



HASEEN DILLRUBA: WILD, WICKED BUT WITH WARTS (IANS REVIEW; RATING: \* \* \*) - PAGE-6

## Uttarakhand CM gives resignation letter to BJP Chief

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS) :** Uttarakhand Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat handed in his resignation to his party BJP today, barely four months after he took charge and just ahead of polls next year in the state.

Tirath Rawat, who had been in Delhi for the past three days for meetings with the BJP leadership, was asked this afternoon by the ruling party to quit. Soon after, he sought an appointment with Governor Baby Rani Maurya. But before meeting with the Governor, he handed in his papers to his party chief JP Nadda. BJP MLAs in Uttarakhand will meet tomorrow to pick a new leader. Mr Rawat was sworn in as Chief Minister in March, with a little over a year to the Uttarakhand election, amid fierce dissent against then Chief Minister Trivendra Rawat. But to keep the post, Mr Rawat, who is an MP, would need to win an assembly seat and become a member of the Uttarakhand legislative assembly by September 10.

To hold bypolls at this time would be a tough decision for the Election Commission after the massive controversy over the March-April election in five states, held alongside rising virus cases in the second surge.

"There are many by-elections due. The Covid situation is a major consideration," Election Commission sources had said this morning. To the BJP's chagrin, the new Chief Minister did no better than his predecessor in defusing the infighting in Uttarakhand.



# CM directs 3-year action plan to make J'khand a leading state in milk, egg production

Mail News Service

**Ranchi, July 2 :** Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren claimed that the state has already become among top states in fish production and it has now set a target of becoming top in milk and egg production.

After a review meeting of the agriculture department at Ranchi on Friday, Hemant Soren asked the officials to set a target in egg and milk production and also asked to focus on animal husbandry sector especially keeping the interest of the locals and geographical region of the

area.

The chief minister asked the department to make an action plan including these components.

Besides asking the officials concerned to prepare a three-year action plan for the purpose, Soren also directed them to fill up vacant posts and provide Kisan Credit Card to all farmers in the state.

The chief minister said Jharkhand has become a leading state in the field of fish production and now stress needs to be given to boost milk and eggs output.

"For this, the target will have to be fixed, so that the state can become self-suffi-



cient in milk production. At the same time, the sector of animal husbandry also needs attention. According to the geographical composition of the area and the interest of the people there,

animal husbandry has to be promoted. The department should work by including these things in its action plan," he said.

Soren said a special campaign should be run at the

block level to provide kisan credit Card to farmers.

"It should be ensured to receive applications from farmers by July 15. Complete the process of taking the application by camping. If the cooperation is not being received from the bank, then the department should ask for clarification from the bank. The government is intending to give kisan credit Card to all the farmers of the state," he said. The chief minister directed the fisheries division to promote fisheries in closed mining complex, saying this will improve the economic condition of the people. He also asked offi-

cial to encourage people to set up hatcheries, and take up poultry farming.

Asserting that lack of human resources is making it difficult for the beneficiaries to take advantage of schemes, he directed officials to fill up vacant posts at the earliest.

Krishak Pathshala can become a vehicle for the capacity development of farmers by imparting training to the cultivators, he said.

Jharkhand agriculture Minister Badal Patralek and Jharkhand chief Secretary Sukhdev Singh were present in the meeting among others. (W-rg)

## 86% drop in Covid cases since second wave peak, but don't lower guard: Health ministry



**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS) :** There has been an 86 per cent decline in Covid cases in India since the second wave of the pandemic peaked in the country but people shouldn't lower their guard, the Union Health Ministry said on Friday.

Addressing a press conference, Health Ministry Joint Secretary Lav Agarwal said, "Under the continued focus of clinical management, the recovery rate, which was at 81.1 per cent on May 3, is now at around 97 per cent."

Seventy-one districts reported a Covid case

positivity rate of more than 10 per cent in the week from June 23 to 29, the government said.

The health ministry added that around 56 cases of Delta Plus variant have been detected in 12 states till June 30.

It also stressed the importance of vaccination and following Covid-19 protocols as it noted that the second wave of the pandemic is not over yet.

On the ongoing vaccination drive, the government said India has been vaccinating on an average 50 lakh individuals daily since June 21, which is equivalent to inoculating

### Pregnant women now eligible for Covid-19 vaccination

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS) :** In a major development, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has announced that pregnant women are eligible for Covid-19 vaccination. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has accepted the recommendations of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI).

"Pregnant women may now register on CoWin or walk-in to the nearest Covid Vaccination Centre (CVC) to get themselves vaccinated," said the ministry.

Health Ministry further added, "The operational Guideline for vaccinating pregnant women, Counselling Kit for Medical Officers and FLWs, and IEC material for the public has been shared with States/UTs for its implementation."

The ministry also said that the decision empowers pregnant women to make an informed choice on taking the Covid vaccination.

Pregnant women have been at increased risk of getting infected with the virus which could also result in rapid deterioration of health and affect the fetus too. The procedure for getting the Covid-19 vaccine for women is the same as for other beneficiaries who are eligible to receive the vaccine. Pregnant women can get vaccinated at the Government or Private vaccination centre either by registering on CoWin or opt for walk-in registration at the nearest centre.

Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) Director-General Dr Balram Bhargava had earlier said that Covid-19 vaccine should be given to pregnant women as it is useful for them.

the entire population of

Norway every day.

To date, 34 crore people, the equivalent of the entire US population,

have been vaccinated with

at least one dose of Covid-19 vaccine since the drive began on January 16, the govern-

### Second wave of Covid-19 'not over yet': Cautions NITI Aayog

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS) :** NITI Aayog member Dr VK Paul on Friday cautioned that the second wave of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic is not over yet even though the number of daily cases are gradually coming down from the unprecedented levels seen in April and May. Speaking at the daily briefing of the Union health ministry over the Covid-19 situation in the country, Paul said, "We are not safe until the entire nation is safe."

He also said that the central teams have been sent to several states that are still reporting an alarming surge in cases. The Centre on Friday sent multi-disciplinary teams to six states - Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Manipur - that are reporting a high number of cases. The two-member team comprised a clinician and a public health expert.

On the threat of a possible third wave, Paul said, "it is not in our hands." "We must have all the preparation regarding infrastructure in rural areas, arrangement for children, ICU beds, medicines etc," he added.

He further said that the government is attempting to "stall any new outbreak" and if people act responsibly and follow all the Covid-19 norms, "then this wave will not come."

ment said.

Nearly 80 per cent healthcare workers and 90 per cent frontline workers in the country have been administered both doses, it added. When asked about vaccine shortage, Lav Agrawal said, "We are running a marathon, not a 100-metre race. Therefore, we need to understand that it is a projection given on the manufacturing capacity of our pharma companies. We provide and coordinate with states based on availability and logistics at the state end."

### Cumulative COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in India exceed 34.41 crore

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS) :** The cumulative COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country has exceeded 34.41 crore according to the 7 pm provisional report, the Union health ministry said on Friday.

More than 38.88 lakh (38,88,643) doses were administered on Friday, it said.

The ministry said 20,08,217 vaccine doses were administered as first dose and 97,458 vaccine doses were given as second dose, in the age group of 18-44 years, on Friday.

Cumulatively, 9,61,89,940 people in the age group of 18-44 years across states/UTs have received their first dose and a total of 23,73,507 people have received their second dose, since the start of phase-3 of the vaccination drive.

Eight states, namely Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra have administered more than 50 lakh first doses of COVID-19 vaccine in the age group of 18-44 years.

Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Jharkhand, Kerala, Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab, Uttarakhand and West Bengal have vaccinated more than 10 lakh beneficiaries of the age group of 18-44 years for the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine, the ministry added.

### 2 more terrorists killed in Pulwama encounter, toll 5

**Srinagar, July 2 (IANS) :** Two more terrorists have been killed in an ongoing encounter between militants and security forces at the Hanjin Rajpora area in South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Friday, taking the toll of terrorists killed to five, officials said.

The district commander of Lashkar-e-Taiba and a foreign terrorist are among the five terrorists eliminated.

"The district commander of LeT, Nishaz Lone alias Khitab, and one Pakistani terrorist are among the five terrorists killed in the Pulwama encounter," the police said.

IGP Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, has termed the operation as a big success.

### Assets of Ahmed Patel's son-in-law, Dino Morea, DJ Aqeel attached under PMLA

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS) :** The Enforcement Directorate on Friday said it has attached assets of late Congress leader Ahmed Patel's son-in-law, actors Dino Morea and Sanjay Khan and DJ Aqeel in a money laundering case involving Gujarat-based pharmaceutical company Sterling Biotech group.

It said a provisional order was issued under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to attach the assets of the four people which are worth Rs 8.79 crore.

Out of this, the value of attachment of assets for Khan is Rs 3 crore, for Dino Morea it is Rs 1.4 crore, for Aqeel Abdulkhaliq Bachooali, popularly known as DJ Aqeel, it is Rs 1.98 crore and for Irfan Ahmed Siddiqui, who is Patel's son-in-law, it is Rs 2.41 crore, the central probe agency said in a statement.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) said that Nitin Sandesara and Chetan Sandesara, absconding promoters of the Sterling Biotech group, have "diverted" proceeds of crime to the four people.

The promoter brothers Nitin Sandesara, Chetan Sandesara, Chetan's wife Dipti Sandesara and Hitesh Patel have been declared fugitive economic offenders by a special court, it said.

The money-laundering case pertains to the alleged Rs 14,500-crore bank-loan fraud said to have been perpetrated by Sterling Biotech and its main promoters and directors.



## Government is committed to helping our migrant labourers: CM

### More than Rs 37 lakh paid back to labourers after state government's intervention

### More than 8 Lakh labour related calls received

Mail News Service

**Ranchi, July 2:** The spread of the novel coronavirus created among other things a labour crisis.

Labourers were stuck across different parts of the country. There was no one around whom they could look up to, for any kind of help.

At this time of crisis the Chief Minister, Hemant Soren extended the hand of support for all the migrant labourers of Jharkhand. Strict directions were given to the officials to ensure help for every stranded migrant labourer. And, since then lakhs of labourers have been assisted through migrant helpline and state migration control room.

\*More than eight lakh calls have been received by Migration



Control room\*

According to the data provided by the State Migration Control room, they have received more than 8,22,239 calls till now. Out of these calls, 5,097,56 calls were received between 27 March 2020 to 31 December 2020 whereas, 3,12,483 calls were received between 01 January 2021 to 25 June 2021.

According to the record, hundreds of international migrants reached out to the state migration control room and 1176 international migrants from Nepal, the Middle East, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bahrain, Sweden, Nigeria, South Africa, Dubai, were extended help in returning home.

Hundreds of returnee migrants complained about non-payment

of dues by their contractors or factory owners. The chief minister took this matter seriously and the government intervened in this matter. In the year 2019-20 more than Rs 26,15,285 of payment were done to the returnee migrants against their unpaid dues. In the year 2021, more than Rs 11, 77, 086 have been paid back to returnee migrants after government intervention.

The migrant crisis during the spread of Covid-19 was a temporary one but the government aimed at understanding the core issue behind the migration.

The Chief Minister asked the officials to arrange to counsel returnee migrants or migrants working in any part of the country. The state control room reported that from January to June 2021, 4828 migrants, who contacted the state migration control room, were counselled.

After understanding their issues every possible help was provided to them. Till date, more than 4,73,257 migrant labourers were counselled through the state con-

trol room. This initiative helped our labourers have a sigh of relief.

"\*With the objective of helping our migrant labourers during the spread of Covid-19 and nationwide imposed lockdown, we had started a state migration control room. But, now this initiative has turned into a mission and the government aspires to transform and upgrade the working condition of our labour force while ensuring that no one ever gets the courage to violate the rights of our labour force."

The control room is functional with multiple helpline numbers starting from the calling facility to WhatsApp support. Our government will never let the guards down when it comes to helping our poor population and labour force," said Hemant Soren.

Below are the helpline numbers- 0651-2481055, 0651-2480058, 0651-2480083, 0651-2482052, 0651-2481037,0651-2481188, 18003456526, 9470132591, 9431336427, 9431336398, 9431336472, 9431336432 (W-rg)

# Hemant Govt working for welfare: Champai

Mail News Service

**Seraikela, July 2 :** Hemant Soren's government is working with a dedicated spirit for the state and the people of the state. State Transport cum Tribal Welfare Minister Champai Soren, who reached Seraikela, made the above observation while meeting the press at the local circuit house. He said that only after the formation of the government, the crisis of Corona hit the state including the country badly. In both the waves, under the leadership of Hemant Soren, better work was done regarding health services and facilities in the interest of the people. As a result of which, with better opportunities, the work of rescuing the people of the state from this epidemic has been possible. He said that with the passage of time, development works in the public interest have also been continuously active in the state.

On Unlock 4.0, he said that the Hemant government has taken care of the interests of small traders of the state even during the

## Hails formation of TAC



Corona epidemic. With this, the time for the market to remain open for employment has also been extended by the state government. But the system of e-pass has been continued under the Covid-19 guideline regarding the transport system from other states.

Describing the formation of TAC by the state government as a big initiative, he said that it would make possible the welfare of the entire state. And at the same time, the original civilization and culture of the tribal society will get protection along with development. And a better identity will be established. Through this the state government is going to take a big initiative towards the welfare of all.

On the occasion, JMM's Block President cum MLA Representative Sonaram Bodra along with Lipu Mahanti, Shambhu Acharya, Sanand Acharya and others were present. (W-pb)

# Villagers sanctify pond with religious rituals

Mail News Service



Mail News Service

**Seraikela, July 2 :** Villagers worshipped the pond in Raghunathpur village of Kandra police station area with traditional customs and religious rituals. During this, the water of the pond was sanctified with Gangajal with Vedic chanting. Let us inform you that on Thursday, the body of a

middle-aged man was found from Raghunathpur pond, which was identified as Gulia Besra (45) of the same village.

Since the body was found, the local villagers were avoiding going to the said pond and using its water. After which the pond was sanctified by offering prayers on Friday. After this people started using the water of the pond. Village

head Ramesh Mandal said that after the body was found from the pond, a meeting of the villagers was held on Thursday itself, after which it was decided to organize religious rituals. Many villagers including Sadhu Mandal, Mochiram Mandal, Gurupado Mandal, Khogen Barik, Butru Mandal, Santosh Mandal, Sonu Mandal were present on this occasion. (W-pb)

# Rotary West felicitates doctors

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2:** On the occasion of National Doctor's Day, Rotary Club of Jamshedpur West, in association with its Interact clubs of Kerala Samajam Model School, Narberam Hansraj English School, DBMS Career Academy, Motilal Nehru Public School, Xaviers School, Kasidih High School and Beldih Church School, felicitated doctors who had done exemplary service in Jamshedpur during the Covid pandemic. The chief guest of the function was Rotarian Dr R Bharat who spoke at length about the life of Dr B C Roy in whose honour National Doctor's day is celebrated on 1st of July every year.

The doctors honoured were Dr Asif Ahmed, Dr Mohammed Asad, Dr Binita Panigrahi, Dr Piyalee Gupta, Dr Minakshi Gupta and Dr Deb Sanjay Nag. A unique gift was presented to the doctors in form a tree planted in their name in the Rotary Forest Trail, CH Area. The doctors spoke of the challenges faced during the pandemic.

The doctors were felicitated by the Interactors who also presented an essay, poetry, dance and song amongst others to express their regard for the medical profession. The program, in virtual mode, was conceptualized by Rotarian Abhijit Mitra, Director New Generation, along with the Moderators of the Interact Clubs.

# Kali Sharma distributes dry rations

Mail News Service



**Jamshedpur, July 2:** BJYM state media in-charge, Krishna Sharma 'Kali' distributed dry rations among more than 100 families at Baliguma and Dimna Basti. He said on the occasion that there were many families who were facing economic hardship during the COVID wave. He said that he embarked on ration distribution programme after getting information from part workers. "I undertook to distribute dry food stock to families affected by the COVID outbreak. The ration will temporarily help them to tide over the hunger pangs. My mission will continue." (W-gs)

# Jamshedpur's daughter made nation proud: Vijay Gond



**Jamshedpur, July 2:** Jamshedpur BJP Mahanagar ST Cell leaders led by Vijay Gond visited the Birsanagar residence of Komolika Bari and presented her a bouquet and scarf as tokens of honour for winning gold at the World Archery competition. Gond observed on the occasion, "Komolika Bari, our Jamshedpur's daughter has made the nation proud with her feat winning the gold medal at the World Archery meet." Other delegates of the BJP Mahanagar ST Cell were Kaju Sandil, Ramesh Baskey, Ramesh Nag, Chandmani Kunkal, Sadanand Mahto, Anup Toppo, Santosh Sandil, Pushpa Tirkey and Saket Kumar. (W-gs)

# Champai reviews health scenario

**Seraikela, July 2:** State tribal affairs minister who also holds transport portfolio, Champai Soren met the district health officials at the Circuit House in Seraikela and took review of the problems of shortage of doctors and assured that infrastructure in health sector would be augmented at panchayat level in the district.

# Instructions to solve water logging problem



Mail News Service

**Seraikela, July 2 :** The Deputy Commissioner has taken immediate cognizance of the efforts of Seraikela Nagar Panchayat Vice President Manoj Kumar Chaudhary, who is trying for a permanent solution to the problem of water logging in the Seraikela Civil Court premises.

Regarding this, he appointed the Executive Engineer of the Building Construction Department, Building Division, Seraikela and the Municipal Corporation. I have written a letter to the Executive Officer of Panchayat Seraikela and directed for a permanent solution to the water logging in the Civil Court premises. In which he has said that a letter was written in this regard by Nagar Panchayat Vice President Manoj Kumar Chaudhary. In view of this, he has directed to jointly inspect the site and prepare the estimate after taking further action to solve the problem and make available the file before the Deputy Commissioner.

In this regard, the Vice President of the Nagar Panchayat has thanked the Deputy Commissioner for taking quick cognizance of the problem. It is said that the history of Seraikela has been very glorious. (W-pb)

# Two nabbed in murder case

**Seraikela, July 2 :** Two persons including a minor have been arrested in connection with the murder of Padolochan Gope under Tirulidih thana in Seraikela on Thursday.

Police arrested 35 year old Manoj Ahir, resident of Tamar district and a minor while Manoj was sent to judicial custody the minor was sent to remand home while the prime accused Satyanarayan Gope is still absconding.

According to SP Anand Prakash, the victim Padolochan Gope had married Bhavani Gope on May 2 and Satyanarayan had made Bhavani Gope his disciple and had started loving her.

After marriage he hatched a plan to kill himand took help of the minor and Manoj who stabbed Padolochan Gope and threw the body on Jharkhand-Bengal border on the banks of Karu river in Tirulidih.

# Widow commits suicide

**Seraikela, July 2 :** Sumitra Kui, a 40-year-old widowed woman committed suicide by jumping in front of the train near Mahalimurup railway station on Chakradharpur Sini railway section under Seraikela police station. The incident is said to have happened around 7:00 am. It is being said that Suniya Ho, the husband of 40-year-old widow Sumitra, a resident of Murup village, died about two years ago.

It was the second marriage of her husband, and was childless and was under stress. However, the reasons for the suicide could not be ascertained. After the incident, the post-mortem was conducted by the Railway Police, taking the body in its possession. After which the body was handed over to the relatives. (W-pb)

# Workshop on pension schemes



**Seraikela, July 2 :** A one-day workshop was organized on Friday under the chairmanship of Circle Officer Suresh Kumar Singha in the auditorium of the Block cum Circle Office of Seraikela and all the ward councilors of the city were informed about the pension schemes. During this, the ward councilors were given detailed information regarding the updated information and guidelines related to various types of pensions.

In the workshop, information was given regarding the eligibility of pension schemes and eligibility of the beneficiaries.

The CO said that only the beneficiaries of BPL category will get the benefit of various pension schemes like Indra Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme, Widow Pension, Disabled Pension and Swavalamban Pension Scheme. In the workshop, information about the eligibility of pension scheme, documents required to take benefits and the complete process of applying were given. (Wpb)



Late Sudhir Ranjan Dey's daughter, Rima Dey and her husband, Manish Sinha on the occasion of his death anniversary, donated a wheelchair to the RP Patel Cheshire Home in Sundernagar as a gesture towards service to mankind.

# Rotary honours Corona Warriors

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2:** The Rotary Club of Jamshedpur East honoured social organization Subhas Yuva Manch president and member of State Supervisory Board, Paras Nath Mishra, social worker M Rahat Hussain, Molly Hem of Tata Motors Hospital and Marvin Moss for their exemplary service to humanity during COVID times. Club president Jayanti Dutta chaired the Vocational Awards Ceremony which was conducted through webinar.



She said that the work done by PN Mishra and his team of Subhas Yuva Manch during the corona wave was laudable and worth

emulating. Jayanti said that the team led by Mishra had provided cooked and nutritious food as a part of the programme, Anand Bhoj, to thousands of people. PN Mishra shared his experiences and challenges that he had faced during the difficult times to continue his service to the needy and helpless. Other Rotarians present during the webinar were Prema Gogna, Dr Anup Gupta, Amitesh Pandey, VK Kohli and others. The programme concluded with the rendition of the national anthem. (W-gs)

# Medic couple honoured by legislators



Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2:** Founder president of social organization, Samporn Manavta Kalyan Sangh, Dr Sanjay Giri and his wife, Dr Dipa Pattanayak Giri were honoured by legislators Mangal Kalindi and Sanjiv

Sardar on the occasion of National Doctors' Day. The legislators observed that doctors always served society and went to medical extremes to save patients. They appreciated the work done by Dr Dipa Giri and Dr Sanjay Giri during the COVID wave.

State vice president of Poorv Sainik Seva Parishad Sushil Kumar Singh, Rajiv Ranjan, dr Kamal Shukla, Ashok Srivastav and Amit Kumar honoured the doctor couple by presenting them saplings. Sushil Kumar Singh said that Dr Sanjay Giri and his organization have been providing immense service to people. He said that the Dr Sanjay Giri and Dr Dipa Pattanayak Giri have continued to organize free medical camps in and around the city.

Samporn Manavta Kalyan Sangh present on the occasion were general secretary Abhishek Gautam, Ravishankar Tiwary, Jayashree, Jyoti, Bijendra, Rajesh, Ritesh and others. (W-gs)



Zila Parishad member, Sudhir Mahto unveiled a plaque and cracked a coconut to launch the construction of a PCC road in Chhota Gamharia Panchayat under Gamharia Block.

# Traders in jubilant mood on inclusion in MSME category

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2 :** "The traders of the Country are in a jubilation mood today because of their inclusion under the definition of MSME. We offer our deep gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari for taking such a big step for the business community of the Country.

Nevertheless, the traders of India shall remain grateful to Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal who became a staunch advocate for the trading community and played a role of catalyst in such a fabulous decision," said



Praveen Khandelwal, Secretary General and Suresh Sonthalia, National Secretary of the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) which has been raising this issue continuously since last more than a year.

This decision of the Government will benefit about more than 8 crore small businesses of the Country.

Khandelwal and Sonthalia said that with this decision, the traders will fall under the MSME category and will be able to avail requisite finances from the banks and financial institutions under Priority Sector Lending. Besides, now the traders will also be enjoying several other benefits of various other Government schemes which are being enjoyed by the MSME category.

Sonthalia National Secretary of the CAIT jointly said that today is a very big day for the

business community of the Country which is providing employment to about 40 crore people and generating an annual turnover of Rs.115 lakh crore.

Singhbbhum Chamber of Commerce & Industry General Secretary Bharat Vasani said, "The covid pandemic affected traders will now be able to restore their businesses by obtaining necessary finances from the banks which were earlier denied by the Banks. This step of the Government will prove to be a milestone step in reviving not only the economy but even the most vibrant retail trade of India." (W-mb)

# AFFIDAVIT

1. RAJEEV RANJAN, Son of Shri Abhiman Singh, Resident of Geeta Sadan, Road No. 4, Baikunth Nagar, Post office Road, Mango, Jamshedpur, District-Singbhum East 831 012, State of Jharkhand, Do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as follows -  
1. That I am an Indian national by birth.  
2. That Astha is my daughter and her Actual and correct Date of Birth is 23.09.2004 as per her Aadhaar card vide No. 3296 7493 6277.  
3. That but Discharge Book of Indian Naval Service and Release Certificate my daughter's Date of Birth has been wrongly shown as "23.09.2003 and also wrongly her Date of Birth shown in Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme card as 23.09.2003.  
4. That necessary correction should be made and read her Actual and correct Date of Birth is 23.09.2004, Hence this Affidavit.  
- Advocate

## No stay on sedition case against Ayesha Sulthana



**Kochi, July 2 (IANS)** Lakshadweep film personality Ayesha Sulthana, who has been in news ever since her controversial remark on a local TV channel, on Friday suffered a setback when the Kerala High Court refused to stay a sedition case registered against her by the Kavaratti police.

Though she has been given anticipatory bail by the court, she approached the court again with a fresh petition to quash the FIR registered against her, for which she was in the island last week and presented herself for three days before the police for their questioning.

On Friday when her

petition came up before the high court, the Centre presented that the investigation has only just started. The court then observed that the investigation is in the preliminary stages and hence it was not possible to quash the case nor could a stay be given at the present moment. Sulthana had landed in the legal soup

when a complaint was registered by Lakshadweep's BJP unit president Abdul Khader against her after she had in a TV channel debate, here on June 7, said that the "Centre used biological weapons for the spread of Covid in Lakshadweep", which according to the complainant was anti-national. She had immediately apologised for her statement while taking part in the TV debate, but the island police decided to go ahead with action based on the complaint.

The Kavaratti police registered a case against her with non bailable charges (sedition) and had asked to appear before the police on June 20.

## Sidhu mocks Punjab govt, asks to follow AAP's Delhi electricity model



**Chandigarh, July 2 (IANS)** Mocking at his own government in Punjab over power outages, Congress leader and former Cabinet minister Navjot Sidhu on Friday asked the government to follow the AAP's Delhi model of extending subsidies to generation companies.

"There is no need for power cuts in Punjab or for the Chief Minister to regulate office timings or AC use of the Common People... If we act in the right direction," said a sulking Sidhu, who met Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Rahul Gandhi separately in New Delhi on June 30 and apprised them of the political situation in Punjab

that will go to the polls early next year.

Facing severe electricity crisis, the Punjab government curtailed timings of government offices from Friday, and cut down power supply to high energy consuming industries with immediate effect to save crops and ease the domestic power

situation.

Sidhu, in a series of back-to-back tweets, said, "Punjab already gives Rs 9,000 crore power subsidy but Delhi gives only Rs 1,699 crore as power subsidy."

"If Punjab copies Delhi model, we will get merely Rs 1,600-2,000 crore as Subsidy. To better serve the people of Punjab -- Punjab needs an original Punjab model, not a copied Model!!" Indirectly hinting at a nexus between the government and power generating companies by revealing the truth of power costs, cuts, power purchase agreements and how to give free and 24-hour power to the people of Punjab, Sidhu

said: "Punjab's revenue per unit of consumption is one of the lowest in India, due to gross mismanagement of the complete power purchase and supply system... PSPCL pays Rs 0.18 per unit 'extra' on every unit supplied, even after receiving over Rs 9,000 crore in subsidy from the state." Favouring investing in renewable energy, that he said, is becoming cheaper along with being environmental-friendly, Sidhu said, "But Punjab's potential from solar and biomass energy remains unutilised even though Central financial schemes can be availed for these projects."

"PEDA spends its time

just on energy efficiency awareness".

Speaking on the lines of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Sidhu explained that about the Punjab model for power by saying that the money spent on giving unreasonable and exuberant profits to private thermal plants should be utilised for welfare of people, i.e., giving power subsidy for free power for domestic use up to 300 units, 24 hours supply and to invest in education and healthcare. According to Sidhu, Punjab is buying power at an average cost of Rs 4.54 per unit, while the national average is Rs 3.85 per unit and Chandigarh is paying Rs 3.44 per unit.

## Memorial in UP villages for Covid victims

**Lucknow, July 2 (IANS)** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has said that a memorial, in the memory of those who have lost their lives to Covid, will come up in each Gram Panchayat in the state.

The Chief Minister, according to the government spokesperson, has said that a Smriti Vatika should be set up in each Gram Panchayat where people can pay respects to those who have died due to Covid.

He has further appealed to the people to plant trees in memory of their loved one and nurture them.

The memorials proposal will be finalized by the Gram Panchayats and should be in conformity



with the local landscape.

The Chief Minister said that the tree plantation programme this year should include trees of the Ramayana era.

The state plans to plant 30 crore saplings this month.

The Ramayana mentions about 88 species of trees that were found between Ayodhya and Chitrakoot. Thirty of these species will be taken up for plantation this year.

## Crucial RSS meeting in Chitrakoot from July 9

**Lucknow, July 2 (IANS)** A four-day crucial meeting of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh will be held in Chitrakoot from July 9. Though the meeting of the Sangh is an annual event, it is being considered significant in the wake of upcoming assembly elections and need for course correction by the BJP government in the state. Senior functionaries believe that crucial decisions regarding the responsibilities of top functionaries can be taken at the meeting, regarding coordination with BJP on the election eve. "Till now Krishna Gopal ji has been coordinating between Sangh and the BJP. At the meeting we will decide if more people are required for coordination at various levels."

## Andhra CM seeks Smriti Irani's support for Disha bills

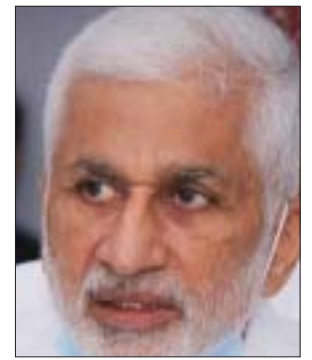
**Amaravati/New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** With two 'Disha' women protection bills waiting Presidential assent, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Friday requested Union Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani to expedite her ministry's response to the legislation. In a letter to Irani, Reddy said the Union Ministry of Home Affairs has called for comments and observations on the Andhra Pradesh Disha (Special Courts for Specified Offences against Women and Children) Bill, and the Andhra Pradesh Disha Criminal Law (AP Amendment Bill), 2019 as they are currently under Presidential consideration for assent. "I shall, there, be grateful, if you could kindly look into the matter and expedite comments of the Ministry of Women and Child Development to the Ministry of Home Affairs on the aforesaid bills," he wrote. He also offered to depute a state officer to brief the ministry regarding the provisions of the bills. The Chief Minister solicited her support for bills aimed to create a robust and conducive ecosystem for speedy justice and to usher in safety, dignity and happiness for the women and children of AP.



## Naidu desperate after losing power: YSRC MP

**Amaravati, July 2 (IANS)** Rajya Sabha member and senior YSRC leader V. Vijayasai Reddy on Friday slammed Telugu Desam Party (TDP) chief Nara Chandrababu Naidu, saying that he has become desperate after losing power.

"From the time Chandrababu lost power, he has been restless like a fish out of water," mocked Reddy. He alleged that Naidu "is wishing for lakhs of Covid deaths in the state to undermine the good name Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is earning across the country for effectively tackling Covid." "When the whole country is praising Jagan's effective control of Coronavirus with



vaccinations and foresight, Babu is bringing disrepute with fake protests," claimed Reddy. The Rajya Sabha MP also trained his guns on a section of media houses for allegedly being in favour of the TDP supreme and claimed that 'they are spending sleepless nights after Jagan Mohan Reddy won a landslide victory in

2019. Calling those media houses as "slave media to the TDP supreme", the YSRC leader alleged that "Naidu is feeling happy by disseminating favourable news from caste-aligned media houses."

"He (Naidu) got used to fighting with the shadows but people don't care what Babu is doing after the emergence of distance between him and people," he said, terming Naidu's recent protest as a 3-hour movie. The Parliamentarian also attacked Naidu's son Nara Lokesh, alleging that the latter may get a stay from the Court against the state government's recent order of banning cigarette and gutka (chewable item) sales within 200 metres distance of schools.

## Centre rushes teams to 6 states for Covid control measures

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** In its fight against the Covid pandemic and strengthen the efforts of the states and union territories, the Central government has rushed multi-disciplinary teams to six states for Covid-19 control and containment measures in view of the increased number of cases being reported by them.

In a statement, the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry said, "The Centre has today deputed multi-disciplinary teams to Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Manipur



in view of the increased number of COVID-19 cases being reported by these states."

It said that these teams will interact with authorities of the states or union territories and get a first-hand understanding

of the challenges and issues being faced by them so as to strengthen their ongoing activities and remove bottlenecks, if any.

The Ministry said that the team to Manipur will be led by Dr L. Swasticharan, Additional DDG and Director EMR; the team to Arunachal Pradesh will be led by Dr Sanjay Sadhukhan, Prof. AIH&PH, for Tripura Dr R.N. Sinha Director Prof., AIH&PH, for Kerala Dr Ruchi Jain, Public Health Specialist Gr. II, RoHFW, for Odisha Dr A. Dan, Public Health Specialist AIH&PH and for

Chhattisgarh Dr Dibakar Sahu, Assistant Professor, AIIMS Raipur.

It said that these teams will be supporting them in their efforts for targeted Covid response and management, and effectively tackling the pandemic.

It further said that the two-member high level team to these states consists of a clinician and a public health expert.

"The teams will visit the states immediately and monitor the overall implementation of Covid-19 management, especially in testing, including surveillance and

containment operations, Covid Appropriate Behaviour and its enforcement, availability of hospital beds, sufficient logistics including ambulances, ventilators, medical oxygen etc and Covid-19 Vaccination progress," it said.

The teams will monitor the situation and also suggest remedial actions.

The Central teams will assess the situation and suggest remedial actions on public health activities to the respective state governments. Copy of the report will also be provided to the Union Health Ministry, it added.

## Goa curfew extended till July 12, stadiums to open: CM

**Panaji, July 2 (IANS)** Outdoors sports complexes, stadiums and saloons will open in Goa, even as Chief Minister Pramod Sawant announced an extension of the ongoing state level curfew till July 12. "State level curfew will be extended till 7am, July 12, 2021. Shops can remain open from 7 am to 6 pm. Saloon and outdoor sports complex/stadiums may also open," Sawant tweeted. The curfew had been first imposed on May 9, in wake of a surge of Covid-19 infections and deaths in the state, and extended periodically on six occasions.

## UP to reopen multiplexes, gyms, stadiums from July 5

**Lucknow, July 2 (IANS)** With the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic under control in Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath government on Friday said from July 5, cinema halls, multiplexes, gyms and sports stadiums will be allowed to operate in the state in strict compliance with Covid-19 protocols.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that these places will have to follow all Covid safety protocols when they reopen.

According to an official statement, he said the business of cinema halls had been adversely



impacted during the pandemic and their problems would be sympathetically considered.

Cinema hall owners have been seeking waiver of electricity bills and other taxes during the period of their closure.

However, the weekend closure will continue in the state.

## Signal from ISRO-Coast Guard transmitter saved 7 fishermen

**Chennai, July 2 (IANS)** A timely signal from a distress alert transmitter (DAT) jointly developed by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Indian Coast Guard enabled the latter to save seven fishermen stranded in mid sea. According to the Coast Guard, in a swift sea-air coordinated Search and Rescue Operation, it located and rescued the distressed fishing boat with seven crew onboard off Tillanchong Island,



approximately 350 km south of Port Blair on Thursday.

The Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC) Port Blair

received an unregistered DAT alert at around 11.30 a.m. on June 30.

Since the alert was activated from an unregistered DAT, details of the boat and its owner were not available with the Coast Guard. Soon it was gathered that the DAT was issued to fishing boat RSN-TWO and the boat with seven crew had left Port Blair on June 28 for fishing.

A co-ordinated search and rescue (SAR) operation was immediately launched

and Coast Guard Ship C-422, Vishwast and Dornier aircraft were tasked for search in the area and the distressed boat was located off Tillanchong Island.

The fishing boat was towed by Coast Guard ship to Kamorta.

"The instant case has once again highlighted the importance of carriage of DATs by fishing boats and proved its efficacy in saving lives at sea in times of distress," Coast Guard said.

## Former Haryana CM OP Chautala released from Tihar jail

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** Former Haryana Chief Minister O.P. Chautala, who was serving a 10-year prison term in a teacher recruitment scam case, was released from the Tihar Jail here on Friday after completing due formalities, prison officials said.

According to the jail officials, Chautala, who was already out on parole, reached the Tihar jail premises on Friday

morning to complete formalities after which he was released from jail.

Sandeep Goel, Director General (Delhi Prisons), said that Chautala was released after completing necessary formalities.

The Delhi government last month had passed an order granting a six-month special remission to those who have served nine-and-half years of their 10-year prison sentence to decongest jails in view of the Covid-



19 pandemic. Following Chautala's release, thousands of his

supporters spilled over the Delhi-Gurugram border on the Delhi-Jaipur expressway to celebrate.

The supporters were seen carrying photos of Chautala and party flags and sang and danced. To express support for the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) supreme, several party workers travelled from across the Haryana state. Party workers also came from Mewat to join Chautala's release celebration.

## Dominica PM calls claims of hatching plot to bring Choksi 'total nonsense'

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** Dominica Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerit has said that his government's hands are clean with regard to the 'mysterious' arrival of fugitive Indian businessman Mehul Choksi, who is wanted in the Rs 13,500 crore Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud case, to the Caribbean island nation, local media reported.

According to Dominica News Online, Skerit has labelled the claims of hatching a plot with the governments of Antigua and India as "total nonsense".

"To say that the government of Dominica

and the government of Antigua along with India colluded in any way, give me a break, that's total nonsense. We don't get ourselves involved in those kinds of activities, those practices, not at all. I mean, that is absurd and we reject it and it is unfortunate that anybody would want to propagate this unsubstantiated claim by a gentleman who is before the courts," he contended.

Skerit further vowed that his government will evenly apply the law irrespective of who is accused of committing crime.

He said that such was the case with the Iranian born,

Dominican citizenship holder and diplomat, Alireza Zibahalat Monfared, who was wanted by the Iranian government for allegedly embezzling billions of dollars while the country evaded international oil sanctions.

Monfared was arrested in the Dominican Republic in 2017 following a lengthy international manhunt.

"You saw all this talk about Monfared. Had he stayed in Dominica at the time that the Iranian government had asked for him, we would have apprehended him," Skerit stated, adding "There was a discussion and a decision to apprehend him so that the Iranian authorities could



present to us the charges. Mr Monfared was a Dominican citizen but we hold a brief to the international law, our responsibilities and our obligations."

Earlier, opposition leader from the United Workers Party (UWP), Lennox

Linton, had alleged that the Dominican government was involved in a cover-up on behalf of the Iranian national and ex-Dominican diplomat, who was arrested on allegations of being involved in his country's biggest-ever corruption scandal.

According to Dominica News Online, Skerit has labelled the claims of hatching a plot with the governments of Antigua and India as "total nonsense".

"To say that the government of Dominica and the government of Antigua along with India colluded in any way, give me a break, that's total nonsense. We don't get ourselves involved in those kinds of activities, those practices, not at all. I mean, that is absurd and we reject it and it is unfortunate that anybody would want to propagate this unsubstantiated claim by a gentleman who is before the courts," he contended.

## UP: 16-year-old shot dead at wedding function

**Agra, July 2 (IANS)** A 16-year-old boy died after being shot at a wedding function in the Khandauli area in Agra.

The incident took place on Thursday and the shot was fired from a relative's gun. The victim's family claimed that the killing was intentional. The victim, identified as Dharmendra Singh, the groom's cousin, was a student of Class 10 and hailed from Rajasthan. The incident took place at Sri Vrindavan Garden, said the police. The police have booked two persons for the murder. According to reports, the gun is owned by Gyanendra Singh, a retired Army man from Hathras, who had reportedly given it to the accused, Vivek, 19, after he insisted on seeing it closely. After taking the loaded gun, Vivek pulled the trigger and a bullet hit Dharmendra in the chest. The CCTV footage shows that the victim was standing with four other people, when the bullet hit him from a point-blank range. Dharmendra was rushed to hospital but he succumbed to injuries on the way. According to police, three bullets were fired and the third hit the boy. The victim's elder brother, Anil Kumar, said that Dharmendra came to Agra on June 28 to attend the wedding. "He came alone here and on Thursday, we were informed about his death. Someone had killed him deliberately," he said.

## Sri Lanka morphing into 'Xi-Lanka'?

By N. C. Bipindra

As the Communist Party of China (CPC) celebrates 100 years of its founding today, much has been said and written about Communist China's infrastructure and development activities in Sri Lanka. While commentaries have waxed eloquent on how Sri Lanka's landscape is being transformed, precious little has been done to critically examine whether the average Sri Lankan on the street has actually benefited.

CPC-funded projects in Sri Lanka are executed by Chinese entities and undertaken using equipment, machinery, and material from China. A significant proportion of labour and most of the top management is also from China. In effect, while Sri Lanka pays for the project, plough-back is into Chinese coffers. Chinese infrastructure projects have also been associated with a steep rise in Chinese imports into Sri Lanka and reduction of exports to China. This has resulted in a growing trade deficit with China, putting tremendous pressure on the Sri Lankan Rupee. The only way to offset this trade deficit is by substantial export-oriented Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flowing into Sri Lanka from China, which is unfortunately not in the Chinese scheme of things. Chinese projects have also not provided any significant benefit to the average Sri Lankan. More often than not, these are vanity projects, which have been used by powers-that-be for enrichment of self, kith, and kin.

The Lotus Tower, cricket stadium and port at Hambantota and Mattala airport have had no impact on the citizens, who are left struggling with rising prices and dropping income.

The \$104 million Lotus Tower was inaugurated in September 2019 with much fanfare. Yet, as with other Chinese projects, it was mired in controversy, with then President Maithripala Sirisena claiming that Chinese contractors were absconding with US\$11 million.

The \$20 -million airport built at Mattala is now infamous as the 'World's Empty Airport'. Sri Lanka's Strategic Enterprise Management Agency had opposed construction of this airport and recommended that Colombo airport be expanded instead.

The Mattala airport, located in then President Mahinda Rajapaksa's home constituency, was built anyway, while Colombo airport continues to burst at its seams. Was it a coincidence that Mattala airport was financed by a loan from EXIM Bank of China while expansion of the Colombo airport was to be financed by Japan?

Similar issues have dogged Hambantota Port, which was built at a cost of \$1.4 billion. Sri Lanka was forced to lease out the port for the long-term to the Chinese since the revenue generated by the port was not even enough for repayment of the interest component of the project's Chinese loans. In 2017, the port earned only \$2 million, whereas the annual loan repayment was in excess of US\$70 million. Even at an annual growth rate of 20 per cent, the port would not have been able to cover its interest payments for the next 30 years. Clearly, this port was never intended to be viable in Sri Lankan hands!

Notwithstanding pronouncements to the contrary, the Sri Lanka Ports Authority has an extremely limited role in running and controlling operations at Hambantota. The Sri Lankan Navy also has to plead with the Chinese to berth their own ships at the port.

The Chinese authorities are now pushing for acquisition of 15,000 acres of land around the port to set up an export zone, claiming that the port does not make economic sense without this zone. Pushed by Communist China, government officials are forcing families to part with fertile agricultural land. This is a standard Chinese tactic seen all over the world and particularly evident in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. However, violent protests by locals have stalled creation of this zone, for now. The much-publicised US\$1.5-billion Colombo Port City being built by CHEC (China Harbour Engineering Company) has also seen its share of controversies. One of the members of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the project was also a consultant for the parent company of CHEC.

When the project was initiated, it was decided that dredging would be done at least five km away from the coast to prevent erosion and damage to local fishing activity. Due to sustained protests by local fishermen who stood to lose their livelihood, dredging was shifted to 10 km away from the coast. This was subsequently quietly re-established to 8 km, under pressure from CHEC. Dredgers were, thereafter, observed to be operating as close as 3 km from the coast, due to connivance of local authorities and CHEC.

CHEC has also subverted the political and bureaucratic apparatus to ensure that the project is executed in accordance with Chinese requirements. It is being claimed that 83,000 jobs would be created for locals and investment of up to \$15 billion would flow into the country. These claims by the Chinese seem unrealistic and it is likely that the project would only bring gains to a select few. Contrary to assertions being made of the overall benefit of the Colombo Port City project, the livelihood of fishermen along the coast to the North and South of Colombo has already been affected by the project.

Large-scale sand mining and quarrying for granite being undertaken for the project will also impact Colombo, Gampaha and Kalutara, the three most populous districts in the country and home to a quarter of the country's population. The malignancy of Chinese infrastructure projects is not restricted to economic and environmental domains but is beginning to have a societal impact as well since Chinese projects have not resulted in any job opportunities. The Port City Project is estimated to have 22 per cent Chinese workers. An average Chinese construction worker is paid 1,000 LKR a day compared to 1,500 LKR that has to be paid to a Sri Lankan. In addition, the Chinese worker is also expected to work longer. This has obviously made Chinese labour more desirable. Whilst official estimates state that there are 15,000 Chinese workers in Sri Lanka, the unofficial figure is closer to 100,000. There is also no transfer of skill and knowledge to the local labour force. In a telling indication of the Chinese stranglehold on the local labour market, most major projects came to a standstill when Chinese workers, who had gone home for the Chinese New Year, could not return due to Covid-19 crisis. Sri Lankan fishermen also face the brunt of poaching by Chinese IUU fishing vessels. IUU stands for Illegal Unreported and Unregulated. Recently, Chinese fishing vessels were found to be operating just outside the territorial waters of Colombo, but government authorities, unable to confront the Chinese, let these vessels off on a technicality. The tourism sector has also not been spared. A controversy erupted when it emerged that Chinese nationals were moonlighting as unauthorised guides for visiting Chinese tourists. It is also commonplace to see Chinese symbols and signage on business establishments. The mushrooming of Chinese shops throughout Sri Lanka had reached such alarming proportions that former president Sirisena had raised this issue in one of his Cabinet Meetings. There is indeed a strong case to examine whether Sri Lanka has actually benefited from Chinese projects. While some projects have proven to be beneficial, such as the China International Container Terminal and expressways, a vast majority have only benefited the Chinese at the expense of the common Sri Lankan citizen. Word on the street is - Sri Lanka will soon be called Xi-Lanka.

(N.C. Bipindra is Chairman, Law and Society Alliance, and Editor, Defence.Capital magazine. He can be reached at ncbipindra@gmail.com)

## A refreshingly candid perspective on the Tata empire

By Vishnu Makhijani

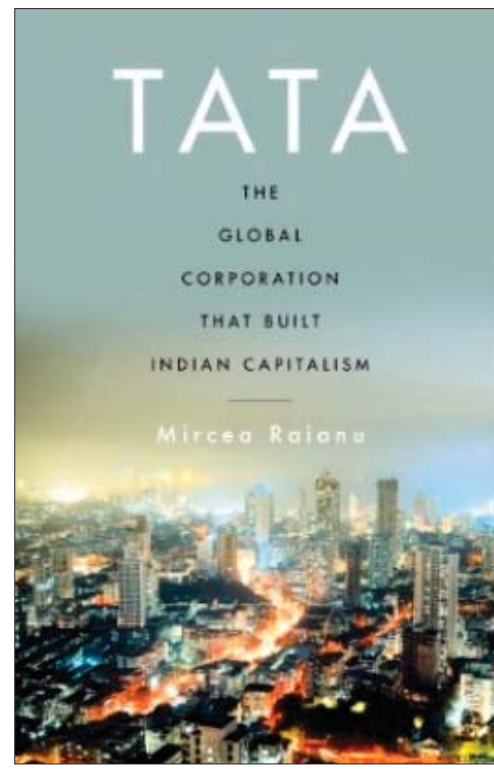


It has its origins in the Harvard University PhD thesis of Mircea Raianu, a historian of global capitalism and modern South Asia and currently Assistant Professor of History at the University of Maryland, who was "struck by the extraordinary continuity and resilience" of the Tata conglomerate "from its origins in the mid-19th century to its current position of importance to the Indian economy in the early 21st century". He wondered why the region's academic literature did not feature more research on business groups over time and the outcome is "Tata - The Global Corporation That Built Indian Capitalism" (Harvard University Press) which tracks the fortunes of a family-run business that was born during the High Noon of the British Empire and went on to capture the world's attention with the headline-making acquisition of luxury car manufacturer Jaguar Land Rover.

"It is true that there are many other books on Tata, but none written by professional historians in conversation with the latest scholarship (not just on business but also in other fields such as economic, legal, intellectual, social, and political history). There are of course a few exceptions, mainly on specialised topics or specific companies (Chikayoshi Nomura's excellent work on steelmaking at TISCO comes to mind)," Raianu told IANS in an interview.

"I spent around two years in total researching in libraries and archives in India, the UK, and US. This is the first book-length study of Tata to use the company archives in Pune and Jamshedpur alongside state archives in Delhi, Mumbai, London, and elsewhere. I also conducted a few interviews with people within and outside the group, but most of the book is based on written and visual records (letters, reports, memos, plans, photographs, advertisements etc.)," he added.

To this extent, his fresh insights lie "in the selection and organization of material around an overall argument about Tata's relationship with the colonial and postcolonial state -- how, when, and why a private company in an emerging market context acted in opposition to the state or like a state itself," Raianu explained. Thus, the six chapters are based on themes such as global financial connections, between paternalism and technology, control over land and labour, and the evolution of philanthropic networks that detail a complex process shaped by world historical forces: the eclipse of Imperial free trade, the intertwined rise of nationalism and the developmental state, and finally the return of globalisation and market liberalisation. The book details how "Tata's exceptional characteristics evolved gradually and contingently" in that it was not till the early 1930s that the group "ceased to rely on a far-flung network of trading



companies run by family members" for technical and financial assistance. "Around the same time, practices of scientific management imported from the West were introduced in the textile mills in Bombay and the steel town in Jamshedpur but never without compromises or countermeasures. Family and community ties remained important, often generating controversy when the financial reputation of the group was on the line, or when its philanthropy came under question in the Parsi community to which they belonged." The Tatas' ideas of ethical or socially responsible capitalism, common to many businesses in emerging markets, were not organic outgrowths of traditional religious values and norms, nor natural responses to mass poverty and a weak state. They were produced through unpredictable and intermittent flows of knowledge and expertise, as well as a conscious process of adaptation and experimentation," Raianu writes in the book. Although not unique in occupying a liminal position between empire and nation, Tata also kept its distance from the state in both its colonial and post-colonial avatars, the author states.

"The group carved out a unique niche for itself by separating the economic and political dimensions of 'swadeshi', giving only tepid support to the Indian National Congress while proudly assuming the mantle of industrialisation in the service of the nation-in-the-making. It enjoyed the 'best of both worlds' until World War II and independence, when this niche began to disappear." Rivals like G.D. Birla, who had openly supported and financed the Congress during the years of the independence struggle, moved closer to the corridors of power in New Delhi and as the restrictive "Licence-Permit Raj" took shape, the Tatas found

themselves excluded from planning decisions, their further expansion restricted. "Yet the group survived the transition to independence, held off the threat of nationalisation and maintained its position at the top of the corporate pyramid into the late 1970s, when the state laid down its regulatory weapons and embraced the private sector in a concerted push for growth," Raianu points out. Tata, he writes, was "able to preserve and sustain a significant degree of autonomy over time due to three principal factors: transnational financial connections, first with East Asia and then with the United States, control over land, labour and natural resources within India; and networks of scientific and technical expertise cultivated through strategic philanthropy. All these factors, in different ways, conferred upon the group certain attributes of sovereignty in the interstices of state power".

There are many who might fault Raianu for not taking the narrative beyond the lifting of the Emergency; that the 10-page Epilogue of the 291-page book (inclusive of an Appendix, Notes, Acknowledgements and Index that stretch over 90 pages), is no substitute because some of the group's best years have come in the 1980s and beyond; that it glosses over the role of Ratan Tata from the 1990s onwards and the fact that the Tata group is one of the two players in the running for the privatisation of Air India, the airline that J.R.D. Tata founded and nurtured till it was nationalised in 1953. It might also seem to some that the author is biased against Ratan Tata because of the spat with Cyrus Mistry, which, in the overall context of the group is seen only as a minor hiccup. (What do you expect when someone tries to overturn the very focus of the group and all that it has stood for all these years?)

"My book is not intended as a comprehensive account or chronicle of the group. It can serve as a platform for further research by others who will make different choices about what to include and exclude," Raianu said in the interview, acknowledging this "may be unsatisfying to some readers" but citing three reasons. "First, archival sources (both from the Tata and state archives) are quite limited for the period after 1980. Second, this moment provided a natural endpoint for the three trends that interest me (use of global financial connections to circumvent the state, land and labor control, and the transition from philanthropy to CSR). Third, the recent history of the group has been amply covered by other studies and the contribution I could have made was limited." He also disagreed that he was biased against Ratan Tata in general, or specifically in regard to the conflict with Cyrus Mistry. "As a historian I wanted to discuss how the issues brought up by this episode (in particular, the tension between investments on a global vs. national scale and the role of the Tata Trusts in the overall structure of the group) are similar to what happened in Tata's past. I do not take a position on who was right and wrong. Nor can I predict the future and know whether it will be only a 'minor hiccup' or if it will have more lasting significance," Raianu concluded.

(Vishnu Makhijani can be reached at vishnu.makhijani@ians.in)

## In rural MP, people shed hesitancy towards vaccination

By Sandeep Pouranik

With the focus on spreading awareness to make people shed misconceptions about the vaccination drive, especially in the rural areas of Madhya Pradesh, the people have started realising that vaccination is the only potent weapon to stop the spread of the Covid-19 infection. The evidence of this shift in attitude among the rural population towards vaccination in the state has emerged with the 100 per cent vaccination already carried out across several Gram Panchayats in the state.

Vaccination drive is taking place in full swing in Madhya Pradesh with more than two crore people having been vaccinated till now. At the starting of the vaccination drive in rural areas, several hurdles were faced by the administration and the people conducting the vaccination drive. In many places, incidents of misbehaving with the vaccination teams also came to light.

It was a challenge before the government to eliminate the confusion among the people residing in villages as they felt that vaccination could lead to death or cause impotency. To deal with these situations, different strategies were prepared and implemented at the district level.

In Betul district, the priests of the tribal population came forward to tell the people that vaccination is the only way to prevent coronavirus infection and the misconceptions spread about it were false. This effort had a ripple



effect and the tribals received the vaccine jabs. As the pace of the vaccination campaign increased, the efforts made to spread awareness among the people living in the rural areas started showing positive outcome. In Jabalpur district, the vaccination data that has emerged from the rural areas has given a boost to the administration and the state government. Hundred per cent vaccination has been undertaken across the 33 Gram Panchayats in Jabalpur. In rural areas of this district, a greater number of vaccinations have been done than the target set by the state government.

Calling positive thinking behind the awareness spread among the people in the villages, Jabalpur District Magistrate Karmaveer Sharma said this was possible only due to the joint efforts of the Health, Revenue and Rural Development Department, including Anganwadi workers,

public representatives and members of Village Disaster Management Committee, as well as villagers coming forward for vaccination. Similarly, Jamui Gram Panchayat of Shahdol district has also been 100 per cent vaccinated. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said vaccination is a potent way to prevent Covid-19 infection. Every Gram Panchayat in the state needs to undergo vaccination as a protective shield just like the Jamui villagers of Shahdol district. CM Chouhan said, "Coronavirus has not been eliminated yet but we all have to learn to live in this pandemic. According to experts, there is a possibility of a third wave of Covid-19 hitting the state. The state government is fully prepared for handling the third wave effectively and all necessary arrangements are being made in advance for this purpose. At the same time, there are incidents of chaos, overcrowding by people and non-availability of vaccines at vaccination centres reported from many areas. Expressing concerns about the overcrowding by people in the state for vaccination, former Chief Minister Kamal Nath said, "There have been reports of huge crowd gatherings and stampede-like situations in many areas during the vaccination drive undertaken in the state. The state government should increase the number of vaccination centres and the days of conducting vaccination. To gather people at a particular place amid fear of a third wave of Covid-19 is putting their lives at a risk."

### Letter to the editor

## Community radio stations should be encouraged

It is laudable that Nashik's community radio station, Radio Vishwas, won two honours at the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's 8th National Community Radio Awards. In the COVID-19 era, Radio Vishwas 90.8 earned first place in the Sustainability Model Awards category and second place in the Thematic Awards category for their radio programme 'Education for All.' For 14 hours each day, the channel broadcasts educational programs in Hindi, English, Marathi, and Sanskrit. Because of the Coronavirus outbreak, poor pupils are unable to buy smart phones for digital education. The Shikshan Sarvansathi project was started with the support of 150 teachers who taped lectures in the studio. The lectures were then broadcast in the order that they were assigned to each subject. The initiative was well-received by the intended audience, with an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 children from municipal and zila panchayat schools benefiting. Community radio stations played an important role in communication during the COVID 19 pandemic. For social change, development, and upliftment of impoverished parts of society, these radio stations should be encouraged

- Amit Singh Kushwaha, Satna (M.P.)

## 31 years on justice still eludes Kashmiri reformist Sarwanand Premi's family

By Sheikh Qayoom

Family of renowned Kashmiri teacher, author and poet, Sarwanand Premi, who was murdered by militants in 1990 along with his son has been running from pillar to post for the past 31 years for justice.

His second son, Rajinder Premi is bitter about unkept promises, non-implementation of recommendations of state human rights commission (SHRC) and even the decisions taken by the state government. Sarwanand Premi was a Gandhian, freedom fighter, social reformer, philanthropist and secular to the core.

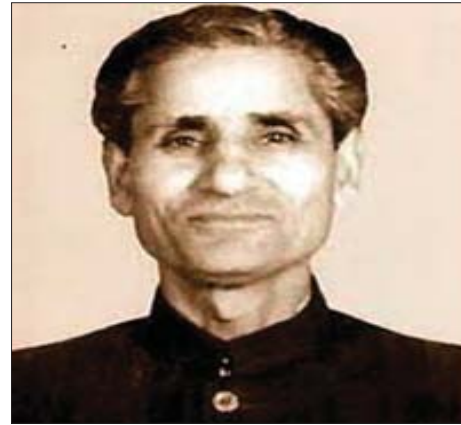
He was a resident of south Kashmir Soaf-Shali village in Anantnag district.

"Militants kidnapped my father, Sarwanand Premi and my brother, Verinder Premi from our village in 1990.

"After two days, their bodies were found," Rajinder Premi told IANS.

"My mother lived upto 2017 and she bore the pain and trauma of losing everything to violence for 27 long years," Rajinder said.

Sarwanand had authored 40 books. He translated the 'Bhagwat Gita' into Urdu and



Kashmiri, 'Ramayana' into Kashmiri. He also translated Tagore's 'Gitanjali' into Kashmiri. "He had command over Sanskrit and a fair knowledge of the Quran.

"Our family had a rare, hand written manuscript of the holy Quran and even this was looted along with everything the family owned." The family approached the SHRC for justice and the SHRC passed recommendations in 2012.

"The state government decided construction of a community/cultural centre in Sarwanand's native village,



commemoration of his literary and cultural work and compensation to the family for the destroyed and looted property.

"They state government also promised effective investigation of the twin murders, loot and plunder and the destruction of the author's literary works.

"None of these recommendations were implemented. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) took cognisance of the case and summoned the state chief secretary who in his statement told the commission that if the family is aggrieved,

they must approach the high court," Rajinder Premi said.

The author's son is disgruntled to such an extent that he accuses the J&K government of dodging the family's plea for justice.

"We have been moving from pillar to post and our prayer for justice is tossed from one corner to the other like a tennis ball. What should we do?" Rajinder said with dejection.

The family has now approached Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and the divisional commissioner Kashmir so that the family gets justice.

"We have a very limited plea like implementations of the SHRC recommendations, implementation of the decisions taken in the high-level meetings of the state government and issuance of record notice/minutes of the meetings on the subject held on 14-01-2017 and 12-10-2017," Rajinder Premi said.

Rajinder said the union ministry for culture has already taken up the issue of construction of a cultural/community centre and recognition of his father's literary works with the J&K government.

"This is also gathering dust some where in the J&K government," Rajinder rued.

### 3 kids killed as truck ploughs into house in Bihar district

Patna, July 2 (IANS) Four persons, including three children, were killed and six others injured after a truck ploughed into a house situated on the roadside in Bihar's Muzaffarpur district.



The incident happened on Thursday night in the Sahdani village located on National Highway 722 in the district.

The injured were admitted to the Sri Krishna Medical College and Hospital (SKMCH) and two of them are said to be in critical condition.

S.K. Sharma, the investigating officer of the case, told IANS: "The accident happened around 9.45 p.m. on Thursday. The deceased have been identified as Manisha Kumari (5), Golu Kumar (5) and Anita Kumari (4). The fourth victim has not been identified yet."

Preliminary investigation reveals that the truck was moving at high speed and the driver was unable to control the vehicle. The driver of the vehicle was also injured in this accident and was thrashed by the locals before being handed him over to the police.

# Amid protest by BJP, Dhankhar fails to complete speech in Assembly

Kolkata, July 2 (IANS) Amid protests by BJP MLAs, West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday had to cut short his much-spectacled maiden address in the Assembly after the opening day of Budget Session, completing it in just four minutes.

The BJP MLAs protested because there was no mention of post-poll violence in Bengal in the Governor's speech.

Dhankhar came to the Assembly at 1.55 pm and entered the hall after offering floral tribute at the statue of B.R. Ambedkar. But as he started to read the speech prepared by the state government, the BJP MLAs started protesting, initially

from their own seats before rushing to the well of the House with posters and placards in their hands.

Dhankhar, who was occasionally interrupted, was eventually forced to stop his speech after just five minutes of starting it.

Dhankhar then left the hall flanked by Speaker Biman Banerjee and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

The Governor, who recently had a controversial debate with Banerjee over the speech prepared for him for the opening day of the Assembly session, was seen speaking to the Chief Minister for 3-4 minutes.

BJP MLA and Leader of Opposition in the House, Suwendu Adhikari, said that the MLAs from the saffron camp protested during the



Governor's speech because it was written by the state government without any mention of the post-poll violence in Bengal.

Interestingly, on the 13th page of the 14-page speech, there is a mention of some people who are termed as 'opportunists', and it has been said that 'some people of this kind' are trying to

create disturbance.

"They are spreading fake news and fake videos and are trying to divide the society. The government will not accept this and strong action will be initiated against them," it is said.

"We have won 77 seats. We protested during the speech of the Governor

because it has been written by the state government. It doesn't mention anything about the post-poll violence. We have shown pictures of 41 people who have been killed in the violence while many women have been raped, but there is no mention of that in the speech. We respect the Governor. He also protested against the post-poll violence and we respect his stand. But the speech that he delivered was prepared by the Cabinet of Mamata Banerjee. The Governor had no say in it," Adhikari said.

The speech had triggered controversy from the beginning. On Monday, Dhankhar had alleged that he wanted deliberations on

certain portions of the speech with Banerjee, because the said portions won't be acceptable by the people.

However, Banerjee had rejected the proposal, saying that the speech cannot be changed because it has been approved by the Cabinet.

Sources close to the Governor indicated that Dhankhar also wanted the incidents of post-poll violence to be included in the speech, but the state government was strongly against it.

This triggered speculation whether Dhankhar would read the speech prepared by the state or deviate from the convention and read his own speech.

# HC directs Bengal govt to provide relief to post-poll violence victims

Kolkata, July 2 (IANS) The Calcutta High Court on Friday issued a show cause notice for contempt of court proceedings against Deputy Commissioner of Police of South Kolkata Rashid Munir Khan for failing to prevent obstruction to the team of National Human Rights Commission which was visiting Jadavpur to examine allegations of post-poll violence. It also directed the state government to provide relief to the victims.

The court was referring to the incident when the fact-finding team of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) constituted by the Calcutta High Court to probe into

the allegations of post-poll violence was allegedly attacked by some people in the Jadavpur area. The committee submitted its interim report to the court on June 30.

Taking a strong stance against the state on post-poll violence, the five-member bench of the Calcutta High Court directed the state government to treat all complaints regarding the post-poll violence as FIR and arrange for ration and medical treatment to all those persons who were injured.

In addition to this, the Court also ordered a second post mortem to be conducted with respect to



BJP worker Avijit Sarkar, who was allegedly killed by a mob in the wake of the post-poll violence in the State. The post mortem will have to be done at Alipore Command hospital, the court directed.

Advocate General

Kishore Datta informed the Bench that the Supreme Court has taken cognizance of Abhijit Sarkar's alleged killing. However, the Bench clarified that it is not passing any directions in the case and has merely ordered a second autopsy.

A 5-judge Bench of ACJ Rajesh Bindal and Justices I.P. Mukerji, Harish Tandon, Soumen Sen and Subrata Talukdar, has directed the local police authorities to register cases based on the recommendations made by a Committee of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). The Bench has also issued notice to the District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police of certain areas, to show cause why contempt should not be initiated against them for failing to prevent the violence.

The report was filed in a sealed envelope and the court has refused to disclose

the contents thereof, or to share a copy of the same with the State counsel. It clarified that the State will be granted an opportunity to make its submissions, after filing of the final report of the Committee on July 13.

Earlier, the High Court had constituted a committee composed of members nominated by NHRC, SHRC and SLSA to coordinate rehabilitation of the displaced persons of Entally constituency. It had also directed the State Legal Services Authority to look into complaints of displaced persons who are being prevented from returning to their homes and take necessary steps for their rehabilitation.

### Odisha to bring back iconic Dakota aircraft from Kolkata

Bhubaneswar, July 2 (IANS) The Odisha government has initiated the process to bring back an iconic Dakota aircraft from Kolkata to Bhubaneswar.

The Dakota (VT-AUI) aircraft belonged to the erstwhile Kalinga Airlines that was founded by former Odisha Chief Minister late Biju Patnaik.

The aircraft was used in the historic rescue operation of a former Indonesia Vice President and Prime Minister in 1947. Now, the aircraft is lying neglected in an abandoned corner of the Netaji Subhas Bose International Airport in Kolkata.

"We have initiated the necessary steps to bring back the iconic aircraft from Kolkata. The works department has been asked to finalise the tender to be floated to bring back the aircraft," Odisha Transport and Commerce Minister, Padmanabha Behera, said on Friday.

The aircraft will be placed near the statue of Biju Patnaik at the Bhubaneswar airport. For this, the Airport Authority of India (AAI) has been requested for approval, Behera said.

According to officials, the transport and commerce department has submitted a request for proposal (RFP) to the works department for its nod. The RFP will be issued soon to engage an agency for the smooth transportation of the aircraft.

Biju Patnaik had used the Dakota aircraft to rescue former Indonesia Vice-President and then Prime Minister Sutan Sjahrir from the Dutch military back in 1947.

The erstwhile Kalinga Airlines had 18 Dakota aircraft. The aircraft were used in the Kashmir operation in 1947-48 for ferrying troops, medical assistants and other supplies to Srinagar.

Of these, 12 have been completely damaged, one is kept at the Kolkata airport, one at the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai, while the Indonesian government has kept one. However, there is no information about the remaining three aircraft.

### Assam's jailed MLA Akhil Gogoi acquitted of all charges

Guwahati, July 2 (IANS) After one-and-a-half years, jailed MLA and a local party president Akhil Gogoi is likely to be freed as the Guwahati-based special NIA court, on Thursday, acquitted him in the second of the two cases filed against him in connection with the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act stir in Assam in December 2019.

Gogoi's lawyers told the media that he is expected to be freed from the Guwahati Central jail soon.

Gogoi and his three associates were accused in two cases under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The Independent lawmaker and his associates were last week cleared of all charges in the first case.

The 46-year-old jailed farmers' leader and Rajgor Dal President Akhil Gogoi, was elected from eastern Assam's Sibsagar seat in the March-April assembly polls and currently lodged in Guwahati central jail.

He is currently under treatment at Gauhati Medical College and Hospital.

The right activist has been in jail since December 2019, for allegedly fomenting violence during the anti-CAA agitations.

The National Investigation Agency had taken up the cases against him and his associates on the basis of two FIRs registered at the Chandmari police station in Guwahati and Chabua police stations in eastern Assam's Dibrugarh district.

"The NIA special court released him today (Thursday) in the Chandmari case. Last week the court discharged him in the Chabua case," Gogoi's lawyer Rahul Sensowa told the media.

Sensowa, who is one of the members of Gogoi's lawyers' team, said three others arrested along with Gogoi - Dharjya Kowar, Manas Konwar and Bitu Sonowal - were also discharged on Thursday. All the three activists are, however, already out on bail.

Gogoi and his associates are charged with criminal conspiracy, sedition, promoting enmity between groups on grounds such as religion, race and language,

assertions against national integrity and support to a terrorist organization including Maoist link.

Welcoming the NIA court's ruling, Rajgor Dal's working president Bhasco de Saikia said the court's verdict has exposed the BJP government's attempts to target the party president without any basis.

The NIA court had last week granted two days' parole to Gogoi to meet members of his family in Guwahati and eastern Assam's Jorhat. His 84-year-old mother Priyoda Gogoi is also ailing.

Akhil Gogoi is the first lawmaker in Assam to win an election from jail after his octogenarian mother, son Nasiketa and prominent rights leaders of the country campaigned for him.

Rights activist Medha Patkar, Magsaysay award winner Sandeep Pandey, student leaders of Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University and intellectuals from different parts of the country and Assam had come to Sibsagar to campaign for Gogoi in the March-April elections to the 126-member Assam assembly.

### RJD attacks Nitish Kumar after minister's resignation offer

Patna, July 2 (IANS) After Bihar Social Welfare Minister Madan Sahani on Thursday offered to resign, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) attacked Chief Minister Nitish Kumar over his governance model.

"The double engine government of Nitish Kumar is undergoing a huge internal dispute. The boat of NDA is wobbling and it would sink anytime," RJD leader

Mritunjay Tiwari said.

"Social Welfare Minister Madan Sahani has offered resignation as he is miffed with the bureaucrats. There are several other ministers in Nitish Kumar government having a similar plight. They are ready for resignation. The bureaucrats are ruling in their respective departments and not listening to the ministers.

"Our leader Tejashwi

Yadav is pointing out the same for long time and it has been proven on Thursday after Sahani offered his resignation and BJP MLA Gyanendra Singh Gyanu levelled allegations on ministers for taking massive bribes during transferring of officials and personnel in different departments come under Bihar government," Tiwari added.

**जिला दण्डाधिकारी एवं उपायुक्त का कार्यालय, पूर्वी सिंहभूम, जमशेदपुर (जिला पंचायत आरवा)**

**त्रिस्तरीय पंचायत (आम)**

**आम सूचना**

**ध्वस्त/जर्जर/चलन्त होने के कारण भवन परिवर्तन हेतु मतदान केन्द्रों की प्रस्तावित सूची का प्रकाशन**

झारखण्ड पंचायत निर्वाचन नियमावली के नियम-27 के अनुसार नियम-8 के उप नियम (क) में विहित रीति से त्रिस्तरीय पंचायत (आम) निर्वाचन-2021 हेतु ध्वस्त/जर्जर/चलन्त होने के कारण भवन परिवर्तन हेतु मतदान केन्द्रों की प्रस्तावित सूची का प्रकाशन सभी सम्बन्धित मतदान केन्द्र भवन, प्रखण्ड कार्यालय (मुंडाबान्दा प्रखण्ड को छोड़कर)/अनुमंडल दण्डाधिकारी का कार्यालय, धालभूम/घाटशिला एवं जिला दण्डाधिकारी के कार्यालय में दिनांक 03/07/2021 को विधिवत् प्रकाशित किया जाता है जो दिनांक 10/07/2021 तक प्रकाशित रहेगा। उक्त अवधि में इससे सम्बन्धित दावा/आपत्ति लिखित रूप से सम्बन्धित कार्यालयों में कार्यालय अवधि के दौरान प्राप्त किया जायेगा।

ह/—  
जिला निर्वाचन पदाधिकारी (पंचायत)-सह-उपायुक्त, पूर्वी सिंहभूम, जमशेदपुर के आदेशानुसार,

PR 248935 District(21-22).D

**जिला ग्रामीण विकास अभिकरण, सरायकेला-खरसावाँ**

दूरभाष - 06597-234162 / E mail- ddc-sar@mail.nic

**-: अति अल्पकालीन निविदा सूचना :-**

मनरेगा अंतर्गत सरायकेला-खरसावाँ जिला के सभी प्रखण्डों में "विरसा हरित ग्राम योजना" के तहत बागवानी किया जाना है। जिसके लिए आम, अमरुद तथा नींबू का पौधा के गुणवत्तापूर्ण खरीददारी के लिए दर निर्धारण हेतु ग्रामीण विकास विभाग, झारखण्ड, राँची के पत्रांक— (N) 714 (अनु) दिनांक 25.06.2021 के द्वारा 14 (चौदह) नर्सरियों को Empanelled किया गया है। जिसकी विवरणी निम्नवत् है— (1) आदित्य हाई टेकनिक् नर्सरी, लोहरगढा (2) फल उद्योग नर्सरी, राँची (3) मेसर्स प्रकाश सीड्स एवं नर्सरी, राँची (4) ग्रीन गार्डन इन्टरप्राइजेज, पश्चिम बंगाल (5) असीमा नर्सरी, पश्चिम बंगाल (6) जानप्रिया नर्सरी, पश्चिम बंगाल (7) बनरी नर्सरी, पश्चिम बंगाल (8) वृंदावन नर्सरी, राँची (9) नारायण हॉर्टिकल्चर नर्सरी, पश्चिम बंगाल (10) राजमहल नर्सरी, साहेबगंज, झारखण्ड (11) श्री कांता नर्सरी, पश्चिम बंगाल (12) नेशनल नर्सरी एवं कृषि फार्म, पश्चिम बंगाल (13) आम नर्सरी एवं हॉर्टिकल्चर फार्म, पश्चिमी बंगाल एवं (14) घोष नर्सरी, पश्चिम बंगाल। अतः सरायकेला-खरसावाँ जिला में पौधा आपूर्ति करने के लिए सूचीबद्ध 14 आपूर्तिकर्ता से पौधा क्रय करने के लिए न्युनतम क्रय दर निर्धारण हेतु आपूर्तिकर्ता से मुहरबंद निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। इसके अतिरिक्त अन्य पौधशाला (नर्सरी) की सम्पत्ति निविदा प्रामाण्य होगी। निविदा से संबंधित अधिक जानकारी जिला के वेबसाइट [www.seraikela.nic.in](http://www.seraikela.nic.in) एवं कार्यालय सूचनापट्ट पर भी देखा जा सकता है।

**नोट :-**

- निविदा की सामग्री नियम एवं शर्तों की पूर्ण विवरणी सरायकेला-खरसावाँ जिला के वेबसाइट [www.seraikela.nic.in](http://www.seraikela.nic.in) पर एवं जिला ग्रामीण विकास अभिकरण, सरायकेला-खरसावाँ (मनरेगा कोषागार) से प्राप्त किया जा सकता है।
- सूचीबद्ध इच्छुक निविदादाता दिनांक 10.07.2021 को पूर्वाह्न 11:30 बजे तक जिला ग्रामीण विकास अभिकरण, सरायकेला-खरसावाँ में मुहरबंद निविदा जमा कर सकते हैं। निविदा उसी दिन दिनांक— 10.07.2021 को पूर्वाह्न 11:40 बजे अद्योहस्ताक्षरी के कार्यालय कक्ष में जिला क्रय समिति के समक्ष खोली जायेगी। निविदा खोलने के समय निविदादाता अथवा उनके प्राधिकृत प्रतिनिधि अनिवार्य रूप से निविदा में उल्लेखित पौधों के नमूने के साथ उपस्थित रहेंगे। लिफाफे के ऊपर Plantation Under MGNREGA अंकित किया जायेगा।

ह/—  
उप विकास आयुक्त-सह-जिला कार्यक्रम समन्वयक सरायकेला-खरसावाँ

PR.NO.248976 Rural Development(21-22):D

### BJP gears up for Panchayat polls in Bihar



Patna, July 2 (IANS) BJP's Bihar unit is gearing up for Panchayat elections despite the poll date not being announced as yet by the Election Commission.

A virtual meeting of BJP election cell headed by convener Radhika Rama was held in Patna where party workers at the ground level were directed to establish contact with voters.

"The BJP Bihar election cell indicates that Panchayat polls will be announced soon," said Sidhartha Shambhu, vice president of BJP's Bihar unit.

"We have appealed to the Booth Level Agents (BLA) to reach at every doorstep at village level and convey the party's achievements. Besides, they have also been directed to educate villagers to take coronavirus vaccines in a bid to defeat the pandemic. We are aiming to make every booth corona-free in the state," Shambhu said.

"The Modi government in the country is successful on every front including fighting Covid. Our workers were also involved in great work during the pandemic and provided essential daily needs including food and medicines during the pandemic. We are here to help people," Shambhu said.

**S. E. RAILWAY TENDER**

E-Tender Notice No. : RS-TATA-01-2021-22, dated : 01.07.2021. Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRS), South Eastern Railway, Tatanagar for and on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tender from the OEM i.e. M/s Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), New Delhi for the following work. Manual offers are not allowed against the E-Tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Description of work: Repair of modules (Power, Aux Power & Control modules) pertaining to BHEL IGBT propulsion system through OEM M/s BHEL of ELS/Tata. Tender value : ₹ 21,03,761.29. EMD : Nil. Cost of Tender form : ₹ 3,000/-. Date and time of closing of tender : 15.00 hrs. of 10.08.2021. Date and time of opening of tender : 15.30 hrs. of 10.08.2021. Tenders can be viewed at website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. Complete detail particulars of the E-Tender are available on the website. If the date of opening happens to be a Bandh or Holiday, the tender will be opened at same time on the next working day.

(PR-156)

E-Tender Notice No. : COMS4-BH-MR-TATA-21-3, dated : 30.06.2021. Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, South Eastern Railway, Chakradharpur for and on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tender from the OEM i.e. M/s Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), New Delhi for the following work. Closing Date/Time : 22.07.2021 at 12.30 hrs. Bidders who are not allowed to submit their original/bid/bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Title : Development, operation and maintenance of Banquet Hall facilities above the Reservation counter premises and meeting room near RPF CCTV office at Main entrance of Tatanagar Railway station for five years. Reserve Price : ₹ 2,39,098/- for 1st year including GST @ 18%. Earnest Money Deposit : ₹ 23,90,980/- for 1st year. Eligibility Criteria : Detailed in tender document. Period of contract : 5 years. Website particulars : [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) (PR-159)

**जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा**

राष्ट्रीय लोक अदालत 10 जुलाई, 2021

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि झारखण्ड राज्य विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार, राँची के निर्देशानुसार जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा के तत्वाधान में दिनांक 10 जुलाई, 2021 को पूर्वाह्न 11:00 बजे सेव्यहारा-न्यायालय परिसर, चाईबासा में हाई ब्रीड मोड : जयुअल फिजीकलद राष्ट्रीय लोक अदालत का आयोजन किया जा रहा है। उक्त राष्ट्रीय लोक अदालत में सुलहनीय आप राधिक मामलों, बैकिंग सम्बन्धी मामलों, धारा 138 एनओईएक्ट, चेक बाउंस एवं मोटर दुर्घटना दावावाद, श्रम विवाद सम्बन्धी मामलों, बिजली एवं पानी बिल से सम्बन्धित मामलों, असुलहनीय मामलों को छोड़कर, पारिवा रिक विवाद, भूअज्ञान, सेवा सम्बन्धी मामलों, वेतन, भत्ते एवं सेवा निवृत्ति लाभ, राजस्व मामले, सिर्फ जिला न्यायालय एवं उच्च न्यायालय में लम्बित मामलों एवं अन्य दिवानी मामलों इत्यादि का निष्पादन किया जायेगा।

अतः आप सभी से निवेदन है कि अधिक से अधिक संख्या में इस राष्ट्रीय लोक अदालत दिनांक 10 जुलाई, 2021 के सम्बन्ध में किसी प्रकार की विस्तृत जानकारी हेतु आप जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार, चाईबासा के सचिव के कार्यालय में उपस्थित होकर अथवा सचिव, जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार, चाईबासा से मोबाईल नं०- 9431761165 पर संपर्क कर सकते हैं।

(कुमारी जीउ) सचिव,  
जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार, चाईबासा

नोट :- उक्त राष्ट्रीय लोक अदालत दिनांक 10 जुलाई, 2021 के सम्बन्ध में किसी प्रकार की विस्तृत जानकारी हेतु आप जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार, चाईबासा के सचिव के कार्यालय में उपस्थित होकर अथवा सचिव, जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार, चाईबासा से मोबाईल नं०- 9431761165 पर संपर्क कर सकते हैं।

निवेदक,  
सचिव,  
जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार, चाईबासा

PR 248870(West Singhbhum)21-22'D

**पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, जमशेदपुर।**

**अति अल्पकालीन निविदा सूचना**

संख्या - 19 / 2021-22 दिनांक 01.07.2021

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निविदा की शर्तें, परिमाण विपत्र एवं योजनाओं की विस्तृत विवरणी विभागीय वेबसाइट [dwsd.jharkhand.gov.in](http://dwsd.jharkhand.gov.in) से Download की जा सकती है। प्राकलित राशि घट या बढ़ सकती है।

कार्यपालक अभियन्ता,  
पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, जमशेदपुर।

PR 248950 (Drinking Water and Sanitation) 21-22 (D)

## Aahana Kumra: I miss shoots and morning call times

**Mumbai, July 2 (IANS)** Actress Aahana Kumra is in a major missing mood. She took to Instagram on Friday to share that she yearns for shoots and much more.

"I miss shoots!! I miss early morning call times! I miss being frozen yogurt! I miss real locations! I miss you Uzbekistan!" wrote Kumra. She shared pictures in the flashback post from the set of last year's release "Khuda Haafiz", where she played the role of an Arab police officer named Tamena Hamid. "#TamenaHamid on the sets of #KhudaHaafiz in Khiva 2019 #FlashBackFriday," she wrote as caption.

In the pictures, she is seen dressed in character, and the shots are captured at the real location of Ichan Kala, Old City of Kava, Uzbekistan. She wears a black top and grey trousers for the early morning shoot. "Khuda Haafiz", starring Vidyut Jamwal and Shivaleka Oberoi, released in 2020 on OTT. Aahana will next be seen playing a pivotal role in Madhur Bhandarkar's upcoming film "India Lockdown".



**Washington, July 2 (IANS)**

The single dose Johnson & Johnson's Covid-19 vaccine has shown strong neutralising antibody activity against the Delta (B16172) variant, with immunity lasting at least eight months, according to results of phase-III trials.

The vaccine is 85 per cent effective against severe/critical disease and demonstrated protection against hospitalisation and death from the deadly coronavirus.

The phase-III trials, submitted preprint to bioRxiv, showed the vaccine was consistently effective across all regions studied globally, including in South Africa and Brazil, where there was a high prevalence of rapidly emerging Beta and Zeta (P2) variants during the study period.



It also generated neutralising antibodies against a range of other SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern, which increased over time, such as the Gamma (P1) variants and the Alpha (B117), Epsilon (B1429), Kappa (B16171) and D614G variants, as

well as the original SARS-CoV-2 strain. "Today's newly announced studies reinforce the ability of the Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 vaccine to help protect the health of people globally," said Paul Stoffels, Vice Chairman of

the Executive Committee and Chief Scientific Officer at Johnson & Johnson, in a statement on Thursday. "We believe that our vaccine offers durable protection against Covid-19 and elicits neutralising activity against the Delta variant. This adds to the robust body of clinical data supporting our single-shot vaccine's ability to protect against multiple variants of concern," he added.

Further, data from a sub-study of the company's Phase 1/2a Covid-19 vaccine study, also submitted preprint to bioRxiv, showed that humoral and cellular immune responses generated by the single-shot Covid-19 vaccine lasted through at least eight months.

T-cell responses, including CD8+ T-cells that seek out and destroy

infected cells, persisted over the eight-month timeframe examined.

"Current data for the eight months studied so far show that the single-shot Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 vaccine generates a strong neutralising antibody response that does not wane; rather, we observe an improvement over time. In addition, we observe a persistent and particularly robust, durable cellular immune response," said Mathai Mammen, Global Head, Janssen Research & Development, Johnson & Johnson.

"With each new dataset, we build on our solid foundation of evidence that our single-shot Covid-19 vaccine plays a critical role in ending the pandemic, which continues to evolve and pose new challenges to

global health," he added.

The Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 single-dose vaccine is compatible with standard vaccine storage and distribution channels with ease of delivery to remote areas. The vaccine is estimated to remain stable for two years at minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 20 degrees Celsius), and a maximum of 4.5 months at routine refrigeration temperatures of 36 - 46 degrees Fahrenheit (2-8 degrees Celsius).

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## Deepshikha Nagpal: Divorce is not a good thing in anyone's life

**Mumbai, July 2 (IANS)** Actress Deepshikha Nagpal shared that the scene where her onscreen husband in "Ranjit Ki Betiyaan" hands over her divorce papers brought back memories of the time she went through separation in real life.

"The scene has become one of my favourite scenes. I just love the way the scene and dialogues are written. I could connect and relive those moments as I have been through a divorce in my life. Divorce is not a good thing in anyone's life. It tears you apart," Deepshikha said.

Drawing a comparison between her real and real life divorce, Deepshikha said: "When Lalita (her character on the show) fights for her husband Guddu Ji, I felt that she really does love him very much and she tries to do everything in her power to get him back. In my personal life, I couldn't have fought, rebel like her. I would have let it go. I was very emotional while shooting these scenes, it is very close to my heart."

She added: "The story is written and shot so well. I enjoyed playing Lalita's



emotional part. I love doing the emotional scene and I'm so glad that my character is so strong, a go-getter a still had an emotional angle which director and creatives are portraying. And who will know better than me to go through divorce."

## Faraz Ansari on 'Sheer Qorma' winning at Frameline Fest: It's a surreal feeling

**Mumbai, July 2 (IANS)**

Film maker Faraz Ansari's short film "Sheer Qorma" has won the Best Short Film Audience Award at San Francisco's Frameline Fest. Winning at this festival makes the film eligible for the BAFTA awards. The film stars Swara Bhasker, Divya Dutta and Shabana Azmi in pivotal roles. Reacting on the win, Ansari tells IANS: "I'm still numb with the fact that a film like Sheer Qorma that is so personal to me, that was born inside my heart and my soul, is going out and conquering the world, winning the biggest awards at the biggest film festivals. (I am) So very grateful for our film winning at Frameline Fest."



Frameline Fest is one of the biggest LGBTQ+ fests in the world. "For a queer, brown, non binary, independent filmmaker to win so many accolades, it's surreal. It is a surreal experience because we have always been told that this is your limit, this is the most that you can get but then the universe finds a way to just give you so much more that you could dream of, you

could even ask for. I'm very grateful and I'm just honoured about the fact that our film is really, not just winning awards but also really touching lives and bringing transformation in hearts," he says. The filmmaker adds: "The reason why we have made Sheer Qorma and I'm just very thrilled to see this child fly and so high and high and high in the sky."

## Royal Enfield celebrates legacy of Classic 350 with new campaign

**New Delhi, July 2:** As India fights the battle against COVID-19, the riding community has had to hit the brakes on their motorcycles. Whilst the entire country stays safely parked at home, Royal Enfield has rolled out t

h e #TimelessClassic campaign to celebrate the spirit of Pure Motorcycling. Being run across the brand's social media handles on Facebook and Instagram, the campaign enables the audience to come together, celebrate the resilience and the storied legacy of the Classic 350 while taking millions on a nostalgic journey to reminisce their favorite moments with the iconic motorcycle. Motorcycling enthusiasts can participate in the campaign by sharing their favorite ride and

adventure memories on the Classic 350 with #TimelessClassic and tagging @royalenfield in their posts. These can be shared either in the form of a photo, a video or a reel. Users can also find the signature Royal Enfield Classic thump on Instagram Reels to create short form videos of their choice. Select entries get a chance to be featured on Royal Enfield's social media channels. The contest has been received with great enthusiasm, registering close to 5000 entries from the community within weeks of its announcement. The best, most passionate stories from these entries are being shared across Royal Enfield's social media platforms, inspiring more riders to share their experiences.

## Royal Enfield announces Rs 20 cr towards India's fight against Covid-19

**New Delhi, July 2:** As COVID-19 pandemic continues to severely affect millions of lives across India, Royal Enfield, the global leader in the mid-size motorcycle segment, has strengthened its commitment to aid the country's fight against the pandemic. Royal Enfield's initiatives focus on building long term medical infrastructure, aiding remote and rural communities, and enabling local administrations with immediate response measures. Given the magnitude of the second wave and its subsequent impact, Royal Enfield has identified strategic medium and long term programs that are inspired by UN's COVID-19 response framework- Build Back Better. Royal Enfield has committed INR 20 crores, in addition to INR 50 crores committed last year by

Eicher Group to support relief and rehabilitation efforts.

In addition to working with state governments and NGOs across Delhi NCR and Tamil Nadu, the earmarked amount is being distributed under the following key areas and initiatives: Building sustainable medical support: In line with its vision to build long term and sustainable solutions, Royal Enfield, in association with Ekam Foundation has commissioned an Oxygen Manifold Plant at Jai Prakash Narayan Apex Trauma Centre (JPNATC), All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi. Royal Enfield is also enabling access to oxygen generators for 6 government hospitals in Tamil Nadu. It is also procuring and supplying critical care equipment to 6 government and 2 charitable hospitals and 30 Public Healthcare Centers in Tamil Nadu.

## NASA's self-driving Mars Rover begins search for signs of ancient life

**Washington, July 2 (IANS)** NASA's self-driving six-wheeled robot on Mars -- the Perseverance rover -- is set to start an epic journey across a crater floor to seek signs of ancient life, the US space agency said on Friday.

The rover, moving at a top speed of 120 metres per hour, will trek across the Martian landscape using a newly enhanced auto-navigation system. Called AutoNav, this enhanced system makes 3D maps of the terrain ahead, identifies hazards, and plans a route around any obstacles

without additional direction from controllers back on Earth.

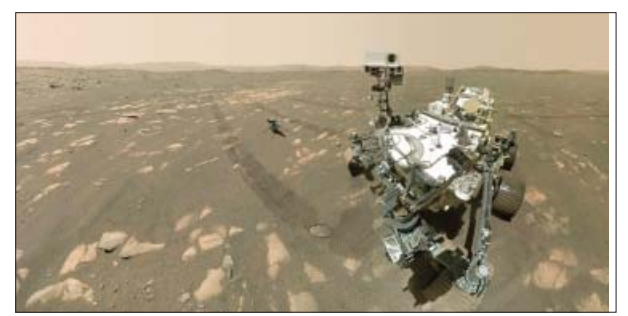
"We have a capability called 'thinking while driving'," said Vandii Verma, a senior engineer, rover planner, and driver at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California, in a statement on Friday. "The rover is thinking about autonomous drive while its wheels are turning," Verma added.

Using AutoNav, Perseverance will begin its first science campaign on the floor of Jezero Crater. This crater once was a lake, when, billions of years ago,

Mars was wetter than today. Perseverance's destination is a dried-out river delta at the crater's edge.

If life ever took hold on early Mars, signs of it might be found there. The rover will gather samples over some 15 kilometres, then prepare the samples for collection by a future mission that would take them back to Earth for analysis, NASA said.

Besides AutoNav, Perseverance wheels are also modified to help with traction as well as durability. Along with being slightly greater in



diameter and narrower than Curiosity's wheels, they each feature 48 treads that look like slightly wavy lines, as opposed to Curiosity's 24 chevron-pattern treads.

Higher clearance for Perseverance's belly also

enables the rover to roll safely over rougher ground -- including good-size rocks. And Perseverance's beefed-up auto-navigation capabilities include ENav, or enhanced navigation, an algorithm-and-software combination that allows

more precise hazard detection.

Perseverance can also employ one of its computers just for navigation on the surface; its main computer can devote itself to the many other tasks that keep the rover healthy and active.

The rover also keeps track of how far it has moved from one spot to another using a system called "visual odometry." Perseverance periodically captures images as it moves, comparing one position to the next to see if it moved the expected distance.

## Preity Zinta: I am so proud of our little organic home garden

**Mumbai, July 2 (IANS)** Preity Zinta can't stop gushing about her organic garden in her Friday social media post. On Instagram, the actress shared a video clip of plucking ripe strawberries from her garden. "I cannot explain how excited I am to see fruits and vegetables grow in our backyard. Mom was with me during the lockdown last year and we planted all sorts of herbs, fruit and veggies. I am so proud of our little organic home garden. Thank you ma for making this possible," wrote the actress, sharing her excitement about her vegetable and fruit garden at her Los Angeles home. "Now, I have strawberries, oranges,

peaches, guavas, tomatoes, green and red peppers, green and red chillies, eggplant, mint, basil and lemon grow around the house. I am loving every bit of this. Try it at home folks -- you will be amazed by your own ghar ki kheti #organicgarden #gharkikheti #strawberries #ting", wrote Preity, who is seen dressed in a lemon yellow suit in the clip. The actress currently resides in Los Angeles with husband Gene Goodenough.



## Haseen Dillruba: Wild, wicked but with warts (IANS Review; Rating: \* \* \*)

**Haseen Dillruba (film on Netflix); Cast: Taapsee Pannu, Vikrant Massey, Harshvardhan Rane, Aditya Srivastava, Ashish Verma; Direction: Vinil Mathew; Rating: \* \* \* (three stars)**

**BY VINAYAK CHAKRAVORTY**

Hand it to these guys -- you'll get the pun in that statement once you've watched the outrageous end -- but this is one wild Bollywood thriller. The film is fun to watch for the way it leads you on before turning the plot on its head, and it's smart in the way it invests 135 minutes of storytelling to mix suspense and wry humour. Kanika Dhillon's writing is as much the 'hero' of "Haseen Dillruba" as Taapsee Pannu, who breathes life into the titular protagonist with trademark relish, or Vikrant Massey -- just give the guy a meaty role and watch him go. That's not to say there are no rough edges in the script, you'll spot plenty of loopholes here. But despite glitches, "Haseen Dillruba" regales sufficiently and there few dull moments. Importantly, the film underlines the changing whiffs of storytelling in mainstream Hindi cinema.



Delhi girl Rani Kashyap (Taapsee Pannu) has the enormous dilemma of having to pick one of two candidates as groom, who seem far from her idea of Prince Charming. The guy from bigtown Mumbai is, well, bald. The other sutor is an engineer with decent looks, but he lives in boring Jwalapur. Between bald and boring, Rani settles for the latter. An amusing 'ladki dikhaai' sequence later, Rani is married to Rishu (Vikrant Massey), the nice guy from Jwalapur.

All of the above, incidentally, is a crisp flashback that follows the point where the film begins. The film starts off showing us Rishu's death, in a cylinder blast at home when Rani has just stepped out for the market. The local inspector (Aditya Srivastava) believes Rani is

the killer as does most of the 'mohalla', as does Rishu's buddy Afzar (Ashish Verma). Moving in time cycles between flashbacks and the present, Rani's narrative tells you why -- she had a torrid fling with Rishu's handsome cousin Neel (Harshvardhan Rane) when he arrived in Jwalapur to river-raft for a few days. The entire neighbourhood was soon aware of the fact. Nothing that goes on in this story actually prepares you for the end. If the test of a thriller lies in keeping its audience guessing, "Haseen Dillruba" would pass the test. The end could seem over the top, but that's probably why it's fun to watch. The film is more than about its thriller quotient. The psychological play of emotions in the relationship drama between Rani and Rishu, Rani and Neel.

## Aavishkaar Group plans to invest in Bihar, Jharkhand

**New Delhi, July 2:** The recent GDP data had shown that consumer spending slowing, private investments and exports contracting in the March quarter. The pandemic has unemployed many people and at the same time Aavishkaar Group, an impact investment platform, backed by 7000 employees, is looking for the potential opportunities to invest in Bihar and Jharkhand, said its Founder and Chairman Vineet Rai. "As I have started my career in neighbouring state Odisha and while working with various industries, I have noticed



people from Bihar and Jharkhand are very innovative. I have personal affinity for the state. In 2015, we invested in Grain bank Ergos when it is trying to disrupt India's agricultural supply chain through a 'grain bank'

concept. We invested in Osam Dairy in 2013 when it was only a plan on paper and have supported Abhinav Shah, Rakesh Sharma, Abhishek Raj and Harsh Thakkar in their entrepreneurial journey creating one of the largest private dairy in Jharkhand. We continue to look at potential opportunities to invest in the state. We are here as a Group to unlock opportunities for entrepreneurs who can build robust businesses" Rai said. He added, "Arohan, our microfinance institution has made rapid strides in

Bihar and Jharkhand, providing microfinance services and supporting the entrepreneurial women to build new livelihoods." Aavishkaar currently manages \$1.2 billion in assets and expects to scale this up to \$ 12 billion in next 10 years. The Group's plan is to help many more startups bloom and provide jobs, livelihoods and solutions to people across the country. The group is planning to invest around \$100 million in start-ups in India during FY 2021-2022. "Covid is once in a lifetime black swan

event. Our belief is that if you do support your customers, they will find a way to repay you and that needs strong process, leadership and right product. It also means you have to build credibility with your lenders and seek their support," Rai said. "The Centre and off late the states have been very supportive of startup. What you need is a nurturing environment for startups. If the government can reduce impediments in the life of an entrepreneur who is starting up that would be the biggest ask," the founder urged.

## Kohli only expressed opinion on 3-Test WTC final, not demanded it

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** Indian spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has said that skipper Virat Kohli never demanded that the World Test Championship final should be a three-match affair, but only expressed his opinion when asked what could be done differently to decide the winner. India lost the WTC final to New Zealand by eight wickets at Southampton recently. "I happened to hear people saying that Virat Kohli asked for three Tests to be played for the WTC final but it is ridiculous. After the match got over, (former England cricketer) Michael Atherton had asked what he could have done differently in the WTC. Virat replied in a particular context that if three matches are played, then adaptability and comeback for a team are possible. But he never demanded something," Ashwin said on YouTube on Thursday. Following the WTC final loss, Kohli had said in response to a question that, "Look, firstly I am not in absolute agreement of deciding the best Test side over the course of one game, to be very honest. If it is a Test series, it has to be a test of character over three Tests. Which team has the ability to come back into the series (should be a factor) ... It can't just be (about) pressure applied over two days of good cricket and you suddenly are not a good Test side anymore. I don't believe in that."

## CWG archery, shooting championships cancelled due to Covid-19

**Birmingham, July 2 (IANS)** The 2022 Commonwealth archery and shooting championships, which were scheduled to take place in Chandigarh in January next year, have been cancelled due to the problems posed by Covid-19 pandemic.

The decision, taken by the Commonwealth Games India (CGI) Executive Board "with the support" of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF), was made "after careful consideration of several factors, including the continued uncertainty created by the ongoing global pandemic". CGF president Dame Louise Martin said in a statement on Friday that, "We are disappointed that the 2022 Commonwealth Archery and Shooting Championships will no longer take place, however, this is the right decision to take in the current climate." The Commonwealth archery and shooting championships would have been held as separate events from the ones at the main games in Birmingham. The medals from the events were not to be added to the final CWG tally. The championships were part of an agreement reached between the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the CGF. The IOA had threatened to pull out of Birmingham CWG 2022 after shooting was dropped from the list in 2019. Later in December, the IOA withdrew its warning during the Annual General Body after a meeting with Louise Martin and then-CEO David Grevenberg in November.

## Jelena, Anastasija stretched before securing 3rd round Wimbledon berths

**London, July 2 (IANS)** Former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko of Latvia got the better of No.31 seed Daria Kasatkina of Russia 6-1, 3-6, 8-6 in one hour and 46 minutes to move into the third round at Wimbledon.

Jelena will next face Ajla Tomljanovic of Australia, who took out Alize Cornet of France 6-4, 0-6, 6-3 in a two-hour, seven-minute contest. Another Latvian Anastasija Sevastova, ranked 56th in the world, recovered from a shaky start to deny Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk 1-6, 6-4, 6-3, a week after stopping the teenager 6-1, 6-7(6), 6-4 in the first round of Eastbourne. Anastasija will next face French Open champion and No.14 seed Barbora Krejickova of the Czech Republic as she bids to complete her career set of second-week appearances at every Grand Slam. The result puts Anastasija into the third round here for the first time in her career -- a stage she has now reached at every major. World No. 34 Jelena slammed 48 winners on Thursday evening dominating Daria in a 22-minute opening set. The Russian committed 11 unforced errors, including four double faults, and rarely got her game going. Jelena, by contrast, saved her biggest shots for the crucial points: a superb volley to go up 4-1, and a fine return winner for 5-1. But Daria gained a foothold in the contest in the second set and the decider was an extremely close contest with Jelena finally prevailing 8-6.

## Ranatunga's '2nd-string team' barb on Dravid's Day 1 with seniors

**Colombo, July 2 (IANS)** The first practice session of the Indian limited overs team here on Friday started on a jarring note after former Sri Lanka captain Arjuna Ranatunga termed their second string and lashed out at Sri Lanka Cricket for staging such a side. The Shikhar Dhawan-led team, which comprises some of India's white-ball format regulars, ended room quarantine on Thursday night and took the field on Friday morning to prepare for the ODI series beginning on July 13. The Indian team is allowed to practice within quarantine from July 2 to 4 after which they will be fully out of quarantine but remain in bio-bubble. Though the team coach Rahul Dravid, who is on his first assignment with a senior Indian national team, had said before departure that they want to win the series, he had also added that the series would have very little bearing on the selection of T20 World Cup squad. Dravid hinted that this tour was meant only to give experience to Indian youngsters. "I am sure the selectors and management would have a fair idea by now as to what kind of squad they are looking for T20 World Cup... Can't read too much into it (the Sri Lanka series)."



# England board likely to give Kohli & Co warm-up against county team

**London, July 2 (IANS)** The Indian men's cricket team in England will likely get to play a warm-up fixture ahead of the five-Test series against the hosts after the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said it is mulling over a request from the Indian cricket board for a 'warm-up match against a County Select XI'. "We are aware of a request from the BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) to play a three-day warm-up match against a County Select XI as part of the Indian Men's Test teams build-up to the five-match LV-Insurance Test series," said an ECB official to IANS.

"We are working through the operations and COVID-19 protocols to ensure we are able to deliver this and will confirm in due course," added the official.

As per the current schedule, the Indian team is on a three-week break,



which started after the World Test Championship (WTC) final last month, and will have a camp in Durham from July 15. The Test series begins on August 4 in Nottingham.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions, Virat Kohli & Co was expected to play only a couple of infra-squad games and have no outing

against any local county side. However, Kohli had made known his displeasure at the current schedule after the WTC final. "We obviously wanted first-class games, which I believe have not been given to us. I don't know what the reasons for that are," Kohli had said on June 23 after India had lost a game.

The ECB official said that the Indians will travel to Nottingham on August 1.

"The Indian Test team will report to Emirates Riverside, Durham for their pre-Test camp on 15 July and will prepare at the venue until 1 August before heading to Trent Bridge, Nottingham, ahead of the first Test starting on 4 August," he added.

## Mayank should be included if Gill is injured: Jaffer

**Mumbai, July 2 (IANS)** Former India cricketer Wasim Jaffer has said that if Shubman Gill misses the five-match Test series against England in August-September due to a leg injury, Mayank Agarwal will be his choice to replace the young opener.

A Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) official had told IANS recently that, "Gill might miss the first Test due to injury in lower part of his leg. But whether he will be available for the remainder of the series cannot be said right now."

The 43-year-old Jaffer, who has played 31 Tests and scored nearly 2000 runs, said on Thursday that, "It will be a very big opportunity for Mayank Agarwal and KL Rahul

with Mayank being my first preference. He has had an excellent career so far. He was dropped after two poor outings in Australia but I am sure he will be looking forward to this opportunity.

Agarwal scored two double centuries, against South Africa and Bangladesh, in 2019 on way to surpassing Sir Don Bradman on the list of fastest to score two double Test tons.

"It is a very big series of five Test matches which can make or break a cricketer's career. I feel KL Rahul can also fit somewhere in the middle-order if not as an opener." Jaffer said on his YouTube video. Gill, who failed in the World Test Championship final, having scored 28 and eight, has played only eight Test matches and averages 31.84. He has scored three half-centuries, including two in the India's victorious Test campaign in Australia.

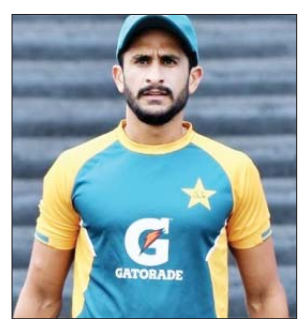
## Hasan Ali makes big gain in Pakistan central contracts

**Lahore, July 2 (IANS)** Pakistan pace bowler Hasan Ali emerged a big gainer in the 2021/22 central contracts' list, announced by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Friday.

Ali made his entry into Category A, joining captain Babar Azam, vice-captain Mohammad Rizwan and left-arm pacer Shaheen Afridi. Ali missed out on the contracts last year due to a back injury but made a comeback to international cricket during the home series against South Africa. Rizwan, promoted from B to A category this February, retain his place in the top bracket. A total of 20 players, one less than last year, have been given 12-month contracts that will run from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022. The contracts include "equalised match fee" across all formats. It

means that all players who represent Pakistan will receive the same match fees irrespective of which category they are in or whether they have a central contract or not. The PCB has also increased the monthly retainer fee for all three categories by 25 per cent and the emerging category by 15 per cent.

Apart from Ali, new faces in the list include Faheem Ashraf, Mohammad Nawaz, Nauman Ali, Imran Butt, Shah Nawaz Dahani and Usman Qadir. Azhar Ali has moved down from Category A to B, while Sarfaraz Ahmed and Abid Ali have dropped from Category B to C. Notable omissions include Asad Shafiq, Haider Ali, Haris Sohail, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imad Wasim, Mohammad Abbas, Naseem Shah, Shan Masood and Usman



Shinwari. PCB CEO Wasim Khan said in a statement that all the nine players will remain in the selectors' plan for the season ahead and have the opportunity to be considered for the 2022/23 season contracts. "Due to the competitive nature of the central contract system, nine players have sadly missed out on this occasion. The door remains firmly open for these players and they will continue to remain in the plans of the selectors," said Khan.

## Wimbledon: Mixed day for India as Sania advances, Bopanna-Sharan lose

**London, July 1 (IANS)**

It was a mixed day for India at the Wimbledon as Sania Mirza and her partner advanced in women's doubles while Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan crashed out of the grass court Grand Slam competition in the first round on Thursday.

Sania and American Bethanie Mattek-Sands started their latest campaign at Wimbledon by stunning the sixth seeded pair, Alexa Guarachi of Chile and Desirae Krawczyk of the USA. They advanced to the second round with a 7-5, 6-3 win on Court 8.

However, there was no such luck for Bopanna and Sharan, who missed the cut for Tokyo Olympics as they could not improve their combined ranking of 113, as they crashed out to 11th seeds, Henri Kontinen of



Finland and France's Edouard Roger-Vasselin. Bopanna and Sharan lost 6-7, 4-6 in the one hour and 20 minutes encounter.

Though the two pairs were evenly matched on most parameters, Bopanna and Sharan had nine break points but could convert

only one while their opponents capitalised on two of the four chances that came their way.

Sania, who has bagged three Grand Slam doubles and as many mixed doubles titles thus far, has won the Wimbledon ladies doubles title in 2015.

## Bravo bags 4 as W Indies level T20I series vs South Africa

**St George's (Grenada), July 2 (IANS)** A career-best haul of 4/19 by Dwayne Bravo led the West Indies to a series-leveling 21-run victory over South Africa in the fourth match of the T20I series here.

With two wins each, the winner of the series will be decided in the fifth and final ODI to be played here on July 3.

Set a target of 168 after skipper Kieron Pollard smashed an unbeaten 51 off 25 balls, with five sixes and two fours to lift the West Indies to 167/6, the Proteas relied heavily on their dependable batsman Quinton de Kock in their quest to clinch the series on Thursday.

However, his dismissal to Bravo for a top score of 60 at the start of the 18th



over saw the Proteas's challenge fizzle out.

The West Indies all-rounder added two more wickets in his fourth over as South Africa finished on 146/9 in their 20 overs.

Earlier, Pollard's match-winning innings and an unbroken seventh-wicket

partnership of 66 with Fabien Allen (19 not out) were critical in giving the home side a fighting chance after they were put in to bat for the first time in the series.

Pollard smashed 25 runs off the penultimate over of the innings from South

African pace bowler Kagiso Rabada to get the hosts to a fighting total.

Pollard won the Player-of-the-Match award.

"I was just happy to be there at the end to make an important contribution. I must commend Bravo's effort with the ball as well, especially as he has faced a lot of unnecessary criticism with people saying he is too old now to be a productive member of this team," said Pollard. With two wins each, the winner of the series will be decided in the fifth and final ODI to be played here on July 3.

Brief scores: 167/6 in 20 overs (L Simmons 47, K Pollard 51; G Linde 2/16, T Shamsi 2/13) beat South Africa 146/9 in 20 overs (Q de Kock 60; D Bravo 4/19, A Russell 2/30) by 21 runs.

## Maana becomes third Indian swimmer to make it to Olympics

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)**

Female swimmer Maana Patel will compete at this month's Tokyo Olympic Games in the women's 100m backstroke as she has earned a Universality quota place, the Swimming Federation of India (SFI) said on Friday.

The 21-year-old from Gujarat is the third Indian swimmer to get a ticket to Japan. Last month, Srihari Nataraj (100m backstroke) and Sajjan Prakash (200m butterfly) had cracked the Olympic A qualification mark to earn automatic berths in their respective events.

Maana's first international competition of the season was the Uzbekistan Open Swimming Championships in April. She had clocked 1:04.47 seconds for gold medal in women's 100m backstroke. Last month at the Sette Colli Trophy in Rome, Sajjan Prakash became the first ever Indian swimmer to achieve Olympic A qualification time in men's 200m butterfly. The 27-year-old had clocked 1 minute 56.38 seconds in the men's 200m butterfly event which was better than the Olympic A qualification time of 1:56.48. Nataraj was the second Indian swimmer to achieve Olympic A qualification time. He clocked 53.77 secs during the time trial at Sette Colli Trophy in Rome which was better than the Olympic A qualification mark of 53.85 secs.



# Wimbledon: Federer, Zverev advance; Nishikori, Dimitrov ousted

**London, July 2 (IANS)** Eight-time champion Roger Federer advanced to the third round at Wimbledon with ease, getting the better of Richard Gasquet of France in straight sets on Thursday.

Sixth seed Federer, who along with Rafael Nadal has won 20 Grand Slam singles titles, the most in Open Era, was in great form as he defeated his French opponent, 7-6, 6-1, 6-4, spending nine minutes less than two hours at the Centre Court.

The Swiss maestro sent down 10 aces, had no double fault, and won 84% points on his first serve. He also slammed 50 winners as compared to 20 by Gasquet. Though the 39-

year-old world No.8 Swiss had 26 unforced errors. Gasquet could not capitalise on that as he himself committed 23 errors. Overall, it was a clinical display by Federer, who had finished runner-up here in 2019 and is hoping to claim his ninth title here.

Federer, who had undergone surgery twice on his troublesome right knee in 2020, gave the Australian Open a miss and lost in the fourth round at Roland Garros.

Earlier on Thursday, the Wimbledon campaign of unseeded Japanese Kei Nishikori came to an end with his defeat to Jordan Thompson of Australia.

Nishikori, a two-time quarter-finalist here in 2018 and 2019, lost to



Thompson in four sets, 5-6, 4-6, 7-5, 3-6. The seasoned Japanese served five double faults and made 49 unforced errors as compared to 22 by his opponent. Though he put in a better first serve than his

opponent, Nishikori could win only 64% points on his first serve as compared to 81% by Thompson.

Earlier in first round, he had defeated Alexei Popyrin of Australia 6-4, 6-4, 6-4. No.18 seed Grigor

Dimitrov of Bulgaria too was dumped the wayside on Thursday. He was shown the door by Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan, who won 6-4, 7-6, 7-6. The Kazakh slammed 34 aces to four by Dimitrov.

Spanish eighth seed Roberto Bautista Agut lost some steam after winning the first two sets in his second round match. He advanced after winning a nerve-jangling five-setter against Miomir Kecmanovic of Serbia -- coming through the bruising contest 6-3, 6-3, 6-7, 3-6, 6-3.

Earlier, World No. 6 Alexander Zverev defeated American Tennys Sandgren 7-5, 6-2, 6-3 in one hour and 45 minutes to

advance to the third round. However, 13th seed Gael Monfils fell to Spanish Pedro Martinez in four sets.

Zverev, who lost in the second round of Halle Open, hammered 13 aces and committed only two double faults. Tennys Sandgren hit eight aces and committed as many as six double faults.

The 24-year-old German, who is yet to win a Grand Slam title, converted five of the 10 break points.

The seventh seed Matteo Berrettini scored a hard-fought 6-3, 6-4, 7-6(4) victory over Botic Van de Zandschulp to advance to third round. The Italian fired 20 aces against de Zandschulp's seven. He also won 83 per cent points on first service.

## Dharmdih power lines on bamboo poles make life risky for denizens



### Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2:** Within a stone's throw from the JBVNL divisional office at Jadugoda is Dharmdih village where worn-out power lines pass over age old bamboo poles providing electricity to 20 families. This condition is a death trap for the villagers who fear the possibility of electrocution any moment and every moment.

Two years earlier, the residents of Dharmdih, hardly a kilometer away from the JBVNL divisional office at Jadugoda, had brought this to the notice of the Executive Engineer of the power provider during a public hearing and the villagers had expected relief from lurking death. But no move had been made by the JBVNL officials concerned to replace the bamboo electric poles with iron or concrete ones and change the worn-out power lines. Instead, the Dharmdih residents continue to live in fear of electrical mishaps. A village resident said, "We stay in constant fear. The bamboo poles sway during winds and they may break and fall any moment. The wires too are in bad shape and may snap and account for the lives of the villagers. JBVNL has been reminded many times and urged to replace the bamboo poles and power supply wires. So far, our pleas and urgings have fallen on deaf ears. It has to be seen when the officials concerned wake up to the perpetual threat of life we are facing every day." (W-gs)

# Health Minister, BJP leaders assure justice to family of deceased father-daughter who committed suicide

## Accused brother who surrendered in court sent to jail, question mark on Bistupur police role

### Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2:** Jamshedpur police has sent the investigating officer in the case of the Paramjeet Saini, an accused in the sexual assault of the deceased Pritpal Singh Saini's wife, has been sent to police barrack as a reprimand for dereliction of duty. However, question marks are being raised on why stern measures like suspension were not taken against the concerned police official posted at Bistupur thana, Amrendra Mandal whose negligence led to the Pritpal Singh Saini and his daughter committing suicide.

Questions are also being raised as the Bistupur thana official Amrendra Mandal did not even heed to the order of Jamshedpur city SP Subhash Chandra Jatt

for prompt action in the case and why was not an abetment to suicide case lodged against the police official.

Tata Steel employee Pritpal Singh Saini along with his elder daughter Baljit Saini had committed suicide by coming under a train near Jugsalai Railway crossing on Wednesday late evening.

A case had been lodged by the deceased employee's wife, Nisha in Jugsalai thana against Gangotri Apartment, Bistupur resident Paramjeet Singh Saini, Rajendra Singh Bittu, a resident of Tinplate in Golmuri and Rajendra's wife Harjit Kaur for abetment of suicide.

Both Pramjeet and Harjit Singh are brothers of the deceased Pritpal Singh who used to stay in Q Road in Bistupur with his wife and



two daughters. Jugsalai police recovered a suicide note in which the deceased had blamed Paramjit, Jaswir Kaur, Rajendra Singh, Harjit Singh and Harjit's wife for his suicide and cited the case number 222/2020 in Bistupur thana in which the deceased's wife had lodged serious allegation of rape against

Paramjeet Singh on December 16, 2020. The suicide note states that he was being harassed by big leaders and intimidated by criminals to withdraw the case from Bistupur thana. An arrest warrant was issued on December 2020 but still his brother was not arrested. Jugsalai police claim that

in the CCTV footage it is noticed that both the deceased father and daughter were seen writing something on a paper.

Meanwhile, Paramjeet Singh after knowing about the suicide and recovery of the suicide note surrendered in the CJM court on Thursday. He has surrendered in a case of rape and had absconding in the same case since December 16, 2020 after his bail petition had been rejected by district session judge and Jharkhand High Court.

State DGP Niraj Sinha has taken cognizance of the case and stressed that nobody involved in the abetment of suicide of the father and daughter would be spared and strict action

would be taken after a probe. Jharkhand health minister Banna Gupta who is also the local legislator reached the Bistupur residence of the deceased father and daughter and assured to meet the state DGP and home secretary for a prompt and fair probe in the case and conduct a speedy trial for quick justice to the perpetrators of such heinous crime.

Meanwhile, BJP state leader Rita Mishra along with BJP city leaders also visited the residence of the deceased family and assured to do whatever the party could do to ensure justice to the family and demanded strict punishment to the guilty persons and the police officials responsible for shoddy probe. (W-rg)

# Third Covid wave: Health hubs come up with contingency plan

## Focus more on oxygen and ventilator beds with larger workforce

### Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2:** As part of their preparations for dealing with a possible third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, which is likely to affect kids, the city-based health hubs have come up with a contingency plan. Prominent hospitals like Tata Main Hospital (TMH), Tata Motors Hospital and MGM Medical College and Hospital have begun refurbishing their paediatric wards and introducing better medical facilities for proper treatment of children.

Dr. Rajan Chaudhry, advisor, medical services, Tata Steel said: "As we prepare for the third wave, we need more oxygen and ventilator beds with a larger workforce. We need to

streamline our protocols to make things comfortable and beneficial for the patients. Communication between the hospital and patients' families/relatives is important. Multiple initiatives were undertaken to communicate about patient well-being".

He said that as part of the precautions for the next wave it is important to get your family and friends vaccinated. The more people get vaccinated the less the chance of pandemic hitting us as hard as it did this time. It is important to wear a proper mask to protect yourself. Follow all COVID-19 protocols.

Parents with small children should be vaccinated. Ladies who are planning a pregnancy



should first get vaccinated and lactating mothers should get themselves vaccinated.

During the second wave, TMH had 450 treatment beds with an oxygen-giving facility inside the hospital of

which 50 were invasive ventilator beds. Very few hospitals had this kind of facility during the pandemic. In addition, the hospital had 150 Covid beds outside TMH for asymptomatic and mildly

symptomatic patients.

In a move to augment health facilities during ongoing pandemic Covid-19, a seven-bed ICU facility is coming up at the Sadar Hospital at Khasmahal in Parsudih locality of the city soon.

In view of rising cases of mucormycosis or black fungus cases in the city, MGM Medical College Hospital has set up a ward for the treatment of the patients.

Tata Motors Hospital has added a special wing with the expert team of the doctors to help post Covid illness. Speaking on the occasion Dr. Sanjay Kumar, head, medical services said: "I am happy to share that we have been able to vaccinate more than 22000 numbers

of people so far. Our team of doctors is working round the clock to protect every life and they are working relentlessly for the community."

This year Tata Motors Hospital has added various new facilities and advanced technologies in order to serve the patients better like New Dialysis Unit, Extension of ICU facility for COVID Care, a new medical ward and add new technology advancements in the treatment process. The hospital has been successfully able to serve more than 4000+ patients with severe cases in the Covid Care Unit. The team has been continuously serving over 15000 indirect cases on the ongoing journey. (W-pb)

## Villagers demand priority in employment



### Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2:** In Narva Uranium Project, Mumbai-based outsourcing company Delta has got a mining contract for 5 years. For restoration in the contract company, the villagers of five villages of Hitku Panchayat such as Hitku, Kadma, Kido, Khukhra Dih, Godadih and Rugdih held a meeting and demanded that UCIL management give priority to the villagers of all the villages under Hitku Panchayat in planning. In this regard, a memorandum was submitted to Jugsalai MLA Mangal Kalindi. In the memorandum, a list was handed over to 222 unemployed youths. A large number of villagers including Paltan Murmu, Shankar Hembram, Rahim Hembram, Pritam Sardar, Rajan Hasada, Ghashiram Das and Uttam Rajak were present among those who submitted the memorandum. (W-pb)

## Panchayat committee pays tribute to Sanatan Majhi



**Jamshedpur, July 2:** A tribute meeting was organized on Friday in Rasunchopa village under the aegis of Rasunchopa Dishom Sohrai Panchayat Committee in memory of former MLA Sanatan Manjhi, who represented Potka assembly constituency twice as MLA.

On this occasion, Zilla Parishad member Chandravati Mahato, JMM leader Sunil Mahato, Sushil Hansda, Shashodhar Hansda, Sanat Mandal, Anupam Mandal etc. were present as guests. At the beginning of the meeting, the guests and villagers paid homage to the picture of the late Sanatan Majhi, followed by a two-minute silence and prayed for the peace of the departed soul. (W-pb)

## Anand Marg distributes 1,550 fruits and medicinal plant saplings



**Jamshedpur, July 2:** Anand Marg Universal Relief Team Global in association with Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Plants (PCAP) have distributed more than 1,550 saplings of fruit and medicinal plants between June 26 and July 2 as a part of their joint endeavor to ensure environmental balance. Among the saplings of trees and plants distributed were Sal, Sagwan (Teak), Gamar (Beachwood), Acacia, Mango, Jackfruit, Blackberry, Anwla (Indian Gooseberry) and many medicinal varieties. People from Potka, Patamda, Gamharira, Govindpur, Gadra, Sapra, Shaharbera, Gauri and other villages were presented these varieties of saplings free of cost.

Anand Marg team's Sunil Anand said, "Some people took 30 saplings of their choice. The entire ecosystem has been thrown out of balance due to human carelessness. It is because of giving back to nature what man has taken - trees and plants that we have undertaken our humble mission of distributing free saplings to people to nurture them and see them develop as fruit bearing and shade providing trees. Nature has given us curative plants and herbs for practical ailments and that is a reason we have been handing out medicinal plant saplings as well. Our free plant distribution programme will continue." (W-gs)

## Congress launches 'Outreach' drive to survey COVID toll



### Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2:** Congress East Singhbhum district in-charge for implementation of the party's 'Outreach' drive, Jyoti Singh Matharu said as per directives of the party's national president, Sonia Gandhi and leader Rahul Gandhi, a survey was being undertaken and would continue till July 30 to take stock of the COVID toll to provide justice to the kin of people who died of the viral infection, children who were orphaned, those who lost their jobs and businesses. Project 'Outreach' was being undertaken by the Congress nationwide and the survey would be conducted from Block to Panchayat levels in every district.

This was stated at a press meet held at the district Congress headquarter in Tilak Pustakalaya on Friday. Matharu stated, "10 COVID Warriors have been appointed who will fill up survey forms on a door-to-door basis. The reports have to be presented weekly to the Congress district president who, in turn, would provide the data collected to the state president. Others present during the press meeting were Congress district president Vijay Khan, Ajay Singh, LB Singh, Brajendra Tiwary, Sanjay Singh Azad, Jasai Mardi, Prince Singh and Aparna Guha. (W-gs)

## Shobha Sahay Trust distributes food grains on anniversary



**Jamshedpur, July 2:** The Shobha Sahay Trust members celebrated the organization's anniversary by distributing food grains and other edibles among helpless and needy persons at Burmamines Kushth Ashram, Burmamines Gandhi Maidan and Sidgora # 10 Basti. The trust members who distributed the food items and other essentials included Sunil Sahay, Khushbu Kumari, Dinesh Gaud, Chandana Rani, Mamata Singh, Sonam Srivastav, Manju Mukhi, Vijaylakshmi, Urmila Devi, Madhu Pal, Amrita Kumari, Gauri Kumari, Anita Singh, Nitesh Sahay and Vikesh Sahay. (W-gs)

# BJP honors gold medal winning women archers



### Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2:** All the three women archers and coaches, who won the Archery World Cup in Paris, are from the

Tata Archery Center in Jamshedpur. On Friday, the Mahila Morcha Committee of the Jamshedpur BJP unit felicitated the gold winning women archers in the party office. Mahila Morcha

District President Jyoti Adhikari presided over the award ceremony. Purnima Mahato (Coach), Dinesh Kumar (President East Singhbhum Archery Association cum State Vice

President), Komolika Bari (Gold Winner) and Ankita Bhagat (Gold Winner) were among those honored during this period.

The BJP Mahila Morcha District Committee honored the women archers by presenting them with mementos and flowers. At the same time, the BJP Mahila Morcha also expressed its gratitude to coach Purnima Mahato and District Archery Association, who played a significant contribution in the role of Dronacharya behind the archers. (W-pb)

# Active Covid cases down to 101 in Jamshedpur

### Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, July 2:** Coronavirus cases continue to decline in Jamshedpur owing to a greater number of recoveries than fresh cases. 10 persons tested positive for COVID-19 in the East Singhbhum district, while no death was reported on Friday, July 2. The new positives in Jamshedpur took the Coronavirus tally to 51582.

18 people recovered of the virus on Friday taking the total recovery to 50431 while total active cases in Jamshedpur are 101.

Of the 101 patients still undergoing treatment for the coronavirus in the district, most are in home isolation, while some are being treated at care centres and hospitals.

Jamshedpur has seen a sharp decline in their total cases in the past four weeks. The death remained at 1050.

As many as 18 people recovered from the virus on Friday taking the overall recoveries to 5031 which accounts for a recovery rate of 97.79%, which is the highest so far.

East Singhbhum district administration has conducted 407644 test per million in the district. The



recovery rate in Jamshedpur is 97.79% while the mortality rate is 2.04%. With just 10 new Covid-19 cases, Jamshedpur's positivity rate on Friday remained below 1%, as the city stayed on the recovery path after a brutal wave of infections between April and May. The positivity rate stood at 0.41% on Friday. More than 2000 were tested on the day. Data from the state government's daily health bulletin showed that the Covid-19 test positivity is 0.41%. The state, too, witnessed a massive fall in infections and fatalities.

The positivity rate of Covid-19 cases

in Jamshedpur is around 0.41 per cent after East Singhbhum conducted over 2000 tests in the last 24 hours.

The Steel City tested 2450 samples, of which, 10 turned out positive while 18 people recovered from the Covid-19. The continuous high numbers of tests have pushed the positivity rate further down to 0.41 per cent, the government data showed.

So far in Jamshedpur 1098198 samples have been collected out of which 1085147 have been tested and 1033565 have turned out to be negative. (W-mb)

# Legal threats move closer to Trump as his trusted official charged

**New York, July 2 (IANS)** Legal threats have moved closer to former US President Donald Trump with the prosecution of his companies and a top official in his inner circle currently face charges of tax fraud.

The case filed in a local court by a city prosecutor on Thursday alleges that the Trump Organization hid payments of perks worth \$1.7 million over a 15-year period to the company's Chief Financial Officer Allen Weisselberg who evaded taxes on them.

Trump is himself not personally charged but the chargesheet said that an "undicted co-conspirator" was also involved.

An undicted co-conspirator is usually someone prosecutors believe is guilty but do not have enough information to charge the person who could later be named and

added to the case if they can build the case.

Weisselberg is accused of evading taxes on \$1.7 million he received in perks that included school fees for his grandchildren and car payments and flat rent, as well as furniture and TV sets for his home.

"This was a sweeping and audacious illegal payments scheme," Carey Dunne, who appeared for the prosecution, told the court. After two years of investigations into the businesses of Trump, state and city officials built their case with the help of Weisselberg's former daughter-in-law, Jennifer, who had financial records allegedly showing the perks that he had not reported.

She is involved in a court battle with her former husband over the custody of their children following their divorce.



Weisselberg, who surrendered to authorities, was brought into court in handcuffs to face 15 charges including tax fraud and grand larceny (property theft) for which he could face prison terms of at least 15 years if convicted.

Trump's companies could be hit with huge fines if found guilty and their hotel and hospitality could suffer a blow by losing their liquor licences.

A common tactic used by

US prosecutors is to prosecute a person who may be able to provide evidence against their principal quarry in hopes that person would turn approver or agree to help the prosecution in return for leniency.

Weisselberg has so far stood firm unlike Trump's former personal lawyer Michael Cohen who has cooperated with prosecutors after being prosecuted in connection with hush

money paid to a porn star and a former adult film star who said they had affairs with Trump.

Cohen was convicted of tax fraud and election finance law violations and sentenced to three years.

The charges against the Trump Organization and its official came a week after the defeated President began holding public appearances, a visit to the border with Mexico to highlight the illegal immigration problem and a rally in Ohio.

Prosecutors in New York State are elected and Cyrus Vance, the prosecutor for Manhattan in New York City, won the election as a Democrat.

During Trump's presidency, his opposition looked to Vance and New York Attorney General Letitia James, another elected Democrat, to

investigate and prosecute him.

Federal prosecutors are appointed by the President.

Reacting to Weisselberg's prosecution, Trump said in a statement: "Do people see the Radical Left prosecutors, and what they are trying to do to 75 million plus Voters and Patriots, for what it is?"

"If the name of the company was something else, I don't think these charges would have been brought," Trump Organization lawyer Alan Futerfas said.

James said that the New York State investigations into Trump and his organisation would continue. State prosecutors were reportedly investigating whether Trump and his organisation had illegally inflated the value of some of the properties to get loans.

## Delta variant to make up 80% of new cases in Germany

**Berlin, July 2 (IANS)** The Delta variant is expected to become the dominant Covid-19 strain in Germany with its share of positive cases approaching 80 per cent, Health Minister Jens Spahn said.

The share of new Covid-19 infections caused by the more infectious Delta variant has already more than doubled since last week and currently stands at 37 per cent, according to the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), the federal agency and research institute responsible for disease control and prevention.

The German government would likely be able to keep its promise to vaccinate the entire adult population by the end of summer, Xinhua news agency quoted the Minister as saying to reporters on Thursday.

The more people receive their second vaccine dose, the higher the level of protection will be against the Delta variant, he added.

Till date, almost 31 million people in Germany have already been fully vaccinated, bringing the country's vaccination rate to 37.3 per cent, according to the RKI.

Spahn urged his non-vaccinated compatriots to get tested regularly.

"This is another important difference from last year, we have tests available on a large scale," he said.

Meanwhile, the number of daily Covid-19 infections is continuing to fall as 892 new cases were registered within 24 hours on Thursday, 116 less than one week ago, the RKI said.

# US adds Pakistan, Turkey to Child Soldiers Prevention Act list

**Islamabad, July 2 (IANS)** In a move that could attract serious sanctions on Pakistan and Turkey and would certainly impact bilateral relations, the US has added both the countries into its Child Soldiers Prevention Act (CSPA) list.

The designation is included in the US State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report. Inclusion in the list could lead to sanction on military assistance and participation in peacekeeping programmes.

The US CSPA is a list of foreign governments, added in the annual TIP report for being found guilty of recruiting child soldiers during the previous year. Police, armed forces, security forces and government supported armed groups are major



entities reviewed before any country is added into the list.

As per details in the TIP report and the 2021 CSPA list, the countries included:

Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Libya, South Sudan, Syria, Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Nigeria, Venezuela, and Yemen.

The 2021 list includes Pakistan and Turkey as the new additions while others have been listed for over 10 years.

A child soldier, as defined by the State Department, is "any person under 18 years of age who takes a direct part in hostilities as a member of governmental armed forces, police or other security

forces".

Pakistan's inclusion into the list is a serious matter of concern for Islamabad as relations with the Biden administration and the Imran Khan led government have not kicked off on a positive path for the moment.

President Joe Biden and Khan are yet to speak to each other, even though Pakistan holds key position in the ongoing Afghan peace process.

The US forces are withdrawing from Afghanistan and have asked Pakistan to provide it access to airspace and airbases to operate from, after exiting Afghanistan.

Pakistan on the other hand, has rejected the US demand, stating that it will not indulge in US's proxy war.

Top military and intelligence officials from

US have been visiting Islamabad recently and have had detailed meetings with the Pakistani military establishment.

Experts say that Pakistan's relations with US are not at the level, where they used to be previously. Pakistan's influence on the Taliban, as per experts, is also not like it used to be. However, Pakistan still has connections with the Taliban, which makes its value even more important.

It is known that there were recruitment camps established and operating from Pakistan, where young soldiers were recruited to either fight in Afghanistan or become suicide bombers.

Pakistan maintains that no terror group holds any organised presence on its soil, nor it would allow any group to operate from its soil.

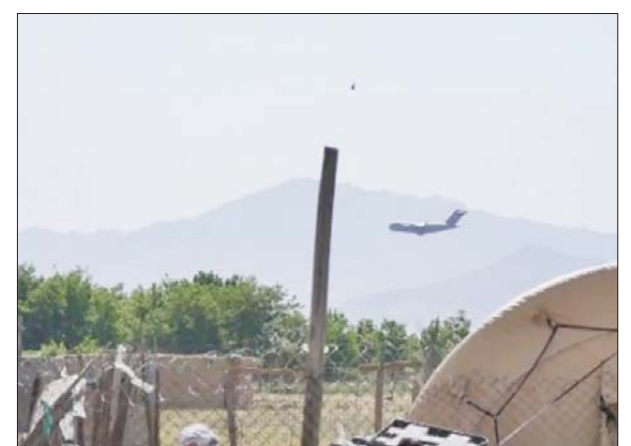
**Kabul, July 2 (IANS)**

After nearly two decades, the US military has left the Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan and has handed it over to Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, sources confirmed on Friday.

At its peak, the airfield, the largest in Afghanistan and located 69 km north of Kabul in the central province of Parwan, witnessed the deployment of more than 100,000 US troops, TOLO News.

The handover of the airfield to Afghan forces shows that last of the roughly 2,500 to 3,500 US troops have left Afghanistan, according to the Defence Ministry sources.

Ahead of leaving the base, dozens of trailer trucks loaded with scrap from destroyed vehicles and equipment that belonged to American



troops left the airfield on a daily basis.

Those who purchase the material say that so far, the scrap has been worth millions of dollars, TOLO News reported citing the sources.

Some residents of Bagram said that such equipment should have been handed over to Afghan forces instead of being scrapped by the US military. But US forces

will be scrapped so it does not fall into enemy hands.

The Afghan government has said that equipment worth \$1 billion will be handed over to the Afghan forces.

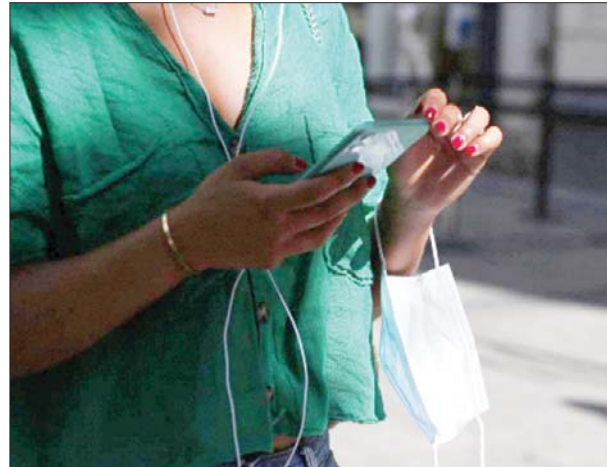
US forces started a withdrawal on May 1, a process that is expected to be completed earlier than the given deadline of September 11.

# Europe expected to be 'Delta dominant' by Aug, warns WHO

**Copenhagen, July 2 (IANS)** The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that Europe is expected to be "Delta dominant" by August, adding that increased mixing, travel, gatherings, and easing of social restrictions have ended a 10-week decline in the number of new Covid-19 cases across the continent.

"Last week, the number of cases rose by 10 per cent. This is taking place in the context of a rapidly evolving situation, a new variant of concern, the Delta variant, and in a region where despite tremendous efforts by the member states, millions remain unvaccinated," the WHO's Regional Director for Europe, Hans Kluge said at an online press conference in here on Thursday.

He noted that the "Delta variant overtakes the Alpha very quickly through



multiple and repeated introductions, and is already translating into increased hospitalisations and deaths", reports Xinhua news agency.

The WHO European Region, according to Kluge, is expected to be "Delta dominant" by August.

He also warns that new variants, deficit in vaccine uptake and increased social mixing would cause a new

wave of excess hospitalisations and deaths before the autumn in the region.

To counter the expected upsurge, Kluge again called upon the region to "remain disciplined" and for citizens to take up vaccines when offered.

"Vaccines are effective against the Delta variant. Not one dose but two doses. Delays in getting

vaccinated cost lives and economies, and the slower we vaccinate, the more variants will emerge."

Kluge also lamented over the clear disparity in vaccine equality between rich and poor countries in Europe and noted that it was "unacceptable" that vaccine coverage was 24 per cent throughout the entire region, "far from the recommended 80 per cent coverage of the adult population".

"With these figures, nowhere is the pandemic over, and it would be very wrong for anyone - citizen and policymakers - to assume that it is.

"The stakes are still high. Covid-19's trajectory in the coming weeks and months depends on the decisions and actions of us as individuals, communities, and as governments, we will take now and the weeks ahead, solidarity pays off," he added.

# Deaths spike as heatwave scorches parts of US, Canada

**Washington/Ottawa, July 2 (IANS)** Hundreds of deaths in Canada's British Columbia province and in the US states of Washington and Oregon have been linked to a record breaking heatwave scorching the two countries, sending thousands of people scrambling for relief, according to authorities.

Lisa Lapointe, British Columbia's chief coroner, said on Thursday 486 deaths had been reported in the province between June 25, a period in which about 165 deaths would normally be documented, reports Xinhua news agency.

Deaths were expected to increase, she said.

"While it is too early to say with certainty how many of these deaths are heat related, it is believed likely that the significant increase in deaths reported is attributable to the



extreme weather British Columbia has experienced."

Oregon's state medical examiner's office on Wednesday attributed at least 63 deaths in five days to the punishing heat in the state, including 45 in Multnomah County, which includes Portland, where temperatures reached a record 46 degrees Celsius.

In Washington, officials reported nearly a dozen lives lost to hyperthermia

on Wednesday alone in King County, which includes Seattle; two heat-related deaths were reported there the day before.

In Snohomish County, Washington, at least three people died this week from heatstroke, according to the medical examiner's office, which added that investigations are pending into at least two more suspected heat-related deaths.

"This was a true health crisis that has underscored how deadly an extreme heat wave can be, especially to otherwise vulnerable people," Jennifer Vines, the Multnomah County health officer, said in a statement on Thursday.

"I know many county residents were looking out for each other and am deeply saddened by this initial death toll."

This year a study found that 37 per cent of heat-related deaths could be linked to climate change. "Climate change is increasing the frequency, intensity and duration of heat waves," Kristie Ebi, a professor in the Center for Health and the Global Environment at the University of Washington, was quoted as saying.

"When you look at this heat wave, it is so far outside the range of normal."

# Emiratis banned from travelling to India, 13 other nations

**Dubai, July 2 (IANS)** UAE authorities have prohibited Emiratis from travelling to 14 countries, including India, amidst fears of the highly infectious Delta coronavirus variant.

Other countries in the list are Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Nigeria.

The directive was issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation (MoFAIC) and the National Emergency, Crisis and Disasters Management

Authority (NCEMA). UAE diplomatic missions in all these countries, official delegations and previously authorised business and technical delegates were exempt from the decision.

The authorities have also permitted travel for emergency treatment cases, with India being one of the most popular destinations among Emiratis for medical purpose.

While the Covid-19 infection numbers continue to be under control in the UAE, one out of three new cases were the Delta variant.

On Thursday, 1,675 new cases were reported, with



1,556 recoveries and eight deaths. With school year ending in the UAE in the first week of July, it is the peak travel time as many citizens and expats head out to escape the heat. In a joint

statement, both authorities stressed on the need for citizens to comply with all Covid-related precautionary protocols, not just at home, but also at the destination country.

The statement said that Emiratis infected abroad will be allowed to return after getting the necessary approvals from the relevant authorities in the host country as well as the UAE.

Meanwhile, Air India announced that its offer for a free date change for cancelled flights from India will be extended until July 21.

In a statement posted on its website, Air India said: "Restrictions imposed by the UAE Government banning entry into UAE other than UAE Nationals and exempted category between 25th April 2021 up to 04th May 2021.

"In view of the same, one

free date change to passengers holding 098 documents for sector India-UAE-India, during the period of ban will be allowed. Difference in fare, if applicable, will be charged. In case passenger wants to cancel the ticket, NIL cancellation charges will apply."

Air India is currently operating around 100 flights weekly to the UAE under the air bubble agreement after travel restrictions were implemented by the UAE government.

These flights can only accept passengers eligible for travel to the UAE under exempted categories.

## 5 injured in Washington under-construction building collapse

**Washington, July 2 (IANS)** At least five people were injured when an under-construction building in Washington D.C. fully collapsed, according to authorities.

The D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department said the building in the 900 block of Kennedy Street Northwest collapsed at around 3.30 p.m. on Thursday, resulting in one person trapped in the debris and several others injured, reports Xinhua news agency.

The department said in later updates that four people with non-life threatening injuries were transported to the hospital, and that the adult male that was trapped was eventually removed from the pile.

He was conscious, it added.

The incident came exactly one week after the partial collapse of a 12-storey condominium in Surfside, Florida. At least 18 people have been confirmed dead, while 145 others were still missing.

U.S. President Joe Biden travelled to Surfside on Thursday, and met impacted families and offering them consolation.

The search and rescue operations have halted after monitoring devices indicated that the remaining part of the building may collapse.

# 'Mumbai Samachar', where Gandhi-Nehru came for chai-chat, turns 200

By Quaid Najmi

**Mumbai, July 1 (IANS)** Asia's oldest existing newspaper - "Mumbai Samachar" - where once Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel used to drop in for tea and a chat, entered the 200th year of publication on Thursday.

It was started as a small bunch of pamphlets on July 1, 1822, by Parsi priest-cum-scholar, Fardunjee Murazban - considered the pioneer of Gujarati journalism - through the first Indian printing press which he launched in 1812.

Initially, Murazban brought out a Gujarati calendar in 1814 before jumping into media journalism in 1822 with the "Mumbai Samachar, 14-pages on three small quarto sheets and a half-sheet supplement in a 10 by 8 inch format.

While the first Asian newspaper was "Hicky's Bengal Gazette" or the Original Calcutta General Advertiser, which came out from 1780, it folded up in 1782. "Samachar Darpan" the

country's first non-English newspaper, was published from May 23, 1818 from Hooghly, followed by the "Mumbai Samachar".

"It catered to the thriving business community of the city and provided business-related news, death announcements, and especially shipping time-tables as all trade was conducted through the Bombay port," its present-day owner-Director Hormusji N. Cama, told IANS in a free-wheeling chat.

A weekly till 1832, a bi-weekly till 1855, and then on to a full-fledged daily, the newspaper became a darling of the Gujarati community comprising Parsis, Hindus, Jain, Dawoodi Bohras, Khojas, Memons, et al.

Over the years, while faithfully catering to the business community, "Mumbai Samachar" witnessed history as the Seven Isles known as Bombay transformed into Mumbai, the country's financial-glamour power capital.

The Camas, who acquired it in



1933, continued the paper's strongly "nationalistic" editorial policies which endeared itself to the stalwarts of the

freedom movement.

"Gandhiji, Nehru and Patel were frequent visitors to my grandfather, Mancherji Cama, to discuss politics over tea," said Cama, who is now managing the newspaper with his two brothers - Mancherji and Merwanji.

With a daily circulation of barely 15,000 copies in the 1930s, now it sells at least 10-times more, and held a total monopoly in the Mumbai Gujarati daily newspaper segment till the 1990s when its first competitor entered Mumbai.

There was also the "Bombay Chronicle" started by another luminary, Sir Pherozshah Mehta in 1910, but after the Camas took it over, they shut it down in 1959 to concentrate only on "Mumbai Samachar".

Interestingly, after Asia's first bourse, the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) started in 1875, the "Mumbai Samachar" would provide well-researched daily reports on the ups-and-downs right till the 1990s which were eagerly lapped up by the

investor community.

"With the advent of the Internet-era, we toned down the stock market coverage. However, the BSE authorities publicly objected and we reverted to it for a few years. But, as things became quicker due to technology, we now offer detailed analyses," Hormusji Cama told IANS.

As in the past, the Camas ensured the newspaper avoided controversies, never targeted people, communities or politicians unnecessarily as it wanted "the readers to feel good in the morning" instead of getting depressed with negative news.

There was a time when the newspaper would carry many top news a day or two later, since, as Cama explained: "We would verify all news, even from the newswire agencies and the tradition continues though selectively."

Surviving for nearly 18 decades without its own set of correspondents, barely in the past 20 years, the newspaper started hiring its own reporters, columnists, expert

commentators.

It even appointed the first-ever woman editor for a Gujarati daily, Pinki Dalal, and has a modern bustling newsroom in the 'Red House' - its imposing headquarters near Horniman Circle, which was a landmark well-known as the Red Fort or the White House for old Mumbaikars.

The staffers enjoyed certain privileges like lifetime employment, no retrenchment policy, and modest emoluments compensated by generous festival food coupons, no salary cuts - even if employees remained absent for months or years due to illness, they would continue to get paid, "as it was not their fault and we couldn't just dump them", said Cama.

The current Editor, Nilesh Dave said its glorious traditions continue and entering the 200th year was a landmark occasion of which all are excited.

(Quaid Najmi can be contacted at: q.najmi@ians.in)

## Starting young was blessing: Anahita & Apoorva

By Sukant Deepak

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** Anahita and Apoorva, the Chennai-based much sought-after young artists in the Indian Carnatic Classical arena insist that starting their training much before the age of 10 has been the biggest blessing. Besides vocals, Anahita is proficient in playing the Chitravina while Apoorva is also a violinist. "Any skill takes a long time to master. So, the earlier a child gets the right kind of exposure, the better chance he or she has, to imbibe the essence and get drawn towards it naturally," says Anahita.

Apoorva adds that her paternal grandmother, who was their first teacher and had the opportunity to learn from several revered gurus in her younger days helped them get an early start into music. "She will always remain our first teacher first and then our grandmother! We continue to learn from her even today and her inputs and critiques are very valuable for our growth as musicians."

Talk to them about the fact that besides vocals, they also play instruments, and both insist that much of their music is based on



aural perception and hence learning becomes predominantly based on what one hears, from the guru. "Notations and other texts definitely compliment this learning process but learning an instrument adds a different dimension altogether. You are now able to see the notes you are playing, and visualize the movements between the notes," says Anahita.

"This brings in a far deeper understanding of what we sing. Even the vice-versa is true. An instrumentalist benefits a lot from learning vocal as it helps in understanding the lyrics of the composition, hence emote better through the instrument," Apoorva adds. Though the duo received the prestigious CCRT scholarship from the Govt. of India at very young ages for a few years,

they point that there are a huge number of musicians who have not been able to pursue their passion mainly due to lack of monetary support. "If the government and other institutions step in with more scholarships, we can definitely see a rise in the number of youngsters getting closer to achieve their dreams in the classical music field," the Chennai-based sisters, who started their initial training with Shanti Jayaraman and are currently under the guidance of Chitravina N Ravikiran hope.

Stressing that it is important that classical music be included at the primary level in schools where young students are exposed to the literary value and the magic of the melody, they feel that workshops and lecture demonstrations by

inspiring artistes should also be organised, where they share their experiences and give advice to those passionate about classical music.

While the pandemic may have brought all concerts to a halt, thus majorly affecting the arts sector, for Anahita and Apoorva this was a time for introspect and analyzing their own music and pay more attention to detail. "Most importantly, we were able to practice without any pressure or the stress of a performance. It was sheer joy to just practice without deadlines. We hope that even when things open up, we are able to continue this, along with our performances," they say.

Part of the recently organised HCL 'Baithak', the sisters believe that when the private sector jumps in to promote art and culture, what emerges is a healthy ecosystem where everyone is able to reap the benefits.

"Companies like HCL provide a great platform for youngsters apart from sponsoring many events. They do a very commendable service to the art community by organizing online concerts too, at a time when the whole world is grappling

with a pandemic. We need more corporate houses to step in."

About digital concerts being organised during these times, they feel music is something to be experienced -- and this is possible only when there is an audience who receives what they sing and through their reactions, they understand the pulse -- thus leading to a continuous flow of energy. "And, alongwith the other artistes on stage, the vibe we share contributes a lot to the kind of qualitative music that has to be produced. It is definitely magical to have these continuous interactions among the artistes and with the audience. That said, online concerts have a different set of advantages, including reaching out to a far wider base of audience," says Anahita.

Talk to them about competition among themselves and Apoorva says that a healthy one does exist. "It goes a long way in improving ourselves. It encourages us to push our boundaries, step out of our comfort zones, which we feel is most crucial for an artist to grow."

(Sukant Deepak can be contacted at sukant.d@ians.in)

## Misuse of antibiotics soared in India during Covid pandemic: Study

New York, July 2 (IANS)

Covid-19 likely contributed to 216.4 million excess doses of antibiotics for adults, suggesting that the drug was used by almost everyone to treat mild and moderate cases of coronavirus infection in the country, claims a research pointing out Covid guidelines were not followed.

The study led by researchers at the Barnes-Jewish Hospital in Missouri, US, showed a total of 16.29 billion doses of antibiotics were sold in India in 2020. Adult dose usage increased from 72.6 per cent in 2018 and 72.5 per cent in 2019 to 76.8 per cent in 2020.

In addition, sales of azithromycin, used for treating typhoid fever, non-typhoidal Salmonella and traveller's diarrhoea, for adults in India increased from 4 per cent in 2018 and 4.5 per cent in 2019 to 5.9 per cent in 2020.

The study, published in the journal PLOS Medicine, also showed notable increases in the sales of doxycycline and faropenem, two antibiotics commonly used to treat respiratory infections. "Antibiotic resistance is



one of the greatest threats to global public health. Overuse of antibiotics lessens their ability to effectively treat minor injuries and common infections such as pneumonia, which means that these conditions can become serious and deadly. Bacteria that have become resistant to antibiotics don't have boundaries.

"They can spread to any person in any country," said infectious diseases specialist Sumanth Gandra, Associate Professor of medicine and an associate hospital epidemiologist at the Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

"Our results indicate that almost everybody who was diagnosed with Covid-19 received an antibiotic in India," he added.

On the other hand, in high-income countries such as the US, UK and Canada,

overall antibiotic use plunged in 2020, even during Covid-19 peaks, revealed the study.

"This is because physicians in high-income countries generally did not prescribe antibiotics for mild and moderate Covid-19 cases. The uptick in India indicates that Covid-19 guidelines were not followed," Gandra said.

In India, an unregulated private sector accounts for 75 per cent of healthcare and 90 per cent of antibiotic sales, allowing for antibiotic overprescription.

Antibiotics should only be given to patients who develop secondary bacterial illnesses, but Gandra said that "this was not the case, indicating the need for policy changes in India, especially in light of the current crisis and the possibility of a devastating third wave".

## Gen X, Z inclined towards altruism: Study



By Puja Gupta

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANSLife)** Different age groups across India dealt with last year's national lockdown amid the Covid-19 pandemic in their own unique ways. Godrej Group's latest survey 'Little Things We Do' highlights revealed how different age groups across the country coped with the lockdown in 2020 in different ways.

A majority of those in the Gen X grouping (59 per cent), aged 45 and above, and the Gen Z (53 per cent) grouping, aged 18-24, turned to altruism, distributing sanitizers, food packets, old clothes, blankets, or medical devices to those in need.

It added that a majority of millennials (54 per cent) made environmentally-conscious actions their top priority. A dissection of the millennials age-group further revealed that younger millennials (25-34) were the most environmentally-conscious among all age-groups with 54.83 per cent giving topmost priority to growing plants at home, being conscious of energy consumption and of the environmental impact of the products they purchased.

The 'Little Things We Do' research was commissioned to highlight how little contributions and their subsequent impact often leaves a lasting mark on our lives.

Almost three out of five (59 per cent) millennials took to a physical or mental fitness activity like yoga, Zumba, walking or meditation to keep themselves healthy and happy. At the same time only a small percentage quit vices such as smoking, overspending, junk eating and drinking across all age groups.

Only 36 per cent of respondents surveyed said they had quit unhealthy habits. Gen Z fared the worst on this count

(34 per cent) followed by Gen X (35 per cent). Eating healthy home-made food due to lockdown restrictions warranted a behavioural consensus among respondents falling in the Gen Z and younger millennials (74 per cent) group in comparison to older millennials (75 per cent) and Gen X (77 per cent).

Sujit Patil, Vice President & Group Head -- Corporate Brand and Communications, Godrej, described the research as an insight into the minds of different consumer age-groups in response to a challenging period. He said, "The current pandemic has taken a toll on the lifestyle and aspirations of Indians. People from different age groups, therefore, have started incorporating 'little' changes in their lives that can boost mental and physical well-being. While some of the age groups have shown great interest towards altruism, others have taken steps to safeguard their own health and well-being.

He further added, "There is a scope improvement in the area of hand and product sanitization as only 86 per cent of respondents said they are sanitizing their hands or things as a measure to stay healthy and happy. This does require a concerted effort from all of us to raise the bar of personal hygiene further."

According to the study, confinement and other restrictions have also given time for entertainment and spending time with family: more than a quarter (27.35 per cent) of respondents contented themselves by spending time with family and watching content (26.59 per cent) and nearly a quarter (23.19 per cent) preferred to spend time reading or listening to music. Almost one in every five started cooking as a form of positive therapy. To stay positive and happy during lockdown, almost 33 per cent of the Gen X-ers surveyed preferred to spend time with family, followed by watching OTT content and TV shows (21 per cent) or listening to music or reading books (23 per cent). In contrast, for other age-groups watching content on OTT platforms or listening to music was their go-to space for happiness.

(Puja Gupta can be contacted at puja.g@ians.in)

## Demand from Western markets helped Indian Textile sector stay afloat amid pandemic

By Puja Gupta

New Delhi, July 2 (IANSLife)

Clothes are one of the basic needs of human existence, which is why even during lockdown, the apparel industry witnessed a steady demand. Demand from Western markets helped the Indian Textile sector stay afloat, says Avinash Mane, Commercial Director, South Asia, Lenzing Group.

Mane shares his views on the challenges the Indian textile industry faced due to the pandemic and what role technology has to play in the future of the apparel industry.

Q: How has the Indian textile industry responded to the challenges experienced by Covid-19 over the past year?

A: The textile sector is one of the biggest contributors to the national economy and a large employment generator. India's textile sector is unique with it being one of the finest in the world producing around 15 per cent of total industrial production and contributing around 30 per cent to total exports.

The sector did face its share of challenges over the last year. While the domestic retail went on pause last summer, the export orders from European and American region also dried. But despite the issues, the industry has kept afloat. Specially post the first wave when orders from western countries started flowing in. The recovery, which was export driven, was visible from early this year. Clothes are one of the basic needs of human existence, which is why even during lockdown, the online apparel industry witnessed a steady demand.

According to a recent report by the Indian Ratings and Research agency (Ind-Ra), the non-



availability of inputs such as fabric, yarns etc due to lockdown related restrictions may cause a short-term impact on the finished output in the sector, however it is unlikely to impact the Indian textile sector.

As mentioned, demand from western markets helped the Indian Textile sector stay afloat. Ind-Ra stated that due to strong export markets, the first quarter of the current financial year may not be a 'lost quarter' for the textile sector. Covid-19 and lockdown have also been a deep learning experience for the textile industry who responded with agility by working out adequate inventory and we believe will help the sector bounce back sooner than expected.

Recently, Lenzing announced its business results for first quarter. The group has seen good growth for its TENCEL lyocell and modal fibers as well as LENZING ECOVERO viscose fibers. The Indian region has been a key contributor to this.

The sector has also received promising support from the government through innovative schemes such as planned mega textile parks, giving it the necessary impetus to become competitive, attract large investments through the creation of world-class infrastructure.

Q: Do you feel that the Indian textile industry has fared better than other regions in terms of business? If yes, why?

A: The Covid-19 pandemic also put a spotlight on the untapped textile potential of South Asian region. It has given an opportunity to countries like India, Bangladesh, Indonesia to become a potential global centre for textile and clothing exports. Availability of abundant and cheap labour, water and other raw materials for textile manufacturing processes, large production of cotton, nearness to growing markets have further helped this.

Q: Covid-19 has given rise to a new type of consumer thus pushing products and services to recreate themselves. Do you believe this is true for textile ad apparels as well? Please elaborate.

A: The Covid-19 crisis gave rise to a more conscious consumer. There has been a significant change in consumer attitudes and shopping behaviour and most of these are expected to remain post-pandemic. The lockdown forced consumers to analyse their shopping habits, including cost consciousness, preference for local products, evaluating the impact of their purchases, which ultimately leads to making sustainable choices.

Consumer preferences sharply realigned away from lifestyle to health, hygiene and personal care. Value of hygiene increased significantly thus paving the way for products that promote hygiene assuring consumers with greater safety from the virus.

What is interesting to note that fibre features such as microbial resistance became a key focus for the textile manufacturers and brands. These were earlier considered as add-on features, the use of which was restricted to special segments like sportswear.

Apparel brands grew their portfolios to add masks as they became a staple product. Demand from the medical industry increased demand for non-woven textile significantly. These are key ingredients in creating masks, wipes and PPE kits. We foresee this demand to sustain in the near future and contribute to the sector.

Q: Do you believe that technology will have a greater role within the textile industry in a post Covid-19 era?

A: We believe technology will play a key role in reviving, rejuvenating, and reinventing the Indian textile industry. Undoubtedly, technology's support is vital to any sector but when it comes to textile, it becomes even more important.

Consumers are keen to know about the origin and journey of their products. This is driving up the demand for traceability by brands and consumers alike which is further driving the increasing use of AI and IoT within the sector. To address this demand Lenzing collaborated with TextileGenesis and introduced a brand-new blockchain-enabled supply chain traceability platform in 2020.

(Puja Gupta can be contacted at puja.g@ians.in)

# India joins OECD/G20 inclusive framework tax deal

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** India has joined the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the G20 inclusive framework tax deal that is working towards addressing the tax challenges arising from the digitalisation of the economies globally.

Majority of the OECD and G20 members, including India, on Thursday adopted the Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting that contains a high-level statement outlining consensus solution to address tax challenges arising in a digitised economy.

The proposed solution consists of two components



-- one, which is about reallocation of additional share of profit to the market jurisdictions, and two, consisting of minimum tax and subject to tax rules.

Some significant issues, including share of profit allocation and scope of subject to tax rules, remain open and need to be addressed, a Finance Ministry statement said.

Further, the technical

details of the proposal will be worked out in the coming months and a consensus agreement is expected by October.

The principles underlying the solution vindicates India's stand for a greater share of profits for the markets, consideration of demand side factors in profit allocation, the need to seriously address the issue of cross border profit

shifting and the need for subject to tax rule to stop treaty shopping.

India is in favour of a consensus solution which is simple to implement and comply. At the same time, the solution should result in the allocation of meaningful and sustainable revenue to market jurisdictions, particularly for developing and emerging economies.

India will continue to be constructively engaged for reaching a consensus based on a ready to implement solution with reallocation of additional share of profit to the market jurisdictions and minimum tax as a package by October and contribute positively for the advancement of the international tax agenda.

# RBI warns against combination of high public debt, low interest rates

**Mumbai, July 2 (IANS)** As economies around the world witness ultra-low interest rates and rising public debt amid the pandemic, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has said that the combination would pose challenges.

The pandemic response saw a tight interaction of monetary and fiscal policy. As monetary policy has sought to control a larger segment of the yield curve, the overlap with public debt management has grown, noted RBI's Financial Stability Report for July.

It noted that with monetary policy committed to an easy stance for some time in many countries, the fiscal stance becomes important.

Too loose a fiscal stance



could cause inflation surprises and financial conditions could tighten, it said, adding that a more

constrained fiscal policy would add pressure on monetary policy.

"It would test the efficacy

of further monetary expansion and could heighten intertemporal tradeoffs," it said. The extraordinary combination of high debt-to-GDP ratios and ultra-low interest rates raises three challenges, said the central bank's report, with the first being the risk of fiscal dominance. Further, it may also lead to a situation where fiscal positions may ultimately prove unsustainable and the complications of the possible joint "normalisation" of fiscal and monetary policies would also crop.

Growth-friendly fiscal policy, the RBI suggested, can help by effectively targeting public infrastructure and productivity.

## New long only India portfolio launched

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** Christopher Wood, Global Head of Equity Strategy at Jefferies, has announced the launch of a long-only India portfolio similar to the existing long-only Japan and China portfolios. Wood said India has nearly always had a significant representation in GREED & fear's long-only Asia ex-Japan portfolio, launched nearly 19 years ago at the end of 3Q02. But for some reason, GREED & fear has never had a dedicated long-only India portfolio. This will now change primarily because GREED & fear would like to add more Indian stocks which is not possible in the regional long-only portfolio since the idea is that these long-only portfolios, none of which can own cash, should be reasonably concentrated. The Indian portfolio, which has been put together in consultation with Jefferies head of India research Mahesh Nandurkar, will start off with 16 stocks compared with the total of 21 stocks currently in the Asia ex-Japan long-only portfolio. Again, the portfolio cannot own cash. Wood said this is certainly not a perfect time to start an Indian portfolio since the Sensex is near an all-time high though, for that matter, so are many other stock markets.

## Govt mulls regular multi-level monitoring of critical infra projects

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** The Centre has decided on regular multi-level monitoring of infrastructure projects that are critical to the economic growth and employment generation in the country. As part of the drive, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Railways and Consumer Affairs, Piyush Goyal chaired a meeting for the review of 20 large-scale infrastructure projects with issues enlisted for resolution, with the Project Monitoring Group on the June 29. Som Prakash, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Chief Secretaries of Governments of Bihar, Haryana and Tamil Nadu, and Additional Chief Secretary, Industries of Government of Maharashtra participated in the meeting through Video Conference. Senior officials of key Central Ministries, including Railways, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Road Transport and Highways, Environment, Forest and Climate Change were also present to discuss issues affecting the progress of work and timely completion of these critical projects. Goyal reviewed 59 issues in 20 critical infrastructure projects with anticipated investment value of nearly Rs 2.7 lakh crore. This includes 11 projects previously reviewed under PRAGATI by the Prime Minister. Among the projects reviewed, Dedicated Freight Corridors along eastern and western routes will augment capacity of rail freight transportation and establish industrial zones at junction points.

## Retail, wholesale trade to get MSME status



**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** In a major move to support traders in the country, the government has revised guidelines for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) to bring retail and wholesale trade under their ambit. Noting that retail and wholesale trade were left out of the ambit of MSMEs, Union MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari, in a string of tweets, said: "Under the revised guidelines, MSME has issued order to include retail and wholesale trade as MSME and extending to them the benefit of priority sector lending under RBI guidelines." "Under the leadership of PM

Narendra Modi, we are committed to strengthening of MSME and make them engines for economic growth. The revised guidelines will benefit 2.5 Cr Retail and Wholesale Traders." With the revised guidelines, the retail and wholesale trades will be now be allowed to register on Udyam portal. In a statement in response to the decision, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said that the traders of the country are in a jubilant mood because of their inclusion under the definition of MSME. CAIT Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal said the decision of the government will benefit about more than eight crore small businesses of the country.

Resurgent India Managing Director Jyoti Prakash Gadia described the move as a path-breaking decision, which will have a positive and lasting impact on the economy. "This will enable them to become a major part of the mainstream economy facilitated by the availability of credit from banks on a priority basis at cheaper rates," he said.

## RBI red flags concerns around big tech in financial services

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has highlighted the likely issues around big tech's role in the financial services sector and said that concerns such as level playing field with banks and operational risks have intensified lately.

RBI's Financial Stability Report for July also noted that big tech offers a wide range of digital financial services and has a substantial footprint in the payment systems, crowdfunding, asset management, banking and insurance of several advanced and emerging market economies.

It added that while this holds the promise of supporting financial inclusion and generating lasting efficiency gains, including by encouraging the competitiveness of banks, some important policy issues arise.

"Specifically, concerns have intensified around a level playing field with banks,

operational risk, too-big-to-fail issues, challenges for antitrust rules, cyber security and data privacy," it said.

The central bank's report said that big tech present at least three unique challenges, with the first being that they straddle many different (non-financial) lines of business with sometimes opaque overarching governance structures.

Second, they have the potential to become dominant players in financial services and thirdly, big tech are generally able to overcome limits to scale in financial services provision by exploiting network effects. "For central banks and financial regulators, financial stability objectives may be best pursued by blending activity and entity-based prudential regulation of big tech," the report said.

Furthermore, as the digital economy expands across borders, international coordination of rules and standards becomes more pressing, it said.

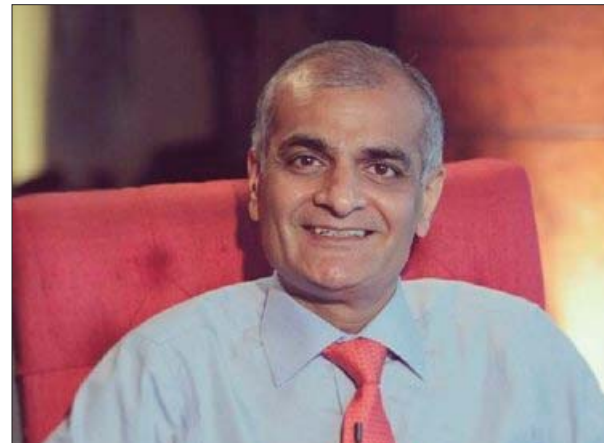
## Edelweiss Group to sell stake in Edelweiss Gallagher Insurance Brokers

**Mumbai, July 2 (IANS)** Edelweiss Group on Friday announced the divestment of its remaining 70 per cent stake in Edelweiss Gallagher Insurance Brokers Ltd (EGIBL) for Rs 307.60 crore.

Gallagher, who previously held 30 per cent in the business, will now be acquiring all the remaining shares, taking its stake to 100 per cent. The transaction is subject to approvals by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India, said a regulatory filing.

Headquartered in Mumbai, with branches in Delhi, Kolkata and Bangalore, EGIBL offers general insurance solutions to clients across India. The business operates across four areas -- corporate, affinity & association, reinsurance & global and digital solutions.

Gallagher and Edelweiss entered into a partnership in May 2019, with Gallagher acquiring a minority shareholding in the insurance broking business to give it wider access to international markets and global expertise.



This partnership marked Gallagher's maiden presence in

India and gave the company a footprint in the growing Indian insurance market. This acquisition of the remaining shares of EGIBL will help enable a deeper integration with Gallagher's global operations, helping scale up the business significantly.

It will also give clients access to a larger suite of insurance products and services. The business will rebrand to Gallagher in the coming months. Edelweiss Group will focus on growing its life and non-life insurance businesses, which have been among the fastest growing in the industry.

Rashesh Shah, Chairman, Edelweiss Group said "We believe in doing what is right for the business and the customer and integrating the business with Gallagher will give it a global edge and achieve our objectives."

"It also provides us with the flexibility to reallocate capital and invest in scaling up our fast-growing life and non-life insurance businesses, making this a win-win for both of us," Shah said.

## Indian Sellers Collective calls for stringent anti-competition e-commerce policy

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** Indian Sellers Collective organized a virtually panel discussion to deliberate on various challenges faced by small retailers/merchants in the wake of the Covid pandemic, policy loopholes, and unfair business practices of e-commerce firms that are creating livelihood challenges for them.

The panel delved into the proposed amendments in Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020 to understand its efficacy in addressing various issues faced by small merchants from the large e-commerce players.

Some key takeaways of the panel discussion were that the government has the intent to address the genuine concerns of consumers and small retailers and towards this, it has put in place laws to regulate e-commerce players in India which needs to be implemented in the right earnest. The panel concluded that the Competition Commission of India (CCI) has a big role to play in protecting the interests of consumers and sellers alike and what is required is the strict adherence to e-commerce policies for both international and domestic online marketplaces.

The panel pressed on the need for education and empowerment of consumers and sellers/small businesses on competition laws so that they can exercise the competition laws thereby checking the instances of exploitation of policy loopholes. It expressed satisfaction with the investigation against the malpractice of firms like Amazons, Flipkart, etc.

and demanded implementation of anti-trust laws in India that are in line with the global trend. It called for nailing down errant e-commerce firms completely through a comprehensive policy framework and advocated business-friendly policies to support MSMEs that are the real growth engine of the economy and can provide solutions to the employment and livelihood challenges faced by the country.

The panelists were unanimous in their view that the Covid-19 pandemic has added to the financial woes of small retailers in India who are already facing unfair competition from large e-commerce players. These e-commerce players are using their financial muscle and exploiting policy loopholes to capture market share thereby driving small retailers/merchants out of business and destroying their livelihoods.

Expressing shock and concern about the little awareness about the competition laws in the country among small retailers and consumers, M.M. Sharma, Competition Law Expert and Head Practice Vaish Associates and Advocates commented, "E-commerce laws in the country are not clear but competition laws which apply to every business, irrespective of size and nature, are clear and can be used to rein in e-commerce firms flouting the rules. CCI is the only regulator in the country that can set e-commerce firms right. The competition body is now actively investigating complaints against e-commerce companies as the sector has gained rapid market share



amid pandemic restrictions. It is a matter of time when these firms are going to lose this battle and all the small retailers/merchants need to do is to come together to demand stronger rules and fight strategically."

He said that small retailers/traders who need visibility generally get into e-commerce platforms. These sellers are often exploited by large e-commerce firms that indulge in preferential selling and exclusive arrangements. These firms indulge in deep discounting, predatory pricing, etc., using their deep pockets and technology to hook the customers. He noted that the new e-commerce bill is silent on the issue of predatory pricing and this needs to be changed by bringing in new provisions.

Expressing his viewpoint on the livelihood challenges faced by small merchants and retailers Abhay Raj Mishra, President of Public Response Against Helplessness and Action for Redressal (PRAHAR) stated, "Covid-19 related restrictions and unfair

business practices of large e-commerce firms have put the livelihood of millions of small retailers and merchants at risk. This makes it important to render urgent support to MSMEs and plug the policy loopholes for their protection and development. We are not against technology or e-commerce but expect more action by the government against online marketplaces that violate the spirit of the law for market dominance." Elaborating on the lack of comprehensive e-commerce laws in the country, AIOVA spokesperson stated, "India has only one law related to e-commerce, and it is only concerned with foreign investment laws. Our concern is that the government is not bringing any blanket law for e-commerce as a general activity in the country. This creates a situation where there are no applicable laws to regulate Indian e-commerce players who may flout the rules in future."

Talking about the malpractices of

foreign e-commerce companies and new e-commerce guidelines he added, "Foreign e-commerce players are indulging in predatory pricing. It is high time that the government understands their business model as such companies are indulging in business malpractices all over the world and are being investigated for their business conduct including in their home country. The new e-commerce guidelines touch upon various consumer concerns, but it is silent on the implementation part of it including high penalties and discontinuation of business which are a must to rein in these large e-commerce firms."

Sharing his perspective on the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown on the livelihood of FMCG traders and retailers, and the respite they need to be provided, Dhairyashil Patil, National President of All India Consumer Products Distributors Federation (AICPDF) said, "The government is vocal about protecting the interests of small businesses, but it has not walked the talk. It has not imposed any strict action on the errant e-commerce platforms to date impacting the livelihood of 2-3 lakh traders. As far as new e-commerce guidelines are concerned, we have been advising government on the drafting of the new e-commerce guidelines and will be more than satisfied if the entire e-commerce guidelines are implemented. It is consumer-focused and takes care of all aspects that are hurting India customers including traders as a trader is also a consumer."

He added that e-commerce is not at all a legitimate business and the sole objective of foreign e-commerce players is to capture the market by leveraging their deep pockets and luring consumers with deep discounts. These firms are mostly creating fewer low-end jobs and are causing 200 per cent more job losses than the number of jobs they are creating. AICPDF is committed to make these firms accountable to the law of the land and follow ethical business practices. It has launched Bharat e-market, a competitive platform to give all the facilities of an e-commerce portal for small traders at no cost.

Talking about the stress faced by small traders/businesses due to capital investments and the need for the government to lend them a helping hand, Dr. P.M. Ganeshraam, Chief Founder Patron of AICPDF said, "Capital raised by small traders from banks against their personal property has been lying unused due to Covid restrictions. The government has not done anything yet to waive off interest on such capital raised. This is causing a lot of stress among small traders and is eroding the capital. This is the case all throughout the country and I wish the government will do something urgently to address the situation."

On the provision of high penalty in case of delay in filing of returns, he stressed the need to waive such charges amid pandemic to give small merchants cushion to invest further. He added that families of at least one crore small businesses/merchants have gone into poverty amid pandemic and harsh regulations.

## TTD being compromised by private firms' involvement: TDP

**Amaravati, July 2 (IANS)** Telugu Desam Party President N. Chandrababu Naidu on Friday alleged that the holiness of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is being compromised by handing over charge of various works to private firms, sidelining those who used to offer free services earlier.

"Earlier, the generosity of national banks, NGOs and service organisations used to offer many free services without the requirement of the TTD spending a single penny," he said.

Noting that a huge number of people used to volunteer in these services and visit the deity for free, Naidu claimed that volunteers and donors have been sidelined now to bring in private companies which are scanning tickets.

Criticising this decision, he asked: "What is the need to involve business practices in a holy shrine? If this is not for commission, then why will they replace free service to pay others?"

TTD Executive Officer, K.S. Jawahar Reddy, recently took oath as the Chairman of specified authority, and Additional EO, A.V. Dharma Reddy, as Convener of specified authority.

The Andhra Pradesh government set up the specified authority for the TTD following the expiry of the tenure of TTD's Board of Trustees.

## SG denies meeting Suwendu Adhikari, Trinamool seeks removal

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** Three Trinamool Congress MPs on Friday questioned the alleged meeting of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta with Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly, Suwendu Adhikari, who is facing probe in Narada case and Saradha chit fund scam, and asked Prime Minister to take necessary action to remove him from the post.

Mehta, however, denied having any meeting with Adhikari, but admitted that the Bengal lawmaker had come to his office-cum-residence unannounced at 3 p.m. on Thursday.

"Since I was already in a pre-scheduled meeting in my chamber, my staff requested him to sit in the waiting room of my office. When my meeting was over, my PPS informed me about his arrival. I requested my PPS to convey to Mr Adhikari my inability to meet him and apologise as he had to wait," he said.

Mehta added that Adhikari then left without insisting on meeting with him. "Question of my meeting with Adhikari therefore did not arise," he said.

In a joint letter, Trinamool MPs Derek O' Brien, Sukhendu Sekhar Roy and Mahua Moitra said Adhikari is an accused in various offences being investigated by the CBI and the ED and "such meeting between an accused in grave offences and with the Solicitor General who is advising such investigating agencies by whom the accused is investigated, is in direct conflict of interest with the statutory duties of Solicitor General of India".

The MPs alleged that Mehta providing an opportunity of audience to Adhikari "not only reeks of impropriety but also raises the question of integrity and taints the post occupied by the Solicitor General".

## SC declines stay on NLSIU decision for 25% Karnataka quota

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** The Supreme Court on Friday declined to stay the National Law School of India University (NLSIU) Bangalore's decision to horizontally reserve 25 percent of seats for students domiciled in Karnataka.

A bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao and Ravindra Bhat refused the stay on NLSIU decision and listed the matter for further hearing on August 2.

The Karnataka government has moved the top court challenging the Karnataka High Court judgment which had struck down the 25 percent domicile reservation introduced at the university.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for a petitioner, sought a stay on the NLSIU notification giving effect to the reservation policy. After hearing arguments in the matter, the bench refused to stay the notification. Senior advocate Sajan Poovayya represented NLSIU in the matter.

The university, earlier this week, announced the implementation of the domicile reservation from the academic year 2021-22, as part of its inclusion and expansion plan approved in April/May this year.

The Karnataka High Court, in September last year, had quashed the NLSIU Amendment Act, 2020, through which 25 percent reservation was introduced for students domiciled in the state, holding that it was ultra vires and contrary to the provisions of the parent NLSIU Act. The court had said that state government did not have the power to introduce domicile reservation at the university.

The state government has challenged this, claiming that the High Court erred in observing that NLSIU is not a state institution and thus, not within its control.

## Police not saluting me, complains Mayor of Kerala's Thrissur

**Thiruvananthapuram, July 2 (IANS)** The Mayor of Kerala's cultural capital Thrissur is peeved that police officials do not only salute him when he passes through the city in his official vehicle, but "also turn away".

Not one to lie low, M.K. Varghese, a former air force official, has taken his complaint to the new state police chief Anil Kant with a demand that orders be passed to rectify this "mistake".

"This salute is not for me, instead it is for the post that I occupy. In my defence career I have given and taken salutes. I have studied the protocols and it is very clear that in the Corporation area, according to the protocol, the Mayor is third in the list after the Governor and the Chief Minister," he said.

"What I have noticed is while the police officials here salute the legislators, MP and other police officials, who are all very lower in the list of protocol, the Mayor is being denied this. This is wrong and I have raised the issue with the new state police chief. Let us wait and see what happens," he added. Varghese, who won the civic polls as a rebel Congress candidate, was a surprise choice for the Mayor as in the 54 divisions of the Corporation, the Left won in 24, the Congress in 23, and the BJP in six.

The Left offered Varghese the post of the Mayor for the first two years and he accepted it. In December, his first year will be over.

# Centre frames high-powered committee to address Ladakh issues

By Ahmed Ali Fayyaz

**New Delhi, July 2:** The Government of India has constituted a high-powered composite committee to address the undercurrents of unrest in sections of the populations in Ladakh, comprising the Buddhist-dominated Leh district and the Muslim-dominated Kargil district, with regard to creation of the Union Territory (UT) out of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act in August 2019.

Creation of the UT, independent of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, was a long time demand of the majority of the population in Leh. Contrarily, a large number of the population in Kargil seemed to be in favour of continuation with J&K. Even after the UT of Ladakh was created, the people of Leh district demanded a Bodoland-type hill council with powers

under the 6th schedule of the Constitution of India. Many of them were not satisfied with a UT without legislature.

For the first in the last about two years, the people of Kargil have agreed to be a part of Ladakh subject to the condition that the UT of Ladakh is upgraded to a separate State with its own Assembly on the pattern of Sikkim in 1975.

On an invitation from the Centre, an eleven-member delegation of the Kargil Democratic Council (KDC) met the Union Minister of State for Home, GK Reddy, in New Delhi on Thursday. According to the participants, all the issues were discussed threadbare and the Government of India constituted a high-powered panel, with representation from the Centre as well as Leh and Kargil districts, with the responsibility of finding a solution acceptable to the people of both the districts

and both the religious communities.

The committee headed by the union MoS Home GK Reddy would include senior functionaries from the MHA, the UT administration of Ladakh, Chief Executive Councillors and Chairpersons of the Leh and Kargil hill councils, the representatives of the two political conglomerates from Leh and Kargil besides the Lok Sabha member from Ladakh.

Constitution of the committee was announced by Mr Reddy after a 150-minute long meeting with the 11-member KDA delegation in New Delhi on Thursday. Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla as well as the Additional and Joint Secretaries looking after the UTs of J&K and Ladakh, were also present. Well-placed authoritative sources said that Mr Reddy and his team would also

have a discussion with the Leh conglomerate headed by Thupstan Chhewang. Chhewang is a former member of Parliament and a former leader of the Ladakh Buddhist Association.

The KDA delegation included its co-chairpersons-Qamar Ali Akhooon (ex-Minister and former leader of the National Conference MLA from Kargil) and Asgar Ali Karbalai (ex-MLA of Congress from Kargil), former Minister and MLA from Zaskar Feroz Khan, who is currently CEC and Chairman of Ladakh Area Hill Development Council Kargil, Sajad Kargili, the representative of Islamiya School Kargil (ISK), who had contested and lost the 2019 Lok Sabha election as an Independent candidate, Sheikh Bashir, the representative of Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust (IKMT), Aga Syed Mohammad, the

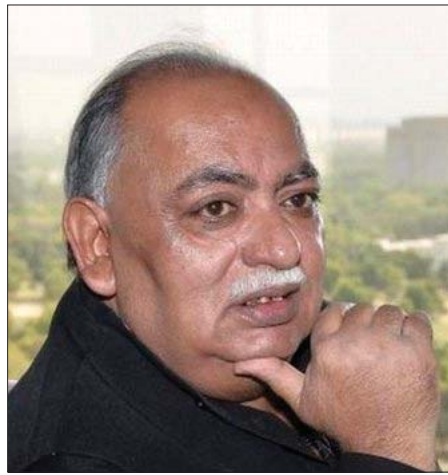
representative of the Noorbakshia Shia group, Shah Nawaz, the representative of Ahle Sunnat Wa al-Jamaat, Zakir Hussain of Student Education Movement of Kargil, Haji Hanief Jan, NC's District President of Kargil, Nasir Hussain Munshi, District President of Congress in Kargil and Syed Ahmad Rizvi of Anjuman-e-Sahib-uz-Zamaan. "The discussions were free and frank and were held in a cordial atmosphere. This was for the first time that the leaders from Kargil got such an opportunity and passionate hearing at an all-important platform of the Government of India. All the invitees spoke their hearts and Mr Reddy as well as his team took necessary notes", one of the participants revealed. "The participants in one voice demanded a separate State with empowered Assembly for Ladakh on the pattern of

Sikkim if reunification of the Kargil district, comprising Kargil and Zaskar Assembly segments of J&K's erstwhile Assembly, with J&K was not possible and restoration of Statehood and Articles 370 and 35-A was a problem for being sub-judice or for other reasons".

The participant from Kargil said that KDA's demand of empowered Statehood and legislature for Ladakh was indigenous and independent of the politics associated with the same subject in Kashmir and Jammu. "When we demand restoration of 370 and 35-A, it is purely in the context of safeguards of our land, government jobs and culture and shouldn't be linked with any community or religion", he asserted.

"The UT without legislature means nothing. Fortunately the people of Leh have also begun to realise it, though late".

## Poet Munawwar Rana's son booked for staging attack on himself



**Lucknow, July 2 (IANS)** A day after the Uttar Pradesh Police raided the house of Urdu poet Munawwar Rana in Lucknow, the police on Friday said his son Tabrez Rana had allegedly staged an attack on himself to frame his relatives in a property dispute.

Tabrez had claimed that he was attacked by unidentified persons, who opened fire at his SUV car on Monday evening near a petrol pump in the state capital's Tripura area. The attackers fired two gunshots and fled from the spot. The bullets hit Tabrez's

SUV but he was left unhurt.

In a statement released here on Friday, the Rae Bareilly police said that during investigation, it was found that Tabrez had a dispute with his uncles over a property issue.

Tabrez allegedly contacted Halim and told him to stage the attack which would not only help him frame his uncles but would create a conducive atmosphere for him to contest elections.

The police statement said Halim and three other persons identified as Sultan, Satyendra and Shubham have been arrested and weapons have been recovered from them.

Police have recorded the statement of Tabrez Rana and initiated a probe into the incident. He is a land dealer and told police that he had no enmity with anyone.

A case has been registered against Tabrez and the Rae Bareilly police searched his father's house in Lucknow during the intervening night of Thursday and Friday.

The poet's daughter Fauzia Rana has, however, accused the police of having barged into their house in the thick of the night without a warrant. She had earlier been booked by the Lucknow police for leading anti-Citizenship Amendment Act protests.

## Uttarakhand CM Rawat meets Nadda again amid uncertainty over future

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** Uttarakhand Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat on Friday met BJP chief J.P. Nadda for the second time in three days to discuss the political situation and the requirement of his election to the state Assembly before September 10.

The meeting between Nadda and Rawat lasted for nearly 30 minutes.

Rawat, who had met Nadda and Union Home Minister Amit Shah late on Wednesday night, is currently the MP from the Garhwal Lok Sabha seat, and as per the rules, needs to be sworn in as an elected MLA within six months of taking over as the Chief Minister.

Currently, two assembly seats -- Haldwani and Gangotri -- are lying vacant, but there is no clarity whether the bypolls will be held before the deadline.

Rawat said that holding by-polls will be decided by the Election Commission and he will follow whatever the Central leadership of the party decides.

BJP national General Secretary and Uttarakhand in-charge, Dushyant Gautam told IANS that there was no discussion of Uttarakhand by-polls held at the party level.

Meanwhile, a party insider claimed that the central leadership has called senior



leaders Satpal Maharaj and Dhan Singh Rawat to Delhi. Asked about this, Gautam said: "Uttarakhand being near to Delhi, many leaders regularly visit the national capital. Nothing should be read between the lines." Sources said that Nadda had explained to Rawat that Section 151 of Representation of the People Act, 1951 has created hindrance in his election to the Assembly.

## Rose Valley ponzi scam: CBI files supplementary charge sheet against 5



**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Friday said that it has filed a supplementary charge sheet in connection with the Rose Valley chit fund scam against five people, including the company's then Chairman and Director Gautam

Kundu. The CBI said that the supplementary charge sheet was filed before the District and Sessions Judge in Tripura's Gomati district against Rose Valley Real Estates and Construction Ltd (RVRECL), Kundu, and former Directors Shibamoy Dutta, Ashok

Kumar Saha, and Ram Lal Goswami.

A CBI spokesperson said that the investigation revealed that the accused had allegedly collected huge public funds amounting Rs 31.49 crore in the form of deposits by issuing certificates in the names of plot or land

bookings, in violation of the Companies Act and SEBI regulations.

It was further alleged that the accused formed several other companies under the said Kolkata-based private company and became the Directors of these companies, the spokesperson added.

"The accused diverted the money in the group companies knowingly that these companies were loss-making entities and opened several bank accounts in the name of the company, became signatories of these bank accounts and transferred or diverted the fund as per their own interest," the spokesperson said.

The spokesperson said that probe also revealed that the accused used to publicise the "high profitability" of the group, contrary to the facts and viability of the business.

## Mysterious explosion-like sound heard in B'luru



**Bengaluru, July 2 (IANS)** A mysterious loud sound similar to an explosion was heard across many parts of Bengaluru on Friday noon. Several residents of the city took to Twitter to share that they heard a loud 'thud' sound.

As per the tweets, the sound was heard in the Sarjapur area, J.P. Nagar, Benson Town, Ulsoor, ISRO Layout, H.S.R. Layout, South Bengaluru and East Bengaluru.

Bengaluru South division DCP Harish Pande said, "We don't have any clear information yet. But from past experience, I can say that it seems like a sonic boom."

Regarding the 'boom' sound, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's spokesperson Gopal Sutar said that regular sorties of fighters and trainers take place at the HAL airport.

"Today (Friday) too was no different. HAL can't comment on the loud noise reportedly heard on Friday in Bengaluru," he said.

Last year in May, a mysterious loud noise was heard across Bengaluru, which rattled many citizens as theories and rumours about the rattle boom spread like wildfire.

Soon the Indian Air Force revealed that it was an IAF test flight involving a supersonic profile that took off from the Bengaluru airport which resulting in the sonic boom.

## SC seeks Centre's response on delay in NEET-MDS counselling schedule

**New Delhi, July 2 (IANS)** The Supreme Court on Friday sought response from the Centre on a plea against the "unjust and infinite delay" caused by the Medical Counselling Committee (MCC) in declaring the schedule for counselling for National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test and Masters of Dental Surgery courses (NEET-MDS) 2021.

A bench, headed by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, issued notice to the Centre, the National Board of Examination, and the

Dental Council of India on a petition filed by some NEET-MDS aspirants.

The petition, filed through advocates Tanvi Dubey and Charu Mathur, said that umpteen efforts were made by the petitioners to get in touch with the respondents in connection with the schedule of the counselling, however, so far, there is no update on it.

The plea contended that the entrance exam was held on December 16, 2020 and the results were declared on December 31, 2020. But,



months have elapsed, and there is no update on the schedule of counselling.

The petition sought directions to the MCC to release the counselling date

at the earliest, and not later than three weeks. It also cited the concerns associated with holding counselling together for NEET-PG and NEET-MDS, as the former has been postponed till August 31.

The petitioners held that waiting for the same would further delay NEET-MDS counselling, and urged the top court to issue direction to the MCC to conduct a separate counselling for the NEET-MDS 2021 and not wait for the counselling of NEET-PG

The plea said: "From the past years records, it is clear that the time duration between the NEET-PG examination and announcement of result is at least one month. Further, the counselling schedule for NEET-PG is released three months after the results. Therefore, it will be unrealistic to organise the counselling for both the examinations together, as it would infinitely delay the counselling for the NEET-MDS candidates and would cause undue hardship to the NEET-MDS aspirants."