to normal.

A more robust recovery cycle in the farm sector to a certain extent actually increases the degree of policy freedom for the government and the RBI. As rural incomes remain supportive on their own, the next phase of policy support can be more targeted towards the urban population, which has borne the brunt of the economic and the health crisis. Supporting discretionary spending and incomes in urban areas will not lead to a faster economic recovery, but will help in improving fiscal finances, which in turn should further boost the government's ability to spend in a pro-cyclical manner, thus improving the chances of the Indian economy going back to levels seen before the COVID-19 outbreak.

The writer is Chief India Economist, Barclays



AUGUST 21, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

ASSAM STALEMATE

THOUGH THE DOOR is still left open for the Assam students to resume talks with the Centre on the foreigners' issue, the Centre feels that matters cannot be left hanging in mid-air for too long and New Delhi may evolve a solution on its own. The Union Minister of State for Home, Yogendra Makwana said that the students were being misguided by certain elements. He made it clear that though the Centre would continue to treat all cases of suspended employees with sympathy, any cases of boycott in future will be dealt with severely. He said schools will be opened shortly and the government will adequate protection to students.

NEW AKALI DAL CHIEF

THE SPLIT IN the Akali Dal was formalised with the installation of Sant Harcharan Singh Longowal as the party president. The leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha, Prakash Singh Badal proposed his name and it was seconded by the SGPC chief Gurcharan Singh Tohra. Badal alleged subversion of the party constitution by the Talwandi faction.

MIZO RIVALS & CENTRE

THE UNION GOVERNMENT is said to have discovered a way to please the arch-rivals in Mizoram politics — the Mizo National Front Chief, Laldenga and the state's chief minister Brigadier Sailo. Laldenga had been de-

manding that Sailo be dismissed as he is posing hurdles in peace talks with China. Sailo has been demanding full statehood for Mizoram. The Centre may concede this demand. But this means that the existing ministry won't be able to continue once the Union Territory is upgraded to a state and this would please Laldenga.

SOPS AND SOAPS

SOAP AND TOOTHPASTE will cost 5 to 50 paisa less according to an agreement between manufacturers and the government. This is part of a new policy direction which envisages rationalising prices by negotiating with consumer goods producers.

9 THE IDEAS PAGE

A new social contract

We need to fundamentally reform our labour markets, attract people to cities where we ensure healthy living conditions, and create economic opportunities in rural India



NAUSHAD FORBES

A WELL-KNOWN SAYING attributed to the Chinese sage Confucius is "may you live in interesting times". What is less well known is that Confucius meant this as a curse — interesting times remove time for reflection and make us think about our baser instincts. We live in far too interesting a time: An unprecedented and worsening health crisis, and the knock-on effect of the worst economic performance in our independent history. So let us rise above Confucius and reflect on where we must be as a country when India turns 75 in 2022.

The Prime Minister, while addressing the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) annual meeting this year, urged those present to think big and partner with the government in putting India on the path to growth. This is an important call. There is much that we can achieve if government and industry work towards the same objective, and in a spirit of mutual trust.

Employment is one such area. Over 85 per cent of employment in India is in the informal sector. An unplanned national lockdown halted economic activity and wiped out livelihoods, especially of informal workers. The Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy (CMIE) estimates that between mid-March and mid-April, 120 million people lost their jobs, with unemployment rising to an all-time high of 27 per cent. Left with nothing, we saw reverse migration on an unprecedented scale — some 10 million people abandoned cities to return to their native villages. For a while, our media was full of discussion of the need to address some of our most chronic social problems.

In the last two months, things have improved. CMIE reports that unemployment is now down to around 9 per cent, and as economic activity has restarted in cities, labour has begun returning from villages. As things have returned to normal, the priority for addressing our most chronic social problems has reduced. We must not waste this crisis. There are three problems we must address: Labour regulation, living conditions for migrant labour in cities, and the strength of our rural economy.

Labour regulation must start with a clear-eyed recognition of facts: We have stringent labour laws to protect workers, but this covers only the formal sector — under 15 per cent of employment. This "labour aristocracy" has almost complete protection, and employers have almost no flexibility. The 85 per cent of our workforce who are informally employed, meanwhile, have almost no protection, and employers have almost complete flexibility. We need to address both ends of the labour spectrum to get the balance right between flexibility and protection for all labour. Everyone must have a minimum level of protection, and every employer a minimum level of flexibility. This calls for a new social contract to define a well-calibrated social security system. This huge project demands good faith and strong leadership by industry, labour and government. It



CR Sasikumar

will take years to get it right, but if we don't fix our employment system now when this issue has achieved such prominence, we will always regret the missed opportunity.

Living conditions in our cities is the second challenge. For too long, we have been content to drive by slums where some of the people who clean our homes, deliver our goods, and repair our equipment live in squalor. How do we set in force a massive private home-building programme? It probably needs much more liberal land-use regulations — our cities have among the least generous floor-space indices (FSI) in the world. New York, Hong Kong, and Tokyo have an FSI five times Mumbai's. If five times as many people can live in the same area, it would drastically reduce rents for quality housing in our cities. Again, this is a multi-year project, and it involves state and city governments partnering with private developers. India is unique in having 70 per cent of our population still residing in rural areas. Seventy-three years after Independence, this is a statement of failed development. We must encourage the migration of people to higher productivity occupations in our cities. And we must ensure that clean, affordable and accessible housing is available for all in our cities. A massive project, again, with the scale that can get an economic recovery underway post-COVID.

Reverse migration is also an opportunity to collaborate in spreading the geography of development. We have long had policies aimed at getting firms to invest in less-developed districts and the current government has an ambitious goal of doubling farmer's incomes. But the gap between the richest (urban) and poorest (rural) districts in the country still grows. We need a three-pronged approach: First, as Ashok Gulati has often argued, the easiest way to grow farmer incomes is by having them grow more value-added crops. Fruits and

In the last two months, things have improved. CMIE reports that unemployment is now down to around 9 per cent, and as economic activity has restarted in cities, labour has begun returning from villages. As things have returned to normal, the priority for addressing our most chronic social problems has reduced. We must not waste this crisis. There are three problems we must address: Labour regulation, living conditions for migrant labour in cities, and the strength of our rural economy.

vegetables have great export potential, and exports must be consistently encouraged and not switched on and off as domestic prices change. And the cultivation of palm plantations has the potential for huge import substitution, but, as Gulati points out, we need corporate farming as the gestation period of seven years for the first crop is too much for the average farmer to handle. The Atmanirbhar agricultural reforms, which permit contract farming, and open up agricultural markets, are major medium-term reforms. Implemented right, they can transform agricultural markets. Second, we need to encourage agro-processing near the source. Fostering entrepreneurship in rural and semi-urban areas would combine nicely with local processing. And third, we need to invest even more massively in rural connectivity. Many years ago, the great sociologist Alex Inkeles was asked if there was only one thing that could be done to foster development, what would it be. His answer was to build roads which connect producers to markets, heads to knowledge, and people to each other. Today, we would add digital connectivity to road connectivity to level the playing field for all regardless of where they live.

This must be our programme of work: To fundamentally reform our labour markets, to attract people to our cities where we ensure healthy living conditions, and to create economic opportunities in rural India. The task is huge, and only collaboration between all levels of government (Union, state, and city) and our dynamic private sector can hope to make substantial progress. Let's use our unprecedented health and economic crisis to truly build a new social contract as our commitment to India@75.

The writer is former President CII, Chairman India@75 Foundation and co-Chairman of Forbes Marshall

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

The decision to scrap Public Health England in the middle of a pandemic that has claimed 65,000 British lives is cynical and wrong.

— THE GUARDIAN

Listen to the weaver

Handloom Day announcements look like a mix of the good and the bad, but are mostly foggy



JAYA JAITLEY

THE CELEBRATION of National Handloom Day this year went beyond mere hashtags. The Ministry of Textiles declared the termination of the handloom, powerloom, wool, jute and silk boards causing widespread chatter, as if these bodies were the only saviours and protectors of these textiles for decades.

Set up by Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, and later headed by Pupul Jayakar, the All India Handicrafts & Handloom Board flourished when headed by these passionately committed women. In 1990, the textile minister made himself the chairperson and nominated caste and political cronies, forgetting representation from Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast, and adding one token woman. Many subsequent regimes never held meetings. The Handloom Board never influenced policy, improved approaches or even removed a speck of dust.

A termite-ridden body cannot be renovated as some would wish. It has to be dismantled. But demolitions must lead to building a better institution, not banish the voice of the weavers concerned. It has to be replaced by a well-chosen modern, dynamic, autonomous and inclusive body of genuinely experienced and credible voices from the handloom-weaving chain, including spinners, weavers, dyers, designers, private and public craft institutions, e-market platform providers and experts. The government must also learn to listen, hear dissent, discuss and engage with such bodies without lecturing, nominating or dominating — in short, there should be less government, more people. State handloom boards (wherever they exist) are not enough as their outreach and vision are limited to the state and responses often depend on vote shares. The Centre must be the receptacle for many senior weavers and experts who have national credibility, experience and vision. A national view must be informed by national inputs: Cooperative federalism must mean a chain linking everyone.

More significantly, the Handloom Day announcements at a video meeting by the minister and secretary, textiles laid out an entirely new approach to development. For old hands in the field, these look like a strange mixture of the good, the bad, but are mostly foggy.

Under good, with caveats, would come Atmanirbhar Bharat, which involves the integration of plans with other ministries like Tourism. Other ministries/departments such as the MEA/ICCR, culture, social justice, women & child welfare, minority affairs and KVIC should also be included. All these ministries touch textiles and crafts and often, their functioning results in duplicating and overlapping rather than effectively integrating with the Ministry of Textiles. The prime minister spoke of breaking ministry silos in

2014, but nothing is visible on the ground.

The Handloom Mark is emphasised, but methods for ensuring its purity are not clear. It should not go the way of bogus artisan cards which include tea sellers and traders. National Institute of Fashion Technology students and faculty are to guide nine Weavers' Service Centres. This is a good move for their resuscitation as many have potential. Highlighting handloom pockets is a positive step, but there is a danger of seeking large "clusters". How will they be identified and what about important though small pockets of rare skills? Will they fall between the cracks because "small is not beautiful" anymore?

Special promotional campaigns were announced. These are badly needed but not in the form of unimaginative, old-worldly advertisements. Excellent India-centric graphic designer groups have done a much better job and should be promoted, rather than co-opted under the rigid government system. Highly talented and committed professionals from the design community are kept out because they aren't from NIFT, NID or otherwise "empanelled" repeatedly. These groups did a yeoman job for promoting weavers during COVID-19. Their efforts should not go unnoticed.

Information technology is undoubtedly the new "king", but if weavers have to avail of all knowledge from a special handloom portal, they need connectivity, computers and digital knowledge. Only the corporate sector or government can rely on IT access for everything. "Maximum Governance, Minimum Government" is still a pipe dream. If you seek government support in any manner, it can be a fly trap and become a "shun government" slogan for weavers and NGOs who have some self-respect. Open-mindedness, less red tape, and inclusiveness are imperative. IT does not guarantee integrity or equality. The worst of the announcements was the declaration of intent to sell handlooms at "the highest price at the highest level" and "not cheap cloth but most expensive cloth". It sounded almost anti-Gandhian.

The prime minister's call of "Local to Global" clearly indicates a bottom-up approach from production to marketing. This is the only way migrants will stay home. Local production for local markets is a brilliant strategy and needs encouragement. The poor man's cloth has been taken over by powerlooms. Selling expensive cloth to the wealthiest will shrink, not expand the market. Instead, many levels of markets have to be targeted with different products for each segment.

Extensive and detailed discussions were held to develop the New Education Policy. The Kasturirangan Report, prepared with inputs from high-level experts, is the basis for the New Education Policy. In the case of the textiles sector, what happened to the Satyam and Ajai Shankar committee reports? What about the inputs from the few meetings that were held before COVID-19 arrived? Can one hope that the government will facilitate frank and balanced discussions involving stakeholders and if necessary, subject the plans to review?

The writer is former president, Samata Party



PARAMESWARAN IYER

In pandemic, take a break

This moment may be ripe to re-evaluate life and career, put family over work

ON THE PLUS side, the coronavirus pandemic has given many people, confined at home for the most part during the successive lockdowns, some breathing space to re-evaluate their careers and their lives. I can recommend this, having done it 14 years ago, without the benefit of a pandemic to force me to put my thinking cap on. Then, on deputation from the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) to the World Bank in Washington DC, I was keen to give our two talented tennis-playing kids the best opportunity to become tennis professionals. They trained at the Junior Tennis Champions Centre at College Park, Maryland, and our daughter, Tara, rapidly rose to rank 45th in the world in the International Tennis Federation's junior rankings. At the age of 17, she was all set to turn pro, but needed a road manager cum coach to travel with her.

Guess what, I quit my job at the World Bank and became Tara's road manager cum coach. I had tried and failed to play professional tennis in my youth, but now had an opportunity to coach a real pro — my daughter. Having nurtured her tennis career from the start, I was very excited at the opportunity of accompanying her at this crucial stage of her journey, even though it meant leaving the World Bank. There comes a time in all of our lives when we need to put our career second and family first. My wife, Indira, had been focusing on the family for many years and it was now my turn. The icing on the cake

was that it was going to be great fun.

Over the next two years, Tara and I travelled to more than 20 countries across five continents, with Tara playing in more than 40 professional tournaments. During this period, my role as road manager consisted of the following main duties — coach, dad, itinerant planner, booker of budget airline tickets and low cost hotels, washer of tennis clothes and drier of sweat soaked tennis shoes, recorder of tennis match statistics and, well, all other "odd jobs".

The only task I was not in charge of while on the tour (luckily for Tara) was preparing meals. We usually had breakfast at the hotel restaurant, lunch at the tournament venue and the evening meal was in the hands of "chef" Tara. She enjoyed coming up with healthy yet tasty food, and was in charge of whipping up our simple dinner, typically consisting of tuna sandwiches, microwaved vegetables and boiled chickpeas. There were times, of course, when we decided to throw the healthy diet to the winds, and splurged on deliciously unhealthy food like McDonald's burgers, French fries and the occasional pizza.

Before plunging into my job as a road manager, Indira and I decided that it would be useful for me to pilot this new assignment role with our son Venkat as the guinea pig. Venkat, just 15 then, was also showing tremendous promise as a tennis player. A

gifted athlete, he had just been selected to play the Junior Davis Cup for India. So, Venkat and I travelled to Istanbul and Cairo for some International Tennis Federation (ITF) Junior tournaments. Venkat did well, earning his first ITF Junior points on this trip, while the main lesson, the freshly minted road manager learned, was to take detailed playing statistics during Venkat's match, in his case, focusing on the percentage of first serves made and the number of unforced errors, particularly on the forehand side.

I was now all set to take Tara on her first tournament on the women's tour to Chongqing, China. It was incredibly hot there and Tara literally sweated her way through the first three qualifying rounds, winning tough matches against Chinese girls. In fact, after winning her third and final qualifying match, her tennis shoes got so soaked that I had to use the hairdryer in the hotel room to blow dry them, to get them ready before her next match. With more and more tournaments under our belts, Tara and I started getting used to dealing with the lows and highs of the tour. A recurring knee injury, however, put an end to Tara's professional career and she went back to college at Duke University where she led the team to the national inter-collegiate tennis title.

Apart from being able to spend a lot of quality time with my daughter and son during their peak tennis playing years, the road

manager stint was a great learning experience for me to be able to manage on my own without the paraphernalia of office support. Having been spoiled by the perks of the IAS, I was forced to become self-reliant — it was an unforgettable experience.

But all good things come to an end, and the best two-year break I ever had concluded in May 2008. On return to the Uttar Pradesh government in Lucknow, I was posted as Principal Secretary Higher Education. Just as I was getting used to this new sector, I was transferred to the Forests Department. Before the transfer merry go round could spit me out into another job, I took voluntary retirement and returned to the World Bank.

For those who are hesitating before taking the plunge to take a break, be reassured that it will not adversely affect your career. Look at my case: I quit the IAS in 2009, re-joined the World Bank, and then in early 2016, was recalled to the government. It all works out in the end, but when the moment is ripe to put family over work, one should practice *carpe diem* (seize the day). So for all those who have had a chance during the successive lockdowns to think about taking an "unconventional" break, my advice is — take it.

The writer is secretary, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation. Views are personal

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

PAROCHIAL MISTAKE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Job of the state' (IE, August 20). Socio-political exigencies in their states are compelling governments to take recourse to the "jobs only for locals" approach. The recent announcement by Shivraj Singh Chouhan follows the same pattern. This goes against the grain of the Constitution. Also, by circumscribing talent flow, such measures are likely to hamper economic growth, instead of promoting it. Short-term measures may please the electorate, but, there is no permanent solution except generating jobs.

Vipul Pande, Nainital

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Job of the state' (IE, August 20). We are living in a global world where boundaries are diminishing. And then there's the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister, who has announced that all state government jobs would be given to his state's people only. His predecessor, Kamal Nath was absolutely wrong to ask private companies to give 70 per cent jobs to people from the state, and now Shivraj Singh Chouhan has compounded that mistake.

Bal Govind, Noida

CRITICAL RIGHT

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Rhea doesn't have stature to comment on Bihar CM: DGP' (IE, August 20). It is intriguing that the Bihar Chief Minister was highly visible in the media regarding the

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Sushant Singh Rajput case as compared to addressing and allying public suffering from COVID-19 and floods. The DGP ought to know better: Every Indian has the right to comment and criticise elected public servants.

LR Murmu, Delhi

WELCOME VERDICT

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Her right to property' (IE, August 20). The Supreme Court judgment has rewritten over five decades of statutory discrimination against women, by placing their rights under the Hindu Succession Act, 1956 and HSA 2005. This will ensure that patriarchal biases end in our country, especially in rural and semi-urban India.

Rajiv Boolchand Jain, Zirakpur

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, Aashima Bhalla W/o Aaditya Gogna R/O-Flat No.312, Pkt-D, Sec-B-2, Narela, Delhi-110040 have changed my name to Aashima Gogna permanently. 0040545516-3

IKrishna Roy Chowdhury, D/O Paresh Chandra Paul R/O- Churaman Uttar Dinajpur west Bengal-733128, Have Changed my Name to Krishna Paul. 0040545509-4

I, Veer Mati W/O, Salethu Singh R/O Village And Post - Tissa Distt - Muzaffarnagar Up- 251308 have changed my name to Birmati for all purposes. 0040545462-1

I, VIMAL CHAND S/O POONAM CHAND JAIN R/O HNO.89/90, III-FLOOR, PKT-18, SECTOR-24, ROHINI, DELHI-110085. CHANGED MY NAME TO VIMAL CHAND JAIN. 0040545516-2

I, Sushil Kumar Sharma, S/O Brij Mohan Lal Sharma R/o-79, Qutub-Vihar Appts Katwaria-Sarai, N.D-110016, have changed my name to Subhash Chander Wadhawan. 0040545513-6

I, Sumita, W/O Naresh Kumar R/O-B-4, New India-Apartment, Sector-9, Rohini, Rajapur Kalan, Delhi-110085, inform that Sumita Panwar and Sumita are the names of one and same person i.e. myself. 0040545509-8

I, Rishita Sushil Kumar Sharma, D/o Subhash Chander Wadhawan R/o-79, Qutub-View Appts Katwaria-Sarai, N.D-110016, have changed my name to Rishita Wadhawan, for all purposes. 0040545513-4

I, Hitherto known as Lalit Jain son of Darshan Lal Jain Residing at G-132, Vijay Vihar, Phase-2, Near Sector-4, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed the name of my minor son Pratham Jain aged 11 years and he shall hereafter be known as Raghav Jain. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection. 0040545516-4

I, Girish Vazirani S/o Lajpat Rai Vazirani R/O-D-31, Sector-27, Noida, G.B.Nagar, (U.P.), have changed my minor son's name from Pulkit Vazirani to Pulkit Girish Vazirani. 0040545451-4

I, EL Singh D/o Nimal Chandra Singha R/O G-404 Amrapali Silicon-City Sector-76 Noida Gautambudhnagar have changed my name to Ashmita Singha. 0040545427-1

I, BIMLA RAUTELA, W/O-JC-383278W Rank Subedar Sh.Kundan Singh Rautela, Presently, R/O-Butt-Cottage, Narsing-Bari, Almora, Uttarakhand-263601, have changed my name, from BIMLA RAUTELA to BIMLA RAUTELA, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040545505-9

I, am owner of (G.D.A.) House, No.-E-545D, IInd-floor, Sec-11, Pratap Vihar, Ghaziabad. In this property my name is Manju Sachdeva. Manju Sachdeva & Manju Arora are one and same person. In future, I will be known as Manju Arora, W/o Shri Ashok Kumar Arora, R/O-1231, Block-K, Near Hanuman Mandir, Jahangirpuri, Shanjipur, North-West Delhi-33, forever. 0040545464-1

I, Vicky alias Vikki, S/O Vinod Prakash R/O-Quarter, No.96/96, Type-1, MAMC Campus, Behind GBPH Darya Ganj, Central Delhi, Delhi-110002, have changed my name to Vikky, for all future purposes. 0040545509-7

I, Sukhvinder W/o Davinder Singh R/O-B-329, Hari Nagar, Maya Puri, South West Delhi-110064, changed my name to Sukhvinder Kaur. 0040545513-1

I, Subhankar Shashikant, S/o Shashikant Mishra R/O- Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075, have changed my name to Subhankar Shashikant, for all future purposes. 0040545513-7

I, Stephen S/O Xavior Thomas R/O-Flat-No-372, DDA-Janta Flats, Pocket-6, Phase-1, Sunrise Apartment, Nasirpur, Dwarka, Delhi-110045, have changed my name to stephen thomas, for all purposes. 0040545513-3

I, Shweta D/o Raj Singh R/O-H.No-620/299, Chauhan Mohalla, Madanpur khadar, Sarita Vihar, Delhi-110076, have changed my name to shweta chauhan for all purposes. 0040545451-2

I, Shagun S/O Prakash Maheshwari, H.No-C-24G, Delhi Police Apartments, Mayur-Vihar, Phase-1, Delhi-110091, have changed my name to Shagun Maheshwari permanently. 0040545509-6

I, Sanjay Singh Rawat R/O-D-71, Chattarpur Enclave, New Delhi-110074, have changed my minor son's name from Saumya Rawat to Samarth Rawat for all purposes. 0040545444-1

I, Chandra Singh S/O Guman Singh R/O-B-11A, Maharani Bagh N.Delhi-110065, have changed my name to Chandar Singh for all purposes. 0040545516-1

I, BHARTI KHANNA, W/O MANOJ S KUMAR, R/O-A-19/20, DOUBLE-STORY, MALKA-GANJ DELHI-110007, have changed my name to BHARTI KHANNA, for all purposes. 0040545509-1

I, Akash Gupta S/o Shri S.C. Gupta, R/O 27, G/F, Tilak Bridge Railway Colony, Mathura Road, New Delhi-110001 have changed the name of my minor son from DRAVID GUPTA to DRAVIN GUPTA for all purposes. 0040545500-1

I, Ajay Singh Chaudhary S/O Shri Radhey Singh, R/O-B-60, Amrapali, Sector-1, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Ajay Singh. 0040545505-2

I, ANUJ KUMAR S/O SHYAM BIHARI H.NO-16/24, SANGAM VIHAR, SOUTH DELHI-110062, CHANGED MY NAME TO ANUJ KUMAR RASTOGI, PERMANENTLY. 0040545505-8

I, Simmi Sushil Kumar Sharma, W/O Sushil Kumar Sharma R/O-79, Qutub-View Appts Katwaria-Sarai, N.D-110016, have changed my name to Poonam Wadhawan, for all purposes. 0040545513-5

LOST & FOUND We, Hansa Puri & Pallavi Puri, R/O H. No. 185, Sec-31, Faridabad, Haryana have lost Allotment, Demand and Possession letter of Property Shop No. 4A, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-2, New Delhi having DDA File No. F47(24)1981/CE/OKL. 0040545392-1

My original documents of property H.No.387, PKT-II, Paschimpuri, New Delhi-110063, have been lost. Finder contact Vijayant Raj Singh, S/O Late Ramraj Singh, H.No.387, PKT-II, Paschimpuri, New Delhi Mobile-No.-8527713828. 0040545513-10

I, Sudha Gupta W/o Pramod Kumar Gupta, R/O-B-11, 2nd-Floor, Shopping Center, Tagore Garden, New Delhi-110027, have lost Original Registered Sale Deed document (Dt.27/06/2011), of Property, No.WZ-27-C, 2nd-Floor, Gangra Ram Vatika, New Delhi-110018, which executed by Smt. Nirmal Sethi in favour, Smt. Narinder Kaur, somewhere in Tilak Nagar. Finder may Please Contact- 9717180003. 0040545451-1

I, Sheetal Prashad Jain, inform that my property, No.58 Bhogal-Road (part of 21 Bazar-Lane) Bhogal New Delhi-110014, comprised in Property, No.4875 Khasra, No.681 Original Lease Deed and Original Sale Deed Regd-No.2093 Book-No.1 Vol No.380 Pages 181-192 Dated-25.02.1959 in the office of Sub-Registrar New Delhi and Original WILL Regd.No.3070 Book-No.3 Vol.No.363 Pages 124-126 dated-01.08.1986 in the office of Sub Registrar New Delhi has been lost. If found please contact on 9873467476. 0040545516-8

I, Priyanka D/o Rakesh Kumar W/O Pawan Bhagat R/O-X/3338, Gali.No.2, Raghubarpara, No.2, Gandhi-Nagar Delhi-110031, have changed my name to Jagriti Bhagat, for all purposes. 0040545509-3

I, Prince Nitvik S/O Shri Gopal Aaditya Raghavanshi R/O H.N.610, Sector-5, Mohan Meakins Society, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad, UP 201012 have changed my name to Prince Raghavanshi for all purposes. 0040545419-1

I, Pavitar Kumar Babbar S/O Late Suresh Kumar Babbar R/O C-323, Sector-19, Noida have changed my minor son name from Bharat to Bharat Babbar for all purposes. 0040545422-1

I, Parth Aryan S/O Shri Gopal Aaditya Raghavanshi R/O H.N.610, Sector-5, Mohan Meakins Society, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad, UP 201012 have changed my name to Parth Raghavanshi for all purposes. 0040545463-1

I, Neema W/o Shri Kishore Kumar R/O-6-C, Kalpana Sector-5, Vaishali, Ghaziabad U.P 201010, inform that my actual name is Neema and wrongly mentioned as Neha on the birth certificate of my daughter Anushka as per affidavit. No. IN-DL 311279206208265. 0040545472-1

I, Mehru S/O Popat R/O B-1/138, Block-B-1, J.J Colony, Raghbir Nagar, Tagore Garden, Rajouri Garden, West Delhi-110027 Have Changed my Name to Mehru Kumar. 0077011710-1

I, MEENAKSHI SHARMA, R/O-A.136, SECTOR-55, NOIDA, GAUTAMBUDH-NAGAR, U.P.201301, CHANGED MY minor SON NAME DAKSH KAPOOR TO AGASTYA SHARMA. 0040545505-7

I, Jasbir Kaur D/o Jagir Singh R/O-Village Kairon, Taran Taran Punjab-143415 Inform That Jasbir Name And Kaur Surname. 0040545505-5

I, JASVINDER SINGH S/O DALAL SINGH R/O-A-4A, GALI.NO-5, HINGIRI-ENCLAVE NILOTHI NANGLOI WEST/Delhi-110041, have changed my name to JASVINDER SINGH. 0040545513-9

I, Har Swroop Singh S/O Jagdish Singh R/O-VPO, Keharola, Bulandshahr, UP, have changed my name from Har Swroop to Harswarop Singh Vide-Affidavit-date-18/07/2020. 0040545516-5

I, Dr. Aanietaya Vaissnava mother and Suryanath Singh father R/O Flat.No.181, Naval Technical Officer's Society, Plot.No.3A, Sector-22, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077, have changed name of our minor son Anany Prakash age 16 years. His new name is RUDRAKSH VAISSNAVA. 0040545491-1

I, CHHAVI KHANNA, W/O MANISH S KUMAR R/O-A-19/20 DOUBLE-STORY MALKA-GANJ DELHI-110007, have changed my name to CCHAVI KHANNA, for all purpose. 0040545509-2

I, Bachan Singh R/O WZ 283/9 First Floor Gali No 2 Vishnu Garden Ghaziala Tilak Nagar New Delhi 110018 have changed my minor son's name from Anil Singh to Anoop Singh for all purposes. 0040545517-1

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MERIT COLLEGE OF ENG & TECH. Approved by AICTE and Affiliated to M.D.U. Rohtak. (Asanda, Near Sampla, District Jhajjar, Haryana) 8950001287, www.merit.edu.in Invites applications for the following teaching positions: PROFESSOR (01) Each in the Department of CSE, CE, ME, ECE ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR (02) ASSISTANT PROFESSOR (04) ASSISTANT PROFESSOR (08) B.B.A. course (NET/Ph.D. qualified) Non Teaching Post: Librarian-1, Admin. officer-1, Electrician (01), Plumber (01), Welder (01), Technical Assistant-02, Computer Operator-02, Clerk-Typist-2, Data Entry Operator-2, Library Attendant-1, Lab. Attendant-4, Safai Karamchari-4 and Peon-4. Qualifications, Pay scales and Experience as per norms of UGC/AICTE/State Govt./MDU, Rohtak, Haryana. The qualification for the post of Librarian is NET/Ph.D. The interested candidates may send their application with copy of the all the testimonials at directormerit@merit.edu.in, careercermerit@merit.edu.in within 21 days but not later than 11/9/2020. The hard copy may be sent at: 53-54 Institutional Area, Janakpuri New Delhi-110058. A copy of the application must be sent to the Dean (Colleges), MDU, Rohtak-124001. Posts can be increased / decreased at the time of interview as per requirement. Chairman TESWS, New Delhi

Public Notice The General Public is hereby informed that my client Rani Devi W/o Lata S. Jagir Singh R/O D-26, Mansarovar Park, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, New Delhi have severed relations with her daughter Manjit Kaur. She has disowned and debarred her said daughter from all her movable and immovable properties. Anybody dealing with Manjit Kaur will do so at his/her own risk and responsibility and she will not be responsible for any act, deed or dealing done by Manjit Kaur. Parvinder Kaur (Advocate) Enrollment No. D/652/2015

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BHAKRA BEAS MANAGEMENT BOARD (Power Wing) Notice Inviting E-Tender. NIT No.: ENIT-3/2020-21/BLB Name of Office: Addl. Superintending Engineer, BBMB, Ballabgarh, (Faridabad) Name of work: Misc. Civil work at 220KV Sub Station, BBMB, Samaypur Estimated Cost: ₹ 3.41 Lacs | Tender fee: 200+18% GST extra = (236/-) Last date of submission of pre-qualification documents 17.09.2020 upto 17:00 hrs. Last date of receipt of tender 24.09.2020 upto 14:00 hrs. The detailed Tender may be downloaded from website https://bbmbeproc.abprocure.com and www.bbmb.gov.in 1208-PR-TS-4 For Your Better Tomorrow Save Energy Today

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRM's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender under single packet system for the under noted work: 1. Name of Work with its location Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of 132 KV Transmission Line between Diwana to Shahbad Markanda of DUK section for a period of Two Years. 2. Approx. Cost of work Rs. 49,68,636.60/- 3. Earnest Money Deposit Rs. 99,400/- 4. E-Tender Bid Online Submission Period 31.08.2020 (00.00 Hrs.) to 14.09.2020 (15.00 Hrs.) 5. E-Tender Bid Submission End Date & E-Tender Open Date & Time 14.09.2020 (15.00 hrs.) 6. Fund Allocation 07042032 7. Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen www.ireps.gov.in E-Tender No.: 11-TR-DNLS-2020-21 Dated: 19.08.2020 1813/2020 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

OFFICE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER ELECTRICITY URBAN DISTRIBUTION CIRCLE PASCHIMANCHAL VIDYUT VITARAN NIGAM LIMITED MUZZAFFARNAGAR Tel. No.: 0131-2621135, E-mail: seecdcmzn@gmail.com E-Tender Notice E-Tenders are invited from eligible bidders. Please visit E-tender portal www.etender.up.nic.in for details/download and for any other corrections/amendments/extensions till the date of submission of bids. Sl. No. 1 Tender Specification No. Short Term E-Tender No. 29/2020-21 EUCC MZN Name of Works Construction of line for releasing connection of load 63 KVA for Toll Plaza NHAI at Chapar under EUDD-II, Muzaffarnagar Earnest Money (Rs.) 8000.00 Tender Fee (Rs.) 1180.00 (18% जी.एस.टी. रकम) Last Date for online submission of tender document 04.09.2020 Date for opening of tender part-I 04.09.2020 Sd/- (R.D. Singh) SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER "Save Electricity in the interest of Nation" पत्रांक: 1521/वि.वि.प.मु.नगर दिनांक: 20.08.2020

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION, PURI, ODISHA Phone: 06752-223447 e-Mail: eephpuri@gmail.com INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB) Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice Bid Identification No. EEPHPURI-21 of 2020-21 Dated. 18.08.2020 1. Name of the work :- Civil, Electrical, WTP and pine line work. 2. Estimated cost :- Rs. 278.33 Lakhs 3. Period of completion :- 18 (Eighteen) Months 4. Date and time of availability of bid document in the portal :- 26.08.2020 (11.00 A.M) to 10.09.2020 (5.00 P.M) 5. Last date/ time for receipt of bids in the portal :- 5.00 PM of 10.09.2020 6. Date and time of opening of bids :- 12.30 PM of 11.09.2020. 7. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid :- Executive Engineer, P.H Division, Puri Phone: 06752-223447 Fax: 06752-223447 E-mail: eephpuri@gmail.com 8. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Sd/- Executive Engineer, (P.H, PURI) OIPR-13010/11/0003/2021

Public Notice Lease deed of plot # 112, sandesh vihar, p&t employees central co-operative house building society, pitampura, delhi in favor of Lt. Shri. R.P. Sinha, s/o Lt. Shri. Deen dayal was lost on 1-06-2016 in jalpauri, (M.P.). If found please contact on 9873467476. Public Notice It is informed to the General Public that my client Shri. Prashad Khanna, aged 99 years old, S/o Late Shri. Nand Lal Khanna, R/O 521 Sector-A, Pocket-C, Vasant Kunj New Delhi-110070, has completely severed all social and legal relations with his son namely Shri. Gautam Khanna, aged 57 years, and his wife namely Smt. Renua Khanna, aged 58 years, both are R/O 521 Sector-A, Pocket-C, Vasant Kunj New Delhi-110070 with immediate effect. My client has completely disowned his son and his daughter in law, and further debar them from their all movable and immovable Properties. Further it is also announced and made clear to everyone by this public notice that any person whatsoever dealing with my son and his wife in any manner will do the same at its own peril and any act or deed or dealing of whatsoever nature will not be accounted to them and he will not be responsible for the same. Sd/- (Advocate) KUMAR Ch. No. 175 Block-C, Delhi High Court

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

CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD

COVID-19 VACCINE TRACKER

Australia PM hints vaccine to be mandatory, backtracks

A DAY after Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced a coronavirus vaccine deal with pharma major AstraZeneca and said all Australians will get the vaccinated for free, he went on to suggest that he would also like it to become mandatory for everyone in his country. Within hours, however, he backtracked and clarified his statement.

"I would expect it to be as mandatory as you can possibly make," Morrison was reported as having said in a radio programme. "We are talking about a pandemic that has destroyed the global economy and taken the lives of hundreds of thousands all around the world, and over 430 Australians. So, you know, we need the most extensive and comprehensive response to

this to get Australia back to normal," the Prime Minister said.

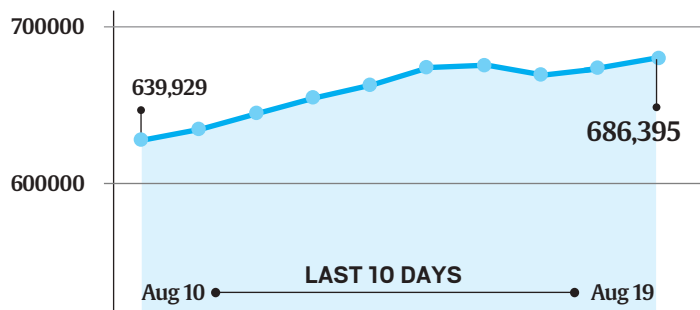
But within hours, he had clarified in another radio programme that all he meant to say was that he would like to "encourage" everyone to take the coronavirus vaccine. "We can't hold someone down and make them take it," he said.

In the United States, Anthony Fauci, infectious disease specialist, was asked the same question about the possibility of making a vaccine mandatory for everyone, and he said he did not think it would be. "I don't think you will ever see mandating of a vaccine particularly for the general public. If someone refuses the vaccine in the general public, then there is nothing you can do about that," he said.



INDIA ACTIVE CASES

686,395



Note: The August 19 figure in this graph is based on government update on August 20

INDIA TOTAL CASES
2,836,925

Source: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, updated at 11 pm on August 20

WORLD TOTAL CASES
22,486,892

Source: Johns Hopkins University, updated at 11 pm on August 20

Study suggests Covid-19 not transmitted via breast milk

CAN BREAST milk transmit Covid-19 from a mother to her child? A new study in JAMA suggests it does not happen. The study examined 64 samples of breast milk collected by the Mommy's Milk Human Milk Research Biorepository from 18 women across the US infected with severe SARS-CoV-2. Although one sample tested positive for viral RNA, subsequent tests found that the virus was unable to replicate, and thus unable to cause infection in the breastfed infant.

"Detection of viral RNA does not equate to infection. It has to grow and multiply in order to be infectious and we did not find that in any of our samples. Our findings suggest



PAPER CLIP
NEW RESEARCH

breast milk itself is not likely a source of infection for the infant," Christina Chambers, co-principal investigator of the study, explained in a statement from University of California San Diego School of Medicine. She is director of Mommy's Milk Human Milk Research Biorepository.

The researchers also mimicked conditions of the Holder pasteurisation process commonly used in human donor milk banks by adding SARS-CoV-2 to breast milk samples from two different donors who were not infected. Following pasteurisation, infectious virus was not detected in either sample.

Source: UC San Diego Health

China twist in Teesta challenge

With the India-Bangladesh water-sharing deal stuck, Dhaka has begun to discuss a Chinese loan to manage the river. Where does this leave New Delhi, whose relationship with Dhaka has received recent setbacks?

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

BANGLADESH IS discussing an almost \$1 billion loan from China for a comprehensive management and restoration project on the Teesta river. The project is aimed at managing the river basin efficiently, controlling floods, and tackling the water crisis in summers.

India and Bangladesh have been engaged in a long-standing dispute over water-sharing in the Teesta. More importantly, Bangladesh's discussions with China come at a time when India is particularly wary about China following the standoff in Ladakh.

How has the Teesta dispute progressed?

The two countries were on the verge of signing a water-sharing pact in September 2011, when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was going to visit Bangladesh. But, West Bengal Chief minister Mamata Banerjee objected to it, and the deal was scuttled.

After Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, he visited Dhaka in June 2015 — accompanied by Mamata Banerjee — and told Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina that he was confident they could reach a "fair solution" on the Teesta through cooperation between central and state governments.

Five years later, the Teesta issue remains unresolved.

How has India's relationship with Bangladesh played out over the years?

New Delhi has had a robust relationship with Dhaka, carefully cultivated since 2008, especially with the Sheikh Hasina government at the helm.

India has benefited from its security ties with Bangladesh, whose crackdown against anti-India outfits has helped the Indian government maintain peace in the eastern and Northeast states.

Bangladesh has benefited from its economic and development partnership. Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia. Bilateral trade has grown steadily over the last decade: India's exports to Bangladesh in 2018-19 stood at \$9.21 billion, and imports from Bangladesh at \$1.04 billion.

India also grants 15 to 20 lakh visas every year to Bangladesh nationals for medical treatment, tourism, work, and just entertainment. A weekend shopping trip to India by Bangladesh' elite is quite common — when the film Bahubali was released, a group of Bangladesh nationals came to India in chartered flights to watch it in Kolkata.

For India, Bangladesh has been a key partner in the neighbourhood first policy — and possibly the success story in bilateral ties



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee in Santiniketan in 2018. Shubham Dutta

among its neighbours.

However, there have been recent irritants in the relationship.

What are these irritants?

These include the proposed countrywide National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) passed in December last year. Bangladesh had cancelled visits by ministers, and Hasina has expressed reservations about CAA. She had said that while the CAA and the proposed nationwide NRC are "internal matters" of India, the CAA move was "not necessary".

Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla, who has served as India's envoy in Dhaka, flew to Dhaka in early March to assuage such concerns. Amid discussions between Bangladesh and China, Shringla went to Bangladesh this week, too. He was the first visitor Hasina has met since the Covid-19 pandemic began.

How have relations between Bangladesh and China been developing?

"China is the biggest trading partner of Bangladesh and is the foremost source of imports. In 2019, the trade between the two countries was \$18 billion and the imports from China commanded the lion's share. The trade is heavily in favour of China," said Joyeeta Bhattacharjee, Senior Fellow at Observer Research Foundation, a New Delhi-based think tank.

Recently, China declared zero duty on 97% of imports from Bangladesh. The concession flowed from China's duty-free, quota-free programme for the Least Developed Countries. This move has been widely welcomed in

Bangladesh, with the expectation that Bangladesh exports to China will increase.

India too has provided developmental assistance worth \$10 billion, making Bangladesh the largest recipient of India's total of \$30 billion aid globally. China has promised around \$30 billion worth of financial assistance to Bangladesh.

Additionally, Bangladesh's strong defence ties with China make the situation complicated. China is the biggest arms supplier to Bangladesh and it has been a legacy issue — after the liberation, officers of Pakistan Army — who were well-versed with Chinese arms — joined Bangladesh Army and that's how they preferred Chinese weapons. As a result, Bangladesh forces are equipped with Chinese arms including tanks, missile launchers, fighter aircraft and several weapons systems. Recently, Bangladesh purchased two Ming class submarines from China.

In the wake of the Ladakh standoff, India has become more sensitive to Chinese defence inroads into Bangladesh.

How has India been engaging with Bangladesh post CAA?

Over the last five months, India and Bangladesh have cooperated on pandemic-related moves. Hasina supported Modi's call for a regional emergency fund for fighting Covid-19 and declared a contribution of \$1.5 million in March 2020. India has also provided medical aid to Bangladesh.

The two countries have also cooperated in railways, with India giving 10 locomotives to Bangladesh. The first trial run for trans-shipment of Indian cargo through Bangladesh to

Northeast states under a pact on the use of Chittagong and Mongla ports took place in July.

However, in recent weeks, Pakistan PM Imran Khan's call to Hasina raised eyebrows in Delhi. While Islamabad portrayed it as a conversation on Kashmir, Dhaka said it was about cooperating to deal with Covid-19.

How has India sought to address China's latest move?

During Shringla's recent meeting with Hasina, "security-related issues of mutual interest" were discussed. The visit tried to address issues on areas that have emerged as potential irritants in the relationship.

Bangladesh expressed "deep concern" at the rise in killings at the Indo-Bangladesh border by "BSF or Indian nationals" during the first half of this year, and the Indian side assured that the BSF authorities have been sensitised of the matter and it will be discussed in detail at the DG-level talks between Border Guards Bangladesh and BSF to be hosted by Dhaka next month.

Among other issues:

■ The two sides agreed that implementation of projects should be done in a timely manner, and that greater attention is required to development projects in Bangladesh under the Indian Lines of Credit.

■ Bangladesh sought return of the Tablighi Jamaat members impacted by the lockdown in India, and also early release of the 25 Bangladeshi fishermen in custody in Assam. India assured Bangladesh that its nationals would be able to return soon.

■ Bangladesh requested for urgent reopening of visa issuance from the Indian High Commission in Dhaka, particularly since many Bangladeshi patients need to visit India.

■ India was also requested to reopen travel through Benapole-Petrapole land port which has been halted by the West Bengal government in the wake of the pandemic.

■ Bangladesh told Shringla that it is ready to collaborate in the development of a Covid-19 vaccine, including its trial, and looks forward to early, affordable availability of the vaccine when ready.

What is the way ahead?

While the Teesta project is important and urgent from India's point of view, it will be difficult to address it before the West Bengal elections due next year. What Delhi can do is to address other issues of concern, which too are challenging.

Now, the test will be if India can implement all its assurances in a time-bound manner.

Or else, the latent anti-India sentiment in Bangladesh — which has been revived after India's CAA-NRC push — threatens to damage Dhaka-New Delhi ties.

How India's online pharmacy market runs

PRANAV MUKUL & PRABHA RAGHAVAN
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

IN JUST the last one week, India's online pharmacy market saw two significant merger and acquisition deals — Reliance Retail picking up majority stake in Chennai-based e-pharmacy Netmeds, and PharmEasy moving to merge with smaller rival Medlife. And the launch of Amazon's online drug delivery services (The Indian Express, August 20).

Is the activity a result of Covid-19?

While Covid-19 and the subsequent behavioural shift towards e-commerce may have catalysed growth for online pharmacies, the sector was already poised to grow sevenfold by 2023 to \$2.7 billion. This was mainly on account of the challenges faced by physical pharmacies. Experts believe that e-pharmacies will be able to solve the problems that traditional pharmacies couldn't. But for this, they need to have a large-scale presence that calls for either huge investments or consolidation.

What are the rules governing the pharmacy sector?

The government had floated draft regulations for e-pharmacies but these guidelines never saw the light of day. The lack of proper rules governing this space has kept large investments at bay. It has allowed the existing players to grow and overcome the challenges

by traditional retailers, which account for almost 85% of the country's total pharmaceutical sales. For pharmacies overall, India's drug regulations require retailers to get a licence to dispense medicines from the state in which they are being sold. This may have been a factor in Amazon restricting its pharmacy sales to Bengaluru for the time being.

What did the draft e-pharmacy regulations propose?

Considering that e-pharmacies currently are not regulated, their operations are constantly met with opposition from brick-and-mortar chemists. In the absence of clear regulations, online pharmacies are operating as marketplaces and catering to patients as a platform for ordering medicines from sellers that adhere to the Drugs and Cosmetics Act and Rules of India. Other regulations, like the IT Act and the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, also apply.

Work on regulations specifically for e-pharmacies has been in progress for several years now. Draft rules for e-pharmacies sought to define the online sale of medicines, what an e-prescription means, and what

type of licences online firms would need to get from regulators to operate. The draft had proposed to allow e-pharmacies to get a central licence to operate from the country's apex drug regulator, which could be used to allow it to operate across the country.

It also proposed to define e-pharmacies in a way that would allow them to distribute, sell and stock medicines. The proposed regulations prevent them from selling habit-forming drugs like cough syrups specified in Schedule X of the Indian drug regulations.

What is the status of the regulation?

Regulations for online pharmacy players have been in the works since 2016 but are yet to come out. The last attempt to clear these regulations saw the draft rules being pushed through two expert committees under the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation — India's apex drug regulatory body — in June 2019. That iteration of the proposed regulations suggested the inclusion of provisions for uploading e-prescriptions.

However, a few months later, the regulations ended up with a high-level group of ministers.

Why Gujarat is allowing buildings 100 m tall, and what it takes to build one

AVINASH NAIR & SHINY VARGHESE
AHMEDABAD, NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

THE GUJARAT government has initiated plans to allow buildings 100 m high or more in five cities: Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Surat, Rajkot and Vadodara. This week, the Urban Development and Urban Housing Department issued a notification incorporating a new chapter in the Comprehensive General Development Control Regulations (CGDCR)-2017 and invited public suggestions and objections within 60 days.

What are the reasons behind the move?

"The government does not intend to change the entire skyline in these cities. The main intent is to attract some iconic buildings in these cities. We are not incentivising developers in any way. However, we are sure

this move will help attract FDI in real-estate," said Prakash Datta, Deputy Secretary and Officer on Special Duty in the department.

Jaxay Shah, chairman, Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India, also believes this move "pending for the last eight years" will attract FDI.

Another reason cited by officials is that urban land is getting scarce and that "horizontal development of cities need more land, which is getting expensive by the day".

What is the current height restriction?

The limit was 45 m during 2001 (Kutch earthquake) and then raised to 70 m (22-23 floors) in 2017. The new policy allows builders to go as high they wish, provided a road at least 30 m wide adjoins the plot and they have an airport no-objection certificate.

If a builder has a 2,500 sq.m. plot, the maximum height can be 150 m. If the plot

is 3,500 sq. m, he or she can build to any height. Skyscrapers can come up in zones that have an FSI (Floor Space Index) more than 1.2. The changes permit a total FSI up to 5.4, but the additional FSI over 1.2 will be chargeable at 50% of the jantri value (ready reckoner rates) of the non-agricultural land.

Will the move bring down housing cost?

While the government has said tall buildings will help bring down the cost of housing, builders say construction will be costlier. "Skyscrapers are usually meant for luxurious residences and commercial structures. Even maintenance costs are high," said Shah, who also heads Ahmedabad-based construction firm Savvy Infrastructure Pvt Ltd.

Ahmedabad-based structural engineer Vatsal Patel said the primary costs in constructing a tall building are foundation and labour. The higher the floors, the more the

cost. For instance, as the structure rises, windows will need thicker and thicker glass. Again, labour costs increase after every fifth or sixth floor by 5-7%.

Market demand is crucial. "In most cities, where land rates are very high, skyscrapers are in demand. Other factors like scenic views and pollution play a role," Patel said.

How are earthquake-related concerns being addressed?

Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar are not far from the Cambay fault, and buildings in seismically active Kutch are not allowed more than one floor. The CGDCR mandates that proposed tall buildings will have to follow the National Building Code which lays down design guidelines for construction in seismically active zones. A Special Technical Committee will be formed with experts in structural engineering and soil mechanics

who will examine each project proposal.

What does a builder need to do?

"Skyscrapers will require extraordinary due diligence as far as structural safety, fire services and third party assessments are concerned. So permissions will take longer than conventional projects or buildings," said Shah. However, government officials said the number of permissions will remain the same.

What does it take to build a tall building?

The Bureau of Indian Standards has special clauses for tall structures, including details like wind load and earthquake resistance. Foundation and structural requirements too are crucial. Tall structures have to consider the horizontal load — how it will behave in an earthquake and the

wind load — and the static load, which is the building's own weight and occupancy load.

FOUNDATION: Foundations can go between 30 ft and 300 ft deep depending on soil conditions. "A geotechnical consultant is always called in to advice the type of foundation that is relevant for the soil type. Once the structural engineer has the data on the load of the building, the consultant will suggest the foundation type," Patel said.

STRUCTURE: Once wind tunnel tests are cleared, the structural framework is decided. To combat wind load, the building is made vertically strong through sheer walls. These reinforced concrete concrete walls go all the way from the foundation up to ensure the building holds even at 250 metres. Many tall buildings in cities such as Hyderabad and Bengaluru now have steel rather than concrete in their superstructure, which makes construction quicker.

Chinese military plans to introduce robot cooks and high-efficiency energy-saving stoves to reduce labour intensity even as it launched campaign to stop food waste and cultivate thrifty habits in the military under the 'clean plate' campaign launched by President Xi Jinping

TOP OF THE WORLD



Kim Jong Un

NORTH KOREA
Kim's sister is 'de facto second in command'

Seoul: South Korea's intelligence agency believes that Kim Yo Jong, the sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, is serving as his "de facto second-in-command" but has not necessarily been designated his successor, a South Korean lawmaker said on Thursday. Ha Tae-keung, an opposition party lawmaker on parliament's intelligence committee, told reporters Kim was helping to run the regime with mandated authority from her brother. "The bottom line is that Kim Jong Un still holds absolute power, but has turned over a bit more of his authority compared to the past," Ha said. "Kim Yo Jong is de facto second-in-command," Ha added.

SOUTH KOREA
Covid infections see spike after protest rally

Seoul: South Korea's coronavirus cases are back "in full swing" and spreading nationwide after members of a church attended a political demonstration, authorities said Thursday, threatening one of the world's Covid-19 success stories. The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) reported 288 new cases as of midnight on Wednesday, marking a week of triple-digit daily increases. "This is a grave situation that could possibly lead to a nationwide pandemic," Vice Health Minister Kim Gang-lip told a briefing.

SRI LANKA
Abeywardena appointed as Speaker

Colombo: Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena, who was sacked for opposing the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord in 1987, has been appointed the Speaker of Sri Lanka's new parliament which met for the first time on Thursday following the August 5 general election. At the inaugural session of the 9th parliament, Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena proposed Abeywardena for the post. The resolution was seconded by opposition MP Ranjith Madduma Bandara. Abeywardena, 75, was congratulated by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and all other legislators.

DAY 3 OF VIRTUAL DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

'We're at an inflection point': Harris accepts historic V-P nomination

REUTERS & PTI
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 20

US SENATOR Kamala Harris accepted the Democratic nomination for vice president on Thursday, imploring Americans to elect Joe Biden in November and accusing President Donald Trump of failed leadership that had cost lives and livelihoods during a pandemic.

Making history as the first Black woman and Asian-American on a major US presidential ticket, Harris said Trump's divisive leadership had brought the country to an "inflection point" and made a direct appeal to the party's diverse electorate whose vote is crucial to defeat Trump on November 3.

"The constant chaos leaves us adrift, the incompetence makes us feel afraid, the callousness makes us feel alone. It's a lot," the California senator and former prosecutor said, speaking from an events center in Biden's hometown of Wilmington, Delaware, that was largely empty because of the coronavirus outbreak.

"We must elect a president... who will bring all of us together — Black, White, Latino, Asian, Indigenous — to achieve the future we collectively want. We must elect Joe Biden," she said.

Harris' nomination capped the third night of a convention that has featured a crush of women headliners, moderators and speakers, showcasing the growing power of women in politics and in the Democratic Party.

The speech by Harris served as a reintroduction to the country after her unsuccessful White House bid. Harris outlined her background as a child of immi-



Hillary urges large turnout

FORMER SECRETARY of State Hillary Clinton gave a strong clarion call to Americans to overwhelmingly vote in the 2020 presidential election to ensure that Donald Trump "can't sneak or steal his way to victory", warning that Trump's re-election will make things "even worse."

"I wish Donald Trump had been a better president. Because America needs a better president than this," Clinton, who lost the 2016 presidential election to Trump, said in her remarks on Wednesday. PTI

grants from India and Jamaica who as a district attorney, state attorney general and now vice-presidential candidate shattered gender and racial barrier.

She said she was able to make history because of the trailblazing efforts of women before her who fought for the right to vote. "That I am here tonight is a testament to the dedication of generations before me," she said. "They organized, marched, and fought — not just for their vote, but for a seat at the table."

Harris opened her speech by remembering her late mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, lamenting the fact that she could not be there to see her daughter's achievement.

"My mother taught me that service to others gives life purpose and meaning. And oh, how I wish she were here tonight but I know she's looking down on me from above," she said.



The constant chaos leaves us adrift. The incompetence makes us feel afraid. The callousness makes us feel alone.

KAMALA HARRIS
SENATOR, V-P NOMINEE

For close to four years now he has shown no interest in putting in the work... no interest in treating the presidency as anything but one more reality show

BARACK OBAMA
FORMER PRESIDENT

Remember: Joe and Kamala can win 3 million more votes and still lose... We need numbers so overwhelming Trump can't sneak or steal his way to victory

HILLARY CLINTON
FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE

Obama lashes out: Trump hasn't grown into the job because he can't

STEPHANIE SAUL
NEW YORK, AUGUST 20

FORMER PRESIDENT Barack Obama delivered an impassioned speech on Wednesday to the Democratic National Convention in support of his party's presidential nominee, Joseph R Biden Jr, praising him as a man of experience, character, empathy and resilience, and urging the nation to come together to oust President Trump, saying democracy's very existence is in jeopardy.

Calling the consequences of Trump's failures severe — "170,000 Americans dead, millions of jobs gone, our worst impulses unleashed, our proud reputation around the world badly



Obama praised Biden as a man of experience, empathy

diminished and our democratic institutions threatened like never before" — Obama issued a call to action, imploring Americans to get behind Biden and his vice-presidential running mate, Senator Kamala Harris of California.

"What we do these next 76

days will echo through generations to come," Obama said, urging all Americans to vote.

"I did hope, for the sake of our country, that Donald Trump might show some interest in taking the job seriously," Obama said. "That he might come to feel the weight of the office. And discover some reverence for the democracy that had been placed in his care. But he never did."

"Donald Trump hasn't grown into the job because he can't," he said.

Obama offered an unflinching criticism of the president, arguing emphatically that Trump had abused his presidential power. "No one, including the president, is above the law," Obama said. NYT

Brother of Manchester Arena suicide bomber imprisoned for 55 years

ADITI KHANNA
LONDON, AUGUST 20

THE YOUNGER brother of the Libyan-origin suicide bomber who killed 22 people in a terrorist attack on an Ariana Grande concert in Manchester three years ago, was jailed for at least 55 years Thursday.

Earlier this year, a jury took less than five hours to find 23-year-old Hashem Abedi "just as guilty" as his older brother Salman Abedi of 22 counts of murder, one of attempted murder in relation to those who survived, and one of conspiracy to cause an explosion.

"This was the largest murder case in English legal history. The prosecution case was that Hashem effectively worked hand-in-hand with his brother as the bomber planned and carried

out his deadly attack on that night in May 2017," said Jenny Hopkins, Head of the Special Crime and Counter Terrorism Division at the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

"Hashem will spend the next five decades behind bars where he can't harm others. My thoughts remain with the families of those who died and the hundreds of survivors," she said.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the jailing of Hashem for his role in the terror attack was "an opportunity to reflect on the importance of tolerance, community and kindness".

Hashem was given life with 55 years minimum for 22 counts of murder, life with 40 years minimum for attempted murder and life with 35 years minimum for conspiracy to cause an explosion. The minimum sentences are to be served concurrently. PTI

Bannon arrested, charged with fraud in border wall campaign

ALAN FEUER & WILLIAM KRASHBAUM
NEW YORK, AUGUST 20

STEPHEN K Bannon, President Trump's former top adviser, was charged on Thursday in New York with fraud for his role in a scheme related to "We Build the Wall," an online fund-raising effort that collected more than \$25 million for the president's much-touted plan to erect a barrier on the Mexican border, officials said.

Bannon and three other defendants "defrauded hundreds of thousands of donors, capitalizing on their interest in funding a border wall to raise millions of dollars, under the false pretense that all of that money would be spent on construction," Audrey Strauss, the acting United States attorney in Manhattan, said in a statement Thursday.

Bannon was arrested early



Steve Bannon

Thursday in Connecticut by United States postal inspectors and brought to Manhattan where he faced charges in a two-count indictment unsealed in federal district court. He was expected to appear before a US magistrate judge in New York later in the day.

According to federal authorities, Bannon, widely considered the architect of Trump's 2016 presidential campaign, hatched the plot to defraud donors to the

build-the-wall campaign with three other men: Brian Kolfage, 38, an Air Force veteran from Miramar Beach, Fla.; Andrew Badolato, 56, a financier from Sarasota, Fla.; and Timothy Shea, 49, of Castle Rock, Colo.

As the founder of "We Build the Wall," Kolfage promised his donors that he would "not take a penny in salary or compensation" and that all of the money he raised would be used "in the execution of our mission and purpose," prosecutors said.

But those promises were false, prosecutors said. Instead, they said, Kolfage secretly took more than \$350,000 in donations for his own personal use. Bannon, through an unnamed nonprofit organisation, received more than \$1 million from "We Build the Wall," prosecutors said, some of which he used pay off hundreds of thousands of dollars in personal expenses. NYT

After suspected poisoning, Putin critic in coma

GABRIELLE TÉTRAULT-FARBER & ANDREW OSBORN
MOSCOW, AUGUST 20

Alexei Navalny

RUSSIAN OPPOSITION politician Alexei Navalny was in a coma in a Siberian hospital on Thursday after drinking a cup of tea that his spokeswoman said she believed was laced with poison.

A fierce critic of President Vladimir Putin, Navalny started feeling ill when returning to Moscow from Tomsk in Siberia by plane on Wednesday morning. He was carried off the plane on a stretcher after it made an emergency landing at Omsk.

He was in intensive care and on an artificial lung ventilator in an Omsk hospital, his spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh said.

"We assume that Alexei was poisoned with something mixed into his tea. It was the only thing that he drank in the morning. Alexei is now unconscious," Yarmysh said.

Doctors gave contradictory information about his condition, saying it had stabilised but also that there was still a threat to his life and they were working to save him.

There is a long history of Kremlin foes being poisoned or falling ill after suspected poisonings. The Kremlin has repeatedly

denied involvement in those and other incidents, calling them anti-Russian provocations.

Yarmysh did not say who she believed may have poisoned Navalny but said police had been called to the hospital.

A regional health ministry spokeswoman, Tatyana Shkirova, confirmed that Navalny has been hospitalised in Omsk and said doctors assessed his condition as serious.

"Doctors are doing everything possible to stabilise his condition," she said. "The poisoning version is one of several versions being considered. It's not possible now to say what the reason was."

Navalny, a 44-year-old lawyer and anti-corruption activist, has served many stints in jail for organising anti-Kremlin protests and has been physically attacked in the street by pro-government activists. REUTERS

'POISONING' OF KREMLIN CRITICS

SERGEI SKRIPAL
A former Russian double agent, Skripal, 66, and his daughter were found unconscious outside a shopping centre in Salisbury in March 2018. UK officials said they were poisoned by Novichok—nerve agents developed by the Soviet military in the 1970s and 80s.

ALEXANDER LITVINENKO
The ex-KGB agent and Putin critic died aged 43 in a London hotel after drinking tea laced with polonium-210, a rare radioactive isotope. Putin probably approved the killing, a British inquiry concluded in 2016.

VIKTOR YUSHCHENKO
The former Ukrainian opposition leader said he was poisoned during the campaign for the 2004 election in which he stood against pro-Moscow PM Viktor Yanukovich. His body was found to contain 1,000 times more dioxin than normal. REUTERS

VLADIMIR KARA-MURZA
The Russian opposition activist claimed attempts were made to poison him in 2015 and 2017. A German laboratory found elevated levels of mercury, copper, zinc and manganese in him

Hong Kong slams US move to end 3 treaties

REUTERS & AP
HONG KONG, AUGUST 20

THE HONG Kong government on Thursday condemned the United States' decision to suspend bilateral extradition and tax exemption treaties with the semi-autonomous Chinese city, saying it was being used as a pawn in geopolitics.

On Wednesday, the US suspended its extradition treaty with Hong Kong, becoming the latest country to do so after Canada, Australia and Britain suspended such agreements. The US also suspended a bilateral agreement with Hong Kong on the reciprocal tax exemptions on income derived from the international operation of ships.

"The US' unilateral decision reflects its disrespect for bilateralism and multilateralism under

the current administration and should be condemned by the international community," the statement said.

"The HKSAR Government strongly objects to and deplores the US' action, which is widely seen as a move to create troubles in China-US relationship, using Hong Kong as a pawn."

The government said that the bilateral agreements were not preferential treatment given to Hong Kong, but were negotiated in good faith to benefit both parties.

Hong Kong will suspend an agreement on mutual legal assistance with the United States, China's foreign ministry said. "China urges the US to immediately correct its mistakes," foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said as he announced the suspension of an agreement on legal assistance.

Facebook removes 790 QAnon conspiracy groups

SHEERA FRENKEL
OAKLAND, AUGUST 20

FACEBOOK SAID on Wednesday that it had removed 790 QAnon groups from its site and was restricting another 1,950 groups, 440 pages and more than 10,000 Instagram accounts related to the right-wing conspiracy theory, in the social network's most sweeping action against the fast-growing movement.

Facebook's takedown followed record growth of QAnon groups on the site, much of it since the coronavirus pandemic began in March. Activity on some of the largest QAnon groups on the social network, including likes, comments and shares of posts, rose 200 to 300 percent in the last six

E. Concern as conspiracy theorists edge towards the mainstream

FORMED ABOUT four years ago, QAnon, once seen as having a fringe presence, is now increasingly causing alarm. Its believers propagate the false theory that the world is run by a group of Satan-worshipping, sex-trafficking pedophiles who are plotting against Trump, as per an NYT report. Now, however, it has gone beyond social media with several supporters even running for Congress and winning primaries. This has caused further concern, with some fearing the movement could lead to domestic extremism.

months, according to data gathered by *The New York Times*.

"We have seen growing movements that, while not directly organizing violence, have celebrated violent acts, shown that they have weapons and sug-

gest they will use them, or have individual followers with patterns of violent behavior," Facebook said in a statement, adding that it would also block QAnon hashtags such as #digitalarmy and #thestorm. NYT

QAnon followers love our country: Trump offers help

Washington: President Trump on Wednesday offered encouragement to proponents of QAnon, a viral conspiracy theory that has gained widespread following among people who believe the president is secretly battling a criminal band of sex traffickers, and suggested that its proponents were patriots upset with unrest in Democratic cities.

"I've heard these are people that love our country," Trump said during a White House news conference. "So I don't know really anything about it other than they do supposedly like me."

When told by a reporter

about the central premise of the QAnon theory — a belief that Trump is saving the world from a satanic cult made up of pedophiles and cannibals connected to Democratic Party figures, so-called deep-state actors and Hollywood celebrities — Trump did not question the validity of the movement or the truth of those claims.

Instead, he offered his help. "Is that supposed to be a bad thing or a good thing?" the president said. "If I can help save the world from problems, I am willing to do it. I'm willing to put myself out there." NYT

Mali army colonel Goita declares himself in charge of country

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BAMAKO, AUGUST 20

A COLONEL in Mali's army says he's now in charge of the West African country, declaring himself chairman of the junta that forced the democratically elected but unpopular president to resign.

Colonel Assimi Goita, one of the five military officers who announced this week's coup on the state broadcaster ORTM, declared himself chairman of the junta now in power. "By making this intervention (the coup), we have put Mali first," Goita said in a broadcast that showed him meeting top officials of government ministries



Security forces drive through Bamako. AP

and urging them to resume work. "Mali is in a sociopolitical and security crisis," he said. "There is no more room for mistakes." Across Africa and around the world, leaders have strongly condemned this week's coup, calling

for an immediate return to civilian rule and the release of ex-President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and prime minister Boubou Cisse.

The two were detained by mutinous soldiers on Tuesday who surrounded the president's private residence in Bamako and fired shots into the air. Under duress, Keita later announced his resignation on state television, saying he did not want any blood to be shed to keep him in power.

Analysts said there were few signs that opposition leaders were aware of the coup in advance, though they stand to benefit through an opportunity to serve in the transitional government promised by the junta.



GOLD

₹52,819



RUPEE

₹75.02



OIL

\$44.72



SILVER

₹67,924

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market; gold per 10 g, silver per 1 kg; Brent crude as of 2330 IST

SENSEX: 38,220.39 ▼ 394.40 NIFTY: 11,312.20 ▼ 96.20 NIKKEI: 22,880.62 ▼ 229.99 HANG SENG: 24,791.39 ▼ 387.52 FTSE: 6,026.74 ▼ 85.24 DAX: 12,821.87 ▼ 155.46

International market data till 1900 IST

UNION CABINET HAS CLEARED LEASING OUT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM AIRPORT TO ADANI ENTERPRISES

After Kerala red flags airport privatisation plan, Puri says state bid failed to qualify

PRANAVMUKUL & LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

A DAY after the Union Cabinet cleared leasing out of three airports — Thiruvananthapuram, Jaipur and Guwahati — to Adani Enterprises, a political slugfest has started over the privatisation of the Thiruvananthapuram airport. Kerala Chief Minister (CM) Pinarayi Vijayan wrote to Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, saying the “unilateral decision” taken by the Centre was against the wishes of the people of the state.

Last year, the government had invited bids from private players to operate these airports for 50 years on a public-private partnership (PPP) basis. The Airports Authority of India (AAI), which currently manages these airports, in February 2019, announced the bids received from nine companies for privatisation of six airports including Lucknow, Mangaluru and Ahmedabad. Adani Enterprises outbid other companies for all six of these airports.

On Thursday, Kerala's Finance Minister Thomas Isaac said Kerala government's claim to managing the airport was rejected even after it offered to match Adani Enterprises' bid. As per AAI, for the

All-party meet backs CM, BJP stays out

Thiruvananthapuram: An all-party meeting held Thursday wanted the Centre to revoke its decision to hand over the management of the Thiruvananthapuram airport to Adani Group. All parties, except BJP, wanted the airport be retained in the public sector.

Thiruvananthapuram airport, it received a per-passenger fee bid of Rs 168 from Adani, while Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (KSIDC) bid Rs 135.

The Kerala government's request to de-link the Thiruvananthapuram airport dates back to November 2018 — shortly after the Centre's in-principle approval for privatising the six airports, senior Ministry officials said. In a representation made to the Centre, the Kerala government had cited its experience in development of greenfield airports at Kochi and Kannur, in addition to the contribution in form of land parcels at Thiruvananthapuram airport, and requested a committee for development and operation of the airport through a special purpose vehicle with the Kerala government as chief promoter, one official said.

Reflecting the meeting's views, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan sent another letter to PM Narendra Modi, saying: “The overwhelming view of the all-party meeting is that the operation and management of the airport should be vested with the state.” ENS

Following this, an Empowered Group of Secretaries was constituted and the Ministry of Civil Aviation requested the Kerala government to make a presentation before the panel. Thereafter, Kerala suggested either transfer of the airport to itself for operation and management by forming an SPV, or offer the right of first refusal (RoFR) to the SPV of Kerala government in a bidding process.

The secretaries' panel then recommended offering the state government SPV the RoFR as one of the options, provided that the SPV's bid fell within the range of 10 per cent of the highest bid. An AAI official said: “Since the quote of KSIDC was 19.64 per cent less than the highest quote of Adani, Government of Kerala was unable to benefit of RoFR.”

“We hope that the Prime

Minister and the central government understand the Kerala people's resentment against handing the Thiruvananthapuram airport to a private firm. This airport was built and developed with the contributions made by the state government and the people. We do feel that the Prime Minister realises the importance of appreciating the stand taken by the state government and the major political parties in the state. Kerala government has got the expertise in running the airports — both Kochi and Kannur international airports are testimonies to it,” Vijayan told *The Indian Express*.

In his letter to the PM, Vijayan wrote: “In my letter dated 10.06.2020, the request to hand over management and operation of the Trivandrum International Airport to the SPV in which the State Government is the major stake holder was reiterated. This has not been considered and the present decision has come even while the litigation in this regard is pending before the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala as per the direction of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.”

The AAI official cited above said during the presentation made to the Empowered Group of Secretaries, the then Chief Secretary of Kerala mentioned the letters given by civil aviation min-

istry in 2003, in which it “assured the state government will be consulted as and when a decision to induct private sector is taken.”

Responding to the allegations by the state government, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said in a tweet: “Parallel narratives can be no match for facts. A campaign has been launched against the decision to privatise the Thiruvananthapuram airport... Winning bid quoted Rs 168 per passenger, KSIDC quoted Rs 135 per passenger & third qualifying bidder was at Rs 63 per passenger. Thus, despite special provision of RoFR being given to GoK, they could not qualify in international bidding process carried out in a transparent manner. They subsequently approached the Hon'ble Kerala High Court & Hon'ble Supreme Court. All these facts are available in the public domain.”

Meanwhile, Congress MP from Thiruvananthapuram Shashi Tharoor backed the Centre. In a tweet Thursday, he said: “GoK (Government of Kerala) chose to participate in the bidding, under rules they agreed, & after losing in the fair process, started questioning the very game they had chosen to play. What really matters is the interests of the travellers of Thiruvananthapuram, not the govt's.”

PAYABLE UP TO 90 DAYS OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment allowance eligibility criteria under ESIC relaxed, workers can claim 50% of average wage

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

RELAXING THE eligibility criteria to avail the unemployment allowance under the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), the Centre announced that workers can directly claim 50 per cent of the average wage as against 25 per cent earlier, payable up to 90 days of joblessness, for their loss of employment between March 24 and December 31 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The benefits will be payable 30 days after unemployment as against 90 days earlier, ESIC said in a release after a meeting chaired by Labour and Employment Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar on Thursday.

The Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana, which is run by ESIC and provides for the unemployment allowance, has been extended by one more year to June 30, 2021, the release said, adding that the scheme will be available with original eligibility conditions during January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021.

The ESIC has also provided for direct submission of claims by the worker covered under the scheme (insured person) instead of it being forwarded by the last

3 KEY POINTS

1 The benefits will be payable 30 days after unemployment as against 90 days earlier, ESIC said in a release after a meeting chaired by Labour and Employment Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar on Thursday.

2 The Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana, run by ESIC and provides for the unemployment allowance, has been extended by a year to June 30, 2021, a release said.

3 The scheme will be available with original eligibility conditions during January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021, it added.

employer. “... the payment shall be made directly in the bank account of insured person,” the release said.

The Insured Person should have been in insurable employment for a minimum period of 2 years before his/her employment and should have contributed not less than 78 days in

the contribution period immediately preceding to unemployment.

Several industry groups had earlier petitioned the government to tap into its reserve funds of ESIC of over Rs 73,000 crore to help part-pay salaries for the workers affected due to the lockdown post the COVID-19 pandemic but the government had stated that it is not in favour of using the ESIC corpus for wage payments and that it already provides for employees to withdraw a basic sustenance amount from their corpus upon losing their jobs. The government has now relaxed the eligibility criteria for the same.

ESI Act applies to all factories and notified establishments located in implemented areas employing 10 or more persons and is applicable on employees drawing wages up to Rs 21,000 per month (Rs 25,000 for persons with disabilities). In July 2019, the contribution rate under the ESI Act was reduced from 6.5 per cent to 4 per cent (employers' contribution from 4.75 per cent to 3.25 per cent and employees' contribution from 1.75 per cent to 0.75 per cent). It covers about 3.49 crore of family units of workers and provides cash benefits and medical facilities to 13.56 crore beneficiaries.

Dream11 set for next funding round, Tencent's share to come down

Harsh Jain to remain largest stakeholder, valuation could go up to \$2.5 billion

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, AUGUST 20

DREAM11, a fantasy gaming platform that has acquired lead sponsorship of the 2020 Indian Premier League (IPL), is in advanced talks with at least four private equity firms to close a \$235-million deal, said sources familiar with the development.

This deal consists of a \$35-million primary fund raising and a \$200-million secondary sale of shares, which could see Chinese firm Tencent Holdings Ltd's shareholding come down to single digits, said sources. Currently, Tencent holds about 10.9 per cent shares in the holding company of Dream11 Fantasy Pvt Ltd, now known as Sparta Technologies Pvt Ltd, said sources. Harsh Jain, the promoter of the gaming platform, will continue to remain the single largest shareholder, sources said.

The deal is likely to see Dream11's valuation increase to \$2.5 billion from \$1.1 billion in April 2019, when US hedge fund Steadview bought stakes from the early investors of Dream11. The deal is likely to be announced soon, sources said.

The private equity firms that are evaluating buying a stake in Dream11 include TPG Capital,

Tiger Global Management and Footpath Ventures among others, said sources. Emails sent to these firms did not elicit any response.

Earlier this week, Dream11 was named as the title sponsor of the 2020 IPL, with the sponsorship amount of Rs 222 crore after the tournament's original title sponsor, Vivo, a Chinese smartphone manufacturer, suspended the contract for this year following a public backlash against Chinese companies amid the ongoing Sino-Indian border dispute.

The duration of the sponsorship with Dream 11 is until December 31.

According to the 2019 annual report of Dream11, the latest available report, the gaming firm's revenue from operations increased to Rs 775 crore from Rs 224 crore in financial year 2018. Its losses widened to Rs 131 crore from Rs 65 crore a year ago.

The company, which was founded 12 years ago by Harsh Jain and Bhavish Sheth, runs fantasy sporting leagues across cricket, football, baseball and basketball.

As of 2020, it claims to have 80 million-plus users. In 2018, signed MSDhoni as a brand ambassador and the following year signed deals with the International Cricket Council (ICC) and IPL to run their official fantasy leagues.

COVID impact: ₹6K cr net loss likely for CV makers'

Commercial vehicle (CV) manufacturers are expected to incur a massive net loss of around Rs 6,000 crore this fiscal, ratings agency Crisil said

31,636: CV sales in April-June period of FY21

85%: Year-on-year decline in sales volume in April-June period of FY2, as India remained in the coronavirus-driven lockdown

Why this is important: The pandemic impact notwithstanding, two consecutive years of high de-growth are likely to result in CV volume reaching its lowest point in 10 years

Source: Crisil/PTI



Google launches job search app in India

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

GOOGLE HAS announced the India launch of its Kormo Jobs app to help entry-level job seekers find and apply for positions. The tech giant, which introduced 'Jobs' last year in India as part of Google Pay to connect job seekers with opportunities in indus-

tries like on-demand businesses, retail and hospitality, said the offering will be rebranded to 'Kormo Jobs'.

While announcing the limited launch last year, Google said it has partnered 25 companies including Dunzo, Zomato, Swiggy, 24Seven, Ritu Kumar and FabHotels, which have posted listings for positions such as delivery partners, security

guards, customer support partners, field sales and marketing executives, etc. In a statement Thursday, Google India said: “In India, employers like Zomato and Dunzo have found Jobs matching algorithm effective in finding candidates with the required skills, experience and location preferences, with over 2 million verified jobs posted on the platform”.

Govt plans further stake sale in IRCTC this fiscal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

THE GOVERNMENT is planning to sell part of its stake in Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corp (IRCTC) in the current fiscal, and has invited bids from merchant bankers for managing the sale process.

“The GoI intends to disinvest a part of the paid up equity capital of IRCTC out of its shareholding through ‘Offer for Sale (OFS)’ method of shares by promoters through the stock exchanges’ as per Sebi Rules and Regulations,” the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management said while inviting Request for Proposal (RFP).

BRIEFLY

Gold plunges by ₹1,492/10g

New Delhi: Gold in Delhi fell Rs 1,492 to Rs 52,819 per 10g, while silver fell Rs 1,476 to Rs 67,924 per kg Thursday.

Gmail back after disruption

New Delhi: Gmail service, which faced an outage, was restored, said Google. PTI

CCI nod to Siemens deal

New Delhi: The Competition Commission of India (CCI) gave Siemens Ltd nod to buy 99 per cent in C&S Electric.

LG Electronics to donate ₹1 cr

New Delhi: LG Electronics will donate Rs 1 crore to Armed Forces Flag Day Fund under ‘Kar Salaam’. ENS

MINUTES OF RBI MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE MEET

Elevated inflation ‘undermining MPC’s actions’ to revive growth

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, AUGUST 20

MEMBERS of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI, which completed its four-year term, have expressed disappointment over the elevated inflation saying it is “undermining the MPC's actions” to revive growth and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the economy which is expected to record its “deepest contraction” in history.

“I have been advocating a more cautious path for policy rate reductions since February 2019. However, I have been in a minority in the MPC. Inflation has now been above the upper band of 6 per cent for a number of months,” MPC Member Chetan Ghate said in his note, according to the minutes of the MPC meeting held on August 6. Notwithstanding large rate cuts to spur growth over the last year and a half, growth has steadily declined despite 250 basis points (bps) in cuts since February 2019. “Future MPCs should not go soft on inflation,” Ghate said in his parting shot.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor and MPC Member Michael Patra said, “Disappointingly, inflation surprises of recent months are undermining the

EXPLAINED Challenge for new MPC will be to target inflation

INFLATION BEING above the target range has thwarted the MPC's actions to revive growth and check the pandemic's impact. For the new MPC, inflation targeting would be the primary focus.

MPC's actions and stymieing its resolve to do what it takes to revive growth and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the economy.” The MPC kept repo rate at 4 per cent in August.

MPC Member Ravindra Dholakia said, although the present circumstances are truly exceptional, the primary mandate given to MPC for inflation targeting at 4 per cent has to be respected. Although there is headroom for further monetary policy action, at this juncture it is important to keep our arsenal dry and use it judiciously, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das. A new MPC is likely to be constituted before the next policy review on October 1.

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Tender Publishing Notice Advertisement

E-Tender No.39
NMSCDCL is publishing tender “Engineering, Procurement and Construction of three ESRs, One GSR sumps, Pump House (Part A) and Construction and Commissioning of Transmission Network (Part B) and Surrounding area under the Nashik Smart City Mission, Nashik”.

Tender publishing date is 19.08.2020 03.00 PM.
Last date of submission of tender 05.10.2020 03.00 PM.
The detailed notice inviting tender will be available on www.mahatenders.gov.in.

Sd/-
Chief Executive Officer
NMSCDCL

Municipal Corporation, Prayagraj (U.P.)
Tender Notice for 10 MTPD Biogas Plant

The Municipal Corporation Prayagraj invites dual bid system tender on behalf Municipal Commissioner, Prayagraj for Design, construction, commissioning with 05 year comprehensive operation and maintenance of 10 MTPD Biomethanation base Electricity Generation Plant from Authorised registered Manufacturer/dealer of “Bhabha Atomic Research center (BARC) Nisarguna Technology”. The Tender Tentative schedule and important date is as follows:-

S.No.	Sl. No.	Tender No. & Date	Name of Work	Cost of Work (₹)	EMD (₹)	Sale / download period From-To	Last date of Submission upto 15:00 Hrs
1	1	DNM/ES/ KDM/ H8- Misc-IC/2020-14/ OTE Date: 21/08/2020	“Assistance works in attending Housekeeping and other Miscellaneous works of Electrical Services at KDM on Job Contract basis for a period of one year (300 days)”	14.91 Lakhs	15,000/-	21/08/2020 to 21/09/2020	22/09/2020
2	2	DNM/Comm/RMP /Contract/2020/1 Date: 21/08/2020	“Wagon sick box identification & Door closing for empty rakes at RNP station for loading of DDM/KDM material for the period one year on job contract basis”	2750 Lakhs	27,503/-	21/08/2020 to 21/09/2020	21/09/2020
3	3	DNM/PP/OSM / PPRMRS/2020 Date: 21/08/2020	“Operation & Maintenance works of Pelletisation Plant and MRS at 12 MTPA Pellet Plant, Donimalai on job contract basis”	909.87 Lakhs	9,10,000/-	22/08/2020 to 22/09/2020	22/09/2020
4	4	DNM/Geol/OC/IC/ 2020-21/01 Date: 24/08/2020	“Miscellaneous work in Quality Control Operation at following Locations of Geology & Quality Control Department (a) Loading Plant (b) Screening Plant (c) Geo & QC Labs. as per suggested location by site-in-charge for a period of one year on job contract basis”	43.31 Lakhs	43,300/-	24/08/2020 to 23/09/2020	23/09/2020
5	5	CE/W/1/262/ 2020 Date: 19/08/2020	“Providing Furniture, Fixtures and Art Objects to Newly Constructed Guest House at Donimalai Township”	53.77 Lakhs	53,800/-	24/08/2020 to 23/09/2020	23/09/2020
6	6	DNM/SM/ Tababuses/ 2020-21/02 Date: 21/08/2020	“Repair and Maintenance of 08 numbers TAA Bus”	6197 Lakhs	68,000/-	21/08/2020 to 21/09/2020	21/09/2020

Note:-
1- Tender Fee should be submitted on UCO Bank, Branch-Nagar Nigam Prayagraj, A/c Name- E-Tendering Security Deposit A/c No. - 06940110006498, IFSC Code-UCBA0000694.
2- EMD Fees should be uploaded in the form of CDR/FDR pledged in favour of Chief Engineer, Civil Nagar Nigam Prayagraj.
3- All details including terms & conditions are uploaded in e-tender website etender.up.nic.in.
4- Municipal Commissioner has all rights to accept/reject the tender without assigning reason.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer (E&M)
Nagar Nigam Prayagraj.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer
Nagar Nigam Prayagraj

Bank of India
Head Office MIS Department - Datawarehouse Star House 2, C-4, “G” Block, 7th Floor, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai-400 051. E-mail: Headoffice.Datawarehouse@bankofindia.co.in

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) NOTICE

BANK OF INDIA INVITES REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR procurement, implementation and maintenance of end-to-end integrated e-PLATFORM solution for Straight Through Origination and Processing of all Banking Products and Services including products & services distributed through Bank channels
Last date for submission of RFP 11.09.2020 by 3:00 PM
Details available on Bank's Corporate Website: www.bankofindia.co.in under “Tender” Section.

NMDC Limited
(A GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ENTERPRISE)
DONIMALAI COMPLEX, DONIMALAI TOWNSHIP, PO-SANDUR TALUK, BELLARY DISTRICT, KARNATAKA, PELLETT PLANT, PIN CODE - 583018, CIN : L31002SI9586001674.

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Sealed tenders are inviting from the competent and experienced bidder for the following works:

Sl. No.	Tender No. & Date	Name of Work	Cost of Work (₹)	EMD (₹)	Sale / download period From-To	Last date of Submission upto 15:00 Hrs
1	DNM/ES/ KDM/ H8- Misc-IC/2020-14/ OTE Date: 21/08/2020	“Assistance works in attending Housekeeping and other Miscellaneous works of Electrical Services at KDM on Job Contract basis for a period of one year (300 days)”	14.91 Lakhs	15,000/-	21/08/2020 to 21/09/2020	22/09/2020
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5	CE/W/1/262/ 2020 Date: 19/08/2020	“Providing Furniture, Fixtures and Art Objects to Newly Constructed Guest House at Donimalai Township”	53.77 Lakhs	53,800/-	24/08/2020 to 23/09/2020	23/09/2020
6	DNM/SM/ Tababuses/ 2020-21/02 Date: 21/08/2020	“Repair and Maintenance of 08 numbers TAA Bus”	6197 Lakhs	68,000/-	21/08/2020 to 21/09/2020	21/09/2020

Further clarification, tender related SL No.1 may contact DGM (Elect) Services by mailing to diomelectrical@nmcd.co.in or fax message to 08395-275028, For SL No. 2 may contact Manager (Comm) by mailing to diomcomm@nmcd.co.in or by fax message to 08395-274644; For SL No. 3 may contact AGM (MP) Pellet Plant by mailing to ksrinivasa@nmcd.co.in, For SL No. 4 may contact DGM (Geol) by mailing to dsreddy@nmcd.co.in or by fax message to 08395-274640; For SL No. 5 may contact DGM (Mechanical) by mailing to dhansdhan@nmcd.co.in or by fax message to 08395-274605; The detailed NIT and tender documents can be viewed and /or downloaded from NMDC's website <https://www.nmcd.co.in/nmcdtender/default.aspx> or Central Public Procurement Portal <https://www.eprocure.gov.in>. Further, for any corrigendum, amendments, clarification etc may please follow the above website.

For and on behalf of NMDC Limited
Jt. GM (Production)

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) The Executive Engineer, B&R Division, HPPWD Nahan, District Sirmour, H.P. on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh invites the item rates...

SEARCH OF MISSING General public is hereby informed that one girl (depicted in the photo). Namely: Sanjeeda, D/o: Abdul Gafar, R/o: H.No.A-154/1, Raja Vihar, Badli, Delhi...

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM E-Tender No. - 51205377B In reference to above following corrigendum is as under: Item No. - 3, Description - Please read Model SP4LA+...

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male namely Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown was found on 11.08.2020 at Near Gali Malayan Market, near Delhi gate, Daryaganj, Delhi.

KOTA BUS SERVICES LIMITED Nagar Nigam, Kota, New Administrative Building Rajeev Gandhi Bhawan, Dushera Maidan, Kishor Pura, KOTA, RJ - 324009 E-mail: nnkota@gmail.com, CIN: U60210RJ2015SGC047372 NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Table with columns: Organization Name, Name of the Work, Project Period, Tender Type & Bid Validity, Number of Buses to be Operated by the Bidder, Tender Download, Sale & Bid Preparation, Last date of Bid Submission, Pre-Bid Meeting date, Time and Place, Website For Downloading Tender Documents, Cost of tender documents, Bid Processing Fee, EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT (EMD), Submission of EMD, Processing fee and Tender fee, Technical Bid Opening Date, Bid validity period, Financial Bid Opening.

BHAKRA BEAS MANAGEMENT BOARD (Power Wing) Corrigendum-I NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER Dated 27.05.2020 NIT No: 553/P-59/VOL-V Name of Office: Chief Engineer/Transmission System, Planning & Design (TS) Directorate, SLDC Complex, Industrial Area Phase-I, BBMB, Chandigarh-160002

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY Tender Notice No. 8 of Year 2020-21 Sealed open tenders are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (S&T), N.E.Railway, Itanagar for and on behalf of the President of India for the following works:

National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI) (An Autonomous Institute under Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India) Sector 81, Knowledge City, Mohali - 140 306 Punjab (INDIA) Tel. : 91-172-5221300 Fax : 91-172-5221100 E-mail : purchase@nabi.res.in

BARAMATI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, BARAMATI PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT e-Tender Notice No. 10/2020-21 (Online) Parent Portal : http://mahatender.gov.in BNP/WS-17/408/2020-21 Dated 19/08/2020

Table with columns: S.No., Stage, Start Date, Hrs., End Date, Hrs. 1. Publication of Tender, 2. Document Download, 3. Prebid Meeting, 4. Bid Submission, 5. Submission of Earnest Money Deposit Challan & Hard Copy of Documents, 6. Opening of Technical Envelope, 7. Opening of Commercial Envelope.

Purvanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited, Vidyut Nagar, P.O.- DLW, Varanasi - 221004 E-Short Term Tender Notice E-short term tender are invited for the following material. The tender will be accepted up to at 15.00 hrs.

North Eastern Railway E-Tendering Tender Notice No. 17/2020 Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.) N.E. Railways, Itanagar for and on behalf of President of India invites "OPEN" e-tender through online (E-tendering) for the following work:

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority Noida Main Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.S. Nager (U.P.) Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com E-TENDER NOTICE E-Tenders are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned.

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA CORRIGENDUM Table with columns: Sr. No., NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH, OLD REFERENCE/NIT NO., NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM, WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH, NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL S.M.S. MEDICAL COLLEGE & CONTROLLER OF THE ATTACHED HOSPITALS, JAIPUR No 18957-63/FC/Store/COVID-19/2020-21 Dated 11.08.20 E-Tender Notice No. 72/2020-2021 Sealed Bid are invited for the Automated Extraction System on Reagent Rental Basis in Microbiology Department SMS Medical College, Jaipur.

CHENNAI METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CIRCLE-II, CONSTRUCTION WING, TOWER-II, 9th FLOOR, EGMORE, CHENNAI - 600 008. SEALED TENDER NOTICE Dt. 20.08.2020 Sealed Tenders are invited from the Registered Contractors, (Pre-qualification document and price bid documents - Two Cover System) for the work of "Execution of certain Additional works such as providing Compound Wall & Retaining Wall, Shaft Closing in Terminal Building, Reverse Osmosis Plant, Fire Protection Works and Effluent Treatment Plant in the ongoing project of New Bus Terminus at Kilambakkam near Vandalur, Chengalpattu, District.

ON THE TUBE

EUROPA LEAGUE FINAL: Inter Milan vs Sevilla
LIVE ON: Sony Ten 2 SD & HD from 12:30am (Saturday)

Seatbelts, masks, PPEs

IPL teams have started flying out to the UAE, the venue for this season. Rajasthan Royals and Kings XI Punjab first to reach on Thursday.



Rajasthan Royals and staff members landed in Dubai on Thursday dressed in PPE kits.



Kings XI Punjab's chief coach Anil Kumble on arrival at the Dubai International Airport on Thursday.



Chennai Super Kings' Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Suresh Raina after a practice session in Chennai on Thursday. PTI

Harbhajan will join CSK squad after two weeks

CHENNAI SUPER Kings squad is all set to leave for the UAE on Friday but veteran off-spinner Harbhajan Singh will not be boarding the flight due to personal reasons and instead join his team within two weeks.

"Harbhajan will not be travelling with the team to Dubai due to personal reasons. He is expected to join the squad in two weeks," a CSK official said. The 40-year-old spinner was also not part of the brief training camp that CSK conducted in Chennai.

The team will leave for Dubai on Friday at around 12.45 pm, the official said. Star all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja and Shardul Thakur had also missed the camp due to personal reasons, the official said.

Thakur joined the squad on Wednesday while Jadeja is likely to fly in later on Thursday. The players have been training here since August 15 under the watchful eyes of bowling coach Laxmipathy Balaji for IPL beginning September 19. PTI

The remote awards

Instead of Rashtrapati Bhawan, sports awardees to attend function from SAI centres

MIHIR VASAVDA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

SOCIAL DISTANCING will go the extra mile at this year's National Sports Awards ceremony.

When their names will be announced during the function on August 29, the awardees will not be making the customary walk on the red carpet inside Rashtrapati Bhawan's Durbar Hall. Instead, the chosen 76 will be at a Sports Authority of India (SAI) centre closest to them from where they will be connected to President Ram Nath Kovind at his residence, through Doordarshan's camera crews.

The pomp and panache of the awards function, which is one of the highlights of India's annual sporting calendar, will be replaced by makeshift arrangements at the training centres, where the winners will assemble for a virtual ceremony.

No plush hotels

Owing to the pandemic and the consequent restrictions on public gatherings as well as social-distancing guidelines, the sports ministry has decided to hold the function remotely. "Usually, there are around 400 to 500 people attending the ceremony, which is held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan. Since that will not be safe because of the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been decided that the function will be held remotely," a ministry official said.

So, rather than being put up at a plush Central Delhi hotel and being part of a grand ceremony at the president's house, the athletes will be asked to report at the nearest SAI Centre. A total of 16 facilities have been identified where the 76 awardees will assemble depending on their region.

Blazers, trophy to be couriered

The athletes have been asked to send their measurements for the ceremonial blazer, which will be couriered to them along with the trophy. "I am completing my police training in Nasik. So I visited the tailor at the academy here and got my measurements done," says wrestler Rahul Aware, who has been recommended for the Arjuna Award. "The ceremony I have



Till last year, around 400-500 invitees would attend the annual National Sports Awards ceremony at the Rashtrapathi Bhawan followed by dinner. PTI file

The ministry expects most of the athletes to be present for the ceremony but there are doubts whether two cricketers – Rohit Sharma and Ishant Sharma – will be able to attend.

heard will be online, but there is no official intimation yet."

Travel arrangements and other logistics are still being worked out. But on the day of the ceremony, the winners are expected to be present at the designated SAI Centres, dressed in their blazers. They will be connected to the Rashtrapati Bhawan via a secure internet connection. Sports ministry officials are likely to join the event from a convention hall in New Delhi, where they are likely to assemble.

Tech-aided ceremony

A pre-recorded citation will be read out at the beginning of the ceremony. Then, the president will show the scroll of honour on the screen and parallelly, the named athlete will stand up at the SAI Centre, take a bow and hold the trophy aloft. "All athletes

have been contacted and their locations taken down. Their travel is being organised and the ceremonial dress will be couriered in time for the ceremony," the official said.

This year, an unprecedented 76 athletes and organisations have been recommended for the awards, including five Khel Ratnas and 29 Arjuna Awardees.

Sports minister Kiren Rijiju is likely to approve the names and make them official in a day or two.

The ministry expects most of the athletes to be present for the ceremony but there are doubts whether two cricketers – Rohit Sharma and Ishant Sharma – will be able to attend. Rohit has been recommended for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, India's highest sporting honour, while Ishant's name has been proposed for the Arjuna Award.

Both are likely to be in the United Arab Emirates, preparing for the Indian Premier League, when the ceremony takes place. Asked if they can join the virtual ceremony from their hotel rooms in the UAE, the official said it was unlikely. "Since this is a presidential event, certain decorum will have to be maintained. It is not yet clear how the cricketers will be able to join in. That will be figured out in the days to come," the official said.

Days after contract renewal, David John resigns

MIHIR VASAVDA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 20

HOCKEY INDIA'S high-performance director David John has resigned, just days after his contract was renewed by the sports ministry until September 2021. It is learnt that the federation has accepted the Australian's resignation but the Sports Authority of India, his employers on paper, are yet to respond.

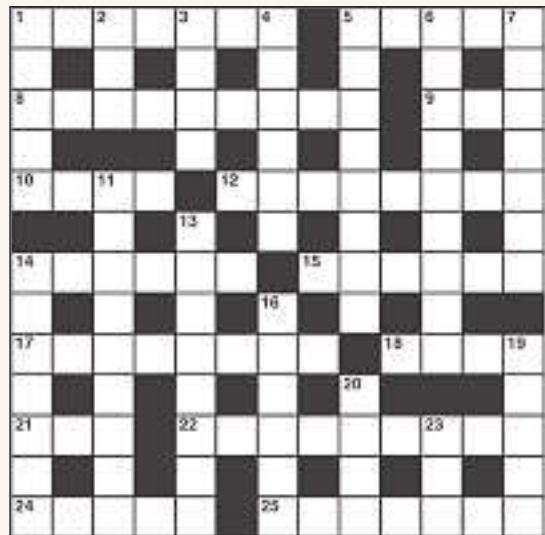
It is learnt that John has cited personal and health issues as reasons to return to Australia. But according to those in the know, John put in his papers after he was asked to report to the Hockey India office in Delhi every day as well as make trips to training centres around the country in the middle of the pandemic.

When asked about John's resignation as well as the reasons for it, Hockey India said, "no comments." John did not respond to text messages. John, who was employed at a monthly salary of \$12,000, has been working from home in Delhi since the beginning of the lockdown in March. In May, Hockey India's office had to be shut down after two staffers tested positive for the coronavirus. "David wasn't comfortable to travel to the office & other cities in the country as it posed health risks. There was a difference of opinion over this issue & he eventually offered to quit," a source said.

John has been associated with Indian hockey for a major part of the last decade, having first come as the men's team's physio along with former coach Michael Nobbs. During that stint, he was credited with improving the players' fitness levels, first bringing them on par with the rest of the world and then making them better.

He left the team after the 2012 London Olympics but returned in November 2016 as the high-performance director. His appointment raised a few eyebrows as John did not have any prior coaching experience. Since then, however, he has been one of the key figures in Indian hockey, having been closely associated with the men and women's teams as well as designing Hockey India's ambitious coaching programme. He also played an important role in the appointment of coaches for the national teams.

CROSSWORD 4203



- ACROSS**
- Sort of deal requiring all the cards to date (7)
 - Tough breed of dog (5)
 - Urgent demand for basketwork? (4,5)
 - One note produces anger (3)
 - Creatures with feet going in two directions (4)
 - Prejudiced? Oddly, indeed so (3-5)
 - Slightly sensitive? (6)
 - Letter was bound to have shown sympathy (6)
 - Not how Sherlock Holmes will make a deduction (8)
 - Turn back before it erupts (4)
 - Start leading the field (3)
 - China's anniversary (9)
 - Protest singer's body language is revealing (5)
 - Smirks that could be made to impress (7)
- DOWN**
- Prepare to whistle for one's money? (5)
 - A green isle in the Aegean (3)
 - A doctor's name (4)
 - In conclusion it's the ultimate gin cocktail (6)
 - Need a difficult craft (8)
 - Salt water spray (9)
 - Gave in or gave out (7)
 - Sort of sketch one has in hand (9)
 - She ran round to a famous furniture designer (8)
 - Struggled, having let suds get out of hand (7)
 - Pieces of eight (6)
 - A bad shot for a musketeer (5)
 - One thing I met on the way up (4)
 - Female sheep quarters (3)

Solutions Crossword 4202: Across: 1 Truffles, 5 Odds, 9 Curse, 10 Plunder, 11 Flock of sheep, 13 Troops, 14 Single, 17 Restlessness, 20 Cruiser, 21 Anita, 22 Snap, 23 Trekkers. Down: 1 Tack, 2 Utrillo, 3 French polish, 4 Employ, 6 Dodge, 7 Scrapped, 8 Question mark, 12 Attracts, 15 Gas fire, 16 User, 18 Sauna, 19 Dais.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
By now the Moon is sailing through significant regions of your chart, and you can be sure that you'll receive a healthy shot of emotional energy. At work, follow a hunch, but keep other people informed, otherwise you will create havoc, even if unintentionally.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
Begin to check out the financial situation, especially if there are tricky domestic implications. I am afraid that there is still little you can do without permission and support from partners, so you must take their wishes into account at every turn.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
It may be tomorrow before you can make yourself understood, but that doesn't mean that you shouldn't launch an attempt today. Happily, partners and colleagues will be increasingly prepared to listen. You never know someone who once stood in your way may soon offer you helpful advice.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
There is much to be said for pressing on with work and routine chores, even when all the indications are that you will be increasingly impatient and dismissive of small daily duties. That's fine as long as you have experienced people doing your bidding. Otherwise you'd better be more circumspect.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
Finally, other people will be able to have their say, and you will be ready to heed good advice. You may be more prepared to hear what children or younger relatives have to say than some other family members. You'll build up credit, and may even receive a major favour.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sept 23)
One possibility not mentioned so far this week, is a chance of unexpected short journeys, perhaps a nostalgic trip, probably for a romantic purpose. Today's stars shift the emphasis towards family visits, or at least communication with people you live with: get talking.

LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct 23)
It's been a confusing week for many people, but today you can set a lead by restoring good and clear communication. One way forward is to get more involved in a charitable exercise, or pursue activities which are designed to make the world a better place.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)
You're getting mixed messages, so by now you may be feeling a little perplexed, even for a Scorpio. Your planets are still urging you inexorably towards emotional confrontation, but try not to be totally uncompromising. There may be a great deal of truth in what a partner has to say.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)
Quite a number of people have been suffering recently, many of them emotionally. Regardless of other considerations, your celestial-inspired task today is to begin to pick up the pieces. You could be much closer to solving a long-term question than you think.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
You are not normally considered secretive, but that doesn't mean that you don't like to keep things close to your chest. Other people must remember that they have no right to take you for granted, or to examine your very private and intimate affairs.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Pleasant social influences reign for the next forty-eight hours, so life should be just as you like it. You may be in dire need of relief from more pressing emotional complications, including some which directly involve your work. Stay cool: they won't last for ever.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
Too many times in the past you have been overshadowed by people who find it easier to shine in a crowd. But now that the Moon is so helpful you should take your heart in your hands and push yourself to the front. Believe it or not, other people will help you on your way.

JUMBLED 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 clue.

To avoid do nothing, say nothing, be nothing - Elbert Hubbard (9)



ANSWER: SOLUTION: CRIIR, SHIRI, CACTUS, CHIMNEY

SUDOKU 4207

Difficulty Level 5s
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 4206



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- FULL FRONTAL IMPACT COMPLIANT, FRONTAL OFFSET IMPACT COMPLIANT, SIDE IMPACT COMPLIANT
- ISOFIX
- HEARTECT PLATFORM

T&C Apply. Features and accessories shown may not be part of standard fitment. Black glass shade on the vehicle is due to lighting effect. Images used are for illustration purposes only.

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DELHI NEXA KAILASH COLONY RANA MOTORS PH: 9999788886	DELHI NEXA LAJPAT NAGAR BAGGA LINK MOTORS PH: 9818199367	DELHI NEXA OKHLA PHASE 1 PREM MOTORS PH: 011-42900000, 7065074531	DELHI NEXA PITAMPURA KRISH MOTORS PH: 7838555047	DELHI NEXA GT KARNAL ROAD RANA MOTORS PH: 7289999111	DELHI NEXA WAZIRPUR COMPETENT AUTOMOBILES PH: 9582668646	DELHI NEXA ROHINI SECTOR 10 SAYA AUTOMOBILES LTD. PH: 9553345301	DELHI NEXA NARELA DD MOTORS PH: 9081900800	DELHI NEXA AKSHARDHAM FAIRDEAL CARS PH: 999925161	DELHI NEXA GHAZIPUR MAGIC AUTO PH: 8929400503	
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