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DON'T BURN
THE BRIDGES

WORLD 8
HONG KONG ACTIVISTS JOSHUA WONG,
AGNES CHOW, IVAN LAM JAILED

SPORT 12
INDIA BEAT AUS
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Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

*Late City Vol. 30 Issue 336
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY DECEMBER 3, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3

the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



JENNIFER ANISTON IS 'BACK TO WORK' 10 VIVACITY

Farmers for Spl Session to repeal laws

Union threatens to cut off Capital from NCR cities if demands not met

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Braving cold, farmers protesting at Delhi's Singhu border against the Centre's agriculture reform laws on Wednesday asked the Central Government to call a special session of Parliament to repeal new agriculture laws and threatened to block other roads of the national Capital if their demands are not met.

Addressing a press conference, Krantikari Kisan Union president Darshan Pal accused the Centre of dividing farmers' organisations by projecting the ongoing protests as Punjab-centric. "The Centre should call a special session of Parliament to repeal new three farm laws. We will continue our agitation till these farm laws are repealed," Pal told reporters.

Meanwhile, the protest at the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border in Ghazipur intensified, leading to the closure of a key route connecting the national Capital with Uttar Pradesh. At the Chilla Border, which connects Delhi with Noida, more farmers from Firozabad, Meerut, Noida and Etawah started gathering, prompting the authorities to close the key road stretch for the second consecutive day.

Representatives of farmers' organisations from other parts of the country will also be involved under Kisan Samyukt Morcha to decide the future course of action against the new farm laws, Pal said.

The Krantikari Kisan Union president said repre-



Farmers prepare food for others during their Delhi Chalo protest march against the Centre's new farm laws at Singhu border in New Delhi on Wednesday. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

sentatives of farmer organisations will give their point-wise objections to the Union Ministers at a meeting scheduled for Thursday.

Another farmer leader Gurnam Singh Chadoni said that if Centre does not withdraw the laws, more steps will be taken in the coming days to press their demands.

Before the Press conference, leaders of around 32 farmer organisations held a meeting which was also attended by Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait at the Singhu border.

The talks between the Centre and agitating farmer

unions on Tuesday failed to end the standoff, and the two sides will now meet again on December 3.

The farmer unions rejected the Government's offer to set up a committee to look into issues raised by them and said they will intensify their stir until their demands are met.

Farmers from the neighbouring States of Punjab and Haryana have been camping at five border points of Delhi for a week now. The number of protesters swelled at Delhi border points on Wednesday. Police stepped up security after thousands blocked key gateways into the national Capital.



Darshan Pal, president of Krantikari Kisan Union, addresses a press conference during their Delhi Chalo protest march against the new farm laws at Singhu border in New Delhi on Wednesday. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Transporters back 'ann daata', to halt ops from Dec 8

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Coming forward in support of agitating farmers, transporters have threatened to halt operations in northern India from December 8 if the Government fails to address concerns of the farming community.

The All India Motor Transport Congress (AIMTC), representing about 95 lakh trucks, about 50 lakh bus and taxi operators on Wednesday served an ultimatum to the Centre.

"The AIMTC has already

extended its support to the farmer agitation from day one. We have decided on stopping our operations strategically starting from north India and if the Government does not address the issue of the farmers. Then we may decide to go for shutting down of transport operations nationwide in their support," AIMTC president Kulkaran Singh Atwal said.

He said the road transport fraternity of the country has extended its full support to farmers who are "ann daata" (food providers).

Continued on Page 2

As farmers are in for long haul at Noida-Delhi border, Chilla route was partially reopened on Wednesday.

The Noida Traffic Police in the morning advised commuters heading to Delhi to take the DND or Kalindi Kunj route instead of the Chilla route through the Noida Link road which was closed due to the demonstration since Tuesday evening.

One of the carriageways on the route was opened in the evening, allowing commuters coming from Delhi to enter

Noida as the protestors continued to sit on the other side of the road amid heavy police deployment.

The Delhi Traffic Police said beside the Tikri and Singhu borders, the Jharoda and Jhatikra borders have been closed for all kinds of "traffic movement". The Badasarai border is open only for two-wheelers. Available open borders to Haryana are Dhansa, Daurala, Kapashera, Rajokri NH 8, Bijwasan/Bajghera, Palam Vihar and Dundahera.

Continued on Page 2

CCTV cameras must at CBI, ED offices, police lock-ups: SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court directed the Centre on Wednesday to install CCTV cameras and recording equipment at the offices of investigating agencies, including the CBI, the ED and National Investigation Agency (NIA), which conduct interrogations and have the power of arrest.

A bench headed by Justice RF Nariman said that states and Union Territories (UTs) should ensure that CCTV cameras are installed at each and every police station, at all entry and exit points, main gate, lock-ups, corridors, lobby and reception as also areas outside the lock-up rooms so that no part is left uncovered.

The apex court had in 2018 ordered installation of CCTV cameras in police stations to check human rights abuses.

It said further that the CCTV systems must be equipped with night vision and have audio as well as video footage and it shall be mandatory for the Centre, states and UTs to purchase such systems which allow storage of data for maximum period possible, at least one year.

"In addition, the Union of India is also directed to install CCTV cameras and recording equipment in the offices of: Central Bureau of



Investigation, National Investigation Agency, Enforcement Directorate, Narcotics Control Bureau, Department of Revenue Intelligence, Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO), any other agency which carries out interrogations and has the power of arrest," said the bench, also comprising Justices KM Joseph and Aniruddha Bose.

"As most of these agencies carry out interrogation in their office(s), CCTV's shall be compulsorily installed in all offices where such interrogation and holding of accused takes place in the same manner as it would in a police station," the bench said in its order.

The top court said that in September this year, it had impleaded all the States and UTs in the matter to find out the exact position of CCTV cameras in each police station as well as constitution of Oversight Committees in accordance with the April 3, 2018 order.

Continued on Page 2

UK PM likely to attend R-Day as chief guest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is likely to be the chief guest for the Republic Day function next year. Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited him for the national event during his telephonic talks recently.

It will be the first high-profile visit by a foreign dignitary to India during the ongoing global pandemic.

While India and the UK are yet to officially announce the visit, reports on Wednesday here indicated that Modi invited Johnson during his talks on November 27. The British Prime Minister invited Modi to the G-7 summit there next year. If the visit materialises, Johnson will be the first United Kingdom Prime Minister to be the chief guest of the Republic Day parade after more than 25 years. The last British Prime Minister to be the chief guest was John Major in 1993.

Besides the invitations, the two leaders discussed the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, climate change, and other related issues.

"The leaders reiterated their shared desire to impart a

quantum jump to the India-UK partnership in the post-Covid, post-BREXIT era, and agreed that there was tremendous potential for enhancing collaboration in trade and investment, scientific research, mobility of professionals and students, and defence and security," an official said.

In November, acting British High Commissioner to India Jan Thompson had said Johnson will soon make an "in person" visit to India. She said, "We are expecting UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab will be paying an in-person visit to India in the next few months. Beyond that, PM Boris Johnson is very keen to come to India. So we hope, over the next few months, we will visit, by both FS Raab and PM Johnson."

In a tweet message after the talks, Modi had said, "Had an excellent discussion with my friend, UK PM @BorisJohnson on an ambitious roadmap for India-UK ties in the next decade. We agreed to work towards a quantum leap in our cooperation in all areas -- trade & investment, defence & security, climate change, and fighting Covid-19." Continued on Page 2

In U-turn, China places order for 5,000 tonne rice from India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid standoff with India along the LAC, China increased its rice purchase from India for the first time in at least three decades, placing order for shipment of about 5,000 tonnes of broken rice in the last two months. Broken rice is used in making noodles and in the wine industry.

India is the world's biggest exporter of rice and China is the biggest importer.

According to the All India Rice Exporters Association (AIREA), China has started importing Indian rice after a gap of two years and placed orders for shipment of about 5,000 tonnes of non-basmati rice as it is the cheapest in the world rice market.

Indian traders have contracted to export 100,000 tonnes of broken rice for December-February shipment at around \$300-320 per tonne. Other grades such as white rice, 25 per cent broken and 5 per cent are ruling between \$330 (₹24,600) and \$360 (₹26,800) a tonne free-on-board. China, the world's largest



producer and importer of rice, used to place restriction on imports from India via various means. In 2006, China was given market access for Indian rice, but shipment took place only during the 2017-18 fiscal.

Beijing imports around 4 million tonnes of rice annually but avoided purchases from India, citing quality issues. China's traditional suppliers, such as Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar and Pakistan, have limited surplus supplies for export and were quoted at least \$30-60 per tonne more

compared with Indian prices. Indian rice exports for the January-October period of the current calendar year have already exceeded the shipments for the whole of last year. Over six million tonnes have been exported during January-October against 5.1 million tonnes in the entire 2019.

Countries like Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone in West Africa, who are traditional buyers of non-basmati rice from India, increased their purchases during the pandemic.

US court blocks H-1B rules that ban foreign staff

Ruling to benefit Indian employees

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

In a huge relief to tens of thousands of Indian professionals and top American IT firms, a US court has blocked two H-1B regulations proposed by the Trump Administration to restrict the ability of American companies to hire foreign employees.

H-1B visas is a non-immigrant visa that allows American companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. The US issues up to 85,000 H-1B visas each year. Usually, they're issued for three years and renewable.

Most of the nearly 600,000 H-1B visa holders are from India and China.

In his 23-page order on Tuesday, US District Judge Jeffrey White of Northern

District of California blocked the Trump administration's recent policy that required employers to pay foreign workers on H-1B visas significantly higher wages.

He also set aside another policy that narrowed the eligibility of H-1B valued by US tech firms and other employers. As a result of the ruling, the Department of Homeland Security rule on occupations and other issues that was to come into effect from December 7, stands invalid. The Department of Labour rule on wages, which took effect on October 8, is also now no longer valid.

The Covid-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the nation's health, and millions of Americans have been impacted financially by restrictions imposed on businesses, large and small, during the pandemic; the consequences of those restrictions has been a fiscal calamity for many individuals, the judge wrote. Continued on Page 2

CAPSULE

BAREILLY SHRINE BACKS CONVERSION ORDINANCE

Bareilly: A prominent Islamic shrine here in Bareilly has issued a religious decree banning religious conversion by force or allurements, endorsing the Uttar Pradesh's recent Ordinance aimed at curbing inter-faith marriages as an alleged ploy for conversion. Bareilly's Dargah-e-Ala Hazrat, one of the most revered shrines for the Bareilly sect of Sunni Muslims, issued the 'fatwa' terming the forcible and fraudulent conversion as against the tenet of Islam.

'HONEY SOLD BY MAJOR BRANDS ADULTERATED'

New Delhi: Honey sold by several major brands in India has been found adulterated with sugar syrup, the environment watchdog CSE claimed Wednesday. Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) food researchers selected 13 top as well as smaller brands of processed and raw honey being sold to check their purity.

EPF ACT ALSO FOR PVT SECURITY AGENCY: SC

New Delhi: The provisions of the Employees' Provident Fund Act are applicable to private security agencies providing personnel to clients, the Supreme Court said on Wednesday.

UK 1st country to OK Pfizer's Covid vaccine, shots next week

PTI ■ LONDON

The UK on Wednesday became the first country to approve the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine against Covid-19 after "rigorous" analysis by its independent regulator, paving the way for mass vaccinations from as early as next week among people at the highest risk of death from the deadly virus.

The British regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), says the jab, which claims to offer up to 95 per cent protection against Covid-19 illness, is safe for roll out.

The UK Government said the approval follows a "rigorous" analysis of the data, conducted at a faster pace but without any compromise on standards.



Prime Minister Boris Johnson welcomed the "fantastic" news and confirmed that the vaccine will begin to be made available from next week.

"It's the protection of vaccines that will ultimately allow us to reclaim our lives and get the economy moving again," said Johnson.

The vaccines require two doses 21 days apart, with strong immunity response kicking in

after seven days of the second dose. The MHRA said it will continue to monitor the data on a rolling basis once the vaccines are deployed among the British public.

"I am thrilled. Help is on its way... we can see the dawn. Let's redouble our efforts to follow the lockdown rules. It's been a very tough 2020 but 2021 will be brighter," said UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock.

The UK Government has formally accepted the recommendation from the MHRA, which means the two-dose vaccine can be injected into arms of high-risk categories within days. Around 10 million doses should be available soon, with the first 800,000 arriving in the UK in the coming days. Continued on Page 2

HC ex-judge Karnan held for insulting judges, their wives

PTI ■ CHENNAI

CS Karnan, former judge of the Madras and Calcutta High Courts, was arrested here on Wednesday following a complaint against him for making vulgar comments against women and remarks against judges, police said.

The arrest comes after a video clip surfaced recently in social media, in which, Karnan, allegedly made objectionable remarks against judges and their wives.

He was arrested by the Central Crime Branch personnel from his suburban residence, a police official said. Several sections of the IPC,

including those related to insulting the modesty of a woman, intentional insult to public servant sitting in judicial proceeding, using obscene words, criminal conspiracy and intimidation, have been invoked against the former judge.

The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act has been invoked against him. He has been slapped with 67A of the Information Technology Act for transmission of explicit obscene material.

A woman advocate lodged a complaint against him and following investigation, he has been arrested, the official said.

Kohli is fastest batsman to hit 12,000 ODI runs

PTI ■ CANBERRA

India captain Virat Kohli on Wednesday became the fastest cricketer to score 12,000 ODI runs, breaking a record held by legendary compatriot Sachin Tendulkar.

Kohli reached the milestone during the third and final match against Australia. Kohli, who needed 23 runs for the landmark coming into the match, touched the figure in his 242nd innings when he took a single off Sean Abbott in the 13th over of the India innings.

In comparison, it took Tendulkar 300 games to get there. The 32-year-old Indian captain was playing in his 251st ODI and averages close to 60 in the format with 43 hundreds and 59 half centuries.

Delhi's air 'very poor'; Gr Noida, Gzb severe

STAFF REPORTER/PTI ■ NEW DELHI/NOIDA

Delhi's air quality was in the Dupper end of the "very poor" category on Wednesday morning, while pollution levels have already entered the "severe" zone in the neighbouring cities of Ghaziabad and Greater Noida.

The Delhi's air quality index (AQI) was 381 at 9 am. The 24-hour average was 367 on Tuesday. It was 318 on Monday and 268 on Sunday.

Noida, Faridabad and Gurugram recorded "very poor" air quality on Wednesday. Ghaziabad and Greater Noida recorded an AQI of 430 and 410, respectively.

An AQI between zero and

50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

The maximum wind speed is expected to be 12 kmph on Wednesday, according to the IMD.

The minimum temperature was 8.2 degrees Celsius on Wednesday and the maximum is expected to settle around 27 degrees Celsius, the weather department said.

The minimum temperature this season has remained 2-3 degrees Celsius below normal in the absence of a cloud cover on most days, according to IMD officials.

Presence of pollutant PM 2.5 and PM 10 also remained high in the NCR cities.

EPF Act provisions applicable to private security agency: SC

New Delhi: The provisions of the Employees' Provident Fund Act are applicable to private security agencies providing personnel to clients, the Supreme Court said on Wednesday. A bench of Justices Navin Sinha and Surya Kant said the appellant company is engaged in the specialised and expert services of providing trained and efficient security guards to its clients on a payment basis. The apex court rejected the firm's contention that it merely facilitated in providing Chowkidars, holding that the provisions of Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Act, 2005 make it clear that the firm is the employer of such security guards and are paid wages by it. "Merely because the client pays

money under a contract to the appellant and in turn, the appellant pays the wages of such security guards from such contractual amount received by it, it does not make the client the employer of the security guard nor do the security guards constitute employees of the client," the bench said. The top court held that the appellant company never made available the statutory registers under the Act of 2005 to the authorities under the EPF Act and it has no hesitation in holding that it actually withheld relevant papers. The provisions of the EPF Act are applicable to a private security agency engaged in the expert service of providing personnel to its client, if it meets the requirement of the EPF

Act," the apex court said. The judgement came on a plea filed by Panther Security Service Pvt Ltd which provides private security guards to its clients on a payment basis. The company, registered under the Act, approached the top court against the high court order, affirming the direction of Assistant Provident Fund Commissioner, Kanpur, holding the appellant liable for compliance with the provisions of the EPF Act and to deposit statutory dues within 15 days. According to the company, it was not covered under the EPF Act, since it was not engaged in rendering any expert services and merely facilitated in providing Chowkidars to its clients. **Agencies**

111 die, 5,600 more test +ve in Maharashtra

■ MUMBAI:

After a gap of 12 days, the number of Covid-19 deaths reached a three-digit figure on Wednesday, as 111 people succumbed to the pandemic, while 5,600 others tested positive for Coronavirus in various parts of the state. A day after Maharashtra logged 4930 infections and 95 deaths, the number of deaths rose by 16 to touch a daily tally of 111, while the infections went up by 670 to touch the day's figure of 5,600. The three-digit death figure of 111 in Maharashtra should be seen in the context of the fact that the state had earlier recorded 155 deaths on November 20. With 111 fresh deaths, the Covid-19 toll in Maharashtra went up from 47,246 to 47,357. Similarly, with 5600 new infec-

tions, the total infected cases in the state climbed from 18,28,826 to 18,32,176. As 5027 more people were discharged from various hospitals the number of people discharged from the hospitals on Wednesday after full recovery since the second week of March this year went up to 16,95,208. The recovery rate in the state rose marginally from 92.49 per cent to 92.52 per cent. Of the 111 deaths reported on Wednesday, Mumbai accounted for a maximum of 20 deaths, followed by 15 deaths in Pune, 13 in Nagpur, 10 in Nashik, 8 in Palghar, 7 in Thane, 6 in Osmanabad, 5 each in Ahmednagar and Solapur, 4 in Aurangabad, 3 each in Sangli and Chandrapur, 2 each in Raigad, Sindhudurg and Gondia, one death each in Jalgaon, Nandurbar, Jalna, Nanded and Buldhana. In addition, one outsider died in

Maharashtra. A day after the number of deaths plummeted to nine, the number of deaths in Mumbai rose by 20 resulting in the Covid-19 toll rise from 10,893 to 10913. The State health authorities had reported on Tuesday that following 724 new infections, infected cases in the metropolis had risen from 283,467 to 284,191. However, the authorities on Wednesday brought down the total number of infections from 284,191 to 2,82,818, following the reconciliation of infection figures. They said that there were 877 new infections in the metropolis. "As the duplicate entries of COVID-19 patients in MCGM were removed today from the central government's ICMR portal, there has been a reduction in the progressive cases and discharges in MCGM and in the state

tally. Progressive cases have reduced by 2250 and the discharges have reduced by 1231," the state health authorities said, alluding to the reconciliation of infection figures done by them. Meanwhile, the number of "active cases" total cases in the state dropped from 89,098 to 88,537. The fatality rate in the state dropped from 2.59 per cent to 2.58 per cent. Pune district, which continued to be the worst-affected city-district in Maharashtra, saw the total number of cases increase from 3,54,010 to 3,54,905, while the total number of deaths in Pune increased from 7479 to 7494. Thane district remained in the third spot -after Pune and Mumbai - after the total number of infections rose from 2,41,281 to 2,41,858, while the total deaths climbed from 5322 to 5329.

Greater Noida Authority to organise Jan adalat to address billing issues

New Delhi: The Greater Noida Authority heard their complaints to the allottees regarding water charges related to Residential Sector - Eta-1,2 Omicron-1, 1A, 2, 3, JU-1, 2, 3 on 03.12.2020. In relation to going to and organizing a water court for its disposal. Regarding the setting up of a dedicated court for industrial allottees in the Jal Adalat to be held on Thursday in the Industrial Week in the Atal Commission Water Court on 03.12.2020 at the Authority Office by the Greater Noida Authority on 03.12.2020. It has been decided by the Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority to organize a water court to resolve the problem of water bill of its allottees. So that the allottees can ensure immediate redressal of their water bills. By putting a "Jal Adalat" in the sectors of Greater Noida every week in the above mentioned. All problems related to water bills of the sector will be resolved in the same workday. For this, problems related to water bills will be solved by organizing a "Jal Adalat" every Thursday of the week from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm and it is being organized in the hall located on the ground floor of the authority office is. Residential sectors Sector-Eta-1, 2, Omicron-1, 1A, 2, 3, JU-1, in the Jal Adalat to be set up by the Greater Noida Authority on 03.12.2020 (Thursday) in the hall located on the ground floor of the authority office. In relation to water charges related to 2, 3, their complaint will be heard from the allottees and immediate disposal will also be done according to that law.

No mismatch in EVM, VVPAT counts in Bihar polls: EC

New Delhi: There was no mismatch between the voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) counts and the votes recorded by electronic voting machines in the Bihar assembly polls held last month, the Election Commission said on Wednesday. The VVPAT slips were counted in 1,215 randomly-selected polling stations of Bihar to match with the votes counted in the corresponding EVMs. They (VVPAT) fully matched (the) EVM count," a commission spokesperson said. Five polling stations are randomly selected in each assembly seat for matching the VVPAT with the EVM count. The machines have been used with all EVMs since the 2017 Goa assembly polls. The NDA won 125 seats in the 243-member assembly against 110 clinched by the opposition grand alliance to pave the way for a fourth successive term for Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in office. **PNS**

RT-PCR tests to cost lowest in country in Odisha at ₹400

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha government on Wednesday capped the price of RT-PCR tests, the best available so far for detection of Covid-19, in private laboratories at Rs 400, the lowest in the country. According to a notification issued by the health and family welfare department, anyone undergoing the RT-PCR test at private laboratories within the state will now have to pay a maximum of Rs 400 including the GST. The decision followed a reduction in the cost of testing kits and other accessories, a senior official said. The cost of an RT-PCR kit now stands at Rs 46 instead of Rs 1,200 earlier, while that of the RNA extraction kit has also come down, and laboratories have to spend a maximum of Rs 200 towards the cost of the kits and accessories, he said. The official hoped that reduction in the price of the test will lead to an increase in testing. The price of RT-PCR test at private laboratories and hospitals which was initially pegged at Rs 4,500, was capped at Rs 2,200 in July and Rs 1,200 in August. The tests will be conducted by private laboratories under the supervision of Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC), Bhubaneswar, following the ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) guidelines, the notification said. The state has four ICMR approved laboratories where RT-PCR tests can be done. The state government is also planning to reduce the price of rapid antigen tests from the current Rs 450. Both the tests are conducted at government laboratories and hospitals free of cost. **PTI**

CCTV cameras...

From Page 1
The apex court, while dealing with a matter related to custodial torture, had in July this year taken note of a 2017 case in which it had ordered installation of CCTV cameras in all the police stations to check human rights abuses, videography of crime scene and setting up of a Central Oversight Committee and such a panel in every states and Union Territory. In its 12-page order, the bench noted that till November 24, compliance affidavits and action taken reports were filed by 14 states and majority of them have failed to disclose the exact position of CCTV cameras in each police station and other details. It said that state level oversight committee (SLOC) must consist of - secretary or additional secretary of home department, secretary or additional secretary of finance department; director general or inspector general of police and chairperson or member of the state women's commission. It said district level oversight committee (DLOC) should comprise of -- divisional commis-

er or regional commissioner or revenue commissioner division of district, district magistrate and superintendent of police and mayor of a municipality within the district or head of 'zilla panchayat' in rural areas. It also specified the duties of SLOC which included purchase, distribution and installation of CCTVs and equipment, obtain budgetary allocation for the same. It said DLOC shall have the obligations including interact with station house officer (SHO) about its functioning and to review footage stored from CCTVs in various police stations to "check for any human rights violation that may have occurred but are not reported". It said adequate funds be allocated for this by the states and UTs at the earliest. It said duty and responsibility for working, maintenance and recording of CCTVs shall be of the SHO of police station concerned. It said in areas where there is either no electricity or internet, it shall be the duty of states and UTs to provide the same expeditiously using any mode of providing power, including solar or wind. "Whenever there is informa-

tion of force being used at police stations resulting in serious injury and/or custodial deaths, it is necessary that persons be free to complain for a redressal of the same," it said. It said SLOC and central oversight body shall give directions to all police stations and agencies to prominently display at the entrance and inside police stations, offices of investigative agencies about the coverage of concerned premises by CCTV and this shall be done by large posters in English, Hindi and vernacular language. "It shall further mention that CCTV footage is preserved for a certain minimum time period, which shall not be less than six months, and the victim has a right to have the same secured in the event of violation of his human rights," it said. It said authorities would implement its order "both in letter and in spirit as soon as possible." The bench, which posted the matter for hearing on January 27, said that affidavits be filed within six weeks by principal secretary or cabinet secretary or home secretary of each states and UTs giving a firm action plan with exact timeline for compliance with the order. **PTI**

Transporters back 'ann daata', to ...

From Page 1
AIMTC core committee chairman Bal Malikit Singh said, "Starting December 8, we will halt the movement of supplies in entire North India including Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan. We will then escalate it to entire country if the government fails to address their issues." The AIMTC, in a statement, said the farmers are fighting for their legitimate rights and over 70 per cent of the rural households depend on agriculture. Entire North India is affected and thousands of trucks carrying food, vegetables and other perishable and non-perishable items coming from Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Jammu and Kashmir are impacted, it said. AIMTC supports the farmers as 65 per cent of the trucks are engaged in carrying farm produce, it added. "At present it is the season of apples, which are getting wasted. Apart from potatoes, onions and other fruits and vegetables as well as other essential commodities like medicines, milk etc too (are) stuck up as their movement is disrupted, which is leading to their shortage in Delhi and in other northern states," the statement said. The situation will worsen in the days to come, unless the Government takes prudent and pragmatic steps to resolve farmers' concerns, it said. "The Government must treat the farmers with dignity and allay their apprehensions on the farm Acts. We wholeheartedly support the cause of the farmers and look forward to a peaceful and amicable resolution of their issues raised by the Government," it said.

Sabarimala to receive more devotees now; 2000 pilgrims on weekdays

PTI ■ SABARIMALA (KER)
The famous Lord Ayyappa Temple here, opened for the annual Mandala-Makaravilakku pilgrimage season, is all set to receive more pilgrims now with the Kerala government deciding to allow more devotees for darshan by adhering to Covid-19 protocols. As per the new decision, a maximum of 2000 devotees would be allowed to have darshan at the hill temple on weekdays and 3000 on Saturdays and Sundays, which was 1,000 and 2,000 earlier respectively, state Devaswom Minister Kadakampally Surendran said. "It has been decided to allow more pilgrims at the Sabarimala temple. The entire booking will be done via online," he said in a statement. Pilgrims can book darshan through the virtual queue system in the concerned website from today, the minister added. Noting that the entire pilgrimage would be in compliance with the COVID-19 guidelines, he said all devotees were required to produce a coronavirus test negative certificate issued within 24 hours before reaching Nilakkal, the base camp. Arrangements have been made at Nilakkal for devotees to undergo the test. Pilgrims can also check in any authorised COVID-19 kiosks run by the government or private agencies anywhere en route to Sabarimala, the minister added. Meanwhile, the state Health department has intensified the antigen testing in Sabarimala and its base camps to check the possible spread of the viral infection in view of the increase in the number of permitted pilgrims at the hill shrine.

Amarinder to meet Shah ahead of crucial talks between Centre and farmers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH
Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh will meet Home Minister Amit Shah at his residence on Thursday, ahead of the crucial fourth round of talks between the Centre and farmer leaders over their agitation. Sources said that Singh will hold deliberations with Shah on Thursday morning in an effort to work out an amicable solution to the deadlock. The farmers are demanding that the government withdraw the new farm laws if it wants them to end their stir. Agitating farmers have been sitting on national highways around Delhi for seven days and have stalled traffic. **UK PM likely to...**
From Page 1
Asked about the proposed visit, the British High Commission said on Wednesday, "We cannot confirm one way or other, PM Boris Johnson is keen to visit as soon as possible." Earlier, Johnson had extended greetings to his Indian counterpart "friend" Narendra Modi on his 70th birthday, expressing hope that the two leaders would meet soon. The two leaders are known to share a strong personal rapport. The two Prime Ministers had last met on the sidelines of the multilateral G-7 summit in Biarritz, France, last year. Modi's last visit to the UK as Prime Minister was a year earlier for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in April 2018. He had held bilateral meetings with then Prime Minister Theresa May.

UK 1st country...

From Page 1
"The vaccine will be made available across the UK from next week. The NHS [National Health Service] has decades of experience in delivering large scale vaccination programmes and will begin putting their extensive preparations into action to provide care and support to all those eligible for vaccination," said a spokesperson for the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). "This follows months of rigorous clinical trials and a thorough analysis of the data by experts at the MHRA who have concluded that the vaccine has met its strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness," the spokesperson said. The UK's Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI) has published its advice for the priority groups to receive the vaccine, including care home residents, health and care staff, the elderly and the clinically extremely vulnerable. Elderly people in care homes and care home staff are top of the priority list, followed by over-80s and health and care staff. Professor Wei Shen Lim of the JCVI told reporters at a Downing Street briefing that vaccine prioritisation has been based on the risk of death from Covid-19 and the hope is that "in phase one of the vaccination programme, 90 to 99 per cent of those who are most at risk of dying from Covid-19 will be covered".

NHS Chief Executive, Simon Stevens, said the health service was preparing for "the largest-scale vaccination campaign in our country's history". Around 50 hospitals are on standby and vaccination centres in venues such as conference centres are being set up now, with military personnel being deployed to assist with the logistics. The joint vaccine, produced by American pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and German biotech firm BioNTech, had recently claimed trials suggested it works well in people of all ages, races and ethnicities. The UK is expected to receive a total of 40 million doses by the end of 2021, enough to vaccinate up to a third of the population, with the majority of doses anticipated in the first half of next year. The Pfizer/BioNTech formula is an mRNA vaccine that uses a tiny fragment of genetic code from the pandemic virus to teach the body how to fight Covid-19 and build immunity. An mRNA vaccine has never been approved for use in humans before, with people only receiving them in clinical trials so far. The UK government had stressed that the Covid-19 vaccine will only be authorised for supply by the UK's independent regulator if it meets strict standards of quality, safety, and effectiveness, and if they are satisfied the vaccine can be consistently manufactured. Experts reiterated that the MHRA approval means the vaccine is safe for human use.

The vaccine must be stored at around -70C and will be transported in special boxes, packed in dry ice. Once delivered, it can be kept for up to five days in a fridge. The UK government has said that it remains confident that the cold supply chain needed to distribute the vaccine will not cause any problems or delays. When the vaccine is stored in a fridge, it has an effective life of up to five days at temperatures of 2 to 8 degrees, which will allow it to be easily stored at distribution centres. The MHRA is the UK's independent regulator, hailed as a globally recognised institution for requiring the highest standards for quality, safety and effectiveness. Pfizer and BioNTech had reported final trial results on November 18 that showed its vaccine was 95 per cent effective in preventing Covid-19, with no major safety concerns. The vaccine is being manufactured in BioNTech's German sites, as well as Pfizer's manufacturing site in Belgium. The news of its approval comes as the UK entered a three-tier lockdown on Wednesday after MPs cleared the proposals in the House of Commons on Tuesday. It means most of England will remain under high or very high alert levels to curb coronavirus infection rates, with strict restrictions on mixing of households and gatherings. The deadly virus has claimed over 59,000 lives across the UK amid waves of lockdowns to control its spread since March. **PTI**

US court...

From Page 1
"However, the history of the US is in part made of the stories, talents, and lasting contributions of those who crossed oceans and deserts to come here. The national government has significant power to regulate immigration. With power comes responsibility, and the sound exercise of national power over immigration depends on the nation's meeting its responsibility to base its laws on a political will informed by searching, thoughtful, rational civic discourse," he said. The lawsuit in this case was filed by US Chambers of Commerce, Bay Area Council and several universities, including Stanford, and trade bodies representing top Silicon Valley companies, including Google, Facebook and Microsoft. The lawsuit argued the new restrictions are not only illegal on their face but that the rushed process for implementing them was flawed. "This is a major win for our economy and for our ability to recover from the worst downturn in generations," said Jim Wunderman, Bay Area Council President and CEO. "H-1B workers fill an important need in our economy and provide immense benefits not only to the companies they work for but the communities where they live. Many of the leading and fastest-growing technology companies in the Bay Area have been founded by entrepreneurs from other countries who first came here on visas," he said. Closing the door to talent from around the world will drive those skills and the opportunities they create to other countries who are more welcoming. In the end that means fewer US jobs, Wunderman said.

"This ruling has many companies across various industries breathing a huge sigh of relief today," said Jon Baselice, director of immigration policy for the Chamber of Commerce. "Both of these rules had the potential to be incredibly disruptive to the operations of many businesses," he added. FWD.us president Todd Schulte said the ruling is a great news for Americans and for the ability of the US to remain the top destination for talented individuals - including international graduates of American universities - who are looking to contribute their skills here and build a stronger economy. "These rules were another rushed attempt by the Trump administration to restrict legal immigration. If implemented, they would be deeply harmful to both American families and our nation's global competitiveness by imposing obli-

gations completely disconnected from real world labour markets," Schulte from the pro-immigration lobbying group said. The future of US' economic security and growth stems in part from the contributions of hardworking immigrants and we must reject "scapegoating" people who are a cornerstone of the country's economic engine, he said. The Department of Homeland Security on October 7 had said its new rule will combat the use of H-1B workers to serve as a low-cost replacement for otherwise qualified American workers. The new rule was to narrow the definition of "specialty occupation" as Congress intended by closing the overbroad definition that allowed companies to game the system; and require companies to make "real" offers to "real employees," by closing loopholes and preventing the dis-

placement of the American worker. "We have entered an era in which economic security is an integral part of homeland security...In response, we must do everything we can within the bounds of the law to make sure the American worker is put first," Acting Secretary Chad Wolf then said. At the same time, the Department of Labour published a rule to appropriately identify the wage levels for H-1Bs and other foreign labour programmes, which will improve the quality of H-1B workers and better reflect wages paid to similarly employed workers in the US. "The rule will limit an employer's ability to replace workers with cheap foreign labour and help ensure wages are not suppressed by the presence of low-cost foreign workers," the White House had said in a statement on October 7. **PTI**

central government. We have enough ration to stay here for months." "Everyone is making their own food and distributing to others. We are Punjabis and know how to stay happy even in difficult situations. We are also getting help from locals. They are providing us water and other necessities," he said. The protesters start preparing 'langar' every morning and food is distributed throughout the day. "Different dishes are being made, including dal, paranthas, rice and kheer. Tea is also being served to people," another protester said. Medical camps have also been set up at Singhu border for protesters who are sleeping on roads under the open sky, in or under their tractors. Dr Vimal Sharma said, "As

Farmers for spl Session to repeal laws

From Page 1
The farmers, who have come from the neighbouring States of Punjab and Haryana, start their day with a bath at petrol pumps, where they also wash their clothes. They return the favour by cleaning the petrol pumps. Then they cooked on the roadside. Anyone visiting the protest site is also offered a wholesome meal which includes dal, rice, paranthas and kheer on different days. A continuous supply of tea helps the protesters brave the cold weather conditions. Before they retire for the day, they gather in groups, singing songs and playing drums to keep their spirits high. A protester, Sonu Kumar, said, "We came here on Tuesday and will stay till our demands are accepted by the

they are walking a lot so they get wounds in their legs. Many have gastric issues. Joint pain is also very common. Those who are sleeping outside their tractors are complaining of fever or cold." Dr Sukhwinder Singh Brar from Chandigarh said, "The protesters have different issues. Most of them are suffering from pain in legs due to old age." The blood pressure of the elderly people is also being monitored. Farmer unions said the three new laws will lead to the dismantling of the minimum support price (MSP) system, leaving farmers at the mercy of corporate houses. But the Government said the MSP system will continue and the new laws will give farmers more options to sell their crop.

Kejriwal slams Punjab CM for dirty politics on farm laws

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister on Wednesday slammed the Punjab Government, saying that CM Amarinder Singh had several chances to stop farm Bills as he was part of the committee but did not do anything to stop the "black laws" (farm Bills). The Chief Minister demanded the Centre to accept all the demands of the farmers and provide a legal guarantee of 'Minimum Support Price (MSP)'. Addressing the media, Kejriwal said that Punjab CM Captain Amrinder Singh should not indulge into dirty politics on farmers' protests against three farm bills passed by the Centre. "The Punjab CM has made false allegations against him for implementing the three Farm bills in Delhi despite knowing that these three laws are passed by the Centre and it is not the prerogative of any state to implement or not implement these laws, since the laws are being signed by the President," he said.

The Chief Minister said the Centre had a full-proof plan of putting the farmers into jails as soon as they reach Delhi, but our refusal to convert the nine stadiums in Delhi into jails has upset the Centre. He also pointed out that Captain Amrinder had many chances to stop the farm bills. "Why did Captain Singh not act against these bills being a member of the central government's committee deliberating on these bills? We all have to decide - whether we are with the farmers, or whether we are with the people who are calling these farmers terrorists," said Kejriwal.

"I was put under a lot of pressure to convert these stadiums into jails. There are some moments in your life when you listen to your own conscience without caring about the results. I want to ask Captain Sahab... Are you under the pressure of these very same people because of which you are making these false allegations against me and talking on behalf of the BJP? Is this your friendship with the BJP or are you under pressure? I know that the reason may be your family is charged with cases and receiving notices from the ED," he added.

Kejriwal said "Today, the farmers are on the borders of Delhi, and their sons are fighting on the borders of the nation. A few days back, farmer Sardar Kulwant Singh Ji was protesting on the Delhi border, and he received the news that his 22-year-old son, Shaheed Sukhbir Singh, was martyred on the border of the nation. In between all of this, when some people call the farmers terrorists, anti-nationals, I cannot imagine what the soldiers on the border must be going through, whose parents are being called terrorists," he said.



Farmers gather in large numbers to protest at Singhu border. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Farmers tether cattle at UP Gate to express their protest

ASHOK NIRWAN ■ GHAZIABAD

On the seventh day of farmers' agitation at UP Gate, the protesting farmers tied up their cattle to mark their protest against the newly introduced agriculture Bill. A minor scuffle between police and farmers also took place during the day.

Manjit Singh from Saharanpur district and president of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), bound himself in the shackles and reached the dharna site. Rakesh Tikait, President of the Indian Farmers Union, said that on December 3, the Central Government has called a meeting of farmer representatives.

"If there is no meaningful result in this meeting, then the farmers will be forced to break the barricades of the Delhi Police and march towards the Parliament House," said Tikait. He said that right now we are doing our movement peacefully on Gandhigiri Siddhant. "After this, our movement can take a violent form," said Tikait. Following the Covid-19 outbreak, the Harsh ENT Hospital located in RDC Rajnagar reached out among the farmers on Tuesday and distributed free masks and gloves.

The doctors also examined the health of the farmers. In the same sequence, the Ghaziabad District Congress Committee put tea biscuits at the movement site and served tea and biscuits to the farmers throughout the day.

Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation has also provided mobile toilets and drinking water for the convenience of farmers. Municipal Commissioner Mahendra Singh Tanwar said that to avoid any mess at the movement site, cleaning workers have been deployed who will look after the cleaning arrangements there for 24 hours.



2 held for duping man of ₹1.90 cr on pretext of allotting him DDA plot

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Two men have been arrested by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Delhi Police for allegedly duping a man of ₹1.90 crore by using forged documents on the pretext of allotment of a Delhi Development Authority (DDA) plot in east Delhi.

The accused have been identified as Prem Shankar Sharma (68) and Rana Pratap Chauhan (72), former employees of DDA, who had taken ₹1.90 crores from the complainant for allotment of DDA plot and also issued forged allotment letter.

Police said that the accused are involved in more than 13 such cases. "They targeted victim, especially businessman who were in search of plots. Through their links, they got details about vacant DDA properties and later showed them to their potential targets. They forged documents related to DDA plots and duped people," police said.

According to Dr O P Mishra, the Joint Commissioner of Police, EOW, a probe was initiated by them on the complaint of one Ashish Sharma, who alleged that the accused duo along with their associate took ₹1.90 crore from



him for allotment of a DDA plot in Krishna Nagar.

"According to the complainant, after showing the plot, the accused told him that the purchase price of the said plot is only ₹22 lakhs, but he had to spend about ₹2 crore extra. As the market price of the plot was much higher at that time, he agreed to pay them," said the Joint CP.

"They took ₹1.90 crore in cash from him and gave a fake allotment letter on behalf of DDA. When he found out about it, he demanded his money back. The alleged did not return the money but gave him four cheques worth ₹80 lakhs, which also got dishonoured," said Joint CP.

"During investigation, the allotment letters, possession letter, NOC and other documents were verified from DDA. It is found that no such allotment letter and other letters

were issued by DDA and were indeed forged," said Joint CP.

"The accused forged documents related to allotments and these authentic looking documents purported to be issued from DDA were provided to the victim. In order to gain the trust of the victim, they made him deposit the amount in a DDA account. In this case, ₹22 lakhs was deposited in DDA account. When no links of the amount were found by DDA, the same were transferred in the suspense account of DDA," said Joint CP.

"The accused PS Sharma, a dismissed gardener in the Horticulture branch of DDA, misrepresented himself as working in DDA at the post of Assistant Director and his associate Chauhan was suspended from DDA in 1999 due to his corrupt practices," the Joint CP added.

AAP demands BJP to release MCD workers' salaries

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday demanded the BJP ruled municipal corporations to release the salary of the staff due for the last four months.

AAP senior leader and MCD in-charge Durgesh Pathak on Wednesday said that the corporations have enough money to pay the salary but they are doing politics to defame the Kejriwal Government.

Pathak said that due to the continuous protest of the AAP and the MCD employees the BJP was forced to release the salary of two months but now the remaining should be released too.

"The citizens of Delhi and the whole country know that the employees of the BJP ruled MCD have not received their salaries for several months. The teachers, doctors, nurses and the sanitation workers have not received their salaries from the BJP ruled MCD. They also held a sit-in demonstration and hunger strike demanding the immediate release of the salaries."

The AAP leader further said that the BJP should not deal with the matter in such a way that the employees again get forced to hold a hunger strike. "The AAP demands the immediate release of all the pending salaries of the MCD employees without any delay," he added.

Fake call centre busted in Gurugram, two held

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Haryana Chief Minister's flying squad late on Tuesday night busted an illegal call centre operating in Sector-28 in Gurugram.

The call centre mostly used to cheat US nationals on the pretext of to resolve Social Security Number (SSN) verification and used to charge 100 to 500 dollars as service charge per client, the police said on Wednesday.

The accused had also paid ₹2.50 lakh as house rent for two months. According to the police a SSN is a nine-digit number that the

U.S. government issues to all U.S. citizens. The government uses this number to keep track of the resident's lifetime earnings and the number of years worked.

While duping their clients, they used to introduce themselves as SSN department employees. According to the police, a team from the CM flying squad led by ACP Inderjeet raided the call centre which was located at plot number 558, Sector-28 in Gurugram following a tip-off.

During the raid, the police arrested two persons in connection with the matter and seized 7 hard

disks along with other electronic gadgets.

The arrested persons have been identified as Anurag Tiwari and Kirti Kumar Keshav, residents of Jind district in Haryana. However, the owner of the fake call center Lokender fled the spot. He is reportedly a resident of Ahmedabad. The arrested duo were the co-partners of the fake call centre.

During the raid, the police had spotted 4 women and 22 men including the arrested suspects, who were working at the fake call center and were communicating

with US nationals. However, after questioning the police have released youths who were working there. "A complaint was received that the fake call centre had cheated several US nationals on the pretext of resolving SSN related problems in Sector-28 area. The youths were employed at the call centres, which were being operated without a license issued by the Department of Telecommunications (DOT)," said Inderjeet ACP, (CM flying squad).

"During the questioning, the accused revealed that they used to communicate with US citizens to resolve the SSN verification process they used to charge nearly 100 to 500 dollars per client as service charge via bank account," he added.

"The matter is under investigation. How the accused was operating the fake call centre it's a part of an investigation. The involvement of other people cannot be ruled out," the officer said.

In connection with the incident, an FIR under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the IT Act has been registered at Cyber crime police station for further investigation.

दिल्ली सरकार
आज की सरकार

Towards access, inclusion and equitable society- Let no one be left behind

Delhi Government Salutes the Extraordinary Spirit of Persons with Disabilities
on the Occasion of
International Day of Persons with Disabilities
3rd December, 2020

Welfare measures for Persons with Disabilities:-

- Financial Assistance Scheme to persons with disabilities to the tune of Rs 2500/- per month to 1,00,609 beneficiaries.
- Six residential homes for persons with Intellectual disabilities.
- Running 03 Halfway/Longstay Homes for rehabilitation of persons treated for mental illness.
- Seven schools for children with disabilities.
- One hostel for college going visually challenged male students.
- SOPs developed to combat the pandemic of COVID-19 in homes/institutions.

"Your success and happiness lies in you. Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties."

-Helen Keller

Arvind Kejriwal
Chief Minister, Delhi

Rajendra Pal Gautam,
Minister of Social Welfare, Delhi

Department of Social Welfare, Govt. of NCT of Delhi

dip/shabdarth/d/0079/20-21

Panel for country's climate change goals

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has set up a national-level panel for a coordinated approach to pursue the country's climate change goals under the 2015 Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which aims to limit the global temperature rise well below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Led by the Union Environment Ministry, the panel will include members from over a dozen ministries of the Central Government to avoid conflict and ensure synergy between various ministries working towards to approach India's ambitious climate change goals.

The "Apex Committee for Implementation of Paris Agreement (AIPA)" with the Union Environment Secretary as its head which was notified by the Government last month would interact with officials across the Government departments, technical experts, civil society leaders and other stakeholders to drive a coordinated approach to the nation's climate change goals under the 2015 Paris Agreement.

India has ratified the 2015 Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC. India's NDC's primarily targets by 2030 a reduction in the emissions intensity of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 33 to 35 percent; achieving about 40 percent installed power

SC questions felling of trees to widen roads



New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday wondered why felling of trees was necessary to widen roads or to keep them aligned in a straight line, and suggested that roads could instead be zigzag, which would help reduce speed of vehicles and save lives by avoiding accidents.

A bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde said: "Why do roads have to be laid in a straight line by cutting trees? Keep the roads zigzag. It will reduce speed of vehicles, and also decrease road accidents and save many lives."

The observation came during hearing of a plea by the Uttar Pradesh government to fell 2,940 trees for the Krishna Govardhan Road project in Mathura.

capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources; energy efficiency; and creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent through additional forest and tree cover.

The Chief Justice asked the state government to look at the value of trees in terms of oxygen supply they will provide in their lifetime, and then evaluate their importance.

The top court observed that though the Public Works Department had assured that it would compensate by planting similar number of trees in another area, felling of 90-year-old tree and then replacing it with a week-old sapling did not make sense.

"It is obvious that there cannot be compensatory reforestation if a 90- or 100-year-old tree is cut down," the court remarked.

"It is not possible for us to accept compensation in merely arithmetical terms, especially when there is no state-

SC asks panel on Chardham project to meet in two weeks, consider MoD's plea on widening of road

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Wednesday asked its high-powered committee, monitoring the Chardham highway project, to consider within two weeks the applications including that of the Ministry of Defence seeking widening of roads up to 7 metres in the Indo-China Border area. The strategic 900-km Chardham

highway project aims to provide all-weather connectivity to four holy towns — Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath — in Uttarakhand. The Ministry of Defence has sought modification of the top court's September 8 order which asked the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) to follow the 2018 circular stipulating carriageway width of 5.5 metre.

ment forthcoming from the Uttar Pradesh government or the PWD as to the nature of trees — whether they are classified as shrubs or large trees," the bench said, citing absence of information or record in connection with the age of the trees proposed to be chopped.

"It is clear that the only effect, if the trees are retained, will be that the roads will not be straight and therefore incapable of high-speed traffic. Such an affect may not

be necessarily deleterious," added the bench.

The Chief Justice told the counsel for Uttar Pradesh government and state PWD that the valuation of trees cannot be done in terms of timber, and instead they should be valued by taking into account their oxygen-producing capacity over their remaining life span, assuming they might be cut now.

IANS

Shah addresses DGPs, hails cops' Covid role



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

For the first time ever, the country's top police brass began on Wednesday virtually amid the coronavirus pandemic. Union Home Minister Amit Shah addressed the DGPs and senior police officers across the country from the Intelligence Bureau Headquarters virtually in the presence of heads of paramilitary organisations.

About 250 officers in the rank of DGP and IGP from all states, union territories and central government are taking part in the four-day virtual meet, organised by the Intelligence Bureau and being attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, NSA Ajit Doval among others.

The key role played by police during disaster and pandemic, new-age crimes like cyber terrorism, radicalisation of youth and Pakistan-sponsored militants in Jammu and Kashmir will be discussed during the deliberations, to be held in multiple sessions, a Home Ministry official said. As the role of police during the ongoing pandemic has come under wholesome praise from all quarters, the meeting is expected to discuss how to

enhance their knowledge and capabilities to handle natural disasters and such health crisis and even help in mass vaccination drive.

The state police chiefs will share their experiences in handling the pandemic and how the police have helped distressed people and migrant workers during the nationwide lockdown. The Prime Minister is likely to make special mention about the exemplary work police personnel have done while fighting the coronavirus, the official said.

According to an estimate, nearly 80,000 police and paramilitary personnel were infected by COVID-19 in the country and about 650 of them succumbed to the virus. Among the infected include about 35,000 paramilitary personnel and 25,000 policemen in Maharashtra, the worst hit state in India. Among the deaths include 100 paramilitary personnel and about 250 in Maharashtra Police, almost all of them while playing different roles during the pandemic.

The Modi Government has been organising it outside the national Capital since it came to power in 2014. The previous conferences were held in Guwahati, Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, Hyderabad, Tekanpur in Madhya Pradesh, Kevadia in Gujarat and Pune.

HM holds talks with Tomar, Goyal to dispel concerns over farm laws



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the fourth round talks with farmers, Union Home Minister Amit Shah held deliberations with Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal on ways to dispel their concerns over the farm laws. And in a move to remove apprehensions of farmers on the agricultural laws, the government has decided to involve secretaries of home, agriculture and consumer affairs in the meeting with farmers on Thursday.

During the deliberations, the ministers are believed to have discussed the issues raised by the farmers and how the government can constructively respond to dispel their apprehensions.

"The Government will hold discussions with farmers' leaders on Thursday and let's see to what extent issues can be resolved," Tomar said.

The agriculture minister appealed to the farmers that the government is ready to address their concern if any. "I appeal to the farmers that the laws are in their interest and the reforms have been done after a long wait, but if they have any objection to it then we are ready to address their concerns," Tomar was quoted by ANI.

Meanwhile, the Rashtriya Kisan Mahashangha has forwarded their demands to the agriculture ministry seeking legal status of MSP, SDM court not to be made the final authority for all issues related to the case of resentment and the need to create a robust environment for access of latest technology in agro-inputs.

CBI books CMO of Hyderabad Univ in DA case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has booked Chief Medical Officer of Hyderabad Central University in a disproportionate assets case for allegedly amassing assets worth about ₹6 crore during 2014 to 2019.

The agency has also booked his wife, a teacher in the Campus School of the university.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of Hyderabad Central University, Dr Ravindra Kumar and his wife P Sujatha have been named as accused in the case registered under various Sections of the Indian Penal Code and Prevention of Corruption Act.

"The source information revealed that Dr Ravindra Kumar purchased the properties in his name and also in the name of his wife P Sujatha during the period from 2014-2019 i.e. mostly after he became CMO in the university," the CBI said in its FIR.

The source information also revealed that assets possessed by the accused at the beginning of the check period was ₹3,22,19,500 and at the end it was ₹9,04,75,680 during the relevant period.

"As such the total assets acquired during the relevant period is ₹5,82,56,180 and expenditure is ₹1,82,90,192 and the total assets and expenditure is ₹7,65,46,372 during the relevant period," it said. The income earned by the accused is ₹3,79,10,402.

"Therefore the accused public servant is learnt to be in possession of assets disproportionate to his known sources of income during the relevant period is ₹3,86,35,970 which amounts to 101.91 per cent of disproportionate assets with reference to their income. The information prima facie discloses the commission of cognisable offence by the accused public servant Dr Ravindra Kumar, CMO and his wife P Sujatha if criminal conspiracy, abetment, intentionally enriching themselves illicitly and possessing disproportionate assets," it further said.

Centre sets up task force for imparting technical education in mother tongue

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday set up a task force to prepare a roadmap for imparting technical education in mother tongue. The task force set up under the chairmanship of Secretary, Higher Education Dept will take into consideration the suggestions made by various stakeholders and will submit a report in a month.

The Government has already started short-listing some Indian Institutes of Technology and National Institutes of Technology where the engineering courses

will be offered in mother tongue beginning next year.

Offering technical education in the mother tongue is part of the new National Education Policy 2020, adopted by the government recently.

The decision was taken by Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank in a high-level meeting attended by several directors of the IITs, academicians and Government officials.

The agenda of the meeting was to discuss and deliberate regarding the implementation of the education

policy.

Pokhriyal said that the meeting was a step in the direction towards achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision that students may pursue professional courses such as medicine, engineering, and law among others in their mother tongue.

The Minister said that while no language will be imposed on any student, enabling provisions should be made so that bright students are not deprived of technical education due to lack of knowledge of the English language.

SC nixes plea against publication of Hathras victim's photo

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to entertain a plea questioning the publication of a photograph of the Hathras victim in the media, saying the court cannot legislate on it and the petitioner can make a representation on the matter to the Government.

A 19-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly gang-raped by four men in Hathras on September 14. She died on September 29 at Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital during treatment. Her cremation at night by the authorities, allegedly without the consent of her parents, triggered wide-



spread outrage.

The plea, which also raised the issue of delays in the trial of cases of sexual violence, came up for hearing before a bench headed by Justice N V Ramana.

"These issues have nothing to do with law," said the bench, also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Aniruddha Bose.

"Right to freedom of expression is there. There is enough law for this. It is unfor-

tunate that such incidents happen," the bench observed.

The apex court further said, "We cannot legislate law after law"

It said the petitioner can make a representation to the government.

On October 27, the top court had said the CBI investigation in the Hathras case is to be monitored by the Allahabad High Court and the CRPF would provide security to the victim's family and witnesses in the case.

The apex court had delivered the verdict in October on a batch of pleas raising concerns on the incident and also the manner in which the teen was cremated.

Five States see spike in active Covid cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Five populated states namely Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, and Rajasthan are reporting an increase in active Covid-19 cases in the country, particularly in the last one month. In the process, they are replacing Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal, which have now started reporting a decline in active cases for the last few days, said an official from the Union Health Ministry.

India has recorded 36,604 new coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, taking the total Covid caseload to nearly 95 lakh while total fatality has touched 1,38,122. The total active caseload has significantly dropped to 4.28 lakh in the last 24 hours, said the official. This is the lowest after 132 days. The total active cases were 4,26,167 on 23rd July, 2020.

The daily new cases added to the country's covid numbers have been around 30K since the past three days while the number of daily

recovered cases has surpassed the daily new cases since the past five days.

Similarly, showing the positive trend, the difference in new recoveries outnumbering new cases has also improved the recovery rate to 94.03 per cent on Wednesday.

The official pointed out that 78.35 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 10 States/UTs with Maharashtra reporting maximum number of single day recoveries with 6,290 newly recovered cases, 6,151 people recovered in Kerala followed by 5,036 in Delhi. On the other hand, 77.25 per cent of the new cases are from 10 States and UTs. Kerala reported the highest daily new cases at 5,375, followed by Maharashtra with 4,930 new cases.

On the fatalities front, the contribution of 10 States/UTs account for 79.84 per cent. Maharashtra saw the maximum casualties (95). Delhi and West Bengal follow with 86 and 52 daily deaths, respectively.

CGHS beneficiaries to avail health benefits of traditional medicine systems also

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

All CGHS beneficiaries—serving as well as pensioners—will now be able to avail the health benefits of alternate traditional systems with the Union Health Ministry approving a proposal to empanel such Centres of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy under the Government health scheme.

"Private Day Care Therapy centers of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy will be empanelled under the CGHS shortly, in a manner similar to empanelment of similar day care centres of conventional (Allopathy) medicine already provided under the CGHS," said an official from the Ministry.

Initial empanelment of day care therapy centres will be undertaken on pilot basis for Delhi and NCR for a period of one year and subsequently would be considered for other places.

The official said that the

step has been taken keeping in view of the growing popularity of AYUSH system of medicines amongst the public at large and all CGHS beneficiaries. The aim of the scheme is to improve the health and wellbeing, reduce health care expenditure and provide excellence in service delivery, efficiency, and comfort to the patients.

The treatment procedure requiring a short duration of stay in the Day Care Therapy Centre, ranging from a few hours to less than a Day will be made available to CGHS beneficiaries under this scheme.

"As the treatment procedure does not require overnight stay in the unfamiliar environment, it is extremely convenient for children and elderly patients," said the official.

At present treatment of approved procedures like Panchkarma and Abhyanga etc. is given only after hospitalization in CGHS empanelment hospital.

Rahul posts image of elderly farmer beaten in Haryana, triggers controversy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP's IT Cell head and the West Bengal co-in-charge Amit Malviya's counter tweet on the image of an elderly farmer being hit by policemen in Haryana, posted by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, has run into controversy and is being flagged as "manipulated media" and "misleading," in what is being claimed as the first such instance in India.

The image, posted by several Congress leaders including Rahul, showed a cop swinging a baton at the farmer who was trying to dodge the blow. Rahul, in his tweet, said as against his party's slogan of "jai Jawan, jai kisan," here Jawan is hitting the Kisan, which is "sad".

Malviya, responding to Rahul's tweet, posted a "propaganda vs reality" tweet with a video of the same still with the caption: "Rahul Gandhi must be the most discredited opposition leader India has seen in a long time". The video showed the cop raising

Malviya was accused by critics of using a cropped video and not showing it full stretch

the baton but the farmer escaping the blow and not touching the elderly farmer.

But fact-check website Alt News put out a longer video of the 'same incident', which showed policemen raining blows on protesters. Malviya was accused by critics of using a cropped video and not showing it full stretch.

Following this, twitter tagged Malviya's tweet as "manipulated media".

It is, however, not clear whether the farmer was "hit" by the same cop in the picture or by some other baton charge in Haryana.

Thousands of farmers, last week, marched towards Delhi for their protest against the centre's new farm laws and faced teargassing, batons and water cannons at several points in Haryana.

17.6% decline in malaria-related cases in India: WHO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is the only high malaria endemic country in the world which has reported a decline of 17.6 per cent in vector-borne cases in 2019 as compared to 2018, according to the latest report by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Stating that various sustained anti-malarial measures are bearing results, the Union

Health Ministry on Wednesday said that the Annual Parasitic Incidence (API) reduced by 27.6 per cent in 2018 as compared to 2017, and by 18.4 per cent in 2019 as compared to 2018.

"India has sustained API less than one since the year 2012," the Ministry said in a statement here.

As per the WHO's World Malaria Report (WMR) 2020, India has also

contributed to the largest drop in such cases region-wide, from approximately 20 million to about 6 million.

The percentage drop in the malaria cases was 71.8 per cent and deaths were 73.9 per cent between 2000 to 2019, it said.

India achieved a reduction of 83.34 per cent in malaria morbidity and 92 per cent in malaria mortality between the year 2000



(20,31,790 cases, 932 deaths) and 2019 (3,38,494 cases, 77 deaths), thereby achieving Goal 6 of the Millennium Development Goals (50-75 per cent decrease in case incidence between 2000 and 2019).

"Decrease in the incidence of malaria cases is also exhibited in the year-on-year tally. The cases and fatalities have

declined significantly by 21.27 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively in the year 2019 (3,38,494 cases, 77 deaths) as compared to 2018 (4,29,928 cases, 96 deaths).

"The total number of malaria cases reported in 2020 till October (1,57,284) has further decreased by 45.02 per cent as compared to the corresponding period of 2019 (2,86,091)," the ministry said quoting the report.

Impossible to work in TMC: Adhikari

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Trinamool Congress' sigh of relief in the wake of a "fruitful" secret dialogue with rebel party leader Suwendu Adhikari was short lived as the former Minister on Wednesday said it was impossible for him to work with the ruling outfit in the current circumstances.

The leader with a formidable mass base is known to have WhatsApped his mind to senior MP and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's special emissary Saugaro Roy with whom peace talks were on for the past fortnight or so.

Sources close to the Adhikari considered the most powerful leader in the party after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that he did not like the way the details of his talks with the senior leadership was

communicated to the media earlier.

A secret meeting featuring Adhikari, Roy, his Lok Sabha colleagues Sudip Bandyopadhyay, Abhishek Banerjee and election strategist Prashant Kishore was held at a private residence in North Kolkata late on Tuesday evening following which Roy said that talks were held in a cordial atmosphere, things had been sorted out.

"Suwendu Adhikari is not going to BJP. It was a foolish assumption. Today Prashant Kishore, Sudip Banerjee, Abhishek Banerjee and I had met him. It was a fruitful meeting and things have been sorted out. He is with TMC and we will work together to make Mamata Banerjee win again," Roy said.

However, TMC's euphoria remained short lived as its East

Midnapore satrap and a former Nandigram spearhead of the Chief Minister communicated to Roy via Whatsapp that it was not possible for him to continue in the present circumstances.

Roy who is being investigated by the central agencies in Narada pay off and chit fund cases had expressed his displeasure after Abhishek Banerjee was given more preference in internal matters including organizational schemes than him, insiders said.

Reacting to newest development in the TMC, BJP observer for Bengal Kailash Vijayabargiya said that the decision the former minister had taken was a foregone conclusion. "This was bound to happen as no one can live in the TMC with self-respect... not in the least a big leader like Suwendu Adhikari... He

is bound to leave that party and he is welcome in the BJP if he chooses to do so."

Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh said "Our doors are open for any able, leader who has good track record and honest background."

Adhikari however has not made his intention clear. Playing the card close to his chest he has not yet made it clear whether he would join the BJP in near future.

Meanwhile, the BJP workers established a TMC party office at Nandigram captured it soon after Adhikari's decision of not returning to the TMC fold was made public, sources said. A fierce turf war had ensued in that zone with the TMC retaliating by taking out a motorbike rally and vandalising some shops in the area.

Key Islamic shrine issues 'fatwa' endorsing UP Ordinance against forcible conversion

Bareilly (UP): A prominent Islamic shrine here in Bareilly has issued a religious decree banning religious conversion by force or allurements, endorsing the Uttar Pradesh's recent ordinance aimed at curbing inter-faith marriages as an alleged ploy for conversion.

Bareilly's Dargah-e-Ala Hazrat, one of the most revered shrines for the Bareilly sect of Sunni Muslims, issued the 'fatwa' terming the forcible and fraudulent conversion as against the tenet of Islam.

In his decree, issued on Tuesday evening, the president of Markaz-e-Darul Ifta of Dargah-e-Ala Hazrat, Mufti Musibur Rahman Rajvi, said in the light of Quran and 'Shariat', religious conversion by force or allurements is illegal.

Markaz-e-Darul Ifta president issued the decree in response to some posers by Rashtriya Sunni Ulema Council president Maulana Interzar Ahamad Kadri on the issue of interfaith marriages and entailing conversion.

Kadri had asked if a Muslim man can religiously convert a non-Muslim girl after marrying her by fraud.

The Rashtriya Sunni Ulema Council president had also asked if there exists in "Shariat" (Islamic laws) any phenomena of "love jihad", a derogatory coinage referring to the alleged campaign of Muslims forcing Hindu girls to convert in the guise of love.

On the question about "love jihad", the fatwa said Islam has no

place for any such thing. "It is a social evil that extends from Western civilization. Love is an English word and jihad an Arabic. It is not related to each other. In the eyes of the Shariat, love jihad has no status," the fatwa said.

The Darul Ifta ulema has also supported the ordinance brought by the Uttar Pradesh government recently against wrongful conversion. This fatwa has also been trending on social media.

The Uttar Pradesh ordinance, aimed at curbing forcible or fraudulent religious conversions including those in the garb of marriage, had got the assent of state Governor Anandiben Patel. It provides for a jail term up to 10 years for any violations. **PTI**

Ladakh: Soldiers fighting fit in harsh winter

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Alongside brave Indian soldiers who are occupying 'icy heights' and braving adverse weather conditions in the eastern Ladakh sector it is the team of doctors, ace surgeons and paramedics, drawn from different command hospitals who are working round the clock to keep them fighting fit.

To accommodate the large Army of soldiers in the highest battleground the Indian Army has already created state of the art modern infrastructure facilities to cater to the special needs of the soldiers stationed at forward locations at an altitude of 16,000 to 18,000 feet.

Super specialists and senior surgeons from different command hospitals have been roped in to perform special duties ranging between six to eight weeks at some of these forward locations to ensure safety of brave soldiers. Specialists have been stationed at a Forward surgical centre (FSC) in the eastern Ladakh sector to provide immediate treatment to the needy soldiers deployed along the LAC. Official sources said, "Field hospitals on ground zero are fully functional and are already performing specialised treatment for extreme winter-related

issues faced by troops."

According to a doctor who had recently completed his tenure at a high altitude location in the Siachen sector, "patients normally complain of high altitude ailments such as breathlessness when they are deployed at a forward location."

Sometimes patients also complain of stomach ache due to sub zero temperature conditions and over dose of packaged food. Soldiers also report fluctuation in their blood pressure and brain stroke, Heart attack, color blindness etc. To address the issue, soldiers are directed to perform yoga asanas and breathing exercises, whenever possible to stay fit.

Defence sources said, "medical Officers are deployed with each unit along with nursing assistants and other paramedics. In addition, surgical teams are also stationed at a Forward Surgical centre to cater to any contingency in the operational area."

These sources said, "For every Brigade centre there exists one field hospital and for every Division headquarters there is one Forward Surgical centre."

To ensure their own fitness, doctors need one week acclimatization if they have to be stationed at an altitude up to 9,000 feet.

The acclimatization period is extended by four more days if a doctor is stationed at an altitude up to 13,000 ft and further four days acclimatization is required for higher altitude locations up to 16,000 to 19000 feet.

Last month, Army doctors achieved a major feat at an altitude of 16,000 feet as they successfully removed an appendix of a soldier in a dug-in at a forward surgical centre in the Eastern Ladakh.

The surgery was performed by a team of three doctors including a Lt Colonel, a Major and a Captain on a soldier, who could not be evacuated by chopper due to the weather conditions.

According to official sources, "To protect soldiers from harsh weather conditions in the region adequate winter clothing has been provided to them to beat sub zero temperature conditions."

Besides ensuring availability of basic amenities including high protein diet, routine ration, fuel supplies, soldiers have been accommodated in Arctic tents which can sustain temperatures between -20 to -40 degrees in the region. At base camps, centrally heated barracks have been set up, equipped with modern heating appliances to protect the soldiers.

TMC angry as Oxford Debating Society cancels Mamata's address

Kolkata: The Trinamool Congress is unhappy with the "affairs" that led to the postponing by the Oxford Union Debating Society of a scheduled virtual address by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

A furious Trinamool leadership subsequently told the newsmen that the move to postpone the virtual address in the final moment "unprecedented".

A senior leader said "A programme planned months ahead was cancelled a few minutes before the event was scheduled to start. This is not the first time that such a thing has happened. Earlier, too, her programmes at international fora and foreign visits have been cancelled at the eleventh hour. All sorts of pressure were applied from the highest level to stop Mamata Banerjee's address. We condemn such politics."

Banerjee would become the first Indian woman Chief Minister to address the "The Oxford Union Debate" had her programme was not cancelled. The organizers cancelled the programme at 1.50 pm just about an hour before it was scheduled to take place saying that "nothing prevails over circumstances sometimes."

Bengal Home Department subsequently tweeted: "Today afternoon, the organisers have suddenly sought postponement and rescheduling of the programme at the last moment!" adding "The request has been made telephon-

ically from the organizers" end, citing some unforeseen problems, a brief while ago. The programme with Oxford Union today stands cancelled."

"I sincerely hope that the Hon'ble Chief Minister will understand and might honour us with her esteemed presence at the earliest possible convenience to you. With your permission, I will pass your details onto my successor, to whom I hand over this Friday," an e-mail apology said.

Founded in 1823, the Oxford Union has hosted top world leaders as speakers, including US presidents Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, British Prime Ministers Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher, physicist Albert Einstein and spiritual leader the Dalai Lama. Banerjee was expected to speak on a host of issues like her Government's popular schemes like Kanyashree, Sabuj Saathi, Swasthya Saathi, Krishak Bandhu, Duarey Bangla etc that had earned worldwide acclaim and awards for the State Government in the past few years.

Incidentally in a similar development in 2018 drawing criticism from the opposition parties including the TMC when Banerjee's pre-scheduled programme to mark Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary at Chicago, her scheduled visit to China and her address at St Stephen's college in New Delhi were cancelled. **PNS**

Bengal Minister Firhad Hakim volunteers in Covid vaccine trial

Kolkata: Senior Bengal Minister Firhad Hakim became the second human volunteer to take part in the third phase of corona vaccine trial that was organized at the National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases or Niced in Kolkata. He was pre-ceeded in the trial by one Biplab Jash.

Hakim reported no complaint saying "I am fine and there is no complication," adding he was ready to sacrifice his life for the cause of humanity.

"Even if I have to give my life I am ready to do so but let there be a vaccine for the teeming millions," he said. He will be observed by the doctors for coming one year.

Meanwhile, Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday once again raised the issue of rampant corruption in the use of pandemic fund by the State Government and demanded probe into it.

"I am aware that Rs 2000 crore pandemic purchase has suffered a fraud and needs to be investigated," adding when this was brought to the notice of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee she constituted a committee.

However he said the committee itself was not beyond question. "But I wanted to know about who were the investigators and who were investigated," I also want to know the fate of the investigation by the investigators who perpetrated the scam," he said. There was no immediate response from the State Government. **PNS**

BSF protecting borders with vigour, says Nityanand Rai

New Delhi: The Border Security Force (BSF) celebrated its 56th Raising Day on Tuesday. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai said on the occasion, "The brave personnel of the BSF are protecting the borders of the country with full vigour, despite tough terrain and adverse conditions. Saluting the supreme sacrifice and indomitable gallantry of BSF Jawans in the line of duty."

Referring to the BSF's Artillery Wing which is celebrating its Golden Jubilee year, the Minister of State said he is confident that the Artillery Wing will achieve new heights by carrying forward its glorious history. Lauding the women contingent participating in the parade Rai said that it is reassuring to see the increasing participation of women power in the security of the country.

Aligarh investors suffer as Karvy licence cancelled

Aligarh: Investors have lost crores of rupees due to the dismissal of Karvy Stock Broking Company Limited (KBCL) licence.

In November 2019, market regulator SEBI had stopped the transaction after Karvy was charged with pledging over Rs 2,300 crore worth of shares of 95,000 customers to lenders for 600 crore rupees. Karvy is now blacklisted. Karvy transferred a large number of investors' shares to another company.

Even then, shares and cash of crores of rupees from thousands of investors could not be returned. On 23 November, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) SEBI has cancelled the license. Investors are making claims in the Investor Protection Fund through the National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL). **PNS**

PCB monitoring Kali Nadi as cleaning project starts

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

The picture of the black river containing the polluted water from the manufacturing unit and the city is going to change now. According to the preparations for the proposed Magh Mela in Prayagraj from January month, purifying the water of the Kali nadi is also included in the plan. The pollution control board (PCB) has started monitoring the river water.

Even though the dirty water of a manufacturing unit of the district does not flow into the Kali River, but due to the sewerage of the unit of Aligarh, Bulandshahr, its water is polluted. In January, in Prayagraj, a large number of devotees will reach to take bath in Magh Mela. After Kannauj, the black river

flows into the Ganges. From the government level, the PCB has got directives to somehow clean the stream of black river which falls in the Ganges. PCB has now started monitoring the water of the Kali nadi.

Recently, thousands of fish were found dead in the black river. When the PCB examined the water, they found that the amount of dissolved oxygen has been reduced from a minimum of 5 to 2 while the amount of biological oxygen demand has increased from a minimum of 2 to a maximum of 12.

Ram Gopal, area Officer, Pollution Control Board said that we have started monitoring the water of black river and are looking at the possibilities of how to purify the water and how to balance the amount of oxygen in it.

Spl court grants bail to Showik Chakraborty

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Nearly three months after his arrest in connection with Sushant Singh Rajput death-related drug case, Showik Chakraborty - the brother of Bollywood actress Rhea Chakraborty, was granted bail by the Special Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act Court here on Wednesday.

Special NDPS court judge G B Gurao granted bail to him on a personal bond of Rs 50,000.

Showik (24) had been arrested along with late actor Sushant Singh Rajput's house manager Samuel Miranda on September 4. His actress-sister Rhea was arrested in connection with the Sushant death-related drug case on September 8. While Rhea was granted bail by the Bombay High Court on October 7, Showik was denied

bail by the bail.

In a fresh bail application filed on Showik's behalf before the NDPS court, his lawyer Satish Maneshinde had said that no drug was recovered from his client's possession and that the NCB's only evidence against his client was using the statements of co-accused as the evidence.

Maneshinde had cited a recent Supreme Court ruling which said that the statements of the accused recorded under Section 67 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act by the NCB officials (who were considered "police officers") could not be considered confessions. He had told the court that in the light of the SC ruling there was no reason to keep his client behind the bar.

He has claimed that in light of the ruling, there is no

reason to keep him behind bars.

The NCB, which is investigating the various drug angles linked to the death of the late actor, had alleged that Rhea and her brother Showik used facilitate drug deliveries and payment through credit cards, cash and other payment gateways. At one stage, the NCB had accused Rhea and Showik of being "active members of a drug syndicate" and financing drugs for use by Sushant.

It may be recalled that Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput was found hanging from a ceiling fan in his closed room of his duplex flat at Mont Blanc building at Bandra's Carter Road in north-west Mumbai on June 14.

Having registered a case of Accidental Death Report (ADR) in connection with

Sushant's death, the Bandra police had collected all documents and pieces of evidence, including autopsy and forensic reports and recorded 56 statements as part of the investigations carried out by it under section 174 of Cr P.C. After substantial investigations, the Mumbai police had inferred Sushant's death was a case of "suicide".

However, in the third week of August, the Supreme Court transferred the investigations in the case to the CBI. In crucial forensic report submitted to the CBI last week, the AIIMS -- which studied Sushant's autopsy report, the injury pattern on Sushant's body and correlated it with circumstantial evidence and also examined the preserved viscera -- ruled out the possibility of a "murder" and said that it was a clear case of "suicide".

NORTHERN RAILWAY
OPEN TENDER NOTICE (E-Tender)
For and on behalf of President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager (Mechanical), Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-tender for following work from experienced and capable tenderers.

1	Tender No.	197-S/185/Hiring-Truck/DEE/20/MC-IV
2	Name of work	Hiring of full body Truck (Carrying capacity-9T)at Coach Care Centre, Delhi Sarai Rohilla for two years.
3	Advertised Tender Value	Rs. 21,95,200.80/- (Excluding GST)
4	Earnest money in favour of Sr.DFM/NR, New Delhi	Rs. 43,900/- (Note: It should be in the form of net banking or gateway only. FDR not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS)
5	Date & time of submission of tender bid	UP to 30.12.2020 at 12:00 hrs.
6	Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen	www.ireps.gov.in

No. 197-S/185/Hiring-Truck/DEE/20/MC-IV Date:-01.12.2020 2681/2020
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that a male Namely Unknown S/o Unknown R/o Unknown Age: Approx 30 years, Height: 5'5", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Long, Build: Thin, Wearing: Blue coloured shirt and black coloured pant, was found dead on 27.11.2020 at Pusta Near Faridabad Bus Stand, Kashmere Gate, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 33-A U/s 174 Cr.PC dated 27.11.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi.



If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.
SHO
P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi
Ph.No.: 011-23967889, 23968730
Mob.: 8750870123
DP/769/N/2020

noida
New Okhla Industrial Development Authority
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G. B. Nagar (U.P.)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from eligible firm/contractors registered with for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes /amendments & corrigendum etc.

S. No.	Job No./Work Name	Amount
1	166/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Park two year maintenance Sector-108 Near (Divine Apartment)	Cost Rs. 69.35 Lacs
2	168/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2020-21, D/o RSP with two year maintenance Sector-47 (Dust Free)	Cost Rs. 42.53 Lacs
3	176/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2020-21, M/o Green Belt with two year maintenance Sector-52	Cost Rs. 30.86 Lacs
4	117/D(H)/DD(H)-III/2020-21, D/o Park (C/o Noida Bio Diversity Park Sh: Golf Cart, Sector-91, Noida)	Cost Rs. 35.30 Lacs
5	109/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, M/o Park with two year maintenance Sector-27 (A to I Block All Parks), Noida	Cost Rs. 50.14 Lacs
6	107/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, C/o site store and Toilet block in different location of Horticulture Division-I	Cost Rs. 85.11 Lacs
7	122/D(H)/DD(H)-III/2020-21, Two year M/o Park Plot No. 11, LIG, MIG Flat & Pocket-06 & 12 in Sector-82	Cost Rs. 41.46 Lacs
8	123/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, M/o RSP with Two year maintenance near underpass Sector-61 Police Chowki to NH-24 along Sector-62, 63, 64 under metro station road no.-6 near NH-24	Cost Rs. 85.39 Lacs
9	124/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, M/o Park with Two year maintenance Sector-12, Noida	Cost Rs. 56.87 Lacs
10	122/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, M/o RSP with Two year maintenance Sector-14A T-Point to Sector-16A T-Point & Sector-16A Fly over to Sector-18 Underpass	Cost Rs. 35.02 Lacs
11	87/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2020-21, D/o RSP in Sector-76, 77 & 78 with two year Maintenance	Cost Rs. 92.70 Lacs
12	173/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2020-21, D/o Park in Sector-3 (B-10 Block) (Open Gym) with Five year maintenance	Cost Rs. 30.82 Lacs
13	64/D(H)/DD(H)-III/2020-21, D/o Park Sector-110 Near Yattharth Hospital with two year maintenance	Cost Rs. 44.99 Lacs

Which can be uploaded by date 09.12.2020 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 10.12.2020 at 11.00 AM.

Office, Sector-39 DIRECTOR (HORT), NOIDA
CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

DELHI JAL BOARD
OFFICE OF THE EX.ENGINEER (NE) II
R-POCKET DILSHAD GARDEN DELHI-95

"STOP CORONA; Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"

PRESS NIT NO. 28 (2020-21)

S. No.	Name of Work	Amount Put to Tender	EMD Amount	Tender Fees	Date of Release of tender in procurement Solution	Last Date/ time of receipt of tender through eprocurement Solution
1.	Replacement of 250 mm dia CI deep/damaged water main from Karawal Nagar road to Sarajay Chowk Moonga Nagar in Mustafabad AC-69 Tender ID No. 2020_DJB_197079_1	26,03,137.00	53,000.00	500.00	01.12.2020	15.12.2020 upto 02:30 P.M.

All the terms and conditions including technical specification and special conditions is available on Delhi Govt. Website: <https://delhi.government.com>, Sd/- ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) (Sukhpal Chauhan) EX. ENGINEER (NE)-II Advt No. J.S.V. 245/2020-21

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL
HOSPITAL AND CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR
Telefax :- 0194-2496089, Email Id:- xenmhchdk@yahoo.in

Gist of e-tender Short term
NIT No: MHCHD/TS /2020-21/210/e-tendering Dated: 01.12.2020

For and on behalf of LT. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited from Reputed and experienced firms for the below mentioned work:-
Name of Work:- Extension of Hybrid Fire Detection and Alarm System to MS office and labour room stage II at Govt. LD Hospital, Srinagar.
Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs) :- 4.61
Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees) :- 200
Earnest Money (Rs):- 9300
Time of completion (in Days) :- 07
Position of AAA/funds:- Available as intimated by intending Department

1. Downloading of Bids:- The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in from **01.12.2020 (18.00 hrs)** and can be downloaded from **01.12.2020 (18.00 hrs)**.

2. Uploading: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site from **02.12.2020 (10.00 hrs) to 14.12.2020 (14:00hrs)** in two (02) covers.

3. Opening of Bids:- The bids received upto due date and time shall be opened on **15.12.2020 at 16.00 hrs or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar
No. DIPK-9819/20 Dated:-02.12.2020

Trudeau messes up

The Canadian PM may want to pander to his Sikh constituency but is that worth risking diplomatic ties with India?



It looks like Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is yet to understand that his blanket support to settler Sikhs, even the extremist kind, who form his constituency and gift him a verdict, can ultimately cost him bilateral ties with India. His advocacy of the rights of protesting farmers to be heard by the Government on new agricultural laws does not just amount to interference in the internal affairs of India, it is also testimony to his political immaturity and lack of understanding on what is a complex and layered issue. For it affects the farming community as a whole and not just Punjabi farmers, who form a bulk of the migrants to Canada. And using the sacred occasion of Gurburab to politicise an issue, which he has taken up merely to pander to his domestic concerns, is simply inappropriate. Besides, given his known sympathies for Khalistanis, his activism on Punjab farmers and their plight would be read by many quarters as linking it to and endorsing the cause of separatism. Trudeau has forgotten that Punjabis in India do not think like the Punjabis in Canada. That Khalistan has no resonance among Sikhs here, least of all farmers. Besides, as an advocate of free market, Canada has always spoken against our food subsidies at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), questioning our Minimum Support Price for staples till as late as last year. Is he then justifying this protectionism selectively because it is convenient to him? As a world leader, Trudeau is expected to calibrate each of his responses according to diplomatic nicety and not be rash or impulsive. Besides, India has been careful about not embarrassing him on his domestic issues and would expect a reciprocal courtesy. The MEA has rightly hit back, describing Trudeau's remarks as "ill informed."

It is clear that Trudeau has not learnt any lessons from his last visit to India when he was given the cold shoulder for including pro-Khalistan leaders in his delegation. Instead of thawing the chill on this issue, he has only been playing this up for his political survival. Some of the most extremist of Khalistani activists, who have been keeping the movement alive and are looking at the slightest opportunity to revive it in India, invested heavily in his campaign and ensured his victory in 2015. Ever since, Trudeau has been sympathetic to their concerns, participating in Khalsa Day parades with floats iconising militant leaders like Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, Amreek Singh and Shahbeg Singh, much to India's discomfort. In a gross oversight of diplomacy, he was even seen with many radical groups that accuse India of "genocide" during the anti-Sikh riots of 1984. And this has continued despite India's protests. None of Trudeau's predecessors have been as vociferous and public about their association with pro-Khalistan leaders, clearly careful about not upsetting India. And despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself mentioning the concern such impropriety caused, groups clamouring for a "referendum 2020", where the Sikh diaspora can vote for an "independent Khalistan", have only gained traction though the Canadian Government has officially opposed it. Trudeau did nothing when 16 Canadian gurdwaras banned the entry of consular officials, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Shiv Sena members. And considering that he would not run short of protocol advisories, Trudeau has rarely given into counsel. Of course, the Sikhs have used the Canadian electoral funding system to emerge as a disproportionate influencer in the Government. Consider this, Sikhs in Canada are only 1.4 per cent of the total population of 37.5 million but they are five per cent of the Parliament and eight per cent of Trudeau's Cabinet. The Canadian Prime Minister is also compromised by his reduced lead during his second term in office, with 157 seats in the House of Commons after the 2019 polls. In a subdued role of leading a minority Government, he has not been able to ignore the heft of the New Democratic Party (NDP) whose leader Jagmeet Singh has emerged as a powerful Sikh voice in Canada, bagging 24 crucial seats. It's not a secret that Sikh legislators hold the balance of power for Trudeau as his outgoing Cabinet had four of them — Infrastructure Minister Amarjeet Sohi, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Minister Navdeep Bains, Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan and Tourism Minister Bardish Chagger. Now, with Trudeau having to tread a thin line going forward, the Sikh influence will be deeply entrenched as Jagmeet, who has a vast following and was himself a prime ministerial contender, is ambitious. Both New Delhi and NRIs in Canada are wary at the thought of having Jagmeet as the future PM because of his alleged "pro-Khalistani" leanings. Besides, he has been a vocal critic of the Modi Government and the current situation in Kashmir, making him a pariah for India. Trudeau's reliance on the NDP's support could mean that he has to do a tougher tightrope walk with India. So far he seems to have slipped once too often. Already many members of his Liberal Party have been embarrassed by the outrageous posturing of Khalistani hawks. Now India, too, has stepped up its diplomatic offensive by linking Pakistan's support to Khalistan as part of its subversive endorsement of and exporting terrorism in the neighbourhood. With the world taking a stand against Pakistan on terror, Trudeau seems hemmed in. Indian High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria is, in fact, arguing that the perils of the association could ultimately impact economic relations as Canada, like many other nations in the West, is keen about moving businesses to India from China after the pandemic. Yes, self-preservation comes naturally to him but is it worth alienating world opinion? Can he justify agenda-driven campaigns as "freedom of expression?" Yet from the looks of it, Trudeau has to deal with a problem of his own making.

Blue shock

Maybe not playing international cricket for half a year and the 'retro' outfits have made our cricket team a bit rusty



The excitement of winning the third and final One-Day International should not divert us from the fact that the Indian men's cricket team has been caught out by a well-drilled Australian squad. What is also telling is that the men in yellow are playing far better in their international colours than they did in franchise T20 cricket. The Indian team, on the other hand, with its uniforms harking back to the 1992 Cricket World Cup, seems to have been inspired by its predecessors. The sharpness and competitive attitude forged over the last years have been replaced by, as many have joked on social media, the Spirit of 1992, which let us not forget was the nadir of competitive cricket for the modern Indian team in the post-1983 environment. No matter how classic the outfits might have been, our 1991-92 tour of Australia was an unmitigated disaster.

However, one must realise that it is extremely difficult for athletes to stay at their peak performance levels after months of inactivity even if there were two months of the Indian Premier League (IPL) in between. Getting into shape takes weeks if not months and India was very fortunate to walk home with a win after two successive blowouts. One can only hope that the rest of the tour does not become a repeat of the 1991-92 tour of Australia and the Indian players can bring home not just a few wins but the Border-Gavaskar trophy as well. Hopefully now with a victory under their belt, our boys can go from success to success. After several months of no cricket, the Indian cricket fan has expectations. Of course, we should be proud of an individual milestone as captain Virat Kohli became the fastest cricketer to score 12,000 ODI runs, breaking a record held by legendary compatriot Sachin Tendulkar.

Don't burn the bridges

The farmers' agitation requires sympathetic handling even if the Govt has facts on its side. A cavalier attitude is fraught with great political and security risk



PRIYADARSHI DUTTA

It brought no fresh honour upon the Union Government that agitating farmers from Punjab were left to shiver on the streets of Delhi the night gurdwaras had been illuminated for Guru Nanak Dev Jayanti. Even as the farmers' agitation had been raging in Punjab since September, the Government had been complacent about it till it knocked the doors of Delhi. At that time, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had not blinked twice before accepting the resignation of Harsimrat Kaur from the Cabinet. Her party, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), one of the oldest constituents of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), quit the ruling coalition a week later.

Whatever the parting of ways might mean for the SAD, it could have serious consequences for peace in the frontier State. The BJP's diminished clout in Punjab contrasts with its firm grip at the Centre. Also, expanding footprints across India might actually drive the Sikh-majority state into an isolationist mindset. The BJP-SAD partnership, according to the late Arun Jaitley, was as much a social alliance as it was political. Their coming together in the mid-1990s was an apt postscript to the end of the insurgency in Punjab. Moreover, the SAD's support base was among rural Jat Sikh agriculturists while the urban Hindu middle-class made up the BJP's constituency. So the breakup might trigger polarisation, with nefarious elements waiting in the wings to revive militancy in the state. This will be the last thing the BJP wants in a State where Hindus are in a minority.

The Modi Government has no Sikh face, barring Hardeep Singh Puri, who is a diplomat, rather than a politician by grooming, and he lost the Amritsar seat in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. The council of ministers is lacking even the ornamental presence of S.S. Ahluwalia, BJP MP from West Bengal, though he never represented Sikh votes. The saffron party had earlier lost Navjyot Singh Sidhu to the Congress.

The Government might have the best interest of farmers in its heart while enacting the new agricultural laws but reforms in the agricultural marketing sector were long overdue to make farming remunerative. While there was no bar on selling agriculture produce



in the open market, outside the MSP regime, or on items not procured by the Government, even before the new laws were enacted, there was no commercial and legal architecture for it. Sadly, the Government felt that consensus-building was redundant. The laws, enacted during the Monsoon Session, had originally been rushed through the Ordinance route on June 5. It is unclear whether there were even minimal consultations with the State Governments (agriculture being a State subject under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution), farmers' associations and other stakeholders. Even the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS), a front organisation of the RSS, is unhappy with the way the Government dealt with the issue. Mohini Mohan Mishra, the BKS All India Secretary, recently stated that nearly 25,000 farmers had sent a proposal to the Prime Minister.

There's no doubt that the laws have been made for the traders and would eventually benefit them. This is akin to what Rabindranath Tagore, speaking of the British rule wedded to the idea of progress, observed: "They are not unwilling to do a favour but don't wish to come close. They would rather feel relieved if they can hastily beat retreat after doing the favour...they don't do mercy, they do a favour; they do not love but protect; do not respect but try to act fairly; they do not irrigate the land, though never ungenerous in sowing abundant quantity of seeds" (*Raja-Praja*, P.4-5). His remarks appear telling today. The Government's cavalier attitude that "we know what's good for you" vis-à-vis the

“**THE BJP-AKALI DAL ALLIANCE WAS ALSO A SOCIAL COMPACT. TRACES OF KHALISTANI ELEMENTS ARE STILL ACTIVE IN PUNJAB. THEY ARE LIKELY TO EXPLOIT FOR THEIR EVIL AGENDA ANY UNSYMPATHETIC ATTITUDE OF THE GOVERNMENT TOWARDS THE FARMERS, THE BULK OF WHOM ARE SIKHS**”

farmers has clearly run into problems. Even if the Vigyan Bhawan talks break the ice, the Government would have finally realised that to act in haste and repent in leisure is not a good policy.

The critics of the farmers' agitation, active on social media,

have been quick to dub the farmers as supporters of Khalistan. Fake photos were also circulated on the digital space. The question is what do they propose to do even if they are Khalistan sympathisers? Would they like to send the Army to quell them? Can the BJP Government afford to burn its bridges in Punjab? Do they have a strong constituency of their own or friends to rely upon if the agrarian crisis, god forbid, deepens into a social crisis?

The unsympathetic attitude of slandering democratic governments of the past for farmers' woes must stop. When a Government tries to de-legitimise the Opposition or vice versa, forces inimical to democracy and peace (like the Khalistanis, for instance) take over. Punjab has profited from the dam-building policies by Jawaharlal Nehru, Food Corporation of India (FCI) procurement by Lal Bahadur Shastri and the Green Revolution by Indira Gandhi. The right way the Modi Government can package its agriculture policy is by saying that it wants to take the story forward through measures long overdue.

Fortunately, the BJP did not have to fight the Khalistani insurgency in the State in the 1980s and early 1990s. It was fought mostly by the Congress Government, even though it was partly responsible for its rise and momentum. In the 1980s, Khalistanis gained by projecting the post-Green Revolution agrarian problems in Punjab along communal lines. At that time, the Congress, which was in as strong a position across India as the BJP is today, was

projected as a Hindu fascist party. The Hindus of Punjab became the first targets of Khalistani violence. This is something that all parties, including the BJP, have avoided recalling in public for fear of opening old wounds. Traces of Khalistani elements, there is no gainsaying, are still active in Punjab. They are likely to exploit for their evil agenda any unsympathetic attitude of the Government towards the farmers, the bulk of whom are Sikhs. The farmers of Punjab have so far rightly avoided communalising the current issue unlike they did so in the 80s. In fact, when their agitation took off in mid-September, it was both against the Centre as well as the State, where the Congress is currently in power. Apart from rolling back the farm bills, they also wanted loan waiver from the State Government. However, in the last two months, the Congress has been able to garner the farmers' sympathies.

In politics, sentiments matter as much as policy. Way back in March, 1783, a Sikh force led by Baba Baghel Singh and Jassa Singh Alhwalia had attacked Mughal Delhi to hoist the triangular saffron flag at Red Fort. A troop of 30,000 Nihang Sikhs encamped at a place nearby, which later came to be known as Tis Hazari. The farmers of Punjab have beaten their swords in ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks. Nothing must be done to wake up the sleeping demons of the 1780s or the 1980s.

(The writer is an author and independent researcher based in New Delhi. Views are personal.)

SOUNDBITE

MHRA has formally authorised the Pfizer and BioNTech Group vaccine for COVID-19. The vaccine will begin to be made available across the UK from next week.



UK Prime Minister — Boris Johnson

What a wonderful story...T. Natarajan making his ODI (One Day International) debut for India today. Dreams do come true!



Australian coach — Tom Moody

I congratulate two Independent MLAs for listening to their conscience and voice of suffering farmers and withdrawing support from the Khattar Government.



Congress leader — Randeep Surjewala

We are not on this earth alone and if you can have a positive, meaningful impact on even one life, then you will become part of the solution and not the problem.



Actor — Priyanka Chopra

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Love thy neighbour

Sir — The recent trilateral meeting between India, Sri Lanka and Maldives led to a historical decision on expanding the scope of intelligence sharing to arrest terrorism and beef up cybersecurity. This could set a precedent of self-reliance, security, unity and trust in the world of South-Asian geopolitics. It will help India gain dominance in the sub-continent. With last week's agreements between India and Bahrain to enhance technology, security and IT, it can be assumed that India is stepping up efforts to draw neighbouring countries closer. This way, India can play an important role in ensuring Asian unity and world peace.

Sunil Chilwal
Halawani

Deconstructing Obama

That the first volume of former US President Barack Obama's autobiography, *A Promised Land*, is on way to becoming a bestseller need not hold us back from an objective assessment of a leader who has captured the world's imagination. He is larger than life and has a bag of tricks for self-promotion.

Obama has used the rhetoric of political slogans to project himself as a man of substance. In the process, he has generated an elusive sense of depth about his persona. His "Yes, we can" slogan paled into insignificance before Donald Trump's "Make America great again." Both Obama and Trump shared jingoism in equal measure in their own distinct ways. Obama's foreign policy was not materially different from that of those who preceded and succeeded him. As any other President would have done, Obama, too, ordered drone strikes resulting in thousands of civilian casualties. Not wanting to be seen as being "soft on terror", his decisions cost many lives in several Muslim countries. He was right in asking, "For what?,"



when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. With his unkind characterisation of Rahul Gandhi as a person who "has a nervous, unformed quality about him", Obama seems to have an inflated sense of his IQ levels. Clearly, he is a vastly overrated leader of our times. Either he did not have it in him or missed the opportunity to go down in history as a great statesman.

G. David Milton
Maruthancode

Ayurveda code

Sir — Any attempt by any alternate science to come at par with Western medicine will always be suppressed and the Westerners will continue to ensure their dominance in this field. Yet their science is just 200 years old, much younger than our age-old Ayurveda. But ours is a more holistic system of

treatment with Sushruta performing surgeries well ahead of our times. So is there logic in not allowing post-graduate Ayurveda practitioners from performing general surgeries as advocated by the Centre? Of course, it is well known that *Kshar-Sootra* has received support from eminent proctologists as the most effective treatment for haemorrhoids

and anal fistula. *Prasooti Tantra*, too, has helped in easing gynaecological problems. But that does not mean that we can open up general surgeries to voids. Given the quality of instruction and in the absence of a regulatory code guiding all traditional medicine institutions, its practitioners may not be equipped to conduct surgeries at this point. Even minor

procedures need to be cleared only after meeting modern standards of efficacy.

Jai Prakash Gupta
Ambala Cantt

India in a tight spot

Sir — UK's approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine gives hope that we may soon be able to fight the pandemic but there are concerns.

About 100 drug development teams worldwide are racing to develop vaccines to distribute them on a large scale. Amid this, Pfizer said that its trials showed more than 90 per cent efficacy. While this is a reason to cheer, there are also concerns because it needs to be stored at sub-zero temperatures — a logistical nightmare for India with few ultra-cold freezers and a huge population. The new two-shot vaccine from Pfizer has to be maintained at minus 80°C. Nowhere on the planet does the logistical capacity exist to distribute vaccines at this temperature. Although vaccines could prove to be a game-changer for the pandemic, wealthy nations have already bought up more than half the future supply. India has been scrambling to secure 500 million doses by July from manufacturers, in addition to developing its own Covaxin. India also plans to manufacture up to 200 million doses of candidate vaccines from AstraZeneca and Novavax next year.

Bhagwan Thadani
Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Middle East set to lose its clout

As the climate emergency deepens, oil-guzzling motor vehicles are switching to electricity instead. That does not bode well for oil-rich nations



GWYNNE DYER

The only officials present were American and Saudi," tweeted the Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, but he was either mistaken or was not telling the whole story. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu really did fly into Saudi Arabia recently to spend a few hours with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. We owe this knowledge to that indispensable journalistic resource, the flight-tracking websites. They revealed that the private plane Netanyahu usually charters for secret visits abroad departed from Tel Aviv recently and flew to Neom in Saudi Arabia, taking off for the return flight three-and-a-half-hours later. So, did a meeting actually take place? Did something go awry? Or did a meeting take place, but each side took the public stance that best met its political needs?

No matter what the compulsion for the ambiguity, one thing is crystal clear: The meeting was meaningless. Once upon a time it would have been headline news around the world. 'US superpower and oil-rich Saudi Arabia get together with embattled Israeli leader to carve up the Middle East', or something along those lines. Whereas today this meeting barely got noticed. Netanyahu is indeed embattled but it is corruption charges he's fighting, not a foreign enemy. Pompeo is a soon-to-be-unemployed politician polishing up his CV for a senatorial nomination in 2022 or the Republican presidential nomination in 2024. Prince Mohammed bin Salman is still effectively the dictator of Saudi Arabia, but that no longer cuts much ice in the rest of the world. Some of this collapse in relevance is temporary. Netanyahu will eventually go to jail or retire, but Israel will still be the dwarf superpower that bestrides the Middle East militarily. Pompeo and his employer US President Donald Trump will soon be out of office and the US will recover some of its former position as a world leader, at least for a while. But Saudi Arabia will never be back as a mover and shaker. The decline is permanent, because "oil-rich" is a phrase destined to become as obsolete as "carbon copy." The oil revenue of the Arab producers has fallen by more than two-thirds, from \$1 trillion in 2012 to only \$300 billion this year, and it's never coming back up. The decline so far has been driven mostly by a steep fall in oil prices — demand rose steadily but oil production persistently rose faster — but now an absolute collapse in demand looms as well.

As the climate emergency deepens, motor vehicles (which account for half of all oil use globally) are switching to electricity instead. That does not bode well for oil rich nations. Britain and France are now committed to end all sales of new cars with internal combustion engines by 2030, which means in practice that nobody there will buy a new petroleum-fueled car after 2025. Many other countries have or are debating similar measures. So what happens to a country like Saudi Arabia, where four-fifths of the Government budget comes from oil revenues? Budget cuts are already happening, of course, but revenues will continue to fall. Moreover, the population in almost all the oil-producing Gulf states is still growing fast.

At some point these two lines on the graph will intersect in a politically destabilising way. If Saudi Arabia and the smaller Gulf oil-states go on spending vast amounts of money on weapons, ostensibly to protect themselves from Iran, the lines will intersect a little sooner, but in any case it's just a matter of time. The extraordinary stability of these States — not a single change of regime in the six oil-rich monarchies of the Arabian peninsula in the past 50 years — has been based entirely on the ability of the traditional rulers to buy the acquiescence of their subjects. Once the wealth goes, so does the stability.

The Arabian peninsula has been briefly a major centre of power only twice in world history: Once in 632-661 CE, after which the capital of the early Islamic empire moved to Damascus, and once from 1973 to the present — but not for much longer. Even the unity of Saudi Arabia itself, which was imposed by force less than a century ago, may not survive the transition. The dominant power centres of the post-oil Middle East will be exactly where they were for most of the past thousand years: Turkey, Iran and Egypt. And at no time in the last thousand years have any two of those three powers been able to cooperate for long. They do have some things in common: Islam (although in two different and generally hostile versions), relatively modern, semi-industrialised economies (Turkey most, Egypt least), and around 100 million people each. But they are divided by language (Turkish, Arabic and Farsi have nothing in common except loan-words), distance (the capitals are more than 2,000 km apart), and by history and politics. Egypt occasionally got conquered by one of the other two but that doesn't count as collaboration. So it might be argued that the Middle East itself is about to disappear as a meaningful concept. No great loss, really.

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy and Work'.)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

EVEN AS AAP WAS CLAIMING TO BE SUPPORTING THE FARMERS, THE DELHI GOVERNMENT EXECUTED THE BLACK LAWS THROUGH A GAZETTE NOTIFICATION.

—PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER
AMARINDER SINGH



FOOD AND ESSENTIALS ARE BEING GIVEN TO THE PROTESTING FARMERS IN DELHI BY AAP. PUNJAB IS BACKING KEJRIWAL, SO AMARINDER IS NERVOUS.

—AAP MLA
RAGHAV CHADHA

Prevention better than cure

The importance of curbing air pollution activities over reduction measures cannot be stressed enough. It is the most effective and economically-feasible option for the long-term



SURESH IYER S KAMARAJU M A EMMAUEL

It is an unfortunate fact that breathing clean air, the most basic of human needs for survival, has become a luxury for many around the globe, and particularly in India, which houses 22 of the 30 most polluted cities in the world. Looking at the severity of the problem of air pollution and its consequences on the health of millions of people, animals and plants worldwide, dirty air is now being seen as one of the most serious hazards.

Ever since the issue of deteriorating air quality has been highlighted and documented, there have been growing concerns over its economic aspects, in terms of investments, technology development and the cost benefits of handling air pollution. This relationship between environmental degradation and economic needs has been the object of constant debate among environmental economists. During the last two decades, this debate has raised several questions about attaining sustainability by normalising environmental management and economic growth with the participation of inhabitants on the same scale.

Peripheral effects or externalities are one of the most basic concepts evoked by economists while looking at problems of environmental pollution. In economics, an externality is an important cause for market failure that arises when the production or consumption activities of an individual or a firm influence the well-being of bystanders. For instance, smoking a cigarette in a public place, an open kitchen in a hotel, or using conventional wood/coal-fired cooking stoves in rural households are considered to create a negative impact on the people in the vicinity.

Air pollution is essentially a negative externality as it imposes costs on people who are external to the transaction of a polluting product. While sustainability focusses on integrating economic activity with environmental protection and social problems, it is obvious that economic development, which ignores environmental and social impacts, could generate undesirable consequences on sustainability trends.

There is a general agreement that we must prevent pollution of our natural resources like air, water and land. On the contrary, there are considerable disputes over how controls should be designed and how much control is needed. From the Indian perspective, the pollution control laws and mechanisms adopted four decades ago in 1981 got amended over time. They tended to lean towards detailed regulation of technology, leaving polluters little choice in methods to achieve environmental goals. However, a rapid economic and social change challenge policy design and implementation. The need of the hour is to look for innovative solutions to avoid pollution rather than focussing on its control only. Addressing the root cause is the most probable solution left to us. India needs to strengthen its capacity, both ideologically and practically, through governmental actions and citizen participation. This would support economic development, promote the industrial set-up and result in employment generation.

Thus, understanding the severity of air pollution and its associated impacts, the Government of India released its strategic action plan the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in January 2019. It clearly elucidates that the technological drawbacks and limitations in expertise are considered as a major hindrance in achieving our environmental obligations. Thus, swift

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THE NEED OF THE HOUR IS TO LOOK FOR INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO AVOID POLLUTION RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON ITS CONTROL ONLY. ADDRESSING THE ROOT CAUSE IS THE MOST PROBABLE SOLUTION LEFT TO US. INDIA NEEDS TO STRENGTHEN ITS CAPACITY, BOTH IDEOLOGICALLY AND PRACTICALLY, THROUGH GOVERNMENTAL ACTIONS AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION



technology transfer mechanisms and effective capacity-building are the way forward for any collaboration in addressing persisting environmental issues. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure", said Sir Benjamin Franklin. The importance of curbing air pollution activities over reduction measures cannot be stressed enough. It is the most effective and economically-feasible option for the long-term.

Along with environmental benefits, pollution prevention practices could directly improve the nation's well-being by providing a cleaner environment, which in turn increases productivity and the effective use of resources. Hence, in order to meet both economic growth and environmental protection simultaneously, it is necessary to widen the gap between emissions and economic output with judicious resource utilisation.

As cost-effective emission control has been in focus for decades in international air pollution regulations, the balance between market-based policies for prevention of air quality deterioration and economics of contamination reduction is expected to play a significant role in India's economic road map, which aims to achieve the \$5 trillion-mark by 2025. The experiences from developed nations have to be replicated in terms of India's existing dismal air quality scenario, which includes technologies and mechanisms with short, medium and long-term effects and goals.

Emissions from the industrial and construction sectors are considered as major sources of particulate matter pollution in India, while the NOx (nitrogen oxide) emissions are majorly con-

tributed by the transport and power generation sector. Thus pollution prevention needs to be initiated from these sectors as the first step towards clean air. With thoughts of shifting from coal-based energy to natural gas, the transition could provide a long-term answer to climate change with a significant decrease in CO2 and other air quality benefits. But the cost of technological development along with the implementation and industrial acceptance scenario needs to be accounted for.

In India, natural gas formed about 5.6 per cent of the country's total energy supply in 2018. The deployment of a large-scale fuel switch from coal to natural gas is influenced by various factors viz. switching demand and supply constraints, infrastructure, technology adaptability, high upfront costs and skill capacity. On the other hand, the recent introduction of the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME-II) policy, along with Bharat Stage Emission Standards (BS-VI) on technology and fuels, emphasises the Government's efforts in curbing pollutants associated with the transport sector.

Moreover, subsidies in the purchase cost of electric vehicles (EVs) would increase cost-effectiveness and acceptance among people, which would be a huge step for the transport sector.

On the same lines, the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) aims to provide 100 per cent Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) access to all households in India to alleviate the dire impacts of biomass/firewood use for cooking. The need of the hour is the effective management of the crop residue, burning of which by farmers

has been a nuisance for some time now. TERI suggests an effective crop residue business model, which emphasises the decentralised use of biomass at the village and industry level. It creates an effective strategy for creating jobs along with crop stubble management.

The emergence of novel technologies curbing emissions has proven to be an effective tool in stimulating investments in clean energy technology at the source. Economic models project that the introduction of such measures at source would result in job losses in some sectors (fossil fuel) and job creation in others (renewable energy and so on). In the long-run, such environmental policies will favour the economy as they will stimulate more efficient use of resources and result in health benefits.

Reducing emissions is a wise, long-term investment that contributes to several development goals and ultimately will yield substantial benefits. Increasing urbanisation and economic development activities along with a lack of effective implementation are fuelling air pollution problems. Addressing the issue of a deteriorating air quality requires multi-level partnerships, incorporating the Government, the private sector, the industry, academia, research institutes, the civil society and associations with more cohesive efforts. The allocation of ₹460 crore for pollution-control schemes under the Union Budget needs to be smartly invested with equal emphasis on increasing public awareness and technology infrastructure.

(Iyer is Fellow, Kamaraju is Associate Fellow and Emmanuel is Research Associate, TERI)

Time to put security front and centre

It is commendable that the US could control further terrorist attacks after September 11. India can learn a lesson or two from this



SUDHIR HINDWAN

sharing of geospatial data. Besides, issues of global cooperation in the economic arena and public health along with the border security apparatus and geospatial information sharing remain a vital part of the pact.

This would certainly provide a huge platform for future Indo-US ties through diplomatic endeavours and be the beginning of a new era of defence deals. Although it is the third 2+2 Dialogue, it holds more importance as the BECA would enhance the chances of sharing information with regard to inner-satellite data, military and intelligence along with logistics facilities. This is vital as the rising tentacles of Chinese expansionism have raised serious concerns about the safety of the entire region. In fact, the Quad Group, comprising India, Australia, Japan and the US, recently held a joint naval exercise to counter the threat posed by China and to ensure security in the Indo-Pacific region.

The BECA would be helpful in developing international cooperation for fighting trans-national terrorism.

According to analysts, it is a welcome development as it would provide a platform for multi-layered security cooperation that would deal with various other issues related to terrorism. Right from funding of terrorist activities, policing cooperation, dealing with cyber threats, secrecy through enhancing technological innovations and tightening the border to maritime security information-gathering exercise. Cooperation and coordination in aggrandisement of communication capabilities and management of security arrangements to deal with any kind of threat are the main objectives of the pact. The catch here lies in how to generate prudence to anticipate a possible threat from religiously-motivated bands of distraught people.

There would also be chances of increased cooperation under the Communication Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) between the security and defence establishments of the two largest democracies of the world. However, there has been a paradigm shift in the

foreign policy outlook of nations. Countries have become more pragmatic in dealing with others and have started building one-to-one relationships. Therefore, the apprehensions of having an adverse impact on ties with either Russia, Iran or China are not going to have a place in strategic policy formulation in the present scenario.

Another important area, which requires immediate attention and cooperation, is developing a mechanism to deal with the chemical weapons in possession of the new breed of terrorists. Chemical weapons are not easily detectable and hence are easily transportable, as compared to conventional arms. International cooperation in terms of forming strict laws and regulations that prevent the acquisition of such weapons can provide a strategic management in dealing with terror.

The cooperation between India and the US may also develop a fool-proof mechanism to put an end to the accessibility of RDX, Erythritol Tetranitrate (Penta) and sophisticat-

ed weapons like AK-56 and AK-47 assault rifles. Plus, cooperation in policing while dealing with the menace of drug trafficking will provide a strong mechanism to crack the nexus between terrorists and drug dealers in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Laos and so on.

However, the main challenge will be how to frame a strategy to deal with religiously-motivated terrorists. It is commendable that the US security and intelligence network could control further terrorist attacks after September 11. India can learn a lesson or two from this. Unless we develop a high-level intelligence network to anticipate such threats, the talk of combating strategies would only remain a chimera.

During the last two decades, the obnoxious nexus between drug smugglers and terrorists has posed a serious problem for internal security networks and compelled various nations to organise themselves and wage a relentless war against this. But mere implementation of vigorous drug laws cannot be effective unless the judicial procedure is modified to ensure speedy

trials. This agreement is an opportunity to nip Pakistan's trouble-making tactics and the narco-terror it is spreading in the region, as well as curb China's expansionist plans.

There is a major transnational transition on account of a rapidly changing value system across the globe as well as a shift in world-level power sharing. Slowly, the old order is giving way to the new. The recent developments and terror attacks in different parts of the globe offer a few lessons: First, no authority can afford to ignore the popular aspirations of the masses anymore. Change and unrest are inevitable if the demands of people are not met.

The process of a new threat transformation has just begun. Therefore, the present initiative by the Governments of the US and India would provide a new framework of security-related information sharing and more chances of confidence building for a better future.

(The writer is a Professor of Political Science)



FOREIGN EYE



THE GREAT UNRAVELLING

Why does every development in the Corona crisis seem to take Boris Johnson by surprise? The Prime Minister sent two letters to Conservative MPs in the hope of dissuading them from voting against the post-lockdown restrictions. The COVID winter plan is due to take effect now. It is already unravelling into a messy muddle. (The Guardian editorial)

Won't immediately lift China tariffs: Biden

Washington: US President-elect Joe Biden has said that he won't immediately lift tariffs placed by President Donald Trump on many imports from China or break Trump's initial trade deal.

Biden says he wants to maximise his leverage in future talks with the United States' geopolitical rival.

Speaking to New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman, Biden said, "I'm not going to make any immediate moves, and the same applies to the tariffs." Biden adds in Friedman's column published Wednesday: "I'm not going to prejudice my options."

Under Trump, the U.S. and China engaged in a year-long trade war that has been largely frozen since a Phase One deal was reached in January. While some industries have benefited from Trump's protectionist policies, the policies have been largely panned by the business community and most experts — and most of the cost of tariffs has been borne by American businesses and consumers.

Biden tells Friedman an early priority after his January swearing-in will be to restore relationships with allies to strengthen his negotiating position with China. AP



Ron Klain preparing to serve as Joe Biden's chief of staff

Washington: Ron Klain has checked all the boxes of a classic Washington striver: Georgetown, Harvard Law, Supreme Court clerk and Capitol Hill staffer, White House adviser and, along the way, of course, lobbyist and lawyer.

Now he is preparing to serve as President-elect Joe Biden's chief of staff, a job often referred to as the nation's chief operating officer.

His gilded resume, deep knowledge of the gears and

levers of power in the capital and decadeslong association with Biden have also done something unusual in today's Washington: drawn praise from both sides of the ideological divide.

The 59-year-old father of three has a reputation among Democrats and, strikingly, even some Republicans for competence — a notable attribute after an administration that rewarded and dismissed people based on their loyalty to President Donald Trump. AP

Hong Kong activists Joshua Wong, Agnes Chow, Ivan Lam jailed

Hong Kong: Hong Kong pro-democracy activists Joshua Wong, Agnes Chow and Ivan Lam were sentenced to jail on Wednesday on charges related to an unauthorised anti-government protest last year at the city's police headquarters.

Wong, who pleaded guilty to organizing and participating in the protest, received 13 1/2 months behind bars. Chow, who also pleaded guilty to participating in the protest and inciting others to take part, received 10 months, while Lam received 7 months after pleading guilty to incitement.

The protest took place on June 21 last year, and saw thousands surround the police headquarters as they demonstrated against excessive force by police against protesters, as well as a now-withdrawn extradition bill that would have allowed suspects to be extradited to mainland China.



Hong Kong activists Joshua Wong, right, and Ivan Lam, left, are escorted by Correctional Services officers to prison in Hong Kong on Wednesday. AP

The trio were members of the now-defunct political group Demosist. It is the first time that Chow, 23, has been given a jail sentence. Wong, 24, and Lam, 26, had previously been jailed over charges related to their activism.

Their jailing comes as Beijing tightens control over the semi-autonomous city following months of anti-government protests last year, which occasionally saw violent clashes between protesters and police. AP

Lawmaker asks Europe to provide 'safe haven'

Copenhagen: A Hong Kong pro-democracy activist who is visiting Denmark urged European nations on Wednesday to allow protesters in Hong Kong "a safe haven from the terror" of China's Communist Party.

"The situation in Hong Kong is getting worse by the day and it is important that the world knows that Hong Kong is no longer a free city," Ted Hui said in an email to The Associated Press.

Britain has extended residency rights for up to 3 million Hong Kongers eligible for British National Overseas passports, allowing them to live and work there for five years. Britain also has followed

the United States, Australia and Canada in suspending extradition agreements with Hong Kong, a city of 7.5 million people which became a special administrative region of China in 1997 after Britain returned control of the territory to Beijing, which promised it autonomy over local affairs for 50 years.

Hui arrived in Denmark on Tuesday "to change the Danish government's stance," according to Thomas Rohden, chairman of the Danish China Critical Society, which organized his trip. A former lawmaker, Hui was able to get his passport back from the government and a visa after receiving an invitation from Danish lawmakers. AP

Rouhani rejects Bill that would boost enrichment

AP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani on Wednesday rejected a bill approved by parliament that would have suspended UN inspections and boosted uranium enrichment, saying it was "harmful" to diplomatic efforts aimed at restoring the 2015 nuclear deal and easing US sanctions.

The tug-of-war over the bill, which gained momentum after the killing of a prominent Iranian nuclear scientist last month, reflects the rivalry between Rouhani, a relative moderate, and hard-line lawmakers who dominate parliament and favour a more confrontational approach to the West.

The bill would have sus-

ended UN inspections and required the government to resume enriching uranium to 20 per cent if European nations fail to provide relief from crippling U.S. Sanctions on the country's oil and banking sectors. That level falls short of the threshold needed for nuclear weapons but is higher than that required for civilian purposes.

Speaking at a Cabinet meeting, Rouhani said his administration, "does not agree with that and considers it harmful for the trend of diplomatic activities." He implied the lawmakers were positioning themselves ahead of elections planned for June.

He added that "today, we are more powerful in the nuclear field than at any other time."

Granting provisional provincial status to Gilgit Baltistan will be priority: Imran

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday said that his government would work on a priority basis to grant the provisional provincial status to Gilgit Baltistan, according to a media report.

His remarks came after he arrived in the disputed region to attend the oath-taking ceremony of the 14-member Gilgit Baltistan Cabinet.

"What will the new government do? First, we will work on granting the region provisional provincial status so that the prevailing sense of deprivation [among the people] can be eradicated," Dawn newspaper quoted Khan as saying. PTI

China denies weakening sanctions enforcement on North Korea

Beijing: China on Wednesday rejected US accusations it is weakening its enforcement of UN sanctions against North Korea, but said more efforts are needed toward reaching a political settlement and greater attention should be paid to the impact of the sanctions on ordinary North Koreans.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying was responding to comments by the State Department's deputy envoy for North Korea affairs, Alex Wong, in which he said China was no longer even attempting to enforce many of the sanctions, including a requirement to expel North Korean contract workers. "The Chinese government increasingly allows its companies to conduct trade with North Korea in a broad spectrum of UN-prohibited goods,"

Wong said at a seminar in Washington on Tuesday.

Chinese and North Korean-flagged ships also regularly transport coal, a key North Korean export covered by sanctions, Wong said.

Hua told reporters at a daily briefing that, as a permanent member of the Security Council and "a responsible big power, China has always earnestly implemented Security Council resolutions and fulfilled its international obligations."

"Under the current situation, all parties should spend more time and energy to promote the political settlement process of the peninsula issue and pay more attention to the negative impact of sanctions on the (North Korean) population and their livelihood," Hua said. AP

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI

4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001

O.A. No.1010/18 Date: 19.11.2020

CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA Applicant

Versus

SHRI NITIN MEHTA AND ORS..... Respondent

To, DEFENDANT

3. M/S. SHUBHKAMNA BUILD TECH PVT. LTD.

197-E, Pocket-IV, Mayur Vihar, Phase-I, Delhi-110091.

Whereas the above named applicant(s) has/have instituted a case for recovery of Rs.71,23,198/- (Rupees Seventy One Lakh Twenty Three Thousand One Hundred Ninety Eight Only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 16.03.2021 at 10:30 A.M.

Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.

SEAL OF COURT BY ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL For Registrar, DRT-II, DELHI

Disputing Trump, Barr says no widespread election fraud



Washington: Disputing President Donald Trump's persistent, baseless claims, Attorney General William Barr declared the US Justice Department has uncovered no evidence of widespread voter fraud that could change the outcome of the 2020 election.

Barr's comments, in an interview Tuesday with The Associated Press, contradict the concerted effort by Trump, his boss, to subvert the results of last month's voting and block President-elect Joe Biden from taking his place in the White House.

Barr told the AP that US attorneys and FBI agents have been working to follow up specific complaints and information they've received, but "to date, we have not seen fraud on a scale that could have effected a different outcome in the election." AP

South Korea passes law allowing BTS stars to postpone military service



New York: In a major move, the South Korean parliament has passed a bill allowing music sensation BTS and other musicians to postpone their mandatory military service until the age of 30.

As per the South Korean laws, all able-bodied South Korean men, aged between 18 and 28, are required to serve in the military for about two years, reported New York Times.

Two of the members of the group, Jin and Suga, will soon turn 28 and their with the group was under threat. PTI

Rage and hope fuel women's revolt over abortion in Poland

Warsaw (Poland): Karolina Micula had used her bare chest in political protest once before.

When Poland's right-wing government first tried to restrict abortion rights, the actress and singer delivered an intense performance onstage in Wroclaw in 2017 that included her spreading paint in the national colors — white and red — onto her breasts and face, ending with a fist raised high.

When the authorities tried again to impose a near-total ban on abortion in October this year, Micula, along with a friend, again stripped to her waist and stood on top of a car at a busy Warsaw intersection during a protest, holding a flare high and giving the middle finger.



"A woman's body is a place of political battle," the 32-year-old said from her Warsaw apartment in an interview. "My gesture meant that I

will do with my body whatever I want to do with it. If I want to stand naked in front of people, I will do it, because it's my choice." AP

Pakistan court declares Sharif proclaimed offender

Islamabad: A Pakistani court on Wednesday declared Nawaz Sharif a proclaimed offender after the former premier failed to appear before it despite repeated summons served in connection with two corruption cases.

The two-member bench of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) comprising Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani heard the case about Sharif's appeals against convictions in the Al-Azizia and Avenfield cases.

The court said that notices would also be issued to the sureties of Sharif to show the cause for their failure to produce him as per the orders of the court. The court was informed by officials of the Foreign Office and Interior Ministry that Sharif was duly informed about the summons of the court both in London, where he was living, and his residence in Lahore. PTI

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General Public is hereby informed that one person **Namely: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, Address: Unknown**, was found dead near Moti Nagar Metro Station, New Delhi on 10.11.2020 in the area of P.S. Moti Nagar, Delhi. The body has been preserved in Safdarjung Hospital's Mortuary, Delhi. In this regard a case has been lodged vide DD No. 44A, dated 10.11.2020 at P.S. Moti Nagar, Delhi. The description of the dead person is as under:- **Age:** Approx 55 years, **Sex:** Male, **Height:** 5'7", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Oval, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Black colour sweater, brown colour pant and bare feet. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.

SHO P.S. Moti Nagar, Delhi

DP/282/Wd/2020 Ph: 011-25101150, 8750871125

राजस्थान राज्य पथ परिवहन निगम
कार्यालय मुख्य प्रबंधक, सी.बी.एस आगरा, जयपुर।
केन्द्रीय/स्टील/वाहन ठहराव स्थल देने बाबत।
केन्द्रीय बस स्टैंड, सिन्धी केम्प, जयपुर पर विभिन्न स्टॉल/केन्टीनो, सुलग कौम्यलेक्स के लिये लाईसेन्सधारि नियुक्त किये जाने हे। प्रस्ताव देने की अन्तिम तिथि 04.12.2020 को दोपहर 02.00 बजे तक है। इस सम्बन्ध में विस्तृत जानकारी निगम वेबसाईट www.rsrtc.rajasthan.gov.in पर एम्प राज्य लोक रचनायन पोर्टल (SPPP) पर (UBN is RTC2021SL0B00345) नी देखी जा सकती है।
राज सांघ/सी/20/7228 तिथि 135/2020-21 मुख्य प्रबंधक

AXIS BANK Retail Asset Centre/Asset Sales Centre: B-6, Lajpat Nagar, Delhi-110024. Corporate Office: 'Axis House', Block-B, Bombay Dyeing Mills Compound, Pandurang Budhkar Marg, Worli, Mumbai-400025. Registered Office: 'Trishul', 3rd floor, opposite Samarshwar Temple, Law garden, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad-380006

POSSESSION NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Axis Bank Ltd. under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued Demand notice upon the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Mortgagor(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned date:

Name of Borrower / Co-borrower	Description of Property	1. Date of Demand Notice 2. Date of Possession 3. Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)
1. Mr. Shalish Waghmare S/O Mr. Abhimanyu Waghmare, L-1287A, DDA Flats, Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019. Also At: Second Floor Flat, Plot No. 1610, Sector-A, Greenfields Colony, Faridabad-121003	Entire Second Floor Flat comprising of three bedrooms, kitchen & two toilet constructed upon the plot no. 1610, Sector-A, Greenfields Colony, Faridabad with roof rights, having total covered area 800 Sq. Ft. and with joint rights to use and enjoy the stairs and common passage and with the value based undivided proportionate share in the land.	1. 11.08.2020 2. 27.11.2020 3. Rs. 16,29,510/99/-
2. Mrs. Jyoti Borkara W/O Mr. Shalish Waghmare L-1287A, DDA Flats, Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019		
Also At: Second Floor Flat, Plot No. 1610, Sector-A, Greenfields Colony, Faridabad-121003. Also At: B-63, Soami Nagar, Delhi-110017		

The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s) in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Axis Bank Ltd.

The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s) attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

The above-mentioned Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Mortgagor(s) are hereby given a 30 days' Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days' from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: 03-12-2020
Place: Delhi

Sd/-,
Authorized Officer,
Axis Bank Ltd.,

SR. No.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	PWD B&R, HANSI	UPGRADATION OF ROAD FROM HANSI TOSHAM ROAD TO DHANI SHANKRIYA BY PDG. WDG. & STG. IN KM 0.00 TO 1.49 IN HISAR DISTT. (ROAD ID 5286)	01.12.2020 21.12.2020	49.96 LAKH	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	pwd-eeep-hansi@hry.nic.in 01663-259688
2	PWD B&R PANCHKULA	RE-INVITING OF TENDER FOR WIDENING & STRENGTHENING OF LINK ROAD NATWAL IN PANCHKULA DISTT. (ROAD ID 2862). (UNDER NABARD SCHEME)	02.12.2020 10.12.2020	NIL	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2920477 pwd-eeep-panchkula@hry.nic.in
3	PWD B&R JHAJJAR	IMPROVEMENT OF ROAD BY PROVIDING WIDENING AND STRENGTHENING ON JHAJJAR FARUKHAGAR ROAD TO SURAH JAHANGIRPUR KHUNGAT SEKHUPURJAT BHADHANI SURUKHPUR TO JHAJJAR ROAD IN JHAJJAR DISTRICT UNDER PMGSY-III BATCH-I/HR7-III-14 (RE-INVITED) + 5 OTHER WORKS	28.11.2020 24.12.2020	1521.58 LACS	www.pmgstendershry.nic.in	01251-252085
4	PWD B&R GURUGRAM	CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDING OF GOVT. COLLEGE AT SECTOR - 16 A FARIDABAD (PDG. 3D HOLOGRAM , VIRTUAL REALITY BASED EDUCATIONAL MODULES), + 7 OTHER WORKS	02.12.2020 15.12.2020	88.47 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in TENDER NO 2020_HRY_152086_1 + 7 OTHER	Pwd-eeed-gurgaon@hry.nic.in 0124-2320874
5	PWD B&R, SONEPAT	IMPROVEMENT BY PROVIDING STRENGTHENING ON KHARKHODA TO TURUKPUR VIA THANA KAKAN-THANA KHURD ROAD (ROAD ID-6233) AND RE-CONSTRUCTION ON KHERI DAHIYA TO KHANDA VIA NAYA KHANDA ROAD (ROAD ID-9652 - 9658) IN SONEPAT DISTT. UNDER NABARD SCHEME RIDF-XXVI (RE-INVITED)	CLOSING DTAE 15.12.2020	396.21 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	0130-2244690 pwd-eeep1-sonapat@hry.nic.in
6	PANCHAYATI RAJ, BLOCK LEVEL E-TENDERING COMMITTEE, BLOCK UJHANA	SUPPLY OF RAW AND BUILDING MATERIAL IN VARIOUS VILLAGES OF BLOCK UJHANA DISTT. JIND	03.12.2020 13.12.2020	50000/- (FOR EACH GROUP)	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	bdpo.ujhana@hry.nic.in sdopr.ujhana@gmail.com 0164-84910
7	PANCHAYATI RAJ, BLOCK LEVEL E-TENDERING COMMITTEE, BLOCK NARWANA	SUPPLY OF RAW AND BUILDING MATERIAL IN VARIOUS GROUP OF VILLAGES OF BLOCK NARWANA DISTT. JIND	03.12.2020 14.12.2020	50000/- (FOR EACH GROUP)	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	bdpo.narwana@hry.nic.in sdo.pr.narwana@gmail.com 94164-84910
8	BLOCK DEVELOPMENT & PANCHAYAT OFFICER, BADLI (JHAJJAR)	SUPPLY OF RAW AND BUILDING MATERIAL IN VARIOUS VILLAGES OF BLOCK BADLI & DISTT-JHAJJAR	03.12.2020 21.12.2020	EMD 2 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	9355630031
9	BLOCK LEVEL E-TENDERING COMMITTEE, BLOCK SAMPLA DISTRICT ROHTAK	SUPPLY OF RAW AND BUILDING MATERIAL IN VARIOUS VILLAGES OF BLOCK SAMPLA DISTT.ROHTAK	07.12.2020 21.12.2020	NIL	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	9896782122
10	BLOCK LEVEL E-TENDERING COMMITTEE, BLOCK ROHTAK	SUPPLY OF RAW AND BUILDING MATERIAL IN VARIOUS VILLAGES OF BLOCK ROHTAK DISTT.ROHTAK	08.12.2020 22.12.2020	NIL	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	9416521327
11	BLOCK LEVEL E-TENDERING COMMITTEE, BLOCK KALANAUR DISTRICT ROHTAK	SUPPLY OF RAW AND BUILDING MATERIAL IN VARIOUS VILLAGES OF BLOCK KALANAUR DISTT.ROHTAK	09.12.2020 23.12.2020	NIL	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	9992221462
12	BLOCK LEVEL E-TENDERING COMMITTEE, BLOCK MEHAMDISTRICT ROHTAK	SUPPLY OF RAW AND BUILDING MATERIAL IN VARIOUS VILLAGES OF BLOCK MEHAM DISTT.ROHTAK	11.12.2020 28.12.2020	NIL	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	896782122
13	IRRIGATION AND WATER RESOURCES , FATEHABAD	DEEPENING AND RENOVATION OF CHILLI LAKE AT FATEHABAD	CLOSING DATE 21.12.2020	154 LACS	hid.gov.in	sen-wsfb.rrr@gov.in
14	PANCHAYATI RAJ, REWARI	PAVEMENT OF RASTA WITH IPB AT VARIOUS VILLAGE, BLOCK NAHAR, DISTT. REWARI	17.12.2020 18.12.2020	374.92 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01274-222260, 9416421261 prexeeng.rwr@hry.nic.in
15	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DIVISION BHAWANI.	REPLACEMENT OF DAMAGED SEWER LINE FROM PARNANI MANDIR TO BAWARI GATE, GHOSIAN CHOWK TO HANUMAN GATE & REPLACEMENT OF DAMAGED DI RISING MAIN 600MM I/D FROM DEVSAR CHIUNGI DISPOSAL TO SULLAGE CARRIER LOHARU ROAD, BHIWANI TOWN.	25.11.2020 08.12.2020	1.53 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in TENDER NO 2020_HRY-144460_2	Executive Engineer
16	FOREST DEPARTMENT CHARKHI DADRI	RANGE OFFICE CONSTRUCTION AT BADHRA + 2 OTHER WORKS	21.11.2020 11.12.2020	56.87 LACS	http://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in	dfcharkhidadri@gmail.com 01250-297241

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etendehry.nic.in RO NO. 84144

Around the Globe

Montgomery (US): Alabama on Tuesday set a February execution date for a man convicting of the 1991 killing of a woman abducted near an automatic teller machine and later found shot in a cemetery. The Alabama Supreme Court ordered that 51-year-old Willie B Smith III be put to death on February 11 for the shotgun slaying of Sharma Ruth Johnson.

Rome: Italy's health minister told lawmakers on Wednesday that Italy will distribute 202.6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines during 2021 in "an unprecedented effort that will require a huge collective commitment." Robert Speranza said the vaccines will not be mandatory, but that the doses allotted Italy through an EU collective purchasing agreement would be "enough to potentially vaccinate the entire population."

Nairobi: The UN says it and Ethiopia have signed a deal to allow "unimpeded" humanitarian access to the embattled Tigray region, at least the parts under federal government control. This will allow the first aid to the region of 6 million people that has been cut off during fighting between the federal and Tigray regional governments. Each regards the other as illegal in a power struggle that has been months in the making.

Indian economy to see positive growth in Q4: Niti Aayog VC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian economy is coming out of the pandemic-induced degrowth and GDP growth will enter the positive territory in the fourth quarter of this fiscal, Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar said on Wednesday.

In an interview to PTI, Kumar also said the Centre's new agriculture reform laws are aimed at increasing the income of farmers and the present agitation was a result of misunderstanding and miscommunication which need to be removed.

"The second quarter GDP

figure (contraction of 7.5 per cent) reflects that the economy is coming out of this pandemic-induced degrowth phase and my expectation is that in the third quarter, we will achieve the same level of economic activity as the year-ago period.

"And the fourth quarter will show a small but positive growth over the previous year because the government has... Ushered in many structural reforms and some more are in the pipeline," he said.

Stating that all those reforms will provide a very strong foundation for accelerating the economic growth in

the fiscal year 2021-22 and beyond, Kumar said, "we have now shrugged off the negative impact of the pandemic and are moving towards a sustained high growth trajectory in the coming years."

About India's growth figure in the current fiscal year, he said it will be better than negative 9 or 10 per cent, as has been forecast by many, including the RBI.

Kumar noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had an unprecedented negative impact on economic activities but this was completely in the nature of a natural disaster and not related to the regular economic

cycle.

"Therefore, it is quite irrelevant to talk about the economy being in a technical recession," he emphasised.

On better than expected manufacturing growth of 0.6 per cent in the second quarter of 2020-21, Kumar said this has come as a pleasant surprise.

"But there is a base effect but nonetheless, it is also endorsed by the higher collection of GST in the last three months," he said, adding that the manufacturing sector will continue to do well in the third quarter because of the festive demand and the pent-up demand.



India's economy recovered faster than expected in the September quarter as a pick-up in manufacturing helped GDP clock a lower contraction of 7.5 per cent and held out hopes for

further improvement on better consumer demand.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) had shrunk by a massive 23.9 per cent in the first quarter of the current fiscal as the COVID-19 lockdown pummeled economic activity.

The second straight quarter of contraction pushed India into a technical recession for the first time.

The Reserve Bank of India has projected the Indian economy to contract 9.5 per cent in the current fiscal while the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank estimates contraction at 10.3 per cent and 9.6 per cent, respec-

tively. Replying to a question on protests by farmers, mainly from Punjab and Haryana, against the Centre's agriculture reform laws, Kumar said there is a need to recognise that the new farm laws have been well received all over the country.

"The three farm laws were clearly intended to improve farmers' ability to increase their income and they give greater freedom and liberty to sell, where they like and to whom they like. ... The present agitation is most likely a result of miscommunication and some misunderstanding which need to be removed," he opined.

Asked whether the gov-

ernment is still confident of doubling farm income by 2022, Kumar said, "all efforts of the government are in that direction and we will see how far we will be to achieve this target."

Talks between the Centre and agitating farmer unions remained inconclusive on Tuesday. The two sides will now meet again on Thursday while support from more quarters poured in for thousands of farmers camping at Delhi borders. The farmer unions rejected the government's offer to set up a committee to look into the issues raised by them and said they will intensify their stir until their demands are met.

Sensex takes a breather; Nifty edges up to fresh high

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The BSE Sensex slipped from record highs to end marginally lower on Wednesday while the Nifty edged up to a fresh closing record amid profit-taking in financial stocks and muted global cues.

After touching a low of 44,169.97 during the session, the 30-share Sensex pared most losses to finish at 44,618.04, down 37.40 points or 0.08 per cent.

The broader NSE Nifty edged higher by 4.70 points or 0.04 per cent to end at its fresh closing record of 13,113.75.

Banking and finance stocks bore the brunt of profit selling ahead of the RBI policy announcement this week. Kotak Bank was the top loser among Sensex stocks, dropping by 3.28 per cent.

HDFC Bank declined by 1.86 per cent, HDFC by 1.28 per cent and ICICI Bank by 0.99 per cent. SBI fell 0.5 per cent while Bajaj Finance shed 0.72 per cent.

Larsen & Toubro dropped 0.16 per cent. On the other hand, ONGC rose the most by

4.11 per cent, followed by Asian Paints (3.74 per cent) and Titan (3.48 per cent). Auto stocks gained after the companies reported sales growth in the domestic market in November, aided by robust offtake amid the festival season.

₹ ends 13 paise lower at 73.81 against \$

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee pared its initial gains to close 13 paise lower at 73.81 against the US dollar on Wednesday, tracking recovery in dollar index and emergence of selling in domestic equities. At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit witnessed a highly volatile trading session. It opened at 73.45, pared the gains and finally closed at 73.81 against the greenback, registering a decline of 13 paise over its previous close of 73.68.

Exports dip 17.84 pc in Apr-Nov this fiscal: Comm Secy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country's exports declined by 17.84 per cent during April-November this fiscal while imports contracted by 33.56 per cent in the same period, Commerce Secretary Anup Wadhawan said on Wednesday.

He said that the trade deficit has come down.

"In 2020-21, April to November, there has been a decline of 17.84 per cent in our exports... If we exclude gems and jewellery and petroleum, then the decline is lower... In the sectors where economic activity is more meaningful in terms of value addition, there the decline is much lower," he said at the Board of Trade meeting.

The secretary said that export sectors which did well during the eight months period include pharma, which grew by 15 per cent, rice (39 per cent), and iron ore (62 per cent).

Speaking at the occasion, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said that going forward, there is

The trade deficit has come down- Commerce Secretary Anup Wadhawan

every possibility to achieve export target of a trillion-dollar by 2025.

"The country is rebounding in a very rapid recovery phase. Industry has become more resilient, international global supply chains are looking up to India to provide an anchor for transparent and more open economies to engage with," he said.

Different arms of the government have been working to identify and support specific sectors where India has advantages, he said.

"We have identified 24 industry sectors, which we believe, can add Rs 20 lakh crore of annual production manufacturing in India... I would like to appeal to the states to supplement the efforts of the central government," he added.

Honey sold by major brands in India adulterated with sugar syrup: CSE

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Honey sold by several major brands in India has been found adulterated with sugar syrup, the environment watchdog CSE claimed Wednesday.

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) food researchers selected 13 top as well as smaller brands of processed and raw honey being sold in India to check their purity.

It was found that 77 per cent of the samples were adulterated with the addition of sugar syrup. Out of the 22 samples checked, only five passed all the tests.

"Honey samples from leading brands such as Dabur, Patanjali, Baidyanath, Zandu, Hitkari and Apis Himalaya, all failed the NMR (Nuclear Magnetic Resonance) test," the study said.

Responding to the claim, Emami (Zandu) spokesperson said, "Emami as a responsible organisation ensures that its Zandu pure honey conforms and adheres to all the protocols and quality norms/standards laid down by the Government of India and its authorised

entities such as FSSAI."

Dabur too refuted the claim, saying the recent reports seem "motivated and aimed at maligning our brand."

"We assure our consumers that Dabur honey is 100 per cent pure. It is 100 per cent indigenous, collected naturally from Indian sources and packed with no added sugar or other adulterants. We also assure our consumers that Dabur does not import any honey/syrup from China and our honey is sourced entirely from Indian beekeepers," it said in a statement.

It added that Dabur is complying with all 22 parameters mandated by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India for testing honey.

"In addition, Dabur honey is also tested for the presence of antibiotics, as mandated by FSSAI. Further, Dabur is the only company in India to have an NMR testing equipment in our own laboratory, and the same is used to regularly test our honey being sold in the Indian market. This is to ensure that Dabur Honey is 100 per cent pure without any adulteration," it said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that One (01) ID Card of Mr. Sukhdeep Bhullar issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. having ID card no.12005 has been found missing and/or lost on 19.11.2020. Anyone who finds the said ID card is requested to return the said ID card to the Manager, Debt Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited, Guram Industries, Therefore all the customers of ICICI Bank Limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any unauthorised person holding the said ID card no. 12005. Please take further notice that anybody making payment to a person holding the said ID card shall do so at his/her own costs, risk and peril and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any payment.

Sd/-
Date: 03.12.2020
Place: Delhi For ICICI Bank Limited

North Eastern Railway

Online Tender Notice

Dy. CME/Repair for Chief Workshop Manager, N.E. Railway, Mechanical Workshop, Gorakhpur for and on behalf of President of India invites single tender through online (E-Tendering) for the following work:-

S.No. : 1. E-Tender No. & Name of the work : IREPS Tender No. 01-MWS-GKP-2020-21-1

Refurbishment of Timken Make CTRB Bearing of LHB type Coaches for 01 Year on Single Tender through OEM. Estimated Cost (in Rs.) : 2,25,55,806.02, Earnest Money (in Rs.) : 2,62,800/-, Last date of tender submission : Upto 11.00 hrs., Date 04.01.2021, Cost of the Tender Forms: Rs. 0.00, Period of Contract : 12 Months. The details of above tender are also available on Indian Railway website www.ireps.gov.in.

Chief Workshop Manager, Mechanical Workshop, CPRO/Mech-74 N.E. Railway, Gorakhpur

About any Passenger Amenty complaint SMS on Mob. No. 09794845955

Do not smoke Bid/Cigarette in train

HMD all set to increase production capacity

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Anticipating surge in demand for syringes amid Covid-19 vaccines showing promising results, India's biggest manufacturer of syringes, Hindustan Syringes and Medical Devices (HMD), is all set to achieve 1000 million production capacity per annum by end of second quarter next year, up from current capacity of 700 million of the specialized 0.5 ml AD Syringes.

"We plan to allocate 50 per cent of the total 0.5 ML AD Syringes produced for the Government and 50 per cent for export to UNICEF as we have got a global responsibility too," said Rajiv Nath, Managing Director of the HMD.

He also said that his company has recently shipped over 100 million pieces of KOJAK Auto Disable syringes to Covax stockpile facility as the Covid-19 vaccines are showing promising results across the globe.

The Covax facility working for global equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines has ordered 140 million KOJAK AD Syringes from HMD to be supplied between August and December 2020.

"The HMD has shipped out more than 100 million pieces of 0.5 ml auto disable (AD) syringes for intramuscular injections to Covax facility and will soon send the next 40 million syringes by December" he added. The WHO and UNICEF have recommended

that auto-disable syringes be used for administering vaccines— particularly in mass immunization programs.

However, Nath felt that even as the local company like his is globally competitive, "we lose out to cheap subsidized Chinese imports and the requirement to match L1 (lowest) price of Chinese imports becomes non-remunerative and discourages investments."

"Currently, over 50 per cent of the AD Syringes used in immunization come in from China. We urge the government to increase import duty on syringes from 7.5 per cent to 15 per cent to enable expansion of supply base and profitable growth of quality certified production of all components and products in India."

Sugar output jumps over two fold at 42.9 L ton in Oct-Nov

New Delhi: India's sugar production jumped over two fold at 42.9 lakh tonnes during October-November owing to early start of mills this season, according to industry body ISMA. Sugar marketing year runs from October to September. According to the data, the country's sugar production stood at 42.9 lakh tonnes during October-November period of 2020-21 marketing year as against 20.72 lakh tonnes in the year-ago period. The association attributed the rise in production to early start of sugarcane crushing this season. "The production trend in the current season so far, appears to be more or less similar to 2018-19 sugar season when 418 sugar mills had produced 40.69 lac tons of sugar, as on 30th November, 2018, except that the diversion of cane juice and B-molasses this season to ethanol will be much more, resulting in a net reduction of around 20 lakh tons of sugar," ISMA said. PTI

Centre working on major interventions to position India as global textiles hub: Secy

New Delhi: The Centre is working on major interventions to position India as a global hub in the manmade fibre and technical textiles segments, including setting up five integrated mega textiles parks, a state-of-the-art world class testing lab and bringing a Focused Product Scheme, a top official said on Wednesday.

Emphasising that India must explore the USD 150 billion global manmade fibre (MMF) market, Textiles Secretary Ravi Capoor also said he is in talks with the Department of Higher Education for introduction of courses in universities and technical institutions like engineering colleges for creation of specialised manpower in the MMF and technical textiles segments.

Addressing a CII conference virtually, Capoor said an evaluation study led by Niti Aayog on the Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUPS) of the textiles ministry has revealed that Rs 13,000 crore worth machinery was

being imported by India and the country has reached nowhere in terms of technology upgradation except in the spinning segment.

He said the government is also willing to offer capital investment subsidy for setting up machine manufacturing plants to textile industry players interested in forging joint ventures, provided the foreign partner agrees to supply machines to domestic firms at a particular price.

"We want to make India a very strong base for technical textiles," Capoor said, adding that a Focused Product Scheme offering production-linked incentives was "almost ready" and will lay special emphasis on the MMF and technical textiles segments. He said the ministry was in a "very advanced stage of encouraging some mega textile parks", starting with about five such parks with integrated facilities and quick turnaround time for minimising transportation losses, eyeing big ticket investments in the sector. PTI

NORTHERN RAILWAY

INVITATION OF TENDERS THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

Tender Notice No. 83205024 Date : 02.12.2020

Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

S.N.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
01.	83205024	Inj. Ramucirumab 500 mg	24 Nos	25.12.2020

NOTE -1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details.
2. No Manual offer will be entertained. 2686/20

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Appeal for Identification

General Public is hereby informed that a male dead body Name: Unknown, S/o Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 45 years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Shallow, Gender: Male, ID Mark: A cut Mark on left eye. Wearing : Black Jacket-Red colour T-Shirt-Gray & Black colour Lower. Found in front of Factory No. 14/24, Ram Nagar Extn., Near Butter Fly School, Kamruddin, Nagar, Delhi. on 19.11.2020 at 10.07 A.M. In this regard, DD No. 42-A Dated 19.11.2020 has been lodged at PS Nihal Vihar, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this male but no clue has come to light so far. Any, person having any information or clue about this male may kindly inform to the following.

SHO
P.S., Nihal Vihar, Delhi
Ph. : 011-25946700,
25946710, 7065036129

DP/540/OD/2020

JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT, JAMMU

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE), DIVISION REASI

Fax: 01991-244323 E-mail: phereasi001@gmail.com

Notice inviting e-Tender

e-NIT No. PHERSI/87 of 2020-21 Date: - 24/11/2020

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of UT of J&K e-tenders (Two cover System) Item Rate basis are invited from reputed and resourceful Contractors/Firms/Companies/Joint Venture of repute, which should be uploaded on the e-Procurement web portal <http://www.jktenders.gov.in> up to last bidding date - 16-12-2020 up to 16:30 hrs for the subject work referred below and as per the details mentioned in this e-tender notification and to whom all the terms and conditions of detailed NIT /Tender Documents/ PWD Form No.- 25 double are applicable. The detailed tender document and Specifications etc. can be downloaded on the e-procurement Portal <http://www.jktenders.gov.in>. The cost of tender documents (Non-refundable/ Non-Transferable) should be in the shape of e-challan/Treasury Receipt to be deposited in MH:0215-WSS (Revenue Head) or through RTGS in J&K Bank Branch REASI in CD Bank Account No. 002901020000829. IFSC code JAKA0REASSI in favour of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE), Division REASI and the proof of having made such payment shall have to be uploaded in Cover-I.

S.No. 1 Name of Work :- A). RETRO FITTING AND AUGMENTATION OF WATER SUPPLY SCHEME KOTHRU UNDER JAL JEEVAN MISSION INCLUDING CIVIL, ELECTRO-MECHANICAL COMPONENTS, CONDUCTING COMPLETE NECESSARY SURVEY, SOIL TESTS & DESIGN AS REQUIRED AT SELECTED SITE, AS PER THE PARAMETERS/SPECIFICATIONS

Adv. Cost of Work (s) in Lacs :- 198.15, Earnest Money In Rs. :- 396300/- Class of Contractor :- "A", Cost of Document :- 5000/-, Period of completion :- 6 months, MH of Account :- JJM

S.No. 2 Name of Work :- B) Operation & Maintenance of critical components as per SBD for a period of three years.

i) 1st year, ii) 2nd year, iii) 3rd year

Adv. Cost of Work (s) in Lacs :- Inclusive in A), Earnest Money In Rs. :- -----, Class of Contractor :- -----, Cost of Document :- -----, Period of completion :- 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year, MH of Account :- -----

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti Division Reasi.

No. DIP/J-7969/20
Dated: 01-12-2020

NORTHERN RAILWAY

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-III, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-Tender for the following work.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Approx. Cost of work	Earnest Money to be deposited	Cost of tender document	Date & Time of submission of tender bid and opening of tender	Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen
1.	Annual Zone for maintenance of track work in the section of SSE/P.Way/DLI under ADEN/DLI	Rs. 98,83,033.25/- (Rupees Ninety Eight Lakh Eighty Three Thousand Thirty Three and paise Twenty Five Only.)	Rs. 1,97,700/- (Rupees One Lakh Ninety Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Only.)	Rs. 0/-	29.12.2020 @ 15.00 Hrs.	www.ireps.gov.in

- The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for participating in the e-tender system.
- For all terms and conditions please refer tender document.
- No manual offers are acceptable.
- Cost of tender document and Earnest money will be acceptable through net banking or payment gateway only.

No.: 128-W/280/E Tender Notice/NIT/30/2020-21/W-3 Dt. 01.12.2020 2678/2020

Serving Customers with a Smile

Metro Railway, Kolkata

Kolkata's Pride

RECTIFICATION OF SEATING SURFACE & MISC. WORK

Tender Notice for e-tendering is invited by Chief Engineer/Con, Metro Railway for the following work : Name of work : Rectification of seating surface and replacement of elastomeric bearing, non-destructive test of existing PSC Box/RCC girders of Old Circular Railway viaduct proposed to be reused/relocated in between Ch. 3.86 km and Ch. 6.0 km of new Metro Railway alignment from Noapara to Airport including preparation of design and drawing of new PSC Box/Composite girders and pedestrian subway at Jessore Road in connection with Extension of Metro Railway from Noapara to Barasat via Bimanbandar. Tender Value: ₹ 3,66,29,483. Cost of Tender Document: Nil. Earnest Money: ₹ 3,33,200. Completion period: 10 (Ten) months. Date of closing: 08.01.2021 at 12.00 hrs. The tender document and other details can be obtained from the website www.ireps.gov.in. The bidding for the tender is to be submitted through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any manual offer if received shall not be accepted and will be summarily rejected.

Abridged Tender Notice No.: Civil-2349-2020 (Open)
FASTER • SAFER • SMOOTHER • CLEANER

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI

4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001

OA No. 354/19 Date: 21.11.2020

PUNJAB & SIND BANK VERSUS APPLICANT

MR. NARENDER SINGH THAKUR & ORS. RESPONDENT

To, Defendant

1. Sh. Narender Singh Thakur S/o Sh. Manohar Lal R/o 51-D PKT-R, Dilshad Garden, Delhi

Also at: Shop No. 14, PKT-L, DDAMKT, Dilshad Garden, Delhi- 95

2. Sh. Ajeet Singh S/o Sh. Jai Chand Singh R/o- 232-B PKT-L Dilshad Garden, Delhi- 95

Also at: S-27 Commercial Complex DLF Ghaziabad, UP

Whereas the above named applicant (s) has/have instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 15,14,084/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakh Fourteen Thousand and Eighty Four Only) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 23.03.2021 at 10.30 A.M.

Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.

By Order of the Tribunal
For Registrar
DRT-II, Delhi

Trend Glazer

A Call To Spy to get digital release

A *Call To Spy*, the international production capturing the story of three WWII spies and starring **RADHIKA APTE**, has been confirmed for OTT release in India. Radhika plays British spy Noor Inayat-Khan, or Nora Baker, who served in the Special Operations Executive during World War II.



"I couldn't be happier to be an integral part of this film, working alongside such an incredible cast from around the globe and I am extremely excited about the film's release," said Radhika. "Since the film has already premiered globally, I have been waiting for the moment where Indian audience get the chance to watch this thrilling spy drama. I am hoping that they too will shower the same love and appreciation," she added.

The makers of the film Hum Bhi Akele Tum Bhi Akele did not approach me to do the film. I approached them and they were skeptical because they considered me a glamorous diva due to my previous films. I really had to convince them to give me an opportunity because the story of is really beautiful and I wanted to be a part of it.



—Zareen Khan

Actor **JOHN ABRAHAM** has been named the Person of the Year for 2020 by the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).



John had sent a letter urging e-retailer Quikr to stop trading in live animals. Over the years, he has teamed up with PETA India to push for a ban on animal circuses.

He also adopted a community dog, Bailey, urged authorities to stop illegal pig slaughter in Goa and put a football jersey on the auction block to benefit the organisations work to help animals.

Jennifer Aniston is 'back to work'

Actor **JENNIFER ANISTON** is back on the sets to shoot for the second season of hit series, *The Morning Show*, and is taking extreme precautions amid the global COVID-19 pandemic.

She shared snapshots from the set on Instagram. In one image, she is in costume to face the camera but wearing a clear plastic face shield.

Aniston wore a grey plaid shirt and slacks as she got ready for the scene, along with oversized boxed specs underneath her plastic face shield that rested on her neck. It featured her name on a white label.

She captioned the picture: "Back to work."



Right from all the dancing, drama, laughter, fun to madness and emotions, it is that time of the year again. The wedding season is officially here and the very first thing that comes to our mind is what to give to the newly married couple. Weddings are a once in a life event, hence, everyone wants to make it memorable and special in their own little ways. Gifting forms an integral part of any ceremony. However, while choosing the best for the couple, we also need to keep in mind that the product should be useful and classy at the same time. So to make things a bit simpler, here are a few wedding gift ideas to choose from.

Gift the convenience of nutritious and delicious meals at the touch of a button. Wonderchef Nutri-Pot is a tech-driven appliance, a combination of seven in one gadget. It prevents overcooking of food protecting all the precious vitamins and minerals. It is programmed with an embedded microprocessor that monitors pressure, temperature, time and adjusts the heating intensity. It's hard-anodized inner pot ensures years of hassle-free use, faster cooking and even heat distribution.

The collection, *Afsaneh*, by Tanvi Gauri weaves the tales of the most valiant women into stunning designer clothes. An array of carefully crafted ensembles with every thread strung together to narrate the story of beauty and courage, this collection can be the perfect gift to show one's love and adoration. Ranging from wedding to festive wear, it celebrates femininity with whimsical details and a soft but vibrant colour palette embellished by hand.

Another great choice can be to opt for glam gowns with ornate metallic embroideries, rich festive hues and luxe fabrics by the brand W. Often chosen for its dramatic ultra-feminine appeal, the floor length gowns are the perfect escapes into a transcendental world of all things exotic.

Taneira presents Tasvi, a collection of sarees, inspired by the cultural and design elements of the three goddesses — Durga, Laxmi and Saraswati. Boasting of a diverse range of pure and handcrafted silks from Chanderi, Maheshwari to Banaras and Kanchipuram, the collection brings alive the spirit of auspiciousness and festivity with vibrant tones, rich embroidery, intricately carved motifs and traditional craft techniques of the age-old weaves. It features ensembles highlighting unique characteristics inspired from each of the goddesses. A part of the collection is designed in darker hues with motifs like hibiscus, trident, moon, stars, rudraksh, bel leaves and lemon, symbolising the divine *shakti* and fierceness of goddess Durga. Representing wealth and prosperity, the range

LOVE, LAUGHTER AND HAPPILY EVER AFTER

Selecting a wedding gift can become an overwhelming task. Why go helter-skelter searching for solutions when TEAM VIVA brings you a few ideas to choose from?



WHETHER IT'S YOUR BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING OR FAVOURITE COUSIN'S, PHOTO ALBUMS ARE THE BEST WAY TO COLLECT AND PRESERVE ALL THOSE FUN AND HAPPY MEMORIES BEYOND INSTAGRAM



inspired by goddess Lakshmi is designed in bright colourful tones and carved in rich motifs like the pink lotus, pomegranate, parrot, kalash, banana tree, elephant, coins and kosa tree. Inspired by goddess Saraswati are the pastel

tones with motifs of white lotus, pearls, swan, peacock, *champa*, veena, scripts and kadamb tree, symbolising light, knowledge and truth.

From planning a wedding, arranging bachelor parties to

giving invitation cards a new look, why go helter-skelter searching for solutions when you can make everything happen right at your home. Get everything customised from Vistaprint as per your choice, along with a hassle-

free delivery at your doorstep, all without compromising on social distancing protocols. You can gift a photo album, a treasure for a lifetime. Whether it's your best friend's wedding or favourite cousin's, it is the best way to collect and preserve all those fun and happy memories beyond Instagram. One can choose from different sizes, including small, medium and large; portrait or landscape orientations; get them personalised as per your needs.

Adding to the wedding fervor, Mia by Tanishq, presents an exclusive ethno-contemporary collection, *Lyana*, to celebrate the light within you. The offering is for the modern Indian woman, who is rooted in the traditional values and believes in celebrating the life her own way. The collection brings together traditional designs weaved with glamour of gold in ultra-modern silhouettes.

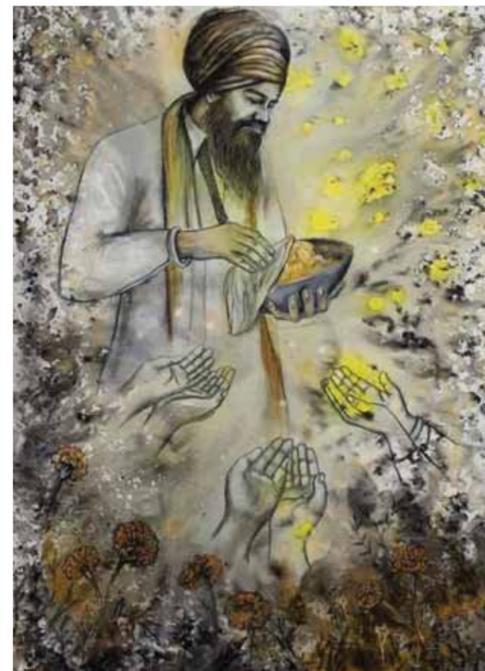
It has a range of 14 Karat light-weight pure gold and diamond jewellery designs in earrings, pendants, bracelets as well as rings. The collection is inspired by the rich heritage of Indian classics but is infused with the Japanese minimalism philosophy.

Gifting gold has always been a good idea. This time, try opting for delicately crafted solid gold watches. Nebula by Titan offers *Ashvi*, especially for the wedding season. The collection features three finely crafted timepieces with bracelets adorned with hemispherical pearls and princess cut diamonds. It showcases a trio of very intricate bracelet designs done on timepieces — a bracelet with free floating pearls wrapped in a gold composition, an elegant wired bracelet set with 30 princess cut diamonds and a graceful rose gold bracelet adorned with stones forming a splendid gradient from deep pink to white. These timepieces can be a perfect addition to the wedding ensemble, hence, making it a great gift.

SKINN, a range of fragrances from the house of Titan, presents Escapade, a refreshing new range of perfumes for men. The collection is crafted by the finest master perfumers from France and brings together various elements of nature in a bottle of perfume. As the name suggests, it is all about the joy of exploring the unknown and it represents the attitude of a carefree wanderer.

A narrative of peace

Artist **HARSHDEEP KAUR** celebrates cultural nuances of Sikhism and natural landscapes in her solo exhibition, *Engaging With The Ultimate*



Her work speaks of the social and natural landscapes that surround our physical and imaginative selves while evoking an intrinsic emotive charm. Presented by Dhoomimal Gallery and curated by Dr Seema Bawa, artist Harshdeep Kaur's solo exhibition titled *Engaging With The Ultimate* offers a varied mix of canvases showcasing landscapes and figurative works.

The series that sets her work apart is based on Sikh men and women, embedded as it is in her own lived experience. She paints her observation of the lives of the Sikh people, their festivals and rituals. Her works reveal vignettes of Sikh heritage founded in its distinctive socio-cultural and visual identity, manifesting a lived faith pictorially.

"Sikh people and their rituals inspire me to create a new dimension in art. The *khalsas* wearing *kesari* turbans, engaged in meditation, working in the

'Sikh people and their rituals inspire me. The khalsas wearing kesari turbans, engaged in meditation, working in the fields or as horse riding soldiers, have left a lasting impression on my art'

fields or as horse riding soldiers, skilled in warfare, have left a lasting impression on my art," explains Harshdeep.

There are also two contemplative works, *Prasad* and *Prayer* that represent their communitarian and egalitarian world through ritual practice of service and meditative silence revealed through the word, *shabd* and *nama*; both leading towards realisation of the ultimate reality.

Another trait marker of the Sikhs is their appearance, especially the turban. The *dumala* or *domala* is a turban wound with lesser number of folds, worn by devout members of both genders. Her paintings, both big as well as the small format, depict these *dumala* wearers. A slightly whimsical work shows a woman wearing *dumala*, donning western wear and sporting dark glasses, a mark of the diaspora's struggle to adapt to the changing milieu.

Her landscapes explore silent spaces marked by the absence of humans, where it is the trees, birds, lakes and waters that suggest a narrative of peace. Then there are the short poesies painted into a bunch of flowers in bloom or a pair of trees conversing in shadows of dusk, in reflections of forms in still waters.

The natural world has been magnified in her landscape paintings. The play and the experimentation with monochromatic tonalities of ink is seen in her forms, creating lots of depth both in figures and landscapes.

(The exhibition is on till December 8 at Arpana Art Gallery, 11 am to 7 pm.)



Oscars 2021 not a virtual affair

There were a lot of speculations around how the Oscars would be held amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is now confirmed the award gala will not go virtual.

"The Oscars in-person telecast will happen," a representative from the Academy said. However, the Academy of Motion Arts and Sciences has decided to push the annual telecast to April 25, 2021, owing to the pandemic.

Several sources have shared that by pushing the awards ceremony back, the Academy hopes for cinema halls to regain normalcy, allowing for more film to compete in the annual celebration.

Now, the Academy is focussing on ensuring that the event is held in the traditional manner. However, it is to be seen how they put a plan in place to hold the ceremony at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, the Malayalam film, *Jallikattu*, has been selected as the official Indian entry in the Best International Feature Film category at the forthcoming 93rd Academy Awards.

The 2021 Oscars are scheduled to take place on April 25. The shortlist for next year's Academy Awards will be unveiled on February 9, and nominations will be announced on March 15. —IANS

KEEP UP WITH TRADITIONS

Chhattisgarh CM BHUPESH BAGHEL plans to discover flavours of Gadh Kalewa by opening centres serving regional and local cuisine

Chhattisgarh, popularly known as the rice bowl of India, also exhibits a rich and unique amalgam of rituals, culture, traditions, festivities, folk art and food. The state's food has always been a source of keeping the rich traditions and flavours of the state alive. But with the changing times, it has got harder to prepare the traditional regional delicacies at home and save the local Chhattisgarhi cuisine from losing its identity and popularity. Hence, the state government has decided to start the 'Gadh Kalewa' in all the districts.

Well, Gadh Kalewa has the soul of Chhattisgarh. As a local open eatery in a tribal setting and ambience, where one can rediscover the long-forgotten delicacies and traditions of Chhattisgarh, it will be a restaurant with an artistic ambience with rural art form paintings on the wall, bamboo seaters to sit and clay birds on top of the tiled roofs. Here you get to sense the flavours of more than three dozen varieties of traditional cuisines, along with a range of Devbhog Products.

The traditional Chhattisgarhi dishes will be served to the people of the state and visitors in these centres



soon. Gadh Kalewa is being widely promoted under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel to preserve the folk art and culture of the state.

To highlight the ambience of Gadh Kalewa, the Handicrafts

Development Board has launched an entirely new series of bamboo craft furniture to add life to the centres. Chhattisgarhi catering and cuisine sales centre is regulating in the state's capital Raipur within the

premises of Mahant Ghasidas Memorial Museum. The state also observes distinct and rare traditions of the local cuisine, which transforms according to ethnicities, weather and festivities.

The cuisine of the forest-based tribal society is based on natural forest produce, which has led to an interesting variety of local delicacies. There's a huge variety amid the simple and festive range of Chhattisgarhi cuisine. These dishes can be roasted, steamed, de-fried or can be prepared in the absence of all the three techniques too.

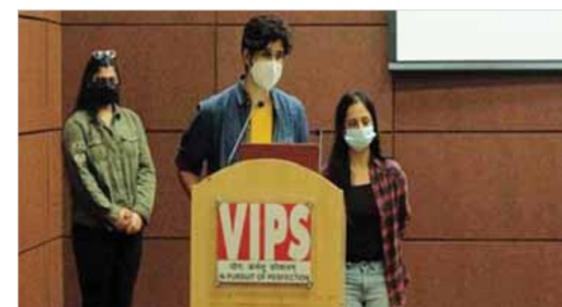
At Gadh Kalewa, mouthwatering dishes like *Chausela*, *Hathhoda*, *Farra*, *Peedhiya*, *Muthhiya*, *Deharuri*, *Papchi Puran Laddu*, *Kari Laddu*, *Angakar Roti*, *Chanur Roti*, *Patal Chutney*, *Bajori*, *Babra*, *Gulgula*, *Cheela*, *Airesa*, *Patar Roti*, *Khupri Roti*, *Buffauri* and many other appetising dishes will be served. The centre will be started by 2021. The local women self-help groups will also be trained and prepared for service and sheds will be provided for smooth regulation of these centres. The poor families can avail self-employment for their livelihood.

The Chhattisgarhi Cultural Programme and cuisine stall were installed in Ahmedabad, Gujarat from January 6 to 14, 2019 under the Government of India scheme, 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat.'

At the Board of Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Renuka Gera, 57, has assumed charge as the Director (Industrial Systems & Products) of the Public Sector Engineering and Manufacturing Enterprise. Significantly, she is the first woman director at BHEL. Prior to this, Gera was heading BHEL's industry sector business segment as an Executive Director. An Electronics and Communication Engineering graduate from Delhi College of Engineering, Gera started her career with BHEL as an Engineer Trainee in the company's Transmission Business Group in 1984. She has earlier been sponsored by BHEL for an International Certification Programme in Business Management conducted under the aegis of the Department of Public Enterprises.



The MGD Weekend Home Affordability Determination lottery of the Rajasthan Housing Board is scheduled to be held on December 7. The lottery for the remaining residential schemes is also scheduled for the day. Residential schemes of Abu Road, Udaipur, Banswara, Bhiwara and Jodhpur lottery will be this month, too. Housing Commissioner Pawan Arora said that the MGD are located amid the lush green fields near Jaipur by Mandal Weekend Homes (Duplex Housing), priced at ₹14 lakh. Online applications had been invited for the scheme. Facilities like *chowpatty*, open air theatre, children's park and open gym are under works. The Jaipur Priority lottery of the housing schemes in cities will be organised soon.



The spirit is alive

The mass communication and journalism students of Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies host their annual media festival — Spandan — digitally

Braving the ongoing blitz of Coronavirus pandemic across the globe, the mass communication and journalism students of Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies (VIPS), New Delhi have created a historical feat by organising the biggest annual media festival on the digital platform.

Themed at digital literacy, media and pandemic, the three-day event will be hosted from December 3 to December 5 with a total of 22 competitive and non-competitive events. Over 300 students are organising and participating remotely, to create a much awaited, unprecedented and grand experience with Spandan 2020.

It will start with the flagship event of 'Media Panchayat' on the topic of 'Information to misinformation: 25 Years of Indian Television News Industry'. The event will witness the participation of industry veterans like Sidharth Mishra, Anant Vijay, Sumit Pande, Satish K Singh and Prof Charu Lata Singh. The second in the line is a workshop on 'Pathkatha: Plot Writing' by writer Anu Singh Choudhary.

The major highlights of the festival include the cultural events, *sanskriti* — a fusion of Indian culture, dance, fashion and music, and grand musical finale. All activities are conducted for the online medium, produced

and recorded over a month following all COVID precautions and safety measures.

Other events include 'Out of Reach': A Mental Health Workshop, with the objective of raising awareness about mental illnesses and the importance of reaching out for help.

Among the international collaboration and events, the festival brings a live concert with Southern Time Band and NADIA HIGH from Canada for the event 'Talks and Tunes' on December 4, promoting AIDS awareness. An event management masterclass with Prof David Hind, President, Asia Pacific Institute of Event Management will be conducted on December 5, for the students making this year's festival a global event.

It also includes webinars with Filmmaker Jalal Jeelani, Cinematographer Aditi Sharma, Screenwriter Anu Singh Choudhary, RJ Errol Gonsalves, National Award winning artist Manisha Jha, and line is a workshop on 'Pathkatha: Plot Writing' by writer Anu Singh Choudhary.

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Celebrate tribals

Arjun Munda, Minister of Tribal Affairs launched the first virtual Aadi Mahotsav — a celebration of the spirit of tribal culture, crafts and commerce to showcase the rich and diverse culture, crafts of Madhya Pradesh on Tribes India website. The first edition will be from December 1-10, 2020.

"I am really happy to be a part of the inauguration of the event projecting Madhya Pradesh. It is a national tribal festival and a joint initiative of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India & Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED). The festival showcases traditional art, handicrafts and cultural heritage of the country. The ultimate objective of TRIFED is socio-economic development of tribal people by way of marketing development of the tribal products. Under the leadership of Pravir Krishna, MD, TRIFED has really been doing a good job towards the upliftment of the tribal community in the country."

The virtual launch took place in the presence of Meena Singh, Minister for Tribal Welfare, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Ramesh Chand Meena, Chairman, TRIFED, Navaljit Kapoor, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Pravir Krishna, Managing Director, TRIFED. Nanu Bhasin, ADG, Press Information Bureau, senior officials of the ministry, TRIFED and members of the media fraternity also attended the event.

The event was moderated by TRIFED's goodwill ambassador, Abhinav Chaturvedi. The highlights included a virtual tour of the artisans' work place and glimpses of the tribal dance and music from Madhya Pradesh. It was also announced that the next focus state from December 11 would be Gujarat, following which the spotlight would shift to Bengal from the December 21 this year.

In his welcome address, Pravir Krishna spoke about the entire concept of the event and how it will help



in popularising tribal culture to national and international audiences. With the onboarding of more than 3500 tribal artisans on to the Tribes India Marketplace, this event offers the tribals a new avenue for popularising their culture and arts and will go a long way in helping their economic situation and make them self-reliant.

Ramesh Chand Meena, Chairman, TRIFED congratulated the team for providing a viable alternative to the artisans. Munda also expressed his happiness that despite such challenging circumstances, efforts are being carried out to mitigate the adverse conditions of tribal populations. Extolling the virtues of the simple, sustainable lifestyle of these people, Munda expressed his concern at the disadvantaged economic state of this section and was happy that with TRIFED's initiatives, the middlemen have been eliminated.

Tribes India e-market place is a noteworthy initiative that showcas-

es the produce and handicrafts of tribal enterprises from across the country and helps them market their produce/ products directly. It is a major leap towards the digitisation of tribal commerce. Five lakh tribal producers/ artisans from across the country are connected via this platform to national and global markets.

Tribes constitute over eight per cent of our population. But even then they are among the disadvantaged sections of the society. An attitude that pervades among the mainstream is the erroneous belief that they have to be taught and helped.

However, if we sit and ponder over it, the truth is otherwise — the tribals have a lot to teach urban India. Characterised by natural simplicity, their creations have a timeless appeal and authenticity. The wide range of handicrafts which include hand-woven cotton, silk fabrics, wool, metal craft, terracotta, bead-work, all need to be preserved and promoted.

LKA sets a milestone



Lalit Kala Akademi National Academy of Arts, an autonomous organisation of Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India held its general council meeting at India International Centre on November 26. Meeting started by reading the Preamble to the Constitution of India on the occasion of 71st Constitution Day of India.

In the meeting the selection process of several governing members was undertaken. During the process the members were selected under the supervision of the election officer Dr Ram Samujh, IRS (Retd). Dr Nand Lal Thakur, GC member from Himachal Pradesh, was unanimously elected as vice chairman of the Academy. Dr Uttam Pacharne, Chairman,

Lalit Kala Akademi said, "I thank general council members for the smooth functioning of the meeting and passing resolutions unanimously. It is an ample proof of the cultural unity of the Indian artistic community as well as their faith in the policies of government to promote art and culture. The council meeting was held after a gap of nine long years. It was the first time that the members showed unanimity in almost all the decisions, including the formation of committee. The Academy is grateful to Culture minister Prahlad Singh Patel for his leadership and his vision and dedication in the field of art and culture."

The following members were selected as members of the executive board. Suman Majumdar (Tripura), Dr. Richa Kamboj

(Uttarakhand), Kishore Kumar Das (Assam), Dr Sunil Kumar Viswarkarma (Uttar Pradesh), C.S. Krishna Setty (Karnataka), Ankush Kumar Dewangan (Chhattisgarh), Gita Hudson (Tamil Nadu), Nirupama Tank (Gujarat), Maruti Baburao Shilke (Maharashtra). The members elected as finance committee members are — Setty (from Executive Board), Majumdar (from General Council), Dr Sonali Sarnobat, Karnataka (from General Council).

In the meeting the members passed a resolution for enhancing the term of general council members and chairman from three to five years similar to other academies under Ministry of Culture.

Pacharne made several announcements to serve the artists community in the meeting. These include the proposals for opening of new regional centres at Pune (Maharashtra), Hubli (Karnataka), Ahmedabad (Gujarat) and Agartala (Tripura). He also announced organisation of 75 major programmes to commemorate 75th independent anniversary of India next year and increasing the awards and scholarship amounts after the due administrative process. The chairman sought the cooperation of all members for organising XII Triennale-India that would be taken up shortly.

NTPC launches Green Charcoal Hackathon



R.K. Singh, Minister (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, launched the Green Charcoal Hackathon being organised by NVVN (NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam), a wholly-owned subsidiary company of NTPC.

Singh said, "The Hackathon displays the spirit of innovation, which pervades NTPC. Any organisation has to have this spirit of innovation to grow and prosper or otherwise, it would fade away. The NTPC management encourages all young engineers to present innovation and new ideas."

He added, "This (Hackathon) is also innovation in the pursuit of reducing our carbon footprint. From that point of view,

all competitors in the Hackathon should keep in mind that the process of converting this (agro residue) to charcoal should not lead to emissions. Another key thing is the commercial model, which will depend on the cost of both the machine and charcoal production. I am sure we will come out with a machine, which is economical. I am happy to see the orientation of NTPC towards reducing carbon footprint."

To fast-track the technology development, NVVN, in partnership with EESL organises technology, the challenge has been aptly named as 'Green Charcoal Hackathon'. The purpose of the event is to leverage the innovative Indian mind to bridge the technology gap with the prime objective to clean the air by eliminating farm fire, producing renewable energy out of the agro residue, to promote local entrepreneurship, and to increase the income of the farmers.

The hackathon was inaugurated in the presence of Ashish Upadhyay, Additional Secretary of Power; Gurdeep Singh, CMD NTPC Ltd and other senior officials from Power Ministry, NTPC Ltd and EESL Ltd.

To encourage the participants, there was a provision for cash prizes worth up to ₹24 lakh in three categories for production of torrefied biomass pellets — 100 kg per day; 1,000 kg per day; 10 tonnes per day.

Anil Kumar Chaudhary, Chairman, SAIL and Chairman, CII PSE Council, chaired the recent PSE Summit 2020, which aimed at discussing, 'PSEs: Furthering Atmanirbhar Bharat'. In his address, he emphasised on the significant and irreplaceable role by the Indian Public Sector in strengthening country's self-reliance and for realising the dream of Atmanirbhar Bharat. He said, "Increasing self-reliance is the cornerstone today for better economic performance and that is why Atmanirbhar Bharat has become so close to our thoughts and actions and today's summit is marked to celebrate its very spirit. 'Perform or perish' is the key that has gripped both the industry in general and PSEs in particular." Several industry doyens participated in the sessions where deliberation on various ingenious ways of contributing towards self-reliance took place.



RITES Ltd., a miniratna (Category - I) schedule 'A' public sector enterprise, has won the SKOCH Gold Award (Response to COVID-19) at the 68th SKOCH summit on November 28. It was also conferred the 'Beacons of Hope-Order of Merit' award for Bogibeel Bridge Project, India's longest rail-cum-road bridge, on the Brahmaputra river in Dibrugarh, Assam. The awards acknowledge the company's efforts in providing state-of-the-art technical and innovative solutions to infrastructure projects and ensuring the uninterrupted supply of essential services during the COVID-induced lockdown.



Government-owned Power Finance Corporation (PFC), a NBFC, has won the Gold Award for Best Performing PSU for COVID activities at the SKOCH awards. The award was bestowed for consistent performance by PFC across verticals. It was presented virtually on November 28, 2020. It was also bestowed with the 'Beacons of Hope' — certificate of merit for its contribution on project for relief activities during COVID. The award is testimony to the corporation's efforts as it ensured usual business even during the testing times.



Satish Kumar Kashyup, General Manager, Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) along with other senior officers visited the workshop on December 1 and 2. He inspected various shops as loco testing & assembly shops and traction motor shops. He also visited steel foundry shop and shell, bogie and wheel shops in manufacturing group. He was accompanied by the departmental heads, officers, staff and supervisors of respective shops. During his inspection, he appreciated the efforts of officers, staff & supervisors of CLW in producing 40 electric locomotives per month for the last three consecutive months despite the COVID-19 situation. This is a step towards 'Make in India' and 'Vocal for Local' campaign of Prime Minister.

Hardik, Bumrah save blushes

Pandya, Jadeja & bowlers help India win final ODI by 13 runs

PTI ■ CANBERRA

Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah found his mojo and the Indian team its winning ways in a morale-lifting 13-run triumph over Australia in the third and final ODI on Wednesday, salvaging some of the lost pride in a 1-2 series defeat.

An in-form Hardik Pandya blasted 92 not out off 76 balls and Ravindra Jadeja's useful 66 off 50 took India to a healthy 302 for 5 in 50 overs after an inept show in the first 30 overs.

It was at least 30 runs short of a par-score on a good batting track but a rejigged bowling attack managed to restrict the home team to 289 all out in 49.3 overs.

Shardul Thakur (3/51) and debutant Thangarasu Natarajan (2/70 in 10 overs) did their bit but it was Bumrah's (2/43 in 9.3 overs) controlled effort with some swing upfront and the dismissal of a marauding Glenn Maxwell in the nick of time which ultimately turned the match in India's favour.

Bumrah did the most important thing by bowling one in the block-hole that had the dangerous Maxwell (59 off 38 balls) having his own little "brain fade" moment trying to free his arms exposing the stumps.

The "Big Show" was in a mood to punish the bowlers and all he needed was to see off Bumrah and attack the others as he was doing.

The cushion provided by his "senior" helped Natarajan to start bowling his yorkers under pressure and Thakur also chipped in with necessary wickets.

The inconsequential match became something of consequence for Virat Kohli and his men as they gear up for the next white-ball series — three T20 Internationals in less than 48 hours.

DIFFERENT ATTACK

India's bowling attack had a different look and it did perform way better compared to the first two games.

Natarajan was very steady in his first spell and got his maiden wicket when Marnus Labuschagne (7), in an unfamiliar role as opener, dragged a



Hardik Pandya raises his bat after completing his fifty during third ODI on Wednesday @BCCI

wide delivery back onto the stumps.

Thakur, replacing a rested Mohammed Shami, was also lucky when Steve Smith (7) tried to tickle one down on the 'fifth leg stump' to be caught by KL Rahul behind the stumps.

Moises Henriques (22) and skipper Aaron Finch (75) looked good during their 51-run stand for the third wicket before the former failed to keep a pull-shot down off Thakur's

bowling.

However, what was more heartening was Kuldeep Yadav's (1/57 in 10 overs) restrained bowling in the middle overs with the last over punished by Maxwell being more of an aberration.

The flight was back and so was the dip in the air that used to create confusion in the minds of batsmen. Debutant Cameron Green (21) played an uppish slog sweep off

I think the pitch was much better for the bowlers. So the confidence levels go up. Playing international cricket for so long, that's the challenge you face. We were clinical with the ball and in the field.

VIKAT KOHLI
ON INDIA'S BOWLING PERFORMANCE IN 3RD ODI

The way they (Hardik and Jadeja) were able to play, they put pressure on, they accelerated and took the game away from us with some really clean hitting

GLENN MAXWELL
ON HARDIK-JADEJA 6TH WICKET STAND

The selection is not in my hands. It is important is that I try to win games for India whenever I play. That is my mindset. I play to win. Once you are on ground, all players just focus on winning matches

SHARDUL THAKUR
ON NOT GETTING ENOUGH CHANCES

Kuldeep which was snapped inches off the ground by Jadeja.

Jadeja (1/62 in 10 overs), who had a field day, topped up a solid batting show with the prized wicket of the rival captain Finch as Shikhar Dhawan managed to make an easy catch look difficult at long-on.

Maxwell and the calm Alex Carey (38 off 42 balls) looked like doing an encore of their victorious effort against England at Old Trafford last September.

But just when they settled down, Carey went for non-existent single only to be sent back by Maxwell as Australia were reduced to 210 for 6.

Kohli fastest to 12K ODI runs

Player	No of innings
Virat Kohli	242
Sachin Tendulkar	300
Ricky Ponting	314
K Sangakkara	336
S Jayasuriya	379
M Jayawardene	399

IN ODIS FASTEST	
1000 runs	Fakhar Zaman
2000 to 7000 runs	Hashim Amla
8000 to 12000 runs	Virat Kohli

PTI ■ CANBERRA

India captain Virat Kohli on Wednesday became the fastest cricketer to score 12,000 ODI runs, breaking a record held by legendary compatriot Sachin Tendulkar.

Kohli reached the milestone during the third match against Australia.

Kohli, who needed 23 runs for

VIKAT KOHLI IN ODIS	
Runs	Innings
1000	24
2000	53
3000	75
4000	93
5000	114
6000	136
7000	161
8000	175
9000	194
10000	205
11000	222
12000	242

the landmark coming into the match, touched the figure in his 242nd innings when he took a single off Sean Abbott in the 13th over of India's essay.

In comparison, it took Tendulkar 300 innings to get there.

The 32-year-old Indian captain was playing in his 251st ODI and averages close to 60 in the format

with 43 hundreds and 60 half centuries. He made his debut in 2008.

Tendulkar scored 18426 runs from 463 ODIs between 1989 and 2012 at an average of 44.83 with the help of 49 hundreds and 96 half centuries.



Oz move to top of Super League table, India 6th



Australian players pose for photo with ODI series trophy after end of 3rd match AP

DUBAI : Australia on Wednesday jumped to the top of the ICC World Cup Super ODI League points table following their 2-1 series victory

over India, who are placed sixth.

With the series win, Australia moved to 40 points, overtaking England who are now placed second.

On the other hand, India logged their first points of the tournament by winning the third and final ODI and are placed sixth with nine points.

Australia had defeated England 2-1 in their previous series of the 13-team championship, which was introduced this year to bring context to ODI cricket and also to decide the seven direct qualifiers for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023.

India, though assured of a berth as hosts.

'Switch-hit part of evolving game'



Glenn Maxwell plays switch-hit during 3rd ODI AP PTI ■ CANBERRA

Former Australia captain Ian Chappell may call it "blatantly unfair" but Glenn Maxwell sees nothing wrong in employing the switch-hit, describing it as a "different part" of cricket's evolution over the years.

A switch hit involves a batsman

changing the order of his hands (from left-handed to right handed grip or vice-versa) after the bowler has already started on his run-up.

"...It is within the laws of the game. Batting has evolved in such a way, that it has got better and better over the years, which is why we see these massive scores are getting chased down and the scores are going up," Maxwell said when asked about Chappell's comments.

Maxwell urged the bowlers to come up with a plan to combat the switch hit.

"And I suppose it is up-to the bowlers to try and combat that," he said.

"I suppose the skills of bowlers have been tested everyday with bowlers having to come up with different change-ups, different ways to stop batters," Maxwell said at the post-match press conference.

He said as the batsmen have evolved, similarly bowlers should also try and innovate.

"...We see guys come up with knuckle-balls and wide yorker fields and different tactics. And the tactics of ODI cricket have definitely evolved, so I just see it (switch hit) as a different part of the evolution of the game..." he added.



SCG to have capacity crowd for 3rd T20

SYDNEY: The third T20 International between India and Australia is set to be played in front of a capacity crowd with the New South Wales Government lifting restrictions on stadiums from December 7. In a world scarred by the Covid-19 pandemic, the ODI series between Australia and India saw the return of spectators with restrictions. However, NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian has announced that stadiums can move to 100 per cent capacity from December 7. "From Monday, life will be very different in NSW," Berejiklian was quoted as saying by *The Australian*. This development means the third and final T20, slated to be played on Tuesday at the Sydney Cricket Ground, which was limited to 50 per cent of total capacity earlier, can now have a full house.

Malan-Buttler record stand seals SA whitewash

AFP ■ CAPE TOWN

Dawid Malan and Jos Buttler launched a savage assault on South Africa's bowlers as England completed a series clean sweep with a nine-wicket win in the third and final T20I at Newlands in Cape Town on Tuesday.

Man of the series Malan finished on 99 not out, while Buttler was unbeaten on 67.

They shared a world record T20 international second wicket partnership of 167 off 90 balls to make South Africa's 191 for three look insignificant. England won with 14 balls to spare.

Rassie van der Dussen (74 not out) and Faf du Plessis (52 not out) set up South Africa's biggest total of the series in an unbeaten partnership of 127 off 66 balls for the fourth wicket.

But the left-handed Malan was quickly into his stride when he joined Buttler after the dis-



missal of Jason Roy. By the end, South Africa looked a demoralised team.

Malan hit 11 fours and five sixes in his 47-ball innings. Buttler faced one ball fewer and hit three fours and five sixes.

England were always well up with the required rate but put themselves in total command in the 10th and 11th overs when they hit 21 and 19 runs off Lutho

Sipamla and Tabraiz Shamsi respectively.

Playing his first match of any type since the last South African season, Sipamla was thrashed for 45 runs off 2.4 overs.

Left-arm wrist spinner Shamsi conceded 57 runs off four overs, two days after taking three for 19 in the second match in Paarl.

Rabada to miss ODI series

IAN ■ CAPE TOWN

South Africa pacer Kagiso Rabada has been ruled out of the upcoming three-match ODI series against England due to an injury.

Rabada has sustained a right adductor strain, one that also kept him out of the dead-rubber final T20I at Newlands.

In a statement, Cricket South Africa said that the 25-year-old will require three weeks to heal.

"The player will be released from the squad and bio-secure environment tomorrow to begin recovery, rehabilitation and preparation for the Betway Test series against Sri Lanka beginning on December 26," the CSA release stated.

Aus Open starts Feb 8

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

The Australian Open tennis Major will start three weeks late on February 8, reports said on Wednesday, with players cleared to train during quarantine following lengthy negotiations with state authorities.

According to Australian media, the start date of 2021's first Grand Slam event was announced to players by tournament director Craig Tiley. If confirmed, it will join the three other major tournaments in being disrupted by the coronavirus.

Tennis Australia has been in protracted talks with Victoria state authorities in Melbourne, which only emerged from a months-long lockdown in October following a second wave of cases.

"It's taken a while, but the great news is it looks like we are going to be able to hold the AO (Australian Open) on 8 February," Tiley was quoted as telling players in a leaked letter.

"Players will have to quarantine for two weeks from 15 January, but the Victorian Government has agreed to special conditions for AO participants — agreeing that they need to be able to prepare for a Grand Slam."

Under the plan, players who test negative for the virus will be able to train while in isolation, Tiley wrote.

Tennis Australia did not confirm the reports on Wednesday, and said plans were still awaiting approval from the state Government.

A February 8 start date would allow for a week of warm-up tournaments after quarantine, but would likely mean scrapping the flagship ATP Cup men's team event due to a lack of time.

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Curtis Jones sent a depleted Liverpool through to the Champions League last 16 on Tuesday, while Zinedine Zidane dismissed suggestions he might walk away from Real Madrid after another defeat by Shakhtar Donetsk left their European hopes in the balance.

Liverpool were without a host of key players for the visit of Ajax to Anfield in Group D, with 22-year-old Irishman Caoimhin Kelleher starting in goal in the absence of Alisson.

Teenager Jones scored the only goal just before the hour, tucking the ball in after Ajax 'keeper Andre Onana thought he could afford to let a Neco Williams cross sail over his head.

The result was vital for the Premier League champions after their home loss to Atalanta a week ago, and it allowed them to secure a spot in the knockout phase.

They will go through as group winners after Atalanta had to come from behind to draw 1-1 at home to Midtjylland.

Atalanta are a point clear in second from Ajax, with the sides meeting in Amsterdam in their last game next week.

Two-time former European champions Porto also sealed a last-16 spot after drawing 0-0 at

Tale of two keepers

Onana's blunder helps Liverpool advance in Champions League as Kelleher impresses on European debut

home to Manchester City, who were already through and are now guaranteed to top Group C.

Porto would have qualified regardless, because Olympiakos lost 2-1 to Marseille in France, with Dimitri Payet scoring two penalties in the second half to turn the game around after Mohamed Mady Camara fired the Greeks in front.

The result ends Marseille's Champions League record run of 13 straight defeats and means they could yet pip Olympiakos to third place and the consolation of a Europa League berth.

LUKAKU DOUBLE

Real Madrid could yet be consigned to a similar fate after they went down 2-0 to Shakhtar in Kiev, their second defeat this season by the Ukrainians.

Substitutes Dentinho and Manor Solomon scored second-half goals in Kiev as Shakhtar stunned the 13-time European champions again, having won

3-2 in Madrid in October. Shakhtar had lost their last two Group B matches against Borussia Moenchengladbach by an aggregate score of 10-0, but now move above Real into second place with one game remaining.

Gladbach are top by a point, while Shakhtar have the upper hand on Real thanks to their superior head-to-head record.

However, the damage was limited as Gladbach were limited to a late equaliser, because of an offside.

It means Inter are bottom of the group but could still qualify, while Real will definitely qualify as long as they win at home to Gladbach. Madrid have made it out of their group in every year since 1997 and so failure to qualify would be seen as a disaster, but Zidane is not considering stepping down.

"I am not going to resign, not at all. We are always going to have difficult moments, and we are on a bad run, but we need to keep going," said the Frenchman.



Real's city rivals Atletico Madrid will also still have it all to do in their final group game after being held to a 1-1 draw at home by a weakened Bayern Munich.

Salzburg can snatch a last-16 place if they beat Atletico at home next week, after the Austrians won 3-1 away to Lokomotiv Moscow.

SINGLES

HAAS SIGN UP MICK SCHUMACHER

SAKHIR: Mick Schumacher, the son of seven-time world champion Michael Schumacher, will drive in F1 for the first time with Haas next season, the team announced on Wednesday. "Haas F1 Team has signed Mick Schumacher as part of its all-new driver lineup for the 2021 Championship and beyond," Haas said in a statement. "Racing for Haas F1 Team next year is an incredible feeling, and I couldn't be happier," said Schumacher, the 21-year-old who is currently topping the charts in F2 championship, with one race to go.

GEORGE REPLACES HAMILTON FOR SAKHIR GP

SAKHIR: George Russell will step up from Williams to replace world champion Lewis Hamilton, who tested positive for Covid-19, at F1's Sakhir Grand Prix, Mercedes announced on Wednesday. Russell becomes just the third Briton to represent Mercedes in Formula One after Stirling Moss and Lewis Hamilton. "A big thank you also to Mercedes for putting their faith in me," said Russell. "Obviously, nobody can replace Lewis, but I'll give my all for the team in his absence from the moment I step in the car."

ANOTHER PAK PLAYER TEST +VE, TOTAL 8

WELLINGTON: New Zealand Government on Wednesday said that another member of the visiting Pakistan team has tested positive for coronavirus, taking the total number of confirmed cases to eight. The positive result was confirmed by New Zealand's Ministry of Health in its daily bulletin on Covid-19 pandemic. The eighth member will now join the seven previously infected Pakistani players in quarantine.

RECOVERED PIOLI RETURNS TO SIDELINES

MILAN: AC Milan coach Stefano Pioli has recovered from the coronavirus and will be back on the sidelines for Thursday's Europa League match against Celtic. Milan said on Wednesday that the latest tests for Covid-19 carried out on Pioli and his assistant Giacomo Murelli were negative.

AGENCIES