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LIVERPOOL BEAT WOLVES
IN PREMIER LEAGUE

LUCKNOW, TUESDAY DECEMBER 8, 2020; PAGES 14 ₹3



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SHAKEELA'S
RELEASE: PANKAJ
13 VIVACITY

Ensure Bharat Bandh is peaceful: MHA to States

States told to maintain social distancing; CAIT, All India Transporters body say markets to remain open, transport service intact across nation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of Tuesday's Bharat Bandh call given by farmers unions and supported by 22 political parties, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has asked all States and Union Territories to tighten security while asserting that peace and tranquility must be maintained.

While the Centre is firm on its stance on the reform laws, farmers want them rolled back as they fear they will be at the mercy of corporates to sell their produce.

In a countrywide advisory, the MHA also said the State Governments and UT administrations must ensure that the Covid-19 guidelines issued with regard to health and social distancing are strictly followed. The States and UTs were told that peace and tranquility must be maintained during the Bharat Bandh and precautionary measures taken so that no untoward incident takes place anywhere in the country.

The Centre's attempts to resolve the farmers' agitation through dialogue is making lit-

tle headway with a few of the farmer unions remaining adamant on their demand to repeal the new agriculture laws.

The Bharat Bandh, called by the farmers' unions who have been protesting against the three farm laws, got support from trade unions, transporters, bank unions and political parties including the Congress, NCP, DMK, SP, TRS and Left.

In a statement of support for the strike on Sunday, the Opposition parties said, "These new farm laws passed in Parliament in a brazen (and) anti-democratic manner (by) preventing a structured discussion and voting, threaten India's food security, destroy Indian agriculture and our farmers, lay the basis for the abolishment of MSP and mortgage Indian agriculture and our markets to the caprices of multi-national agri-business corporates."

Meanwhile, traders' body CAIT and the All India Transporters Welfare Association on Monday said markets across the country



Farmers shout slogans during their Delhi Chalo protest march against the new farm laws at Singhu border in Delhi on Monday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

including in Delhi will remain open on Tuesday and transport services will also remain operative, notwithstanding the Bharat Bandh call given by protesting farmers. In Mumbai, BEST buses, taxis, auto will continue to ply on the road on

Tuesday. Ahead of Bharat Bandh call on Tuesday, the Gujarat Government imposed Section 144 of CrPC in the State. The police would not allow any outfit or any group to forcefully impose bandh in the State. UP

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath accused that some political parties are trying to spoil the atmosphere in the country, "especially the present stand taken by them on model APMC Act shows their double standards". Attacking the Opposition parts at a hurriedly convened Press conference at his official residence in Lucknow he said that the parties which have backed the Bharat Bandh call on Tuesday "should apologise before the nation".

After five rounds of talks between the Centre and the farmers' unions failed to end the impasse, the two sides are again set to meet on December 9, a day after the countrywide strike. Talks between the Government and protesting farmers remained inconclusive on Saturday even after five rounds of discussions as union leaders stuck to their demand for the repeal of the new farm laws and went on a "maun vrat" seeking a clear "yes or no" reply, forcing the Centre to call for another meeting on December 9 to resolve the deadlock.

BJP hits out at 'double-faced' Opp for fueling farmers' fears

Ravishankar reminds Rahul of saying 'farmers can sell directly in the Congress-ruled States'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the Modi Government braced up to deal with the Bharat Bandh call on Tuesday, the BJP has slammed the Opposition parties for fanning the farmer's stir by stoking their fear. Senior BJP leader and Union Law Minister Ravishankar Prasad on Monday described the Opposition parties as "double-faced" and called its stand "utter political opportunism".

Prasad said a majority of Opposition parties, including the Congress, the NCP and the Samajwadi Party (SP) — now backing the farmers — had in the past approved the marketing reforms in the agriculture sector.

Referring to what he said "sudden" support of non-BJP parties to the farmers stir as "shudh rajnetic swarth ki rajniti", Prasad said these are "double-standards" adopted by the Opposition to save their declining political base.

The BJP leader skirted questions on the ongoing talks between the farmers and the Government (with the next round scheduled on December 9) but stressed that new laws which "set free restrictions" were good of the farming community.

The Minister said under new farm laws the farmland "will not be sold, leased or mortgaged".

Giving the latest figures of "higher procurement and payment on MSP", he said, "we have no intention to end the mandi system" in the country.

Prasad quoted 2019 Congress manifesto (page 17, part 2) saying that the party "will repeal APMC Act and make the trade, including

export-import, free from restrictions".

In the same vein, the Union Minister pointed out that the Hindi manifesto of the Congress spoke about "amendments".

He quoted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's statement in CMs' conference in 2013 that "farmers can sell directly in the Congress-ruled States" and that the farmers will be "given free choice".

Prasad said NCP leader Sharad Pawar, "now opposing farm reforms" had as Union Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Minister written to a letter on August 11, 2010, to all CMs that "agriculture needs huge investments and private sector investment is essential and so a change in the mandi system".

The BJP leader further said that in an interview in 2005, Pawar had said that six-month time was maximum that was needed to abolish APMC Act.

Continued on Page 6

Emergency services to be allowed, bandh won't be forced on anyone: Farmers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Protesting against the three recently enacted agriculture-related laws by the Centre, farmers, who have been camping in Delhi for the last many days vehemently demanding scrapping of the Bills, said on Monday that emergency services will be allowed during Bharat Bandh on December 8.

Also, they appealed to their affiliates to not force anyone to observe the shutdown.

Farmers sitting across the borders in the national Capital have called Bharat Bandh and Chakka Jam on December 8 and threatened to intensify their agitation and block more roads leading to the national Capital if the Government does not accept their demands.

Addressing a Press conference on Monday, the farmers' unions appealed to farmers to maintain peace and not to enter into any scuffle to enforce the bandh.

"Bandh will be across the country and the Central Government will have to accept our demands to scrap the new farm laws," said Jagjit Singh Dallewala, the president of Bharatiya Kisan Ekta Sangathan.

"Why the Government was agreeing to make changes in the legislations now after initially claiming they will benefit the peasantry. We want the Government to reinstate the old farm laws even if the Government thinks it is not good for farmers," said Darshan Pal, farmer union leader.

Continued on Page 6

Opposition parties adopting double standards on new farm laws: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath slammed the opposition parties for poisoning the minds of farmers over the new farm laws, saying that they were adopting double standards as they had supported the legislation in the past. "The opposition leaders are now trying to pull the trigger on the government from a gun put on the shoulders of the farmers just for their political mileage," he said.

The chief minister said that the entire opposition, including Congress, NCP, SP, BSP, Akali Dal, DMK, TMC, were playing games. "They have supported the new laws in the Standing Committee meeting of Parliament and even during the passage of the ordinance," he said.

Details on Page 2

Metro rail a value-addition to modern Agra, says PM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Taj city got a gift on Monday when Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the construction of the Agra Metro Rail project, describing it as a modern value-addition to the historical city of Agra.

The prime minister, on the occasion, said that this historical city was now matching its steps with the progress and growth of the 21st century. "In the last six years, the speed and scale at which the metro network worked on the entire country, along with UP, reflects both the government's identity and commitment. As of 2014, about 215 km of metro lines were operational in the country."

Details on Page 2

SC allows Central Vista foundation, stays project work till plea is heard

Modi scheduled to lay foundation stone for new Parl on Dec 10

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday allowed the Centre to go ahead with the proposed foundation stone-laying ceremony for the Central Vista project after the Government assured it that no construction or demolition work would commence till the apex court decides the pending pleas on the issue.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told a bench headed by Justice AM Khanwilkar that there would be only foundation stone-laying ceremony, and no construction, demolition or felling of trees would be done for the project as of now.

The revamp, which was announced in September last year, envisages a new triangular Parliament building, with seating capacity for 900 to 1,200 MPs, that is targeted to be constructed by August, 2022 when the country will be celebrating its 75th Independence Day. The common Central Secretariat is likely to be built by 2024.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone on December 10 for the new Parliament building and the construction is expected to be completed by 2022 at an estimated cost of ₹971 crore, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla had said on December 5.

The SC is seized of pleas which have raised questions over several aspects, including the environmental clearance granted to the project.

During the hearing conducted on Monday through video-conferencing, the bench asked Mehta to apprise it within five minutes about the Government's view on the issue of construction work for the project. The bench observed that it would not allow construction or demolition till its decision on the pending pleas opposing the project.

The SC said the Centre can proceed with the requisite paperwork in the meantime.

On November 5, the apex court had reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas which have raised questions over the Centre's ambitious Central Vista project, which covers three km stretch from Rashtrapati Bhavan to India Gate in Lutyens' Delhi.

Continued on Page 6

Bharat Biotech, Serum Institute seek emergency use nod

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After US-based drug maker Pfizer applied for the approval of its coronavirus vaccine in India, the Serum Institute of India (SII) and Bharat Biotech too have sought from the Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation emergency use authorisation for their Covid-19 vaccines.

Bharat Biotech's Covaxin is being indigenously developed by the Hyderabad-based company in collaboration with the

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). While SII's Covid-19 vaccine is developed by AstraZeneca-Oxford University.

Sources in the Government said that the top drug regulator, DCGI, has started reviewing their applications on granting of authorisation, which will be made on the basis of three parameters — safety, quality and efficacy.

"As promised, before the end of 2020, @SerumInstIndia has applied for emergency use authorisation for the first

made-in-India vaccine, COVISHIELD," tweeted SII CEO Adar Poonawala on Monday.

"This will save countless lives, and I thank the Government of India and Sri @narendramodi ji for their invaluable support," he wrote.

Government officials said that the vaccine, developed from adenovirus which is a common cold virus, will be the first preventive option against Covid-19 available in India and it could be administered to the first priority group comprising healthcare workers



beginning the next month. The Government has already geared up for immunising the

identified population.

Though the company has not revealed the details of the application sent to the regulator, sources said that it will submit the full analysis released by AstraZeneca-Oxford last month. The analysis showed that their vaccine candidate was 70 per cent effective on average in a late-stage trial in the UK and Brazil.

In India, a phase 2/3 trial being conducted on 1,600 individuals is aimed at looking for any immunogenicity and not for actual protection against

Covid-19 as per the vaccine's trial design.

Also, as the trial in India involves the dosing regimen with two full doses. The regulator can accept just the 62 per cent efficacy and the bridging immunogenicity from SII and grant the approval for restricted use, officials said.

According to the ICMR, the SII has already manufactured 40 million doses of the vaccine under the at-risk manufacturing and stockpiling license it obtained from the DCGI.

CAPSULE

NOIDA, GHAZIABAD'S AIR 'SEVERE' 4TH DAY ON TROT

Noida: The average air quality remained "severe" in Ghaziabad and Noida for the fourth day in a row, while it stayed "very poor" in Faridabad and Gurugram, according to a Government agency data on Monday. Presence of PM 2.5 and PM 10 also remained high in the five immediate neighbours of Delhi, according to the air quality index (AQI).

'JET AIRWAYS MAY RESUME OPS NEXT YEAR'

Mumbai: The consortium of UAE-based businessman Murari Lal Jalan and London's Kalrock Capital — which has won the bid to revive Jet Airways — on Monday said it expects to start operating the airline by the summer of 2021.

Continued on Page 6

Body of missing naval pilot found off Goa coast 11 days after crash

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy has recovered the body of the missing naval pilot Commander Nishant Singh off Goa coast. His MiG-29K had crashed into the Arabian Sea 11 days back. The second pilot of the twin-seater was rescued the same day. Both the pilots had managed to eject from the jet before it went down.

The missing commander's body was located on the seabed 70 metres below water. The body was found 30 miles off Goa coast. The jet had taken off for a routine sortie on November 26 after taking off from the INS Vikramaditya aircraft carrier.

Giving details of the mishap, the Navy had said that day a board of enquiry was ordered to ascertain the cause of the incident.

"A MiG-29K trainer aircraft operating at sea met with an accident at about 1700 hrs on 26 November. One pilot has been recovered and search by air and surface units in progress for the second pilot. An enquiry has been ordered to investigate the incident," the Navy said.

The official said intensive aerial, coastal and surface search by the Indian Navy ships and aircraft was in progress to locate the pilot. Underwater search by divers and seabed mapping using

specialised equipment in vicinity of primary wreckage of MiG-29K was on.

The search teams had managed to locate the debris of the ill-fated jet after a few days. It included landing gear, turbo charger, fuel tank engine and wing engine.

Sources said mortal remains of a human body were found in the vicinity of the wreckage site. The samples are being sent for DNA testing for confirmation of identity.

They also said all sections of the aircraft wreckage including ejection seats have been accounted for using side scan sonar and high definition cameras.

Metro rail a value-addition to historical Agra: Prime Minister

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Taj city got a gift on Monday when Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the construction of the Agra Metro Rail project, describing it as a modern value-addition to the historical city of Agra.

The prime minister, on the occasion, said that this historical city was now matching its steps with the progress and growth of the 21st century.

“In the last six years, the speed and scale at which the metro network worked on the entire country, along with UP, reflects both the government’s identity and commitment. As

of 2014, about 215 km of metro lines were operational in the country. In the six years, more than 450 km of metro lines in the country are operational and work is going on at a rapid pace on about 1,000 metro lines,” Modi said.

Modi said Agra was the seventh city in UP to be connected with a metro rail facility.

“Besides metro rail networks, metro coaches are also being made in India under Make in India. Not only this, the signal system is also to be constructed entirely in India. This shows India is becoming self-sufficient even in the case of metro networks,” he said. “The present India is

Kicks-off construction work

dreaming big. But just dreaming does not work. Dreams also have to be fulfilled with courage. The youth of India living in small cities are showing the same courage. In order to make small cities the axis of self-reliant India, a lot of development is being emphasised,” the prime minister said.

Thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said the metro rail project would herald a new era of public transport in the Taj City.

“There were problems in promotion of tourism in Agra in the absence of a public



transport system and that too as per the norms of the environment. The apex court had expressed concern over this but the sustained efforts of PM Modi resulted in this project being realised,” he said.

The chief minister said it was a matter of pride that under the guidance of Prime Minister Modi, public welfare schemes seen on the ground had benefited the poor, the youth and the women during the trying times of COVID-19 while on the other hand, the infrastructure development went on without any hindrance.

The chief minister chose the occasion to congratulate the prime minister as the Invest India received UNCTAD Investment Promotion Award 2020.

Asserting that this coveted title was a true testimony to the global recognition of India’s business-friendly environment, the chief minister pointed out that Invest India was a valuable partner in the formation of Invest UP, the premier investment promotion agency that would work together with Invest India to bring in more investments into the state.

“I thank the prime minister for the extraordinary measures taken under his leadership to improve Ease of Doing

Business (EoDB) in the country. We look forward to working with Invest India to attract and facilitate more investments into the state,” he added.

The total cost of the Agra Metro Rail Project is Rs 8,379.62 crore and in the first phase, the Sikandra to Taj East Gate corridor will be constructed. Two corridors of a total length of 29.4 km are proposed in the project.

All the stations of the AMRP have been planned in such a way that all the four major railways stations, bus depots, colleges, main markets, and the tourist destinations are well connected for the easy movement of the locals as well as the tourists.



NOTICE

I Sunder Bai W/o Late Ram Dulare residing Village - Mutvallipur, P/O Vishundapur Police Station, Dalmau, Raebareilly (U.P.). I have change my name from sunder bai to Sundara Devi vide affidavit detail 23 Nov. 2020 before court, Vishundapur, Raebareilly.

NOTICE

My 10th Marksheet, Statement of exam results, Migration Certificate (Index no T/456/028) Year 1989, also my 12th Marksheet (Index no. B/ 943/036) year 1991 and other Certificates have been irretrievably lost. Anshuman Kishore Singh S/o Dr. Brij Kishore Singh. Add.: 117/K-86 Sarvodaya Nagar, Kanpur, 208025.

NOTICE

In my son Shivam Yadav's student of Class 9th mention his school records my name is Dinesh Prasad. Yadav and my wife name is Rekha Devi which is wrong. My correct name is Dinesh Yadav and my wife name is Rekha Yadav. Dinesh Yadav Vill-Chuharpur, Post - Narayanpur, Chaubeypur, Varanasi (221104).

NOTICE


I, Nikhilesh Upadhyay S/o Prem Narayan Upadhyay R/o Vill : Manikpur Post : Rampur Sakarwari, Thana : Bewaria, Dist : Ambedkar Nagar, U.P. has declare that I have lost my Migration Certificate of Sr. 181346 Enrollment No. 171616 of M.Sc. Microbiology issued from Gurukul Kangri University Haridwar.

NOTICE

I, Army No-7241315K (DFR/NA-Vet) Hridaya Nand Prasad, R/o-Vill-Kalli Paschim Raibareilly Road Near Purbi-Mata Mandir, Post-Kalli Paschim, PS-SGPGI, Teh-Sarojini Nagar, Lucknow (U.P.) 226301, declared that in my service record my son name wrongly mentioned as Kumar Dashvant Raj Gupta. His correct name is Deshvant Raj Gupta (Affidavit No-38AE266042)

OBITUARY

OBITUARY



HAVILDAR JAGDISH
07 FEB 1977 - 29 NOV 2020

ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF HAVILDAR JAGDISH WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH 457 FIELD HOSPITAL

FROM: MAJ GEN NAVEEN AGGARWAL AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

OBITUARY

OBITUARY


SEPOY MANISH SINGH
18 SEP 1994 - 14 NOV 2020

ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF SEPOY MANISH SINGH WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH 153 GENERAL HOSPITAL

FROM: MAJ GEN NAVEEN AGGARWAL AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

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CM: Oppn parties adopting double standards on new farm laws

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath slammed the opposition parties for poisoning the minds of farmers over the new farm laws, saying that they were adopting double standards as they had supported the legislation in the past.

“The opposition leaders are now trying to pull the trigger on the government from a gun put on the shoulders of the farmers just for their political mileage,” he said.

Talking to reporters here on Monday, the chief minister said that the entire opposition, including Congress, NCP, SP, BSP, Akali Dal, DMK, TMC, were playing games.

“They have supported the new laws in the Standing Committee meeting of Parliament and even during the passage of the ordinance,” he said. “Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has even issued the notification on the new Act but now are supporting the farmers and opposing the Act. Such move of the opposition shows their vested interest to create anarchy in the country at the behest of the farmers,” he said.

Yogi Adityanath said that in 2010-11, when the UPA was in power, the then agriculture minister and NCP leader Sharad Pawar had written to all the states for amendment in the

Yogi reviews preparations for Magh Mela, Sant Samagam

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday reviewed the preparations for the proposed Magh Mela in Prayagraj and Sant Samagam to be held from February 16 to 28 March in Vrindavan, Mathura.

He asked the officials to ensure cleanliness and good flow of the river Ganga in Prayagraj and Yamuna in Mathura during the mela.

“All the departments concerned should ensure continuous reviews at their levels. Weekly or fortnightly reviews at the chief secretary level should be carried out,” he said.

The chief minister said all facilities should be provided to the devotees, especially the kalpvasi's visiting the Magh Mela and Sant Samagam.

“No compromise should be made regarding this. Arrangements should be made for sanitation and sanitisation for the devotees,” he said.

The chief minister said Covid tests must be done by RT-PCR method to prevent any spread of the novel coronavirus infection during the mela. He said

Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act for the benefit of the farmers and to end the mandi system. “I cannot believe that Manmohan Singh as PM, Sonia Gandhi as UPA chairperson and Rahul as Congress general secretary were not taken into confidence by the then agriculture minister,” he said.

“Even during the past elections, Congress and other parties had mentioned support to the APMC Act in their poll manifesto and after the defeat

of Congress in Delhi elections in 2014, the then Congress president Rahul Gandhi had claimed that they lost in the Delhi polls as they could not bring the amended law on APMC,” he added.

Yogi Adityanath, though, mentioned that the Bharat Bandh called by the farmers on Tuesday over the APMC Act was illegal and supported by the opposition merely a political drama.

The chief minister said that even Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh

Yadav in 2019 supported this Bill in the meeting of the Standing Committee on Agriculture . On Monday, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav was detained in Lucknow when he was staging a protest when not allowed to go to Kannauj for participating in a kisan march, in support of the agitating farmers.

Yogi Adityanath said that over the past six years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had implemented revolutionary and historic policies in favour of the farmers.

health and safety of the devotees,” he said.

The chief minister said that COVID-19 was under control in the state but the threat had not disappeared hence vigilance, safety and caution were necessary. “If a person is found to be coronavirus positive, he/she should be sent to hospital immediately and people accompanying him/her should be quarantined,” he said.

The chief minister said toilets should be in adequate numbers at the mela area and mobile toilets should also be made available. He also stressed on proper arrangement for drinking water.

The chief minister said that clean and continuous flow of Ganga in Prayagraj from January 1 to February 16 and Yamuna in Vrindavan, Mathura from February 1 to March 28 should be ensured.

On this occasion, the chief minister was also briefed about preparations being made in connection with the events by all the departments concerned, including the district magistrates of Prayagraj and Vrindavan-Mathura.

APPOINTMENT LETTERS TO 3,209 TUBEWELL OPERATORS TOMORROW

With the aim to provide better irrigation facilities to farmers, tubewell operators will be appointed and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will give appointment letters to 3,209 tubewell operators on Wednesday.

In view of the problems faced by the farmers due to shortage of tubewell operators, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had earlier directed the Uttar Pradesh Subordinate Services

Selection Commission (UPSSSC) to make recruitment on the vacant posts through a fair and transparent procedure.

“The UPSSSC selected 3,209 tubewell operators and sent the list to the Irrigation department. The department has allocated 3,209 tubewell operators on merit in a transparent and fair manner,” the official said.

He said these appointments will make the operation and maintenance of tubewells easier and provide water for

Police alert to maintain peace during Bharat Bandh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With government directions to go soft and avoid direct confrontation with the leaders of farmers’ unions supporting the Bharat Bandh on Tuesday, the police all over the state, especially in western Uttar Pradesh, have been put on alert to avert any untoward incident.

Special vigil is being kept to ensure that any group not supporting the agitation does not try to create problems for the law enforcing agencies by clashing with those supporting the Bharat

Bandh. Special police deployments have been made on all the highways to ensure that no one is stopped forcibly.

The Central government has also issued a nation-wide advisory for Bharat Bandh which will be observed by the protesting farmers from 11 am to 3 pm. Several opposition parties have supported the all-India strike call.

The Union Home Ministry has asked the state governments and Union Territory administrations to maintain law and order and ensure that the Covid guidelines are strictly followed.

Sources said that directives had also been issued to ensure that those opening their establishments should not face any trouble and that peace must be ensured at all cost.

The sources further said that senior officers were also keeping a track on senior leaders of opposition parties and they might be detained or even taken in custody if they tried to come out in the open to support and make the Bharat Bandh successful on Tuesday.

Prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code are already enforced

in many places, including Lucknow, and in western UP towns to arrest all leaders, except those of farmers’ unions, if they try to force closure of business establishments or block traffic movements.

Interestingly, almost all the opposition parties have supported the Bharat Bandh and their workers would come out in large numbers on Tuesday to make the bandh successful.

The Congress also announced to stage demonstrations against the new farm bills across the state on Tuesday.

Akhilesh Yadav detained for staging sit-in

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav was on Monday detained and bundled into a police van after he sat on dharna against the three new farm bills.

Yadav, who was to take part in a Kisan March on Monday, staged a sit-in protest outside his residence in Lucknow after the police sealed a road near the Samajwadi Party office.

Akhilesh Yadav was scheduled to go to Kannauj for leading the Kisan March.

Over a dozen opposition parties have extended support to the Bharat Bandh call given by the farmers organisations protesting in Delhi.

Akhilesh Yadav, along with his supporters, broke through police barricades erected near his residence on Vikramaditya Marg and sat on dharna to express solidarity with the



farmers protesting against the new farm laws.

“If the new farm laws are intended to help the farmers, then why are they on the warpath? Why is the government so adamant? If farmers do not want the new laws, the government should take them back,” the SP chief told reporters at the protest site.

Akhilesh Yadav said, “We will raise awareness among the farmers that the farm laws are against them. Samajwadi Party started this Kisan Yatra which was stopped by the present government, my house was sealed from all sides. I ask why was it sealed? At the most we would have gone to meet and talk to the farmers and put our point before them.”

Yadav was to take part in a 13-km-long Kisan Yatra at Kannauj in support of the protesting farmers who are demanding repeal of the new farm laws introduced by the BJP government at the Centre.

Accusing BJP of dictator-

ship, Yadav said, “This is BJP’s dictatorial behaviour. BJP has destroyed the Indian Constitution and made a mockery of it. The BJP does not want to debate on this issue; they are taking a one-sided decision. The farmers are angry and are protesting so why is the government not listening to them?”

SP spokesperson Rajendra Chaudhary said sealing of the road leading to the party office was undemocratic

“The government is afraid that Akhilesh Yadav is going to participate in the Kisan Yatra. Peaceful demonstration is the democratic right of every individual and the government is adamant on violating it,” he said.

The police, meanwhile, said that the Kannauj district magistrate had denied permission for the rally.

“Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav was to go to Kannauj for a programme, but the Kannauj district magis-

trate did not give permission for it. Hence, the portion of the Vikramaditya Marg leading to the SP office was sealed,” a police official said.

On Sunday, the SP had said that it would organise farmer rallies in all districts of Uttar Pradesh from December 7, beginning with Kannauj.

Meanwhile, the BJP slammed the SP call for Kisan Yatra. A BJP spokesman said that everything being done by the Samajwadi Party and other parties was nothing but ‘propaganda and these parties did not have the support of the farmers. The BJP spokesperson said that the opposition parties wanted to create chaos and take advantage of the moment. He said the SP was synonymous with goonda raj.

Notice Inviting e-Tender

No. SSA/Esst/EPB - III-IV/357/2020/3218 Date : 05.12.2020

Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Shiksha) invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed exercise book manufacturers for the supply of Evaluation and Practice Books for class –III&IV (Single Line, Plain and Square Line).

To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.

The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/ scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

Sd/-Executive Director,
SSA, Assam
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

Janasanyog No. CF/3088/20

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA.
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
RWS&S DIVISION, RAYGADA.

E-mail: eerwss_rgd@nic.in, eerwssrgd@gmail.com.

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH E-Procurement.
Tender Identification No.06/RWSS/RGD/2020-21

1) Name of Works:-

1) Supplying & Laying of rising main and distribution system pipe line of UPVC/DI/GI, construction of Compound wall RCC OGR/ ESR, SV/NRV Chamber, Air Valve, Pillar stand post etc for different PWS projects & Spring Based Water Supply Projects in Rayagada District.

2) Total Number of Works :- 5 Nos. (Detailed list available in the website)

3) Estimated Cost :- Rs.8.30 Lakhs to 274.82 Lakhs

4) Class of Contractor :- D,C,B& A

5) Period of completion :- 3months & 1 Year respectively

| Procurement Officer. | Bid Identification No. | Availability of tender online for bidding | |
|--|--|---|---|
| | | From | To |
| 1 Executive Engineer, Rural Water Supply & Sanitation Division Rayagada. | 2 Online Tender/06/RWSS/RGD/2020-21 | 3 14.12.2020 at 11.00 Hours | 4 02.01.2021 upto 17.00 Hours |

NB:- Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in

OIPR-25007/11/0006/2021

Sd-02/12/2020
Executive Engineer,
RWS&S Division, Rayagada.

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Covid positivity rate comes down to below 3 percent

248 more test positive, 263 patients recover

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Covid positivity rate of Lucknow has come down to 3 percent this month, according to a senior health official. Fewer number of people are testing positive even as a larger number of tests are being conducted in the district. The per-day cases have also come down to below 300.

As per the official, they removed the old equipment at the District Immunisation Centre in Aishbagh where the Covid vaccine will be stored. "This is being done to create space for our other logistics as the old equipment which are not in use will be auctioned," he said. He added that for the cold chain maintenance, they would have a regular 24-hour electricity supply to the centre. Maintenance of the infrastructure is also underway. He said the sites where the vaccinations would be carried out were yet to be decided.

On Monday, 248 people tested positive for coronavirus while 263 patients recovered. Lucknow's death toll stands at 1,030 and there are 3,351 active cases in the district. The fresh cases included 24 from



Indiranagar, 20 from Gomtinagar, 16 from Chowk, 15 from Rae Bareilly road, 14 from Vikasnagar, 13 from Mahanagar, 11 from Ashiyana, and 10 each from Hazratganj, Talkatora & Jankipuram.

Across the state, 1,515 persons tested positive, including 68 in Kanpur, 155 in Ghaziabad, 80 in Gautam Buddh Nagar, 82 in Varanasi and 176 in Meerut, taking the UP tally to 5,56,397. There were 20 deaths in the state,

including two each in Kanpur, Fatehpur & Varanasi, and one each in Prayagraj, Lucknow, Ghaziabad, Gorakhpur, Muzaffarnagar, Hardoi, Etawah, Gonda, Ghazipur, Sultanpur, Unnao, Mainpuri, Kasganj & Kanpur Dehat, taking the toll to 7,944.

Meanwhile, Dr Zia Hashim from SGPGI pointed out that most of the patients in the ICU of the Rajdhani Covid hospital had been referred from other hospitals. "Last month, we had

received more than 50 percent of patients in the ICU and they already got one-week treatment in other hospitals. Earlier, we were getting younger patients, but now we are getting patients aged 60 years and above," he pointed out.

"As far as severity of the disease is concerned, 3-4 patients continue to be on ventilator and a few on oxygen," he added. Dr Hashim said Covid patients are coming to SGPGI from Gorakhpur, Allahabad, Unnao and Kanpur among other districts.

Spokesperson of RMLIMS Dr Shrikesh Singh said they are also getting about 60-70 percent of the patients from other districts and private hospitals.

"Some of the patients admitted in private hospitals get positive reports after testing negative two to three times. Some of the private hospitals have now started co-relating Covid with symptoms and their clinical experience along with other investigations and are not going by the tests alone. This is because sensitivity of RT-PCR is also not 100 percent and sometimes it also gives a false negative report because of incorrect technique," he said.

Railway Board member inspects MRCF

Lucknow (PNS): Member of Railway Board (Traction and Rolling Stock) Rajesh Tiwari inspected the Modern Rail Coach Factory (MRCF) in Rae Bareilly on Monday. He was accompanied by GM Vinay Mohan Srivastava and senior official Vivek Kumar.

Tiwari sought details of the projects underway at the factory and discussed in detail the quality and safety issues related to coaches. He discussed future plans with senior officials of the factory. He also had a word of praise for the factory for bagging shields for best production for two consecutive years. He also asked the officials to promote plantation.

Later, he lighted a lamp as a tribute to Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar on his 65th death anniversary (Mahaparinirvana Diwas), and garlanded Ambedkar's statue.

Meanwhile, RDSO organised a function on the occasion of Mahaparinirvana Diwas on Monday. RDSO director-general Virendra Kumar paid tributes to Dr Ambedkar. Senior officials of RDSO, including Sudhir Agarwal, AK Pandey, Ramesh Pinjani, and office-bearers of RDSO associations, also paid tribute to Dr Ambedkar.

S-I still under police scanner after death of live-in partner

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In the mysterious death of his live-in partner Mamta Singh, sub-inspector Rahul Singh Rathor is still under police scanner as his call detail records and social media accounts are being looked into.

ADCP Qasim Abdi said the police were given information about Mamta's death by her former husband Pawan on Sunday night. "However, the content had no merit of a complaint or an FIR. He just gave formal information. Mamta's parents also did not lodge any complaint. If a complaint is lodged, a case will be registered," he said.

He confirmed that Mamta had gunshot injuries on the left side of head and forensic scientists were studying the situation under which she suffered firearm injuries. He added that the police were interrogating Rathor.

Sources said the police were treating the sub-inspector in question with kid's glove. "The statements given by the two domestic helps of Rathor are in his favour. As per the statements, Mamta com-

mitted suicide. Also, recovery of a suicide note endorsed the statements of Rathor and his domestic helps. However, the gunshot injury which Mamta suffered is puzzling. This is making the police spend more time in carrying out investigation into the case," they said.

Mamta, who was a divorcee, was the live-in partner of Rathor, who was previously posted in the cyber cell of Lucknow police. She suffered gunshot injuries under mysterious circumstances at her flat in Omega Apartment in Chinhat on Sunday morning and died.

Rathor and their domestic helps were said to be present in the house when the incident took place. The police teams recovered a pistol and the suicide note in the evening even though they had reached the flat around 10:30 am.

Meanwhile, a 39-year-old man was found dead near a liquor shop in Vikrant Khand under Vibhuti Khand police station area on Monday morning. The deceased was identified as Vijendra Kumar of Vikrant Khand.

As per reports, some commuters spotted the man lying

near the liquor shop around 7:45 am and soon a huge number of residents flocked to the scene. Vijendra's father Ram Pratap also reached there around 11 am and he, along with some other locals, rushed him to RMLIMS where he was declared brought dead.

Later, the hospital staff sent a memo to the Vibhuti Khand police. A police team was sent to the hospital to collect details related to the incident. The police said autopsy report would ascertain the cause of death. "Vijendra was unmarried and he had left his house some time on Sunday night," the police said.

THEFT

Thieves made off with cash and ornaments from a house in Hasanganj police station area. Mohammed Ansari of Brahmanagar in the area, along with his family, had gone to Sitapur to attend a marriage function. Ansari said they left for Sitapur on December 5 and his brother Saif Ansari informed him about the theft on Sunday. He said the thieves broke locks of all the rooms and had decamped with cash and ornaments.

18 garbage collection vehicles flagged off

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia and Municipal Commissioner Ajay Kumar Dwivedi on Monday flagged off 18 garbage vehicles at Faizullahganj for door-to-door collection. "It is often highlighted that Faizullahganj faces the issue of garbage and which results in increase in the number dengue cases. "In a bid to improve hygiene in Faizullahganj and to do it on a priority basis, the system of door-to-door garbage collection has been established. As per our standard of one vehicle for 1,000 houses, 18 garbage vehicles have been deputed for Faizullahganj and they will be collecting garbage on a regular basis," he said.

He said residents should make separate arrangements for wet and dry garbage and hand it over to LMC employees. "It is important to keep Faizullahganj clean to prevent deaths due to dengue," he said. He added that zones 1, 4, 5 & 8 of LMC already have sufficient



number of garbage vehicles and in some areas, the door-to-door collection has reached 100 percent.

"In the remaining zones,

we will be deputing garbage vehicles soon," he said.

He added that for the remaining garbage collected in Faizullahganj in the recent years,

they had deputed teams from other zones. "As many as 350 LMC employees will work for the next eight days to completely clean the area," he said.

LU estimating biodiversity status of Raj Bhawan

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow University is estimating the biodiversity status of Raj Bhawan. According to director of Institute of Wildlife Sciences Amita Kanaujia, it is being done under the directions of Governor Anandiben Patel and guidance of Vice-Chancellor AK Rai.

She said the governor had requested for the biodiversity estimation of Raj Bhawan. "The work is going on and the report will be submitted in about eight months," she said.

Kanaujia said they are studying the variety and abundance of insects, birds and trees at Raj Bhawan. "We are also trying to make sure that along with Raj Bhawan, Lucknow University and Lucknow zoo can become the lungs of the state capital," she said. She added that the governor initiated the project after the university estimated the biodiversity index of Lucknow.

"This is the best time to do this estimation and we will again do it in April. We are spending four hours in the morning and two hours in the evening at Raj Bhawan. There



Offline classes resumed at Lucknow University on Monday. All students could not attend the classes due to Covid-19 protocols and they joined online. As many as 35 students were present in the class while 11 students attended the MA third semester class online

are four people involved in this work," she pointed out.

Kanaujia, who recently published a book on 'Birds of the Lucknow University,' said there are 61 bird species at Lucknow University. "This figure is good but not very good. This can be maintained

by making water bodies at the university. The maximum species of birds are in Kukrail forest, followed by Lucknow zoo," she pointed out.

"Out of the all the species, the ones which dominate are hornbills, tree pies and barbets. There are some trees at

Lucknow University which are over 100 years old and attract birds because the wood is old and birds can make a hole in it unlike new trees," she said.

These trees include pakad, bargad, peepul, semal, jackfruit, drumstick and kadam.

BSP, RLD back Bharat Bandh

Lucknow (PNS): Bahujan Samaj Party and Rashtriya Lok Dal have also come out in support of Tuesday's Bharat Bandh called by farmers protesting against the new farm laws.

BSP national president Mayawati wrote on Twitter on Monday that farmers were agitated all over the country for the withdrawal of three new laws related to agriculture and their organisations had given a call for Bharat Bandh on December 8 and the BSP supports them. The BSP chief again appealed to the Centre to accept the demands of the farmers. RLD state president Masood Ahmad said his party workers and leaders would help farmers in all respects to make the bandh call a success on Tuesday.

He said the Central government had deceived the annadatas (farmers) by passing the anti-farmers laws.

Other opposition parties including Congress, Samajwadi Party, Aam Aadmi Party are also supporting the Bharat Bandh call.

Banks asked to give loans to SC/ST, woman entrepreneurs

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

STAND-UP INDIA SCHEME

In a bid to uplift the Dalits, backwards and underprivileged people in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has implemented the Stand-up India Scheme in the state.

"The chief minister has instructed every bank to provide loans to at least one SC/ST and one woman entrepreneur under the Stand-up India Scheme. This initiative will benefit 36,000 SC/ST and woman entrepreneurs of the state," the government officials said.

UP stands first in the Stand-up India Scheme in the country. Till June 2020, loans worth Rs 2,386 crore were approved on 11,789 applications and a sum of Rs 1256 crore was also released.

"With this scheme, young entre-

preneurs are not only realising their dreams but are also changing the image of the state," the official said.

Lucknow, Kanpur Nagar, Agra, Varanasi, Ghaziabad, Meerut, Prayagraj, Gorakhpur, Gautam Buddha Nagar and Bareilly are among the top ten districts in the state under the Stand-up India Scheme. The highest amount of Rs 195 crore has been approved to 939 applications in Lucknow, out of which Rs 117 crore has already been released.

Under the Stand-up India Scheme, 12,196 applications in Uttar Pradesh, 9,235 in Tamil Nadu, 7,154 in Maharashtra, 6,647 in Gujarat, 5,929 in West Bengal, 5,780 in

Telangana, 5,491 in Andhra Pradesh, 5,484 in Karnataka, 4,569 in Rajasthan and 3,905 in Madhya Pradesh have been approved.

Under the Stand-up India Scheme launched by the Central government in 2016, loans ranging from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 1 crore are given at lower interest rates to businessmen belonging to SC/ST, Backward Classes and Women. Income tax exemption is also allowed for the first three years during the commencement of business. This is followed by an interest rate of 3 percent with the base rate, which cannot exceed the tenure premium. To repay this debt, a time of seven years is given to the person.

MoU signed to promote river tourism in UP

Lucknow (PNS): The Uttar Pradesh Tourism department on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) to promote and encourage tourism industry by developing river tourism in the state.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Chief Secretary Rajendra Kumar Tiwari regarding the operation of PAX vessel in Varanasi.

In his address, the chief secretary said that there was immense potential for tourism development in the state. He said there were many places of religious, cultural, historical and wildlife etc., and that was why UP was famous as an important tourist centre in the country and abroad due to the complete variety of tourist

attractions. The two RoPax vessels in Varanasi will be operated by the Tourism department. In this regard, the chief secretary gave directions to prepare an action plan to identify the immense possibilities of river tourism in the state and to increase the night stay of domestic and foreign tourists.

A presentation was also made to promote river tourism on the Sarayu river in Ayodhya and instructions were given to the Tourism department to make a package tour on Ayodhya. Dr Amita Prasad, Chairman of IWAI, said that with the aim to add river cruise tourism in future, the Inland Waterways Authority of India agreed to construct two jetties in Ayodhya and had requested the state government to mark the land for them.

Seven incubators approved under startup policy

Lucknow (PNS): The policy implementation unit for Startup Policy 2020, chaired by Additional Chief Secretary (IT & Electronics) Alok Kumar has approved the proposal of setting up 7 startup incubators in the state in a meeting held at Lok Bhawan on Monday. These incubators will act as the first contact for startup. The startup policy, which was launched in July, promises to create a robust ecosystem for startups to grow and nurture the ideas by setting up more than 100 incubators in the state, at least one in each district of Uttar Pradesh. These incubators will work under a hub and spoke model to provide primary information and guidance to startups and recommend different startups for the incentives given by the state government under the new policy.

Notice Inviting e-Tender
No. SSA/Esst/EPB -II/356/2020/3217 Date: 05.12.2020
Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Shiksha) invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed exercise book manufacturers for the supply of Evaluation and Practice Books for class -I & II (Four Line and Square Line).
To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.
The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

Sd/-Executive Director,
SSA, Assam
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

Janasanyog No. CF/3091/20

Rampur's Mumtaz park renamed

Lucknow (PNS): In another setback to Samajwadi Party MP Mohammad Azam Khan, a park in Rampur city named after his father Mumtaz Khan has been renamed as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Park.

The renaming ceremony was inaugurated by Union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Monday.

Addressing the gathering, Naqvi said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had brought revolutionary changes in India's political sphere, and this transformation had jolted those who considered politics their "dynastic property". He said a politician's identity could not remain dependent on a "family cradle" and only diligence and hard work could establish a person in the field of politics. He said

now politics was not about "khandani zamindari" (family fiefdom) but about serving the people. "The legacy of 'champions of dynasty' is shrinking due to the revolutionary change in the political work culture brought by Prime Minister Narendra Modi," Naqvi said in an apparent swipe at the Congress' Nehru-Gandhi family.

Naqvi also inaugurated Maulana Imtiyaz Arshi Khan Gate near the Raza Inter College, unveiled a statue of Mahatma Gandhi relocated inside the Gandhi Samadhi; inaugurated the Sahibzada Colonel Yunus Ali Khan Gate and the Major Abdul Rafe Khan Gate near the Gandhi Samadhi and also inaugurated the Atal Park in Panvadiya.

Foundation to propagate Vajpayee's ideas, legacy

Lucknow (PNS): An organisation named after former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee will work for propagating the ideas and legacy of Vajpayee, the five-term MP from Lucknow. UP Law Minister and MLA from Lucknow Central Brajesh Pathak said here on Monday that Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Foundation will be set up.

Pathak said the foundation would work for propagating the ideology of the former prime minister in every nook and corner of the country.

He said the foundation would also work for promoting talent among youth in different spheres like theatre and literature. He said every year, on the eve of the birth anniversary of the prime minister on December 24, a Kavya Sandhya would be organised. He said seminars were also proposed to be organised on the legacy and the personality of the former prime minister and research projects were also proposed to be initiated in universities and degree colleges. He said this year on the eve of the birth anniversary of Vajpayee, Kavya Sandhya would be organised on December 24.

Notice Inviting e-Tender
No. SSA/Esst/EWB/370/2020/3222 Date: 05.12.2020
Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission (Samagra Shiksha), Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed Manufacturer of Exercise Book for supply of Evaluation Workbook LP and UP.
To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.
The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

Sd/-Executive Director,
SSA, Assam
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

Janasanyog No. CF/3094/20

SP workers protesting against farm laws held in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Several Samajwadi Party (SP) workers were arrested when they were protesting against the stopping of party's president and former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav in state capital while the latter was trying to go to Kannauj. After getting the news of detention of party's chief, the SP workers reached the district headquarters and raised strong voices against the Central and state governments and demanded immediate withdrawal of three farm laws.

Led by city chief Vishnu Sharma when the SP workers started raising voices against the state government, about two dozen workers including senior leaders and ex-corporator Dr OP Singh, corporator Haroon Ansari, Varun Singh, Satya Prakash Sonu, Abdul Kalam and chief of local unit of women's wing Puja Yadav were arrested. The party workers were also arrested at different parts of the district including at Chowk and other police stations.

Earlier, when former UP Minister Surendra Patel and ex-MLA Mahendra Patel, along with the party workers were trying to go to attend the proposed Kisan Rally in Kannauj, they were stopped and house arrested at their residence at Bhirbhanpur (Raja Talab) under Rohania police station. On the occasion, the security forces and the SP supporters had some altercation.



SP workers being arrested while protesting against farm laws in Varanasi on Monday

Pioneer

Meanwhile, in protest against the farm laws, a group of SP workers took out a procession from Ashapur crossing. Seeing the cops ready to stop their procession, they had adopted different routes and reached the district headquarters led by Vishnu Sharma. The others who were also present were Jitendra Yadav and Puja Yadav.

Meanwhile, a group of Congress workers reached Chanduwa Satti and other places and appealed to vegetable sellers to give their full support to proposed 'Bharat Bandh' on Tuesday. They also pasted posters in support of their demands. Many other opposition parties and associations of the traders have also

extended their support to the proposed Bharat Bandh. Besides, at a virtual discussion organised under the auspices of Pandit Kamlapati Tripathi Foundation, senior social activists like Prof Mahesh Vikram Singh, Vallabhacharya Pandey and Aflatoon expressed their serious concern over the rigid attitude of the Central Government towards the ongoing peaceful agitation of the farmers. They also strongly condemned the government for using water cannons against the agitators during these days of winter and lathicharging the farmers while they tried to reach the national capital.

They said that during 12 days long agitation, five meet-

ings with the farmers were convened but all of them failed to bring any fruitful result. Annoyed over the attitude of government, the farmers have given a call of bandh, they added, appealing to all the parties and social organisations to make the proposed bandh a grand success. Among others who also participated in the discussion were former state Congress chief Vijay Shankar Pandey, ex-president of UPCC (IT Cell) Baij Nath Singh, Shailendra Singh, Bhupendra Pratap Singh, Pramod Srivastava, Ashok Pandey, Vinod Singh, Puneet Mishra, Vipin Mehta, Mohammed Arshad and Subhash Ram.

Bodies of 3 drowned youths fished out

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Almost after 20 hours, the bodies of three drowned youths were fished out by evening on Monday. The teams of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), boatmen and divers continued their operation to search the body of another youth who is also said to be missing since the boat tragedy. Meanwhile, the police detained the boatman on which the youths were boarded.

It is pointed out that five friends had gone across the river late afternoon on Sunday to enjoy the reunion party as they had met after five years. These youths had studied in

Udai Pratap Public Inter College together. After returning from across the river, the boat capsized in the evening in the river in front of Bhadaini Ghat when they were returning with others boarded on it as the river water entered the boat.

When they raised an alarm, the boatmen and divers present at ghats on that time, lent their help and succeeded in rescuing three friends and four others boarded on the boat. After getting information, the police and NDRF personnel also reached the site and launched a search operation but in vain and they have to stop the operation at night. One of the rescued youths, Vishal Sonkar informed the police

that the boatman Manoj Sahani had allowed six other youths to board on boat despite being denied by them for the same. It was said that there were 11 persons boarded on the boat including these five friends among them two were girls.

The NDRF teams, boatmen and divers again launched a search operation on Monday morning and succeeded in fishing out one youth of five friends identified as Vishal Singh, resident of Lakshmanpur in Bhojpur area afternoon. The NDRF personnel also succeeded in fishing out the body of another youth identified as Junaid of Bajardiha. It was said that Junaid had gone to across the

river with his friend Shanwaj and both were also boarded on the same boat. During the operation, the body of Shanwaj was also fished out in the evening. With this, the bodies of three youths were fished out. But a youth Abhishek Maurya, one of five friends, was still missing. The NDRF teams along with boatmen and divers continued their operation to search him. The missing of some others was also feared. Meanwhile, the police detained the boatman Manoj Sahani who claimed that five friends had not gone across the river on his boat and added that he had allowed boarding on the boat when they requested to drop at Tusli Ghat.

GM flags off cycle rally at BLW

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A cycle rally 'Cyclothon' was organised under the 'Fit India' campaign under the auspices of the Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) Sports Board on Monday in response to the call given by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The cycle rally was flagged off by General Manager (GM) Anjali Goyal.

In this cycle rally, Principal Chief Materials Manager and president of BLW SA DS Jangpangi, BLW SA general secretary and Principal Chief Personnel Officer PK Singh, along with a large number of other departmental officers, employees, Scouts / Guides, Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel and others participated. This cycle rally started from Golf Course following the COVID-19 guidelines and after passing through many areas in BLW premises culminated at



GM Anjali Goyal flagging off a cycle rally at BLW in Varanasi on Monday

Pioneer

Cinema Hall complex. Meanwhile, rich tributes were paid to Bharat Ratna Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar on his Mahaparinirvana Diwas (death anniversary) at a brief function held at the Administrative Building. Though the anniversary was on Sunday but due to holiday the function was held on Monday. On the occasion, GM Anjali Goyal lit the lamp to mark the inauguration of the

programme. She offered floral tributes to Baba Saheb at his portrait. Then the other officers and employees of BLW also offered tributes.

JANMOTSAV OF KAL BHAIKAV CELEBRATED: The rush of devotees was seen at Kal Bhaiav temple on the auspicious occasion of Bhaiav Astmi here on Monday when they celebrated the Janmotsav (birthday) of Lord Kal Bhaiav

by cutting cake a big size of cake made of five dry-fruits and other items. Throughout the day, the rush of devotees was also seen at this famous temple to have a 'darshan' of the Almighty, known as 'Kashi Ke Kotwal' and offered prayer right from early morning to the night hours.

According to the members of organising committee, they have been celebrating the Janmotsav of Baba Kal Bhaiav for last 14 years and heavy cake was cut and later on, prasad was distributed among devotees after the Aarti of Baba at noon. The temple was decorated on the occasion.

STREET PLAYS STAGED: Angry with the rising cases of violence against women at home and working place as well, the artistes associated with Prena Kala Manch on Monday staged street plays in rural areas to aware women about domestic violence.

96 new Covid cases in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 96 new COVID-19 patients have been detected in the district, increasing the total number of cases to 19,768 on Monday. The day saw two more deaths, increasing the toll to 322. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 106 and out of them, 102 have been recovered from home isolation, while four from the hospitals, increasing the number to 15,817 and 2,879 respectively. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 18,696, leaving 750 active cases. The recovery rate is 94.57 per cent, while the mor-

ality rate is 1.62 per cent.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh has informed that in the first report of the day, 67 positive patients were found out of 3,471 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 4,47,422 and the results of 3,278 are awaited. Out of them, 4,27,683 were negative, while 19,739 positive. The total number of samples collected was 4,67,735. Earlier, two females aged 75 and 44 from Karaundi and Newada respectively succumbed to COVID-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU). With the addition of two new red zones, the total number of

hotspots has increased to 2,535 including 223 red zones. Four green zones have been converted into red zones again. There are 2,312 green zones with three new ones.

Meanwhile, amidst the good news being received about the invention of vaccine for COVID-19 soon, the cases in many parts have started increasing, once again, due to changing weather conditions in this belt of Purvanchal (eastern UP) comprising 10 districts of three divisions. On Sunday, 167 cases were found which included 69 in Varanasi, 17 each in Bhadohi and Mirzapur, 15 in Ballia, 11 in Jaunpur, nine in Chandauli, eight each in

Sonbhadra and Mau, seven in Azamgarh and six in Ghazipur. The total number of cases has increased to 60,943 but the recovery rate has also improved sharply as it is 94.84 %. The maximum cases are in Varanasi division (35,035) followed by Azamgarh (15,509) and Vindhyachal (10,059) but the best recovery rate is in Azamgarh (96.70%) followed by Varanasi (95.07%) and Vindhyachal (94.40%). The total number of death toll has increased to 911 and the mortality rate is 1.49% with highest in Varanasi 1.53% (538 deaths) followed by Azamgarh 1.46% (227) and Vindhyachal 1.45% (146).

53 more test positive in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

A total of 53 new corona patients were reported within the last 24 hours including Assistant Bank Manager of Union Bank of India located at Johnstonganj, Senior Accountant of AG Office, head constable of CRPF, on Sunday, while the number of infection-free was 95. Also, a 68-year-old man resident of Gaus Nagar Kareli has also died. Dr Rishi Sahai, the Nodal Officer of

Corona confirmed this.

Dr Sahai said that with the addition of 53 new patients, the total number of corona patients in the district has increased to 26,982. However, 25,905 people have been cured. Out of this, home isolation of 19,402 people has been completed. Home isolation of 80 people has been completed on Sunday too. Apart from this, 15 people have been discharged from SRN, Beli and private hospitals. Till Sunday evening 81

patients were admitted in these hospitals whereas, 645 people are in home isolation. The total number of active cases is 726.

The corona test was conducted by 4,174 people on Sunday. Of them, 2,297 people tested through antigen tests, 1,705 by RT-PCR, 57 by private labs and 115 Truenat. Union Bank's Assistant Manager, CRPF head constable, railway TT, fire service driver, AG office senior accountant, High

Court advocate, High Court review officer have been found to be infected.

In addition, a 68-year-old man from Gaus Nagar has died due to a deadly virus. According to the Health department report, he was on dialysis for a year. He got his corona test conducted through antigen in the private hospital where he was found positive in the test. After this he was shifted to SRN Hospital. He died on Sunday.

Man kills wife on suspicion

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

In a heart-rending incident, a husband killed his wife after hitting her with a heavy object on her head over an issue of doubt. The incident took place in Katra area in the district late on Sunday night. However, the husband was arrested soon after the accident.

During interrogation, the nabbed husband informed the police that he used to have suspicion over behaviour of her wife. This often led to a fallout between the couple. Police said that the accused was also jobless and as a result of which he was frustrated. Before committing the murder, he had consumed liquor. After this, he went home and attacked his wife.

Madhu (48), a resident of Katra was a Class IV employee in the women's hostel. Husband Umesh used to run a rickshaw till lockdown. He had been sitting in the house since March. There was a fight between Madhu and

Umesh over some trivial issues on Sunday evening. Umesh walked out of the house. He drank heavily and thereafter he returned home and attacked Madhu with a rod.

Madhu had received head injuries due to rod's blows and she fell unconscious. By then, the neighbours living next door had also gathered the spot. Madhu was immediately rushed to the hospital, but she died soon after.

On receipt of information, Inspector Colonelganj Dixit reached the spot and reviewed the situation. He said that Madhu's body was sent for postmortem. Accused Umesh Kumar has been arrested. During questioning, he told the police that he suspected Madhu. There was a dispute in the family about over matters. The couple was issueless. Umesh was not doing any work for the last several months. Madhu used to earn livelihood for her family. That is why Umesh was frustrated.

Husband Umesh has been arrested for the murder of Madhu. He used to doubt Madhu. That is why he murdered his wife. Sudhir Kumar, Circle Officer Colonelganj added.

Umesh Kumar and Madhu were married 20 years ago. Umesh lived in Madhu's house in Katra. Madhu's parents and siblings have died. Her other relatives lived side by side. They said that they had a fight in the morning. When Madhu fell on the ground bleeding profusely, he himself had reached the hospital with others. When the doctors declared Madhu dead, he came back home from where the police nabbed him.

VILLAGER KILLED: A villager was brutally murdered with sharp edged weapon in Pandra village, under the trans-Yamuna area of Bara on Sunday night. The police could not resolve the mystery behind this ghastly killing in the absence of the clue as to who killed Vinod

Shukla alias Lallu, 55, and why.

The incident has sent shock waves down spine of the family members who were taken aback in the morning when they came to know about this murder. The villagers are in tension.

Forensic team and the sniffer dogs were pressed to resolve the murder mystery, but they also remained clueless. According to reports, family members of Vinod Shukla lived in the old house while he was staying at his nearby under-construction house to look after his ailing buffalo. The new house sans doors and windows. When Vinod's wife reached there with morning tea, she was shocked to see the body of her husband lying in a pool of blood. Her screams were so loud that the nearby residents got alarmed and reached the spot. The police were informed immediately, but the murder mystery still remains unresolved.

Passing out parade of RPF recruits held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The passing out parade of 2nd batch of 248 lady constable recruits of Railway Protection Force organised at zonal training centre Subedarganj on Monday in the gracious presence of Additional Director General, Railway Protection Force Dr Anoop Shrivastava.

On this occasion, a total of 248 lady constable recruits, including 19 of North Central Railway, 59 of Central Railway, 97 of Northern Railway, 2 of North Eastern Railway, 22 of North Western Railway, 47 of Western Railway and three of West Central Railway successfully completed nine month long rigorous training programme and formally became part of the Railway Protection Force by taking part in the passing out parade.

Additional Director General, Railway Protection Force Dr Anoop Shrivastava inspected the parade of lady recruits and took the salute. All



248 trainees were also sworn-in on the occasion. The commander of the parade was Anita Ola and led the passing out trainees in eight Platoons (Platoon-1 Commander - Trainee Mohini Yadav, Platoon-2 Commander-Trainee Sonia, Platoon-3 Commander - Trainee Khushboo, Platoon-4 Commander - Trainee Suman Kuntal, Platoon-5 Commander - Trainee K. Nirmala, Platoon-6 Commander- Trainee Madhu Kumari, Platoon-7

Commander- Trainee Seema Bandewar and Platoon-8 Commander - Trainee Chinu Nagar.

During the function organised at zonal training institute, ADG RPF also honoured trainees Nirmala, Sangeeta Natwaria, Priyanka Rana and Anita Ola for their outstanding performance in training programme. Speaking on this occasion, Additional Director General congratulated all trainees as well as officials of

RPF zonal training centre Subedarganj for successful conduct of training programme despite ongoing COVID-19 challenges. He also said that formal induction of these lady RPF personnel in protection force will strengthen security arrangements and women passengers will get a more secure travel environment.

Dr Srivastava wished successful future to all RPF recruits and motivated them to discharge their responsibilities sincerely.

Principal Chief Safety Commissioner North Central Railway Ravindra Verma, Divisional Railway Manager Prayagraj Mohit Chandra, Principal head of departments of North Central Railway, Principal zonal Railway Protection Force Training Centre Sanjay Pise and other officials were also present in this passing out function. The programme was conducted by RPF Inspector Suruchi Sharma and Inspector Anil Dubey.

City shelter homes lack facilities

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The Prayagraj city continues to grapple with severe cold but the Prayagraj Municipal Corporation (PMC) has failed to keep up. There were many temporary and permanent shelter homes in various parts of the city but they lacked facilities.

The Environmental engineer said, 'We are taking necessary steps for providing all kinds of amenities at the shelter homes. In fact, white-washing of some shelter homes is being undertaken. We have purchased about 100 mattresses and are in the process of buying another 200 blankets. This will soon be provided to the shelter homes.'

There are about 21 permanent and temporary shelter homes functioning in the city. Out of these, 11 are permanent shelter homes operational at Leader Road, Noorullah Road in front of Allahabad junction, Mundera Chungi, Lakar Mandi, Khulabad, Yamuna Bank Road, Baghambari Gaddi Road, Allahpur zonal office, Daraganj station, Daraganj ward office and Phaphamau. There are about 10 temporary shelter homes that have been set up including All Saints Cathedral in Civil Lines, PD Tandon Park, CMP Degree College, Heera Halwai, Laxmi Talkies, Sohbatiya Bagh, Teliarganj and Naini.

A reality check showed a lot needs to be done. The Leader Road Shelter home near the railway junction and Leader Bus Depot is enough representation of the condition of these homes. There is no sanitary staff to clean the home and its toilets. Pan-stains mark the walls of the two-tier structure. Tattered mattresses have been spread in the room.

Corporator of PMC Shiv Sewak Singh, said adequate arrangements should be made so that poor people can rest in temporary shelters.

With the start of December, the time for the pink cold is also gone. For the past few days, the city has been witnessing biting at night and light mist in the morning, but now fog will also increase. Fog is expected to increase with biting cold at the end of the week. On Saturday, the temperature in the city is expected to be a minimum of 11 degrees, while the maximum mercury can reach 28 degrees. The weather is expected to remain clear.

According to the Meteorological Department (IMD), there may be a severe winter this time in North India. Fog is expected to increase with biting cold. More cold wave is expected to occur. IMD said in its winter forecast for December to February that the minimum temperatures in north and

central India were likely to be below normal. Night temperatures may be below normal, while daytime temperatures are likely to be above normal. At the same time, the minimum temperature is expected to be above normal in the west coast and south India.

IMD said in its forecast, 'In the coming winter season (December to February), minimum temperatures are likely to be below normal in most sub-divisions of North, North-West, Central India and some sub-divisions of East India. Oceanographer and environmental expert Prof. Shailendra Roy said that the weather is expected to remain clear till the first week of December. There is no chance of rain. Sunshine can be seen during the day and biting cold at night.'

GAS PIPELINE TO BE LAID IN VILLAGES: Now the villages of Prayagraj will also be hi-tech. LPG will be supplied from pipes not only in the city but also in the villages. Preparations are also being done for this move. Pipeline will be laid in villages soon. Domestic gas will be supplied from house to house through these pipelines. When the villagers came to know about it, they had no bounds of happiness.

MLA Pratappur Haji Mohammed Mujtaba Siddiqui launched the said scheme in the Birkaji village of Phulpur

to deliver LPG from door to door through the pipeline. During this, the MLA said that the important scheme of the Central Government is starting in Phulpur. In this, LPG will be delivered to every household through a pipeline, in which consumers can use gas according to the requirement by installing meters. It has to be paid bill, which will be much cheaper than LPG gas with cylinders.

Local manager of the company Danish Rizvi, Deputy Manager Ashish Sharma, Sanjay Gautam etc. were present on the occasion.

Employees of the Adani Gas Private Limited Company said that the work of laying the pipeline will start soon. Few villages have been selected in the first phase. In the second and third phase, the scheme will be operational in all villages. People will have to take a connection for this. After this the company will carry the pipe to the house. There will not be any kind of danger from this move. This gas will be very economical.

The first phase of work will be started this month, which will be completed in about two months. In the first phase, the pipeline will be laid in half a dozen villages. Thereafter, pipes will be laid in about 50 villages. Then all the villages of Phulpur will be saturated with the plan.

SP workers take out procession against new farm laws; arrested

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Hundreds of Samajwadi Party workers were arrested for taking out a procession in violation of the prohibitory orders in place in the city.

The SP workers and leaders holding placards, posters and banners shouted anti-Narendra Modi government slogans as they marched, demanding that the “anti-farmer laws” be rolled back and the farmers be given minimum support price for cane, paddy and wheat. They were intercepted by the police at Green Park Stadium

The SP workers alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Party at the Centre was acting in Nazi pattern and demanded the unconditional release of the party president, Akhilesh Singh Yadav who stood up against the Draconian laws.

Addressing the party workers later, SP city president Imran said on the directive of the Centre and the state government, Akhilesh Yadav had been arrested and the party strongly condemned the autocratic and high-handed attitude of the government.

He warned the govern-

ment to immediately mend its anti-farmer and anti-people attitude or be ready to face a massive agitation.

He said if the strong arm tactics of the government continued, the farmers would be forced to withdraw completely from agriculture.

He said the farm marketing legislations had been prepared at the behest of the multinational companies as they were planning to force farmers to sell of their produce on throwaway prices so that they could be benefited.

Imran said today capitalism had become dominant and the government was trying to suppress the voice of the farmers. He said what could be more shameful was that the farmers and people of the country demanding their rights were being latched charged of fired at.

He said if the SP president was not released immediately, the party workers would take to violent means of protest.

Prominent among the leaders present were Samajwadi Yuvjan Sabha state president Arvind Giri, Abhishek Gupta, Subhash Dwivedi, Ajai Yadav, Varun Mishra and Abdul Moin Khan.

VHP & Bajrang Dal celebrate Shaurya Diwas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Under the aegis of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal, Shaurya Divas celebrations were organised with fanfare in the city on Sunday.

Speaking on the occasion, former district convenor of Bajrang Dal and VHP media incharge Satish Bajpai said, “We had been celebrating the event for the past 28 years. But the Shaurya Divas of this year becomes a special event as the construction of Ram Temple in Ayodhya has started. It would not have been possible had thousands of karsewaks not demolished the disputed Babri Mosque on December 6, 1992.”

Satish Bajpai was present on the Ram Janmabhoomi campus along with hundreds of party activists when the disputed structure was demolished.

Former national convenor of Bajrang Dal, Prakash



VHP leader Satish Bajpai speaking at Shaurya Diwas celebrations.

Sharma, was also extended a rousing welcome.

He was one of the 52 accused who faced trial for demolition of the dispute structure. All the accused were

acquitted by the court which pronounced its verdict on October 1 this year. He also addressed the meeting.

Prominent activists present in the programme included

Somnath Tewari, Virendra Singh, Rajesh Tripathi, Aditya Shukla, Chandra Shekhar Pandey, Manu Awasthi and Deepak Sharma (corporator).

Ganga Barrage area to witness development

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Raj Shekhar, while chairing the first meeting of Ganga Barrage Area Development Committee for the development of Ganga Barrage area on Monday, said the first and foremost benefit of the Ganga Barrage was that it had successfully diverted the mainstream towards Kanpur Nagar.

He said on the one hand the ghats had been revived and on the other, a special area had emerged which could developed as the new Kanpur and various departments had started working in the direction.

The divisional commissioner said the main development works to be taken up in this area included Lucknow and Mandhana link road, Botanical garden, Atal Ghat, Boat Club and link road between Barrage and Company Bagh.

He said an exclusive area had emerged which could be successfully developed as residential area, variance area on the banks, water sports and tourist development.

He said the special and main entry point to this new city had been constructed but it was observed that land sharks were encroaching upon the government land and plotting illegally and this need to be nipped in the bud before it was too late.

The divisional commissioner said it was the right time to ensure that the work was taken up seriously and meticulously so that it could be benefited through the various provisional plans of the state government and the Centre. He asked all the departments concerned to work in perfect coordination so that the benefits to these scheme could be availed of.

He said apart from this, the National Green Tribunal's directives need to be followed in the right earnest and all the illegal activities should be stopped with an iron hand.

The divisional commissioner said in the past meeting



Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar, chairing the first meeting of Ganga Barrage Area Development Committee at his camp office on Monday

of the Kanpur Development Authority, it had been decided that the Ganga Barrage area would be demarcated and named the Ganga Barrage Development Area. He advised that single window monitoring and a special committee be set up on priority.

Shekhar directed the Irrigation department to demarcate the area in the next 15 days and prepare the plan.

He asked the KDA VC, Irrigation department and the police to set up a special team and identify all the illegal activities going on and take legal action on top priority.

The divisional commissioner said all the schemes which had already been completed and the ones which were still proposed be compiled in a booklet form and the officials work out a plan for further development keeping in mind entertainment and tourism aspects.

He said the heavy vehicles, barring buses, be stopped on this route as they were damaging the barrage.

Prominent among those who took part in the meeting included the KDA Vice Chairman and secretary, Kanpur municipal commissioner, ADM (City) and ADM (Finance), district police chief and RTO.

‘AI becoming a significant part of man’s everyday life’

KANPUR (PNS): Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, Prof Sandeep Shukla while addressing an induction-cum-orientation session at Allen House Institute of Technology on Monday said in the present times the amount of data that was generated by both humans and machines far outpaced humans’ ability to absorb, interpret and make complex decisions based on that data. He said artificial intelligence formed the basis for all computer learning and

was the future of all complex decision-making. He said artificial intelligence (AI) was no longer just contained in science fiction films but it was increasingly becoming a significant part of our everyday lives.

He said it was expected that the growth of AI in education would be massive. He said it could help automate grading and with AI, the role of grader could be passed along. He added that current AI technology was already able to automate grading of multiple choice materials, but as AI developed and became more intelligent, it was expected that the technology would one day be able to grade more than standardised assessments.

Discussing teaching, he said in addition AI would be providing support for teachers in other ways. He said some of the routine tasks could be managed by AI, as well as communication with students like one college professor successfully using an AI chatbot to communicate with students as

a teaching assistant all semester without students knowing they were not talking to a human. He said in future the students would have an AI lifelong learning companion. He said the next generation students would grow up with an AI companion that know their personal history and school history and therefore, it would know each student's individual strengths and weaknesses. He said AI will also be able to help students with special needs by adapting materials to lead them

65 more test positive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar reported 65 more coronavirus positive cases on Monday evening. Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said that 65 more people had tested positive for coronavirus infection between Sunday evening and Monday evening taking the tally of confirmed cases to 31,147 cases. He said that no patient was discharged from hospital. He said two COVID-19 deaths in the city were reported till Monday evening keeping the death toll to 795. The CMO said at present 903 active cases were undergoing treatment. Dr Mishra said 3990 samples were sent for testing in the city.

IMA-K condemns ‘khichdification’ of medicine systems

KANPUR (PNS): The Indian Medical Association's Kanpur branch has expressed concern over the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Central government trying to force upon mixopathy and khichdification and has decided to vociferously protest this move.

The protest move will be part of the nation-wide movement form Tuesday.

The IMA has decided that from December 11 onward, the medical fraternity would keep the non-essential and non-Covid services paralysed all over the country.

The IMA-K said in Kanpur Nagar, all the doctors would keep the clinics, pathologies, nursing homes and hospitals closed between 12.00 noon and 2.00 pm in protest against the Centre's move..

Addressing press persons, IMA-K president Dr Neelam Mishra and secretary Dinesh Sachan said from times immemorial, the pattern of allopathic mode of treatment had been saving millions of lives and it was based on extensive research work.

They said the allopathic treatment was based on fact and it was a fact that allopathic medicines provides immediate relief as soon as consumed. They said the IMA supported this mode of treatment and condemned the placebo treatment.

The IMA-K leaders said this mode of treatment had been successfully producing new effective medicines and vaccines after deep research.

They said even the COVID-19 vaccine which had hit the markets were meticulous research of doctors and there was no doubt that allopathic treatment was successful and valid across the whole world and this was on account of being genuine and effective.

They said the government move to replace allopathy with mixopathy would pose a big threat to human life and thus the IMA strongly condemned the khichdification and warns that if the demands were not met with, they would be forced to give further momentum to their agitation.

They hoped the government would reconsider its stand.

Dr Mishra said treatment could not be the privilege of the rich and thus it had to be kept genuine and affordable. She said on account of the expertise in medical science and affordability, India had emerged as the best destination for medical tourism.

She said thus in the current mode of treatment, qualitative improvement and uplift be introduced.

Those present included Dr SK Mishra, Dr Archana Bhadauria, Dr Pravin Katiyar and many more.

45-yr-old woman’s body found

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

The body of a 45-year-old woman, Sunaina Devi, wife of Moti Prajapati, a resident of Rupaudha village under Adalhaat police station, was found along the railway track near Narainpur market on Sunday. The police of Narainpur outpost reached the spot and took the body of the deceased into custody for completing the legal formalities. In another incident, Sandeep (25), a resident of Judai village under Ahraura police station, hanged himself from the ceiling in a rented house in Hajipur village under Adalhaat police station on Sunday. On getting information the police reached the spot, broke the door, recovered the body, took it into custody, completed the legal formalities and informed his family. Meanwhile another report said that an unknown aged 85-year-old man was found dead in Dabak village under Jamalpur police station on Sunday. On being informed the police reached the spot, took the body into custody for completing the legal formalities and trying to ascertain the identity of the deceased.

ELECTROCUTED: Rudra Prasad (42), son of late Seeta Ram, a resident of Siddhi village under Padari police station, was electrocuted when he was operating his mono block pump on Saturday. On being informed the police reached the spot and took the body into custody for completing the legal formalities. Meanwhile, Dharmendra (30), son of late Dukhran, a resident of Hardi Mishra village under Lalganj police station, lost his life in Harihara village on Mirzapur- Sonbhadra road under Madihan police station when he fell down from his tractor on Saturday. The police reached the spot and

took the body into custody for completing the legal formalities.

INSPECTED: DM Susheel Kumar Patel has directed the district horticulture officer to promote poly house, farming of dragon fruit and banana to enhance the income of farmers. Such direction was given by the DM during the inspection of a poly house located at Nuanav village under city block on Sunday. The DM saw the cucumber in bunches there. About dragon fruit, owner of the farm house, Gyan Prakash Dubey, said that it ensured earning for 20-25 years and its farming was more lucrative than traditional one. During the visit of the DM Yogendra Singh, a progressive farmer of Khanpur village under Seekhad block, demonstrated a different type of moringa which not only was useful for health but also a means to earn a lot. The DM told the farmers to train others too. He directed the DHO to make the farmers aware about such modern type of farming and provide government facilities.

CERTIFICATES DISTRIBUTED: Chairman Nagar Palika Parishad (NPP) Manoj Jaiswal stressed on sportsman spirit in games. These views were expressed by him during the concluding ceremony of taekwondo tournament organised at the temple of Bawanbeer located near Ojhala bridge in the city on Sunday. Speaking as the chief guest he urged the players to work hard and make not only their family but the nation proud too. He promised the organisers to provide the kit to the players and assured to make available the place for proper training. The function concluded with the distribution of the certificates to the participants who had secured places in the tournament.

Kolkata-Ghazipur City weekly spl from Dec 17

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration for the convenience of passengers will run two pairs of additional special trains. All coaches in these trains will be of reserved category and passengers travelling in them will have to follow the Covid-19 guidelines, CPRO PK Singh said.

The 03125 Kolkata-Ghazipur City weekly special train will from December 17 until further order leave Kolkata at 22.45 hrs every Thursday, the next day Bardhaman at 00.06 hrs, Durgapur at 00.58 hrs, Asansol at 01.36 hrs, Dhanbad at 02.55 hrs, Gaya at 06.00 hrs, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Jn at 09.00 hrs, Varanasi at 10.30 hrs and reach Ghazipur City at 12.25 hrs. During the return journey the 03126 Ghazipur City-Kolkata weekly special from December 18 till further order every Friday leave Ghazipur City at 23.20 hrs, the second day Varanasi at 01.10 hrs, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Jn at 02.35 hrs, Gaya at 04.50 hrs, Dhanbad at 08.45 hrs, Asansol at 09.59 hrs, Durgapur at 10.27 hrs, Bardhaman at 11.23 hrs and reach Kolkata at 13.05 hrs. A total of 19 coaches, includ-

ing two of generator-cum-luggage van, six of general second, seven of sleeper and three of AC third and one of AC second class will be attached in the rake composition of this train. Meanwhile the 03121 Kolkata-Ghazipur City weekly special will from December 13 till further order every Sunday leave Kolkata at 20.05 hrs, Durgapur at 22.13 hrs, Asansol at 22.49 hrs, Madhupur at 23.57 hrs, on the second day Jasidih at 00.24 hrs, Hajha at 01.50 hrs, Kiul at 02.35 hrs, Hathidah at 03.02 hrs, Bakhtiyarpur at 03.52 hrs, Patna at 05.05 hrs, Pataliputra at 05.45 hrs, Dighwara at 06.37 hrs, Chhapra at 07.45 hrs, Ballia at 08.50 hrs and will reach Ghazipur City at 10.30 hrs. During the return journey, 03122 Ghazipur City-Kolkata weekly special will from December 14 till further order leave Ghazipur City every Monday at 13.55 hrs, Ballia at 14.55 hrs, Chhapra at 16.50 hrs, Dighwara at 17.43 hrs, Pataliputra at 19.25 hrs, Patna at 20.05 hrs, Bakhtiyarpur at 20.57 hrs, Hathidah at 21.36 hrs, Kiul at 22.15 hrs, Hajha at 23.45 hrs, the second day Jasidih at 00.17 hrs, Madhupur at 00.44 hrs, Asansol at 02.01 hrs, Durgapur at 02.31 hrs and reach Kolkata at 05.15 hrs. A total of 19 coaches will be attached in the train.

Timings of special trains revised

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration has revised the timings of special trains being run for the convenience of passengers as per the new timetable. As a result the following special trains are being run as per the revised time. Therefore, the passengers are requested to know about the revised timetable of the trains at the time of reservation or before travelling in order to avoid inconvenience. All coaches in the trains will be of reserved category and passengers travelling in them will have to follow the Covid-19 guidelines, CPRO PK Singh said.

SECUNDERABAD-DANAPUR SPL: The 02791 Secunderabad-Danapur daily special according to the revised schedule from December 5 will leave Secunderabad at 09.25 hrs, Kazipet at 11.27 hrs, Peddapalli at 12.28 hrs, Ramagundam at 12.40 hrs, Manchiryal at 12.55 hrs, Bellampalli at 13.10 hrs, Sirpur Kagaznagar at 13.40 hrs, Balharshah at 15.20 hrs, Chandrapur at 15.40 hrs, Sevagram at 17.07 hrs, Nagpur at 18.25 hrs, Katol at 19.15 hrs, Betul at 21.10 hrs, Ghoradongri at 21.51 hrs, Itarsi at 23.45 hrs, on the second day Jabalpur at 03.15 hrs, Katni at 04.35 hrs, Satna at 06.00 hrs, Prayagraj Junction at 10.20 hrs, Prayagraj Rambagh at 10.37 hrs, Gyanpur Road at 11.54 hrs, Bhulanpur at 12.50 hrs, Varanasi at 13.40 hrs, Pt Deendayal Upadhyay Jn at 15.00 hrs, Dildarnagar at 15.48 hrs, Buxar at 16.15 hrs, Ara at 17.00 hrs and reach Danapur at 18.00 hrs. During the return journey 02792 Danapur-Secunderabad daily special will from December 7 leave Danapur at 12.15 hrs, Ara at 12.47 hrs, Buxar at 13.40 hrs, Dildarnagar at 14.07 hrs, Pt Deendayal Upadhyay Jn at 15.55 hrs, Varanasi at 17.00 hrs, Bhulanpur at 17.14 hrs, Gyanpur Road at 17.58 hrs, Prayagraj Rambagh at 19.28 hrs, Prayagraj Jn at 20.05 hrs, Satna at 23.20 hrs, the second day Katni at 00.45 hrs, Jabalpur at 02.15 hrs, Itarsi at 05.50 hrs, Ghoradongri at 06.50 hrs, Betul at 07.34 hrs, Nagpur at 11.05 hrs, Sevagram at 12.05 hrs, Chandrapur at 13.33 hrs, Balharshah at 15.05 hrs, Sirpur Kagaznagar at 15.52 hrs, Bellampalli at 16.21 hrs, Manchiryal at 16.42 hrs, Ramagundam at 16.59 hrs, Peddapalli at 17.15 hrs, Kazipet at 18.25 hrs and reach Secunderabad at 21.30 hrs. Currently in the rake composition of this train a total of 24 coaches, including two of SLR, two of general sec-

ond class, 13 of sleeper, four of AC IIIrd, two of AC IInd and one of pantry car, are being attached. In 02791 Secunderabad-Danapur special from December 10 from Secunderabad and in 02792 Danapur-Secunderabad special from Danapur from December 12 a total of 22 coaches, one of generator-cum-luggage van, two of general IInd class, 11 of sleeper and four of AC IIIrd, two of AC IInd, one pantry car and one coach of SLRD will be attached.

SURAT-CHHAPRA SPL: The 09045 Surat-Chhapra special as per the revised time table December 2 will leave Surat at 10.10 hrs, Udhna at 10.13 hrs, Vyara at 11.01 hrs, Navapur at 11.36 hrs, Nandurbar at 12.35 hrs, Dondaicha at 13.19 hrs, Sindkheda at 13.27 hrs, Amalner at 14.06 hrs, Jalgaon at 15.15 hrs, Bhusaval at 15.45 hrs, Raver at 16.25 hrs, Burhanpur at 16.40 hrs, Khandwa at 17.50 hrs, Harda at 19.04 hrs, Itarsi at 20.25 hrs, Pipariya at 21.25 hrs, Jabalpur on second day at 00.20 hrs, Katni at 01.55 hrs, Satna at 03.30 hrs, Manikpur at 04.55 hrs, Shankargarh at 05.50 hrs, Prayagraj Chheoki at 06.40 hrs, Vindhychal at 07.35 hrs, Mirzapur at 07.50 hrs, Chunar at 08.22 hrs, Kashi at 10.23 hrs, Varanasi at 10.50 hrs, Jaunpur at 11.52 hrs, Shahganj at 13.05 hrs, Azamgarh at 13.57 hrs, Muhammadabad at 14.17 hrs, Mau at 14.50 hrs, Rasra at 15.31 hrs, Ballia at 16.25 hrs, Suraimanpur at 16.59 hrs and reach Chhapra at 18.35 hrs. During the return journey 09046 Chhapra-Surat special from December 6 will leave Chhapra at 09.00 hrs, Suraimanpur at 09.36 hrs, Ballia at 10.25 hrs, Rasra at 11.07 hrs, Mau at 11.50 hrs, Muhammadabad at 12.11 hrs, Azamgarh at 12.36 hrs, Shahganj at 14.00 hrs, Jaunpur at 14.35 hrs, Varanasi at 16.35 hrs, Kashi at 16.45 hrs, Chunar at 17.00 hrs, Mirzapur at 17.28 hrs, Vindhychal at 17.42 hrs, Prayagraj Chheoki at 19.05 hrs, Shankargarh at 19.44 hrs, Manikpur at 21.15 hrs, Satna at 22.20 hrs, Katni at 23.40 hrs, Jabalpur on second day at 01.15 hrs, Pipariya at 03.20 hrs, Itarsi at 05.00 hrs, Harda at 05.54 hrs, Khandwa at 07.52 hrs, Burhanpur at 08.45 hrs, Raver at 09.05 hrs, Bhusaval at 09.55 hrs, Jalgaon at 10.35 hrs, Amalner at 11.40 hrs, Sindkheda at 12.17 hrs, Dondaicha at 12.36 hrs, Nandurbar at 13.17 hrs, Nawapur at 14.04 hrs, Vyara at 14.42 hrs, Udhna at 15.41 hrs and reach Surat at 16.10 hrs.

CEPC convenes meeting with exporters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC) convened a meeting with prominent member-exporters through video-conferencing recently. It was attended by Prof Rakesh Mohan Joshi, project leader, and Dr Pooja Lakhanpal, Associate Professor, IIFT. CEPC Chairman Siddh Nath Singh, second vice-chairman, CEPC Umer Hameed, members, COA, CEPC, Umesh Kumar Gupta, Sandeep Kataria, Husain Jafar Husaini, Sanjay Gupta and Executive Director, CEPC, Sanjay Kumar, attended the meeting. Prominent industry representatives i.e. Vinay Kapoor, Aslam Mahboob, Rajkumar Bothra, VP Gupta and Alpa Mewawala were also present in it. In his opening remarks Chairman Siddh

Nath Singh said after Covid-19 the business scenario has totally changed and we have to maintain a balance between the virtual and physical activities for proper growth of the industry. He said handmade carpet industry is rural-based cottage industry which is highly labour intensive and due to the special nature the requirements are to remove the restriction of developed and non-developed countries for providing hospitality to buyers, to increase the limit of participation of members in overseas activities from three times to five, to increase the grant on overseas publicity to exporters from present five per cent to 20 per cent, government should support the industry for sending small delegation consisting of three to five members for evaluating and exploring the potential of new markets etc. Some members requested for special funding for preparing a detailed documentary on manufacturing process to educate the end consumers and its telecast in overseas market, grant/subsidy on freight of exhibition goods and grant/ subsidy on e-commerce. Prof/Rakesh Mohan Joshi and Dr Pooja Lakhanpal requested the members to submit their suggestions in the questionnaire at the earliest to enable them to submit their recommendations to the government. Siddh Nath Singh requested the members for support and cooperation in submitting their suggestion to the Council on testing facilities in Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT), Bhadohi, and suggestions for the new five-year Foreign Trade Policy.

‘No need to change CRPF khaki uniform’



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Confederation of Ex Paramilitary Force Welfare Association has opposed the proposed change in Khaki uniform of the CRPF and demanded that Military Service Pay be accorded besides pension restoration for the paramilitary personnel.

General Secretary of the Confederation Ranbir Singh asserted that the combat dress of the jawans is already there for those deployed in the Naxal-hit States, Jammu and Kashmir, the Northeast and the men even use such uniform in the national Capital. Even the CRPF DG is often seen in com-

bat uniform, Singh stressed. The khaki has given an identity to the paramilitary personnel on par with the military and there is no point in abandoning it, he said.

"Instead of changing the dress code, the CRPF DG being the chairman of Welfare and Rehabilitation Board (WARB) should push for restoration of pension for the paramilitary personnel, send a proposal for relaxation in GST for Central Police Canteen (CPC) and paramilitary service pay on the lines of military service pay," he said.

Singh recalled that it was the Khaki uniform which saved Parliament from the terror

attack on December 13 in 2001 but as a reward the Government withdrew the pension of the paramilitary forces in 2004.

"Despite being chairman of WARB, DG, CRPF has not held any meeting with the ex paramilitary personnel. In this scenario, shouldn't WARB be disbanded as it is only proving to be a white elephant," he stressed, adding that the Confederation representatives met the CRPF DG twice but no action has been taken on the issues flagged by it.

The Confederation has also planned a seminar here on December 13 to canvass support for these issues.

Don't panic if you have Covid like symptoms: Study

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

In case you are suffering from a single or all of Covid-19 symptoms as specified by the Government, don't panic. For, you might not be infected with virus despite showing Covid-19 symptoms—fever, general weakness, cough, sore throat, breathlessness, headache and loss of smell and taste—as a team of doctors from Safdarjung Hospital & VMMC in Delhi has found after conducting a study on such patients.

They, however, said that those who are old aged, having work profile like health care workers and having history of contact with positive patients were more likely to be infected with the virulent virus.

In their study, the health experts observed that there is no significant difference in symptoms of Covid-19 positive patients when compared with those who reported negative results after RT PCR test was conducted on them.

"Our study has revealed that Covid-19 symptoms do not indicate that the person is suffering with the disease. Its only after the RTPCR test, that one can conclude about the disease," said lead author of the study, Dr Jugal Kishore, Director Professor and Head, Department of Community Medicine, VMMC and Safdarjung Hospital.

He, however, said that only at an older age, work profile like health care workers and history of contact with positive patients were significantly more



associated with RT PCR positive patients.

The study published in the Epidemiology International journal found that majority of symptoms were not predictors of Covid-19 and only occupations and history of contact remained significant risk factors of the disease in multivariate analysis. The study also underlines the need for conducting test even in long run and that public should not on their own start taking medicines.

The study was conducted among the patients admitted in Covid-19 wards or visiting the hospital for testing of SARS CoV-2 infection. Contact data of test results was collected from the medical record and detailed information was collected through telephone calls. 103 cases were selected who were found test positive by RT PCR and 103 negatives were selected as controls.

However, various comorbidities were identified among cases and controls with two of the cases reported to be suffering from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary

Disease (COPD) and 2 controls had malignancies.

"On analysing various underlying medical conditions against controls and cases, it was found that there was a significant difference among cases and controls who had Diabetes and Hypertension. Around 43 per cent of the patients who visited the hospital for getting tested had a history of contact with a COVID-19 case or suspect. Among the cases, 35.9 per cent of the patients reported to have a contact, and among the controls, around 50.5 per cent reported to have a contact with Covid-19 positive cases."

The others who were involved in the study were Aakanksha Bharti (senior resident), Heena (Statistical assistant) Geeta Yadav, Professor, all from Department of Community Medicine, Nitesh Gupta, (Assistant Professor) Department of Pulmonary, Critical Care & Sleep Medicine, and Ramesh Meena, (Assistant Professor), Department of Medicine, all from VMMC & Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi.

Export Promotion Council to be set up for AYUSH products

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Cashing in on the growing global interest in AYUSH-based solutions for disease resistance and treatment during the difficult times of the Covid pandemic, the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of AYUSH have decided to set up an Export Promotion Council to boost AYUSH exports.

A decision in this regard was taken recently in a joint review of AYUSH trade and Industry held online by Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Shripad Naik, Minister of AYUSH.

"It was also decided in the review that the entire AYUSH sector will work together to achieve price and quality competitiveness to boost AYUSH exports," said an official from the Ayush Ministry.

Highlighting the growing global interest in AYUSH-based solutions for disease resistance and treatment during the difficult times of the Covid -19 pandemic, Naik said that trade and commerce in the alternate traditional medicine Sector needed to upscale quickly in order to meet the growing demands from India and abroad, and to serve the larger number of people who are now looking up to these systems for main-

taining their health.

He shared with the participants that the AYUSH immunity protocols and the National Clinical Management Protocol for Covid 19 for Ayurveda and Yoga were timely interventions which provided relief to large sections of the population.

"The emerging evidence of a correlation between the low Covid -19 mortality rates and large-scale adoption of AYUSH prophylactic solutions by the population is significant for the public health practice in the country," he added.

Goyal, while praising the frontline role played by the AYUSH Sector in the fight against Covid -19 said that the protection offered by the AYUSH systems to the common people during the pandemic time neutralised the skepticism that many people had about the efficacy of the medicines and products offered by these systems.

"The spurt in exports of AYUSH products in the recent months is a direct reflection of their growing popularity in many countries. The standardisation of the HS codes related to export will be considered on priority as a step to promote exports," he said while batting for the need of setting up the AYUSH Export Promotion Council.

61% people know one or more people who have succumbed to Covid infection, finds survey

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With Covid 19 death tally in India crossing 1.41 lakh so far, a new survey found that 61 per cent people know of one or more people who have succumbed to the infection. Similarly, 44 per cent people know of one or more individuals who are likely to have died due to coronavirus but their deaths were not labelled as Covid deaths.

The survey was conducted via LocalCircles platform, a community social media platform. The survey also found that only 26 per cent of respondents said no one known to them or in their social network - family, extended family, friends, colleagues, neighbours, business associates, etc. - has died due to COVID-19 in the last eight months.

The first question in the survey asked citizens, "How many in your own social network (family, extended family, friends, colleagues, neighbours, business associates, etc.) have lost their life due to COVID-19 in the last 8 months?"

According to the survey, responses from 9,524 citizens were received. Notably, 61 per cent of the respondents have 1 or more individuals in their

social network who died of COVID-19. Further 26 percent voted, "No one lost their life and thankfully all recovered".

More than 16,000 responses were received from citizens across 208 districts of India. Of them, 69 percent respondents were men while 31 percent respondents were women. According to LocalCircles, 51 percent respondents were from tier 1, 24 percent from tier 2 and 25 percent were from tier 3, 4 and rural districts.

To gauge the extent of such cases, the survey asked people, "How many individuals in your own social network lost their life in the last 8 months, which was not declared COVID-19 deaths but it was likely related to COVID or accelerated by COVID?"

Responses from 6,392 citizens were received. Per the result, 44 percent people now have one or more individuals in their social network who likely lost their life due to COVID-19 but were not COVID-19 but were not declared as COVID-19 deaths. This assumes a lot of significance if the numbers are extrapolated. Now the seventh-most-affected country by active cases, third by fatalities, and second by total cases, India has added 2,45,512 cases in the past seven days.

Good news for air travellers: IndiGo pays out 90% refunds



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

There is some positive news for those air travellers who had booked flight tickets to travel via low-cost carrier IndiGo during the lockdown period. Since the resumption of operations in May, the low cost carrier IndiGo on

Monday said that it has already paid out 90 percent refunds amounting to approximately ₹1,000 crore. According to IndiGo, the airline will disburse customer credit shells and refunds by January 31, 2021.

IndiGo chief executive officer Ronojoy Dutta said the

sudden outbreak of COVID-19 and the resulting lockdown brought the airline's operations to a complete halt by the end of March. "As our incoming cash flow dried up, we were unable to immediately process refunds for cancelled flights and had to create credit shells for the refunds that were due to our customers," he noted.

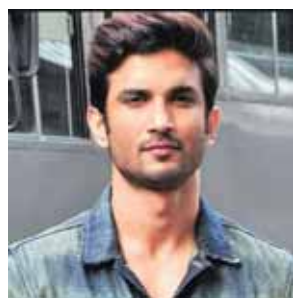
However, with the resumption of operations and a steady increase in demand for air travel, the airline's priority has been to refund the credit shell amounts in an expedited manner, Dutta said.

"We are pleased to commit that we will disburse the full 100 per cent credit shell payments latest by January 31, 2021," he said.

India resumed scheduled domestic passenger flights on May 25 after a gap of two months due to the coronavirus lockdown. Scheduled international passenger flights continue to remain suspended in the country since March 23 due to the pandemic.

However, airlines have been permitted to operate special international flights under the Vande Bharat Mission since May and under the bilateral air bubble pacts since July.

PIL in SC for CBI status report in SSR death case



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A PIL was filed in the Supreme Court on Monday seeking direction to the CBI to submit a status report in Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput death case.

The plea, filed by advocate Puneet Dhandia, said the apex court passed an order for the CBI enquiry on August 19 and despite lapse of almost four months the probe agency is yet to conclude its investigation.

"The CBI is not acting responsible in the present case and there is a delay in the conclusion of the investigation of the case," it said.



"Even in serious offences like murder, the law stipulates filing of charge sheet in 90 days but in the present case the premium investigating agency has failed miserably in their role and the unnecessary delay in the present case is bringing bad name to the administration of justice not only in our country but across the globe," the plea said.

It sought direction to the CBI to complete its probe within two months and submit a final report in the concerned court.

It said Rajput was found dead in mysterious circumstances and the probe was initially conducted by Mumbai Police.

"On dissatisfaction being shown by the family of the late actor this Court directed the Central Bureau of Investigation to conduct an enquiry in the mysterious death of late actor Sushant Singh Rajput," the plea said.

The PIL said that a fair, competent, impartial and speedy investigation is the need of the hour.

Centre rushes med experts to Eluru after children hospitalised with unknown illness

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has rushed a three-member team of medical experts to Eluru in Andhra Pradesh after Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu spoke on Monday to Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan after many children were hospitalised with an undiagnosed illness in the past few days, the VP's Secretariat said.

The three-member team of medical experts to Eluru includes Dr Jamshed Nayar, Associate Professor (Emergency Medicine) from AIIMS, Dr Avinash Deostawar, Virologist, NIV PUNE and Dr Sanket Kulkarni, Dy Director, PH Expert from NCDC, Delhi.

The unknown disease has claimed one life and affected around 350 people so far. A majority of the victims are in the 20-30 age group. Around 45 children below the age of 12 years have been admitted. According to the district commissioner's report, the sickness is not contagious. People from areas where Eluru municipal's water distribution is not available also fell sick. Even those who drink only mineral water daily also fell sick, the DC said in its report.

The Andhra Pradesh health officials are trying hard to ascertain the cause of the mysterious illness, said a statement from the Government.

Defamatory remark against Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti: SC refuses to quash FIRs against Amish Devgan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to quash FIRs against News 18 TV anchor Amish Devgan for his alleged defamatory remark against Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti during a show on June 15 but said he will get protection from any coercive action if he continues to cooperate with the probe.

A bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar and Sanjay Khanna also transferred all FIRs filed against Amish Devgan in different states, including Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Telangana, to Ajmer in Rajasthan.

The top court had earlier granted Amish Devgan protection from any coercive action in connection with the FIRs.

Several FIRs were lodged against Amish Devgan for using a derogatory term for the Sufi saint in the news debate show called "Aar Paar" on his channel on June 15. Amish Devgan later tweeted an apology saying he was actually referring to Muslim ruler Alaaddin Khilji and inadvertently ended up naming Chisti.

Amish Devgan through his lawyer Mrinal Bharti had moved the top court seeking quashing of the FIRs saying it was a slip of the tongue and he

Amish Devgan through his lawyer Mrinal Bharti had moved the top court seeking quashing of the FIRs saying it was a slip of the tongue and he had already expressed regret for the "inadvertent" error

had already expressed regret for the "inadvertent" error.

He had told the top court that "none of the FIRs said that public order was being disturbed".

Senior advocate Manish Singhvi, appearing for Rajasthan, had opposed Amish Devgan's plea for quashing of the FIRs saying the investigation is the right of the police.

The top court, while granting interim relief to Amish Devgan, had also stayed the probe in the cases related to the telecast against the journalist. The journalist has said the plea concerned his life and liberty.

SC to hear next week plea of 94-yr-old woman seeking to declare 1975 Emergency as unconstitutional

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Monday said it would hear next week a plea filed by a 94-year-old woman seeking to declare as "wholly unconstitutional" the proclamation of emergency in 1975.

The plea, which has also sought compensation of Rs 25 crores from the authorities who had actively participated in the "unconstitutional acts", came up for hearing before a bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul.

The bench, also comprising Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and Hrishikesh Roy, posted the matter for hearing on December 14.

The petitioner, Veera Sarin, has claimed in her plea that she and her husband were "victims of the atrocities inflicted by the then government authorities and others" during the period of emergency which was proclaimed minutes before the midnight of June 25, 1975.

The proclamation was revoked in March 1977.

"The petitioner, in a genuine desire to bring about an end to the undemocratic nightmare, infamously known as 'the emergency' seeks a

The plea said later the petitioner's husband died and she had to face the legal proceedings initiated against him during the emergency

peaceful closure, that can be brought only by an acknowledgment and declaration by the highest court of justice of the country in which citizens repose the highest level of confidence and faith, that the said incident was unconstitutional," the plea said.

Sarin said that she and her husband, who had a flourishing business of Gold Arts in Delhi at that time, were compelled to leave the country during emergency for fear of being thrown into jail for no justifiable reason, on the "whims and wishes of government authority in a state where civil rights and liberties stood curbed."

The plea said later the petitioner's husband died and she had to face the legal proceedings initiated against him during the emergency.

"The ordeals of the emergency and destruction caused during the said period are being suffered till date by the petitioner. The petitioner and her family were made to run from pillar to post for the past 35 years to vindicate their rights and restore their properties," the plea said.

The petition said that during that time, the petitioner was "shunned by her relatives and friends" because of the illegal proceedings initiated against her husband and now she is seeking "closure to the trauma of her lifetime, which still resonates in her mind".

It alleged that even now, the movable properties including jewellery, artefacts, paintings, sculptures and other valuables have not been reinstituted to her family and she is entitled to be compensated for the acts done by the concerned authorities. The plea referred to a December 2014 order passed by the Delhi High Court which had held that proceedings initiated under one of the legislations against the petitioner's husband were bereft of any jurisdiction.

Two minor girls who crossed LoC repatriated to POK

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Two minor girls hailing from Pakistan occupied Kashmir, who had inadvertently crossed LoC and sneaked inside the Indian territory on Sunday, were repatriated at Chakan-da-bagh in Poonch on Monday.

According to a Jammu based Defence spokesman Lt-Col Devender Anand, "Two girls from Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, Laiba Zabair aged 17 yrs and Sana Zabair aged 13 yrs of village Abbasspur, Tehsil Forward Kahuta who had inadvertently crossed into Indian side in Poonch in the morning hours of 06 Dec 20 have been repatriated from Chakan Da Bagh crossing point on Monday". Before returning home Laiba Zubair in a video message said, "after Indian army jawans spotted them crossing the LoC they escorted them to safety and treated them well. They offered us food, warm clothes and comfortably accommodated us. We are thankful to them and appreciate their conduct". The custody of both the minor girls was handed over to Jammu and Kashmir police in Poonch.

What's the rush?

SC reprimands Govt for aggressively pushing Central Vista project, withholds construction



Is building a citadel as testimony to one's transformative legacy and power so important when the nation is going through its worst crisis brought on by the pandemic? Or is considered and reasoned opinion now a dispensable ritual in the rush to tick the boxes of jobs done, good or bad? May be the Narendra Modi Government thinks that it can make its priorities the nation's own, ignoring reality. So the Supreme Court pressed the much-needed pause button yesterday, literally rebuking the Government for "moving forward aggressively" on Delhi's Central Vista project, even before a decision could be taken on a slew of petitions chal-

lenging it. And though it allowed Modi to lay the foundation stone for the project, it categorically ruled out any construction or demolition in the demarcated area or any cutting of trees, the last so not advisable in a climate-challenged city like Delhi. The Government has justified the ₹1,000 crore project, that provisions for a new Parliament building and a do-over of the Central Vista, on grounds of adapting to the requirements of changed times. But the top court sensed the Government's real intent of making a power statement and curbed the adventurism, saying, "Just because there is no stay, does not mean you can start construction. We did not pass any clear stay order because we thought you are a prudent litigant, and you will show deference to the court." When Government counsel Tushar Mehta sought time to respond to the court's order that no construction or demolition could continue, the court insisted that he reply in five minutes on compliance. To that extent, the court played conscience keeper and made it amply clear that runaway ambitions could not be allowed to have their way when the timing and the spends are clearly inappropriate. It underlined that just because the Government considered its authoritarian and signature move as important, everybody shouldn't agree and fall in line.

The real intent of the argument that Lutyens' Delhi needs a makeover, particularly the Central Vista of the Rajpath, to create more spaces for a more streamlined operation of Ministry offices and freeing up more citizen-friendly spaces, is entirely political and in no way cultural or futuristic. It is quite unlike the French experiment with the Louvre though parallels have been drawn to it. When the glass Pyramid came up in the courtyard of the museum, ostensibly to free up spaces for an easier visitor movement, the then French President Francois Mitterrand was lambasted for creating "an architectural joke, an eyesore, an anachronistic intrusion of Egyptian death symbolism in the middle of Paris and a megalomaniacal folly." The oddity of its existence was such that critics and conservationists compelled the architects to tone down on drama, keep much of the rejig of the Louvre's internal map underground and stay away from the surrounding classical architecture. Of course, Mitterrand, an avid art lover, was thinking about keeping the Louvre relevant for generations than sealing a political legacy. Here, it is the latter taking precedence. The Government's move is about overwriting history with its own. Yet tradition's co-existence with modernity is encoded in our DNA and Delhi is the best testimony, where each successive ruler has sedimented through relics and monuments that have stood the test of time. And Delhiites have never denied heritage its place, be it Rajput, Islamic, European or colonial, making it a part of their living history, one where Lutyens' Delhi is a key chapter. And no argument holds before the elegance and classicism of the design — the green pavilions, perches, cupolas and the islands are the only democratic spaces where citizens can move and roam free, catching the afternoon sun in the middle of winter and the gentle breeze of a summer evening. No kiosk and retail space is needed here for it is precisely to escape those that Delhi families assemble here. Besides, being the first stretches to be locked down for security around Republic Day and Independence Day, they are anyway sanitised and cannot ever be a porous event space like Washington's National Mall. Redevelopment wouldn't mean more freedom to the masses. Considering the India Gate and now the war memorial respects martyred soldiers no less, do we need to scream our triumphalism and identity any louder? Shouldn't the Government be wiser to leave a legacy of policy and governance instead? Repurposing or modifying administrative offices within the shell of an existing facade and rejigging interiors are the done thing. But to change the skyline is quite the other. Agreed, there may be an increasing demand for land in the cities and the size of the Government means that its bureaucracy needs to be accommodated. Question is why can't they be relocated to a space where vertical growth is possible. The Rajpath has been our ceremonial pivot, providing a monumental, dignified and symbolic setting for governmental structures, museums and national memorials. Attempting to change it for no pressing reason, therefore, is like marginalising and eroding its place-based identity. Simply because of its historicity as a power statement. One that the current regime wants to overlay with its own definition of a monolithic and a neo-cultural India, as if we never had roots through millennia. Prime Minister Narendra Modi doesn't quite like the "Lutyens' world" and the power structures and codes embedded in it. But in the name of breaking elitism and freeing up space for people, one cannot justify political point-scoring. There are fruits of preservation; they serve as reminders of what was and where we need to go. There are only ruins of demolition, forcibly reconstructing the past to suit our ends. Besides, no amount of overwriting can erase the imprint of the city in our hearts. In the end, Delhi's soul gets damaged.

West Asian outreach

Arab nations are warming up to India and the Army Chief's visit will further strengthen ties



The visit of Army Chief, General MM Naravane, to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) should be welcomed by all who are keen for India's relations with the Arab world to improve. The Narendra Modi Government might have made 'Look East' a cornerstone of its foreign policy but the most dramatic improvement of ties in the past six-and-a-half years has been with the Arab world. And as many Arab nations normalise their relationship with Israel, their one-time mortal enemy, India, a long-standing friend of Israel, can only be most pleased. Combined with the fact that Pakistan, which often found a steady hand of support in the Arab world, has seen its ties

with the two leading nations, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, deteriorate in the recent past, India can only look from the sidelines and be pleased at the state of affairs. Saudi Arabia is upset with Pakistan switching allegiance to Turkey as a leader of the neo-Islamic world despite feeding off Gulf largesse. The Saudis went so far as to recall a major loan from Pakistan and UAE stopped issuing visas to Pakistani citizens. However, with the Saudis and the Emirates involved in complicated politics in the area, particularly with Iran, overtly through a war in Yemen, and also internecine issues in Qatar, India will also need to thread a tightrope.

India has to maintain amicable relations with all sides because of both commercial and military reasons. Naravane as a representative of the Government must be careful. That said, India's improved relations with West Asia are here to stay for the medium-term with major nations having political stability. OIC member states have been drawn by India's compliance of rulebook diplomacy, respect its non-provocative gestures and scent its economic growth and wide markets. There's a new-found respect diplomatically after we held off China. Besides, India continues to provide skilled manpower to Arab nations. Of course, there is the challenge of how the incoming US administration will treat the area but one expects more of the same.



GOVIND BHATTACHARJEE

The nationalisation of banks in 1969 effectively ended the corporate dominance in the banking industry, with the Government taking control of 90 per cent of the total banking business in India. Now corporate houses may once again be allowed to enter the banking arena if the recommendations of the Reserve Bank of India's Internal Working Group (IWG) for reviewing corporate structure of private sector banks are accepted by the Government. The suggestions are rather sweeping and it is questionable if all the risks have been weighed carefully. There are two major recommendations; the first is to allow large corporate and industrial houses to own banks by amending the Banking Regulation Act 1949, and the second is to allow large non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) with 10 years' track record, including those owned by corporate houses and with an asset size of ₹50,000 crore and above, to convert themselves into banks. The recommendations are open for comments till January 15, 2021.

Some of the biggest industrial houses already own large NBFCs bigger than many medium-sized banks with more than a decade's track record. Besides HDFC with assets worth ₹5.6 lakh crore, there are Bajaj Finservice, Sriram Transport, L&T Finance Holdings, Indiabulls Housing, Tata Capital, M&M Finance holdings, Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company, Muthoot Finance and Aditya Birla, which fulfil the twin criteria. Their total assets would exceed ₹14 lakh crore (FY 20). There are also Government-controlled NBFCs — for example, the one led by PFC with assets of ₹6.6 lakh crore, followed by REC with ₹3.2 lakh crore assets, LIC Housing Finance and HUDCO — which also fulfil the criteria; their total assets amount to around ₹14 lakh crore. For a COVID-battered and capital-starved banking sector reeling under mounting NPAs, such huge capital from private cash-rich companies could just be rejuvenating, a consideration which probably weighed with the IWG. Private players were allowed into banking after 1993 and since 2016, NBFCs have also been allowed, but so far their responses have been tepid. One reason was the small cap of 15 per cent on the promoter's stake; this is

opinion08

Recipe for disaster

Before giving banking licence to corporates, the RBI must ensure a robust and fool-proof regulatory oversight architecture which it clearly lacks now



now proposed to be raised to 26 per cent in the long run over 15 years. But as Rajnish Kumar, the former chairman of SBI, said: "It will only work well when the system has three things in place — strong ring-fencing for business interest, high-quality corporate governance and resolution framework for banks and finance companies." This is where the recommendations raise serious worries and have attracted widespread criticism, including from ex-Central bankers Raghuram Rajan and Viral Acharya, who called it a "bombshell" dropped by the RBI.

Historically, the RBI has always been cautious about issuing banking licences to corporates on account of the inherent conflicts of interest and poor corporate governance. The last two licences to IDFC First Bank and Bandhan Bank were given seven years ago after licences given to the Kotak Mahindra Bank and YES Bank, of which the YES Bank has now gone bust due to crony capitalism and ineffective regulatory controls and had to be bailed out like all others.

The global financial crisis had made the developed nations very cautious. In response to the 2008 global financial crisis, the US had adopted several measures, including enactment of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which introduced a raft of measures to regulate the financial sector and protect consumers. The Act amended many existing legislations, like the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to create an Investor Advisory Committee, an Office of the Investor Advocate and an ombudsman. It instituted regular reviews of conflicts of interest within investment firms by newly-created over-

sight institutions like the Financial Stability Oversight Council for identifying and improving systemic risks and especially to monitor designated Systemically Important Financial Institutions, which are deemed "too big to fail." Even these may not be sufficient guarantee against future malfeasance.

Nothing of that sort happened in India. Satyam happened in 2009 and we were in deep slumber. An attempt to strengthen corporate governance and give it a statutory authority was made only in 2013 in the new Companies Act by incorporating some key provisions of Clause 49 of SEBI's listing agreement. That these are hardly effective is evidenced by the unending series of frauds and scams, which have since broken upon the Indian banking scene, the regularity of which no longer surprises us. The weaknesses of the regulatory and oversight institutions and the multiple conflicts of interest along with crony capitalism have wrought havoc in the financial sector time and again. The IL&FS fraud dealt a body blow to NBFCs in India, exposing the risks a large NBFC poses to our financial system. Much of our NPAs have been the creation of super-fraudsters like Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi, Mehul Choksi, Rana Kapoor and their ilk who could manipulate the system with active support from important levers of power. In all these cases, the RBI's supervision has been lax and ineffective. Of course, the RBI was not alone to blame; the statutory auditors, often from the big four, and the credit rating agencies equally contributed to bypassing controls, throwing caution to the winds.

If the growth of banks and NBFCs continues unchecked

without an effective framework to correct asset-liability mismatches, the financial sector will remain vulnerable to risks and accidents, dragging the economy in a downward spiral. The continued failure of banks — the latest being the Laxmi Vilas Bank (LVB) — points to the gross inadequacy of the RBI's regulatory architecture, including its prudential norms. Even in the developed world, entry of large corporates into the banking sector is discouraged. The IWG has itself admitted that "the prevailing corporate governance culture in corporate houses is not up to the international standard and it will be difficult to ring-fence the non-financial activities of the promoters with that of the bank"; all the experts it had consulted, save one, on this issue had disagreed with its recommendations.

Before allowing large NBFCs into the banking space, the RBI must ensure a robust and fool-proof regulatory oversight architecture which it clearly lacks. The urgency being displayed by it to complete this process, therefore, legitimately surprises many and raises many unnerving worries.

The biggest concern of the RBI has always been to prevent connected lending and exposure between the banks and other related financial and non-financial group entities. It allowed large industrial houses to set up their own payments banks for the first time during 2015-16. Many like the Tatas, Birlas, Ambanis and Mahindras had applied for licence. Of the 41 applications, only 11 got in-principle approval, and seven started operations by 2018. But the banking landscape in India is undergoing significant transformation, with all public sector banks to be consolidated

into only half a dozen large banks with balance sheet size of ₹10 lakh crore each, besides a handful of large private banks. Hence there may be better avenues for raising capital rather than putting the stability of the financial system at stake.

Indeed the stakes are too high to treat the matter so casually. First is the enormous risk in connected lending. As Rajan and Acharya have correctly noted, "The history of such connected lending is invariably disastrous — how can the bank make good loans when it is owned by the borrower? Even an independent committed regulator, with all the information in the world, finds it difficult to be in every nook and corner of the financial system to stop poor lending." Besides, the unintended consequence of concentration of economic and hence political and lobbying power in such corporate houses is likely to follow, giving a further boost to crony capitalism. Second is the excessive competition likely to result from the entry of corporates into banking, leading to erosion of profit margin of the existing banks and forcing them to lend to risky ventures and businesses, thereby further weakening the financial system. Ultimately, it is only the small investors who pay the price, as we have seen in the cases of Sahara, DHFL, PMC Bank, Yes Bank and LVB. Corporate governance is weak even in the largest private banks, as the case of ICICI Bank has demonstrated.

The Indian financial landscape is littered with a highly complex web of numerous shell companies, front companies to big corporates they can lend to, opaque onshore and offshore ownership structures of companies and incestuous financial transactions between corporate entities, who can easily form a cartel to evade regulation and oversight. The RBI still does not have the institutional capacity to enforce regulation and exercise effective control — only recently it has introduced a separate regulatory and supervisory cadre to monitor systemic risks arising from the growing sizes and complexities of an intertwined and interconnected financial sector. The question to be addressed before embarking upon any such misadventure is whether the regulator is adequately equipped to monitor millions of transactions taking place via the internet, traversing every nook and corner of the globe, and follow the monetary trails of illegitimate deals.

(The author is a former Director-General at the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India and an academic)

SOUND BITE

The farmers are in trouble. They are forced to shiver in the cold. Let's help them during the Bharat Bandh.

Delhi Environment Minister
—Gopal Rai



As the two biggest economies and permanent members of the UNSC, China and the US should enhance dialogue and ties.

Chinese Foreign Minister
—Wang Yi



I love Divine. He is one of the most phenomenal artistes in India. I am looking forward to doing a song with him.

Singer
—Armaan Malik



If I look back at how we played then in 2014 and how we play now as a team, I feel we have come a long way and have grown stronger.

Hockey Forward
—Lalit Upadhyay



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Stand by the girl child

Sir — This is with reference to the article, "Girls please, not brides", published on December 7. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 is only on paper. In practice, it is talked about more in breach than in observance and is scarcely followed due to the crippling poverty in the country.

Now, the pandemic has worsened the situation for millions of underprivileged living in rural India and they are marrying off their girls early due to poverty and job losses, unmindful of the impact it will have on their lives, development and health. This abuse needs to stop, not just through the strict implementation of the Act but also by creating awareness and lending a helping hand to the poor as a community.

Moreover, our girls should be given free food in educational institutions so that the parents have one less mouth to feed. They should be given education free and trained for a vocation till they are financially independent. Now, the legal age of marriage for girls is likely to be revised from 18 to 21 years. It is a good idea. However, it will only work well in practice if our girls

Govt should assure farmers

The objective of the Bharat Bandh called today (December 8) by the farmers' organisations is to mount pressure on the Modi Government to repeal the new farm laws enacted as part of its single-minded pursuit of neo-liberalism. The Government has made "corporatisation" its watchword. The new farm laws and labour laws are evidence that it is more interested in pursuing the interests of corporates than the interests of the farming community and the working class. However, the laws aimed at dismantling the State-regulated agriculture sector to pave the way for its monopolisation by corporate behemoths have met with stiff resistance from the farmers. Their protests are gaining traction among people cutting across political boundaries with each passing day. The Government should think more in terms of how to ensure a reasonable standard of living for those who really drive the economy — ordinary, decent, hard-working people — than how to help the privileged rake in more profits. It should occur to it that food growers are wealth producers of the country in their own way and cannot be denied protection and left in the lurch.

The corporate-controlled media's scarce coverage of the protests does not make them any less momentous and historic and its vain attempt at rationalising and validating the laws doesn't make them any better. The farm-

are well-protected by free education, food and job support. Girls should be taught martial arts too, so they can be safe in the public and private space. Above all, the Women's Reservation Bill, which is all but forgotten, should be

revived and translated into law.
Sravana Ramachandran
Chennai

Save our girls

Sir — A pertinent point was raised in the article 'Girls please,

not brides.' We, as a society, may be against child marriage but do we do anything concrete to stop it? How can we just expect the law enforcement agencies to prevent child marriages and not do anything to help the keepers of



ers' agitation, which is assuming the proportions of a people's movement, is an assertion of people's power seldom seen in post-Independent India. We fail to see the logic behind the proposition that the Opposition's support to the farmers' agitation against mortgaging agriculture to big agri-businesses will weaken it. The Government should remove its corporate blinkers and look at the farm laws afresh with an open mind to realise the truth of the farmers' cause. It should empathise with the farmers and factor in their concerns gracefully. There is honour and no loss of prestige in making a gesture towards public opinion and rectifying the situation.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

the law in any way? The least we can do is help the underprivileged educate their girl children so that they can become financially independent one day and lead a more fulfilling life and contribute to the nation's economy. The hand that rocks the cradle indeed rules the world, but that hand has to belong to a self-reliant, educated and financially independent woman, not a minor deprived of food, freedom and education.

Rohit Roy
Noida

Let Central Vista be

Sir — Glad to read that the Supreme Court expressed anger over the way the Centre is "aggressively" going ahead with the construction work of the Central Vista and directed that no construction, demolition or felling of trees shall take place there. The people of the nation do not want the Central Vista to change and this project must be stopped, due to emotional, historical and environmental reasons.

R Ragu
Delhi

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Who will the star pair up with?

In all probability, Rajinikanth is bound to have a secret or open understanding with the BJP as both need each other



KALYANI SHANKAR

Will the BJP be able to rope in Tamil superstar Rajinikanth, who has announced plans to launch his much-awaited political party in January 2021? The actor is a phenomenon and will be a major factor in the forthcoming Tamil Nadu Assembly polls, scheduled for April-May 2021. He has chosen this time to make his political debut because there is a huge vacuum in the State after the demise of two former Chief Ministers and political heavyweights, M Karunanidhi of the DMK in 2018 and J Jayalalithaa of the AIADMK in 2016.

"It is the need of the hour. If it is not done now, it will never be done. For this, I urge the people to stand by me. Together we will bring change," the star-turned-politician tweeted this week. There has been speculation that he is inclined towards the BJP, though Rajinikanth has been rather coy about discussing his plans. The problem for the BJP is that if Rajinikanth's party decides to go it alone and contest all 234 seats, it will eat into the BJP's ally, the AIADMK's vote share more than that of the DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam). Rajinikanth's entry comes at a time when the incumbent AIADMK-BJP alliance, the DMK-Congress-Left Front, and another superstar Kamal Haasan have already firmed up their alliance. With the BJP's ambitious plans to expand in the South, is it possible for Rajinikanth to join the BJP-AIADMK combine? Have the elections become a game of arithmetic?

The megastar had been putting off entering politics since 1996, when the Congress first offered to make him its chief ministerial candidate to counter the then Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa. Since then, the Congress as well as the BJP have been wooing him. "The time to rewrite Tamil Nadu's destiny has come. There's a great need for change... it's now or never. Voted to power, we will change everything," Rajinikanth promised this week. Failing repeatedly to gain a foothold in Tamil Nadu, the BJP had been trying to goad the actor into entering politics, but he had resisted the party's overtures so far.

The BJP is handicapped, with no tall leaders at the State level, and would like to use him as its mascot. Being a megastar, he has the advantage of being a known face and has a huge fan following and clubs. He proposes to launch a spiritual party as opposed to the atheist Dravidian parties. It will be advantageous to the actor too, as the BJP is a disciplined party and has both manpower and money. The BJP would also help facilitate other things like registration of his new party and so on. So both think that they are natural allies.

Second, Rajinikanth does not have time to build a party before the polls. His fan clubs alone will not be enough. Though he had asked his followers to register their names on his website, you need teams for booth management and door-to-door campaigns and so on. The BJP has already loaned Arjun Murthy, head of the State BJP's intellectual cell, as "chief coordinator" of the new party, indicating what is to come. While the BJP has welcomed his entry, Deputy Chief Minister and AIADMK coordinator O Panneerselvam has also hinted at a possible alliance with Rajinikanth's party. Addressing a meeting in Theni this week, he said: "We welcome great film actor Rajinikanth's decision to enter politics. In politics, anything can happen. If there is an opportunity, an alliance will be formed."

Rajinikanth, too, has some challenges to face. First of all, the field in Tamil Nadu already has two strong Dravidian parties — the DMK and the AIADMK, who share a combined vote bank of 50 per cent. The other, smaller, but significant regional players such as the PMK (Paattali Makkal Katchi) and actor Vijayakanth's DMDK (Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam) are in the line-up too. Second, the star has some health problems as he had undergone a kidney operation and might not be able to withstand a rigorous election campaign. Third, so far there is no clarity on whether his party will fight next year's Assembly polls in Tamil Nadu independently or strike an electoral alliance. Fourth, in a caste-ridden State, forward castes, such as the Mudaliars, have divided their loyalty between the two Dravidian parties for long. As for the dominant castes, the Gounders have Chief Minister E Palanisamy of the AIADMK, the Thevars have O Panneerselvam, the Vanniyaars have Dr Ramadoss and the Scheduled Castes have the VCK (Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi). Vijayakanth's DMDK, the Vaikoled MDKM (Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam), the two Left parties and actor-turned-politician Hassan's Makkal Needhi Maiam share the caste groups. The minorities go with the DMK or the AIADMK. Parties such as the CPI (M), the CPI, the VCK and the MDKM are aligned with the DMK coalition.

In all probability, Rajinikanth is bound to have a secret or open understanding with the BJP as both need each other. The problem for the actor will be who to attack during the campaign, the Centre or the State Government? Many indications are that the star will lean towards the BJP.

(The writer is a senior journalist)

WE WILL WIN THE ASSEMBLY POLLS WITH PEOPLE'S SUPPORT AND WILL BRING A HONEST, CASTELESS AND SPIRITUAL POLITICS TO TAMIL NADU.

—TAMIL MEGASTAR
RAJINIKANTH

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



UTTAM GUPTA

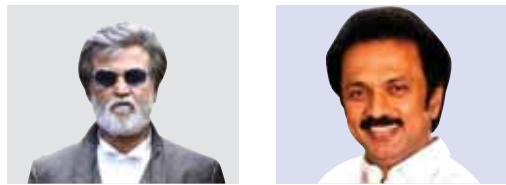
The recommendation of an Internal Working Group (IWG) set up by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to allow industrial houses to own banks — if they meet the criterion — has invited strident criticism from experts, including the former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan. Asking how a borrower could also be a lender, they have debunked the idea, stating that this would lead to misdirected lending, mostly to entities belonging to the industrial house that owns the bank. This apprehension is valid but the misuse of public money can happen in any bank, irrespective of the ownership. For instance, in Public Sector Banks (PSBs) till now, businessmen patronised by the ruling establishment managed loans on considerations other than merit. In private banks, too, the situation is no different, as amply demonstrated by the failure of Yes Bank, which is not owned by an industrial house. There is a dire need to strengthen regulatory oversight to guard against irregularities in running banks. The IWG recommends allowing promoters to hold 26 per cent equity stake in a steady state or after 15 years (up from the existing norm of 15 per cent) from the start, when it should be a minimum of 40 per cent of the equity for the first five years. It suggests taking a sympathetic review of whether industrial houses should be allowed to own banks if they meet the criterion. And considers allowing Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) with assets of over ₹50,000 crore, and in operation for over 10 years, to convert to banks, whether or not they are owned by industrial houses.

These suggestions need to be read in a certain context. Already, after a prolonged tussle, the banking regulator had allowed promoters of the Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited (KMBL) to maintain their stake at 26 per cent despite the 15 per cent norm (originally named Kotak Mahindra Finance Limited, it was the first NBFC in India to convert into a bank in February 2003). This prompted promoters of other private sector banks, who had lowered their stake to 15 per cent, to demand that they, too, should be allowed to increase it to 26 per cent. For instance, the Hinduja Group of IndusInd Bank made the appeal. Therefore, by allowing promoters of all private banks to have 26 per cent stake, the IWG has taken the logical step forward.

The 15 per cent threshold was anomalous, as with a marginal stake, the promoter won't have the desired skin in the game. Hence, the much-needed seriousness and commitment would be less. As a result, the management and governance of the bank could suffer. A study by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), India, shows that this may well be the case. An analysis of old private sector banks done by the BCG illustrates that "boards, where equity ownership is diversified, can take control of a bank and start to direct its operations in a less than optimal manner. The Catholic Syrian Bank and the Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) are good examples of this. In fact, 12 old private banks are laggards in respect to technology and risk systems and have not grown their share from four per cent of the assets of the system."

Even so, for a promoter to initially start with 40 per cent shareholding as per the existing guidelines and then bring it down to 15 per cent (after the efforts during the initial difficult phase have borne fruit and the operations have stabilised), relegating him to a minor player, is unfair. No wonder, the KMBL promoter pleaded with the RBI to allow it to retain a higher shareholding, which the latter agreed to. The apex bank should implement

INDIA NEEDS MORE BANKS WITH ADEQUATE CAPITAL BUFFER TO MEET THE CREDIT REQUIREMENT OF A \$5 TRILLION ECONOMY BY 2024-25 (FUNDING ON SUCH A MAMMOTH SCALE CAN'T BE DONE WITH EQUITY CAPITAL ALONE). IN VIEW OF THIS, AND CONSIDERING THAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO OPEN UP EVEN PSBs TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THERE IS A DIRE NEED TO EXPAND THE LANDSCAPE OF POTENTIAL INVESTORS. THE INVOLVEMENT OF LARGE INDUSTRIAL HOUSES COULD BE OF GREAT HELP IN THIS ENDEAVOUR BUT FAIR PRACTICE IS NEEDED



ANYBODY CAN JOIN POLITICS. LET RAJINIKANTH LAUNCH HIS PARTY FIRST AND SAY WHAT IS HIS POLITICAL POLICY. THEN I WILL COMMENT.

—DMK PRESIDENT
MK STALIN

Checks and balances

Crony capitalism has also happened in public sector banks. There is a dire need to strengthen regulatory oversight to guard against irregularities in running all banks



the IWG's recommendation to allow 26 per cent shareholding to the promoter in the long-run.

The second major recommendation to allow industrial houses to own banks, after addressing any outstanding issues or concerns in respect to "connected lending" and incorporating safeguards in the Banking Regulation Act (BR Act), needs to be read in conjunction with another suggestion made by the RBI to the Finance Ministry early this year. The RBI had proposed that the Centre reduce its shareholding in six top PSBs, i.e. the State Bank of India, the Punjab National Bank, the Bank of Baroda, Canara Bank, the Union Bank of India and the Bank of India to 26 per cent. In the follow-through, the Centre has already initiated the process to reduce its holding to 51 per cent in the next 12-18 months.

Realising that the market may not have the appetite for it, the RBI thought that letting corporates in could help raise the prospects. There are several corporates with deep pockets who can buy the shares of PSBs, thereby enabling successful divestment and at the same time, help the Government garner resources to rein in the fiscal deficit in the current difficult year (it is aiming to garner about ₹43,000 crore). For this to happen, the regulator has to take a policy decision to allow corporates to own a bank. This is precisely what the IWG has done. But this has invited criticism from experts who say that instead of being based on due diligence and assessing viability of the project, the bank will give loans keeping in mind what the owner wants. Put simply, this will be tantamount to the use of public money for unjust enrichment of the corporate. This undoubtedly needs a vigilant architecture. In PSBs, for instance, businessmen with political

clout managed loans and got them okayed. Neither did the banks insist on repayment, nor did the defaulters have any fear, as those who were expected to take action chose not to act. This led to an increase in non-performing assets (NPAs) to an unsustainable level, forcing the Centre to bail them out by using the taxpayers' money.

In private banks, too (albeit those not owned by a corporate house), the situation is quite similar. Merely because an industrial house gets to occupy the driver's seat in a bank does not automatically follow that public deposits will be misused. Abuse or otherwise is primarily a function of the quality of the management on the one hand and supervision by the banking regulator on the other. If, any of these prerequisites are lacking, then, irrespective of who owns the bank, exploitation is inevitable. To handle that, there is a dire need to strengthen regulatory oversight and the RBI should make proactive intervention on "real-time" basis to prevent mismanagement and irregularities — instead of continuing with the present practice of bolting the stable after the horses have fled.

India needs more banks with adequate capital buffer to meet the credit requirement of a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25 (funding on such a mammoth scale can't be done with equity capital alone). In view of this, and considering that the Government wants to open up even PSBs to the private sector (look at the decision to reduce its shareholding in six top PSUs to 51 per cent), there is a dire need to expand the landscape of potential investors. The involvement of large industrial houses could be of great help in this endeavour.

Accordingly, the Government should only consider the IWG's recom-

mendations after incorporating safeguards to address issues of "connected lending" by amending the BR Act. All banks, which have other group entities, should be held by Non-Operating Financial Holding Companies (NOFHC).

The recommendation for a higher minimum initial capital of ₹1,000 crore (up from the existing ₹500 crore) makes eminent sense. However, there is a case for raising the bar even further to say, ₹5,000 crore, to ensure that only very serious entities enter the space.

The third major recommendation of the IWG to allow NBFCs with assets of over ₹50,000 crore, and in operation for over 10 years, to convert to banks is in sync with the RBI's stance all along. The only change mooted now is to permit NBFCs owned by industrial houses to convert to banks, too. The RBI probably went by the fact that there are a number of well-run NBFCs owned by industrial houses who can be good candidates for converting to and running a bank.

The group has also battled for "harmonisation" of various licencing guidelines to ensure that relaxations (or for that matter, tightening of rules) given at different points of time are applicable to all entities, irrespective of when the licence was given to each. Some important recommendations provide for a "clear" and "consistent" definition of holding by a promoter (use of paid-up voting equity share capital is prescribed as the right metric); maximum share holdings of 15 per cent by non-promoters uniformly for all, banks not to carry out any activity permissible within the bank, through a separate subsidiary; pledging of bank shares and so on. The RBI should build in checks and balances.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst)

Erratic temperatures spell economic doom

Before climate change delivers the fatal blow, India must respond with effective counter-measures to protect lives and livelihoods



KOTA SRIRAJ

As India experiences a colder than usual winter, public opinion is firmly set on the premise that the Coronavirus-driven lockdown reduced pollution levels, thereby resulting in a season that's more spirited than the previous ones. However, nothing could be further from the truth. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has already sounded an alert to the effect that the winter of 2020-21 will be colder than usual due to the *La Nina* conditions prevailing in the equatorial Pacific Ocean. *La Nina* is the cooling phase of the *El Nino* southern oscillation cycle in the equatorial Pacific

Ocean as opposed to the warming *El Nino* phase. As if confirming the IMD's predictions, Delhi has already witnessed its coldest November in 71 years. But miseries brought on by the cold may be the least of our concerns compared to the economic impact that lies in wait for India in the wake of these erratic temperature changes.

The IMD predicts an uneven distribution of minimum and maximum temperature levels in various parts of India, which could lead to a higher variance between night and day temperatures. This, in turn, would impact farming in the Rabi season. Especially the wheat crop which is the main cereal that is grown in northern and central India.

Other crops that stand to be impacted are soy and corn. In south India, a major cash crop, coffee, which is extremely sensitive to temperature variations, is expected to suffer unduly thanks to these weather-related anomalies. These developments on the agricultural front can wreak havoc in the form of sudden spike in food prices and cause unexpected financial

turbulence for the farming community that is already facing multiple difficulties.

The economy would eventually suffer the ripple effects of the agrarian crisis, the adverse impact of climate change, coupled with setbacks on account of COVID-19.

The latest McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) report has presented unsettling facts that point towards dwindling economic prosperity due to the havoc unleashed by climate change. The report states that there is a risk of \$200 billion to India's GDP by 2030 due to a sharp reduction in outdoor working hours triggered by the increase in ambient temperatures. What are currently considered as unsafe outdoor temperatures to work in will increase by a whopping 15 per cent by 2030, directly impacting productivity and eventually the per capita income of the nation. This is because outdoor work has immense relevance for the economy. As of 2017, it contributed to nearly 50 per cent of the GDP. It drives 30 per cent of the GDP growth and



ensures employment for nearly 75 per cent of the labour force or nearly 380 million people in India. Hence, climate change-driven spike in temperatures can put up to 2.5 to 4.5 per cent of the GDP at risk.

In fact, it is estimated by the MGI report that nearly 160 to 200 million people bear a clear five per cent possibility of being exposed to lethal or fatal heatwaves as early as 2030. As temperatures rise, so do the costs of air conditioning. It is estimated that by 2030, a massive \$110 billion would be

required as capital costs for improving the air conditioning infrastructure. Urgent remedial measures are needed to avert much of the problems before 2030. Although some situations have surpassed the stage of remedy, all is not lost yet. The authorities must have concerted plans in place that are able to mitigate the forthcoming threats. Gradually shifting of outdoor working hours coupled with movement of capital and labour out of the designated high temperature hotspots will go a long way in reducing the adverse economic impact that is being predicted.

Moreover, all the current ongoing infrastructure and developmental projects must have a critical component of climate change adaptation consideration built into them. This sensitivity will reduce the carbon footprint of these projects and will in turn help avert extreme outcomes in the form of spiralling heat output signatures.

Yet another aspect that needs urgent attention while in the pursuit of ensuring a safe climate for the future is the state of our energy supplies. The

average hydel power plant dams that are currently operational in the country are decades old and the constant exposure to the elements, not to mention the ever-present interaction with water, is taking a toll on their structure. The future presents a scenario where rising temperature would mean more melting snows and glaciers, which in turn would increase the water load on these dams. An immediate assessment is required as to how these ageing concrete structures would hold up to this increased onslaught of water and still deliver. This is essential because the need for gradual decommissioning of the coal-fired power plants can no longer be a long-term strategy but is in fact a short-term urgent requirement if the erratic temperatures need to be reined in before 2030. Erratic temperatures are here to stay. But before they deliver the fatal blow, India has to respond decisively with effective counter-measures in order to protect lives and livelihoods.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)



FOREIGN EYE



NO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM STILL

Though development along the Lakeside was regulated till the 1990s, the chaotic transition to democracy was misused to construct right up to the banks of the lake in Nepal. The growth of water hyacinth indicated deterioration of water quality. The tourist destination has now slowly realised the urgency of seriously dealing with its self-destruction.

(The Himalayan editorial)

Markets maintain record run on vaccine progress

FINANCE, FMCG STOCKS SPURT

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic equity indices sprinted to fresh lifetime highs on Monday as investor sentiment got a lift after Pfizer and Serum Institute applied for emergency use authorisation for their COVID-19 vaccines in India.

Robust buying in finance, FMCG and banking counters offset weak global cues and a depreciating rupee. Rising for the third straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex soared 347.42 points or 0.77 per cent to its fresh closing peak of 45,426.97, after touching a record intra-day level of 45,458.92.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty rose 97.20 points or 0.73 per cent to an all-time closing high of 13,355.75. It touched its record intra-day peak of 13,366.65 in early trade. The Nifty has now made fresh lifetime highs for five straight sessions.

Hindustan Unilever (HUL) was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, jumping 3.09 per cent, followed by Bharti Airtel, HDFC, ITC, IndusInd Bank, SBI, Sun Pharma, ONGC, Tech Mahindra, L&T and ICICI Bank.

On the other hand, Kotak

Bank, Nestle India, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finance and HDFC Bank were among the laggards, dropping up to 1.37 per cent.

Vaccine major Serum Institute of India (SII) on Monday said it has applied to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for emergency use authorisation for the AstraZeneca-Oxford COVID-19 vaccine in the country.

Earlier on Saturday, the Indian arm of US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer became the first company to seek a similar approval from India's drug regulator for its coronavirus vaccine in the country, after securing such clearance in the UK and Bahrain. "News of progress in the COVID vaccine and healthy inflows by FII's helped markets to continue the upward trend... We are seeing buying interest emerging on every dip, thanks to rotational players across the sectors. "Technically, Nifty could face a hurdle around 13,450. The stock-specific trading approach is yielding decent returns so far and we suggest continuing with the same. Also, keep a close watch on global markets and upcoming domestic macro data for cues," said Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking.BSE telecom, FMCG, healthcare, oil and gas, industrials, tech and capital goods indices climbed up to 2.78 per cent, while consumer durables and realty closed with losses.

Rupee drops by 10 paise to 73.90 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee dropped by 10 paise to settle at 73.90 against the US currency on Monday due to a rebound in the dollar in overseas markets following geopolitical concerns.

The dollar recovered from two-and-a-half-year low on Monday after reports that the US was preparing to impose sanctions on Chinese officials, increasing the risk of geopolitical tensions.

Concerns over a Brexit trade talks as the EU and the UK were still trying to address major differences to avoid a no-deal exit by year-end supported the dollar sentiment. At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit witnessed a volatile trading session. It opened at 73.79 and rose to an intra-day high of 73.70 in the first half.

Growing up in India made me build inclusive digital economy, says Pichai

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai on Monday stressed that growing up in India amid poor access to a computer or a phone set him on a course to build a more inclusive global digital economy and empower the next billion people.

Speaking at the Singapore FinTech Festival, Pichai said that the question of inclusion and opportunity is deeply personal to him. "Growing up in India, I didn't have much access to a computer, or a phone. To make a call, I had to wait in long lines to use a shared phone with everyone else.

"So when our family finally got our first rotary phone, it changed our lives for the better, and it set me on a course to help bring technology to more people around the world," he emphasised.

He said the digital inclusion can be achieved first by accelerating progress in closing the digital divide, which means expanding connectivity, financial inclusion, and digital skills.

"Second, by deepening partnerships between governments and business, which means building on the new collaborations we've seen during COVID," he said.

Pichai mentioned how Google



Pay is helping India bridge the digital divide.

The company launched Google Tez, now Google Pay in India in 2017.

"At the time, my home country was still largely a cash-based society. Since then, digital payments services have helped reshape how transactions are made. They've increased financial inclusion by making payments simple and seamless for over a hundred million Indians," Pichai informed.

"People are using Google Pay to do everything from send money home to their families and split the check for dinner. Kira store owners are using it to pay their business expenses, as well as receive payments from their loyal customers." People in India complete more than three billion digital transactions a month, two thirds of which are taking place outside India's biggest cities.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Traders' body CAIT and the All India Transporters Welfare Association on Monday said markets across the country including in Delhi will remain open on Tuesday and transport services will also remain operative, notwithstanding the "Bharat-Bandh" call given by protesting farmers. Thousands of farmers protesting against the Centre's new agri laws for the past 11 days here have called on people to join their "Bharat Bandh" or nationwide shutdown call on Tuesday in large numbers.

Issuing a joint statement, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) and All India Transporters Welfare Association (AITWA) said traders and transporters will not be participating in the Bharat Bandh called on December 8. "Commercial markets across the country will remain open and business activities will take place as usual whereas the transport services will also remain operative on December 8," the joint statement said. CAIT President B C Bhartia, Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal and Pradeep Singal and Mahendra Arya, Chairman and President of AITWA respectively, stated that so far no farmer organisation or farmer leaders have approached them seeking support for "Bharat Bandh".

Trade unions lend moral support to farmers' call for 'Bharat Bandh'

New Delhi: A joint platform of ten central trade unions has extended its moral support to the 'Bharat Bandh' call by farmer organisations on Tuesday. The unions would not go on strike or abstain from work but support the farmers' agitation. They would wear black batches while on duty, stage protest after or before working hours and also hold rallies after or before their work schedules.

The unions went on a nationwide strike on November 26 to protest against the recently

passed labour codes as well as farm laws, among other issues. nd Mazdoor Sabha Harbhajan Singh Sidhu told PTI that the joint forum would extend moral support to the farmers' agitation but would not go on strike because a notice is required to be served for the purpose. However, he said the members of the ten central trade unions would wear black badges, stage protest peacefully and also hold rallies after or before their work schedule.

PTI

Jet Airways may resume operations next year: Jalan-Kalrock consortium

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The consortium of UAE-based businessman Murari Lal Jalan and London's Kalrock Capital - which has won the bid to revive Jet Airways - on Monday said it expects to start operating the airline by the summer of 2021.

The consortium is awaiting the NCLT and other regulatory

approvals, including reinstatement of slots and bilateral traffic rights by the civil aviation ministry and Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). It is also planning to launch dedicated freighter services once the carrier takes off the ground again. The committee of creditors (CoC) has already approved the airline's revival plan submitted by the consortium in October.

| NIFTY 50 | | | | | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|--|
| SCRIP | OPEN | High | LOW | LTP | CHANGE | |
| NIFTY 50 | 13,264.85 | 13,366.65 | 13,241.95 | 13,355.75 | 97.2 | |
| UPL | 455 | 478.2 | 453.55 | 476.5 | 20.8 | |
| ADANIPORTS | 461 | 474.9 | 459 | 470 | 16.3 | |
| HINDUNILVR | 2,189.25 | 2,259.60 | 2,187.00 | 2,255.00 | 70.8 | |
| BHARTIARTL | 498 | 510.5 | 494.6 | 509.5 | 15.75 | |
| ONGC | 91.15 | 94 | 90.75 | 92.6 | 2.75 | |
| ITC | 198.2 | 203.75 | 197.6 | 203.75 | 5.55 | |
| COALINDIA | 133.3 | 137.2 | 133 | 136.7 | 3.4 | |
| GAIL | 120.75 | 124.4 | 120.6 | 122.85 | 3.05 | |
| HDFC | 2,240.00 | 2,309.70 | 2,221.20 | 2,303.00 | 57.1 | |
| DRREDDY | 4,930.00 | 5,074.00 | 4,905.10 | 5,028.45 | 119.9 | |
| SBI | 263.8 | 271.45 | 263 | 269.5 | 6 | |
| INDUSINDBK | 915 | 953.5 | 913.2 | 933.3 | 19.65 | |
| TECHM | 915.5 | 990.85 | 914 | 942 | 18.9 | |
| SUNPHARMA | 570.35 | 591.5 | 567.05 | 580.6 | 11.55 | |
| LT | 1,154.80 | 1,171.90 | 1,144.00 | 1,169.55 | 20.05 | |
| ASIANPAINT | 2,440.00 | 2,478.80 | 2,437.00 | 2,474.00 | 35.25 | |
| ICICIBANK | 505 | 515.6 | 504.15 | 509 | 6.95 | |
| IOC | 90.5 | 92.2 | 90.4 | 91.6 | 1.2 | |
| NTPC | 99 | 101.15 | 98.7 | 99.65 | 1.1 | |
| HDFCLIFE | 645.1 | 651.4 | 641.85 | 650.2 | 6.95 | |
| CIPLA | 766.95 | 782.5 | 766 | 773.3 | 6.35 | |
| INFEY | 1,147.30 | 1,153.00 | 1,136.00 | 1,142.95 | 8.3 | |
| BPCL | 392.15 | 405 | 391.45 | 394.9 | 2.6 | |
| RELIANCE | 1,940.60 | 1,965.00 | 1,940.60 | 1,958.35 | 11.6 | |
| TCS | 2,715.00 | 2,744.00 | 2,706.15 | 2,741.00 | 13.45 | |
| GRASIM | 99.95 | 99.94 | 99.25 | 99.4 | 3.9 | |
| BAJAJ-AUTO | 3,311.40 | 3,335.00 | 3,267.80 | 3,320.00 | 8.6 | |
| M&M | 750 | 755.85 | 744.05 | 752.3 | 1.75 | |
| EICHERMOT | 2,553.50 | 2,573.55 | 2,540.00 | 2,558.35 | 4.85 | |
| AXISBANK | 616.95 | 624.4 | 612.45 | 615 | 0.5 | |
| DIABLAB | 3,704.00 | 3,741.95 | 3,663.45 | 3,714.95 | 3 | |
| TERAMOTORS | 184.45 | 186.45 | 182.7 | 183.9 | -0.25 | |
| HEROMOTOCO | 3,179.90 | 3,217.95 | 3,135.60 | 3,173.00 | -7.45 | |
| BAJAJFINSV | 9,064.00 | 9,129.00 | 8,955.60 | 9,030.00 | -22.45 | |
| SHERCEEM | 25,000.00 | 25,089.00 | 24,724.00 | 24,831.65 | -81.2 | |
| POWERGRID | 193 | 197.25 | 192.5 | 193.65 | -0.7 | |
| HCLTECH | 858 | 859.95 | 850.4 | 855 | -3.5 | |
| BRITANNIA | 3,650.00 | 3,670.00 | 3,612.10 | 3,628.60 | -19.6 | |
| WIPRO | 362 | 362.75 | 357.5 | 358.7 | -2.1 | |
| HINDALCO | 252.3 | 253.95 | 248.5 | 251.7 | -0.6 | |
| TITAN | 1,436.00 | 1,436.00 | 1,418.00 | 1,421.75 | -9.4 | |
| ULTRACEMCO | 5,120.00 | 5,176.00 | 5,037.00 | 5,056.00 | -35.4 | |
| HDFCBANK | 1,375.00 | 1,379.95 | 1,358.10 | 1,375.50 | -10.1 | |
| MARUTI | 7,828.80 | 7,835.00 | 7,690.00 | 7,738.05 | -65.1 | |
| BAFINANCE | 4,870.00 | 4,924.95 | 4,815.00 | 4,822.00 | -53.35 | |
| TATASTEEL | 62.6 | 62.9 | 60.95 | 61.55 | -7.2 | |
| JSWSTEEL | 370.8 | 373.2 | 362.3 | 365.5 | -4.9 | |
| KOTAKBANK | 1,849.45 | 1,856.00 | 1,805.00 | 1,821.15 | -25.1 | |
| NESTLEIND | 17,651.00 | 17,900.00 | 17,449.85 | 17,572.50 | -256.2 | |
| SBI LIFE | 863.5 | 866 | 848 | 850 | -13 | |

| NIFTY NEXT 50 | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|--|
| SCRIP | OPEN | High | LOW | LTP | CHANGE | |
| NIFTY NEXT 50 | 31,513.35 | 31,784.40 | 31,448.05 | 31,724.75 | 285.65 | |
| HDFC AMC | 2,611.70 | 2,722.30 | 2,600.00 | 2,722.10 | 130.95 | |
| BANDHANBNK | 395 | 418.4 | 394 | 410.7 | 17.3 | |
| LUPIN | 399 | 969.3 | 993 | 966.1 | 32.8 | |
| DMART | 2,441.90 | 2,540.50 | 2,413.00 | 2,518.00 | 76.1 | |
| INFRA TEL | 237.65 | 249.4 | 234.15 | 243.65 | 6.3 | |
| PFCE | 116.4 | 118.4 | 115.1 | 118.25 | 2.75 | |
| NMDC | 107.95 | 110.75 | 107.3 | 109.3 | 2.45 | |
| PETRONET | 263 | 268.2 | 261 | 268 | 5.9 | |
| BOSCH LTD | 13,177.00 | 13,550.00 | 13,065.65 | 13,414.00 | 294.35 | |
| PEL | 1,474.80 | 1,507.00 | 1,461.40 | 1,498.60 | 30.25 | |
| ALKEM | 2,865.00 | 2,940.00 | 2,858.00 | 2,920.00 | 56.6 | |
| BIOCON | 444.85 | 453.3 | 437 | 450 | 7.35 | |
| BANKBARODA | 59.2 | 61 | 58.5 | 60 | 0.95 | |
| NOKWELL-N | 585 | 590.95 | 581.15 | 588.4 | 8.8 | |
| MAURITI | 4,230.00 | 4,334.25 | 4,225.05 | 4,299.00 | 63 | |
| MARICO | 395 | 401.9 | 391.4 | 400 | 4.95 | |
| ICICIPRULI | 479.05 | 492.9 | 475.85 | 482 | 5.8 | |
| TORNTPHARM | 2,660.25 | 2,705.00 | 2,611.95 | 2,693.30 | 28.05 | |
| GICRE | 140 | 142.85 | 139.35 | 140.65 | 1.4 | |
| AUROPHARMA | 902 | 923.4 | 897.1 | 907.75 | 7.1 | |
| UBL | 1,090.50 | 1,112.90 | 1,088.05 | 1,098.55 | 6.9 | |
| TATACONSUM | 563.95 | 570 | 561 | 567 | 3.5 | |
| GODREJCEP | 712 | 717 | 706.45 | 713.8 | 3.8 | |
| PIDILITIND | 1,606.95 | 1,630.90 | 1,604.00 | 1,614.50 | 7.8 | |
| ADANITRANS | 439.5 | 444.85 | 426.6 | 438.55 | 2 | |
| SIEMENS | 1,528.50 | 1,555.00 | 1,521.00 | 1,534.65 | 5.9 | |
| OFSS | 3,065.00 | 3,068.95 | 3,035.00 | 3,053.00 | 10.7 | |
| IGL | 478.6 | 484.45 | 473.85 | 480.1 | 3.65 | |
| ABBOTINDIA | 15,250.00 | 15,330.00 | 15,230.00 | 15,290.30 | 43.25 | |
| PNB | 35.6 | 36.4 | 35.4 | 35.75 | 0.1 | |
| CADILAHC | 471.9 | 480.95 | 466.85 | 472 | 0.95 | |
| PGHI | 11,000.00 | 11,050.00 | 10,851.15 | 10,956.75 | 16.1 | |
| COLPAL | 1,525.00 | 1,558.00 | 1,525.00 | 1,542.65 | 1.85 | |
| MOTHERSUNI | 158.85 | 161.2 | 158.55 | 159 | 0.15 | |
| MUTHOOTFIN | 1,175.00 | 1,185.00 | 1,168.00 | 1,173.00 | 1 | |
| BERGEPAINT | 671 | 679.8 | 666.35 | 671.5 | 0.3 | |
| INDIGO | 1,744.00 | 1,768.00 | 1,720.00 | 1,745.00 | 0.2 | |
| AMBUJACEM | 256.25 | 256.3 | 250.55 | 252.5 | -0.05 | |
| HINDPETRO | 218 | 219.8 | 215.15 | 216.6 | -0.05 | |
| ICICIGI | 1,457.90 | 1,457.90 | 1,433.20 | 1,449.00 | -1.25 | |
| DABUR | 502.6 | 505.5 | 499 | 501.7 | -0.6 | |
| ITI | 3,250.75 | 3,339.00 | 3,235.00 | 3,259.00 | -6.15 | |
| ACC | 1,682.60 | 1,682.60 | 1,637.70 | 1,658.00 | -7.95 | |
| HAVELLS | 829.45 | 839.9 | 823.6 | 825 | -4.5 | |
| CONCOR | 412 | 415.5 | 409 | 410 | -2.65 | |
| HINDZINC | 242 | 243.9 | 239 | 239.45 | -1.75 | |
| BAJAJHLING | 3,154.00 | 3,199.00 | 3,104.90 | 3,114.85 | -23.2 | |
| SBCARD | 855 | 864 | 844.15 | 847 | -11.85 | |
| DLF | 211 | 211.3 | 205.65 | 207.6 | -3.7 | |
| ADANIGREEN | 1,135.00 | 1,140.00 | 1,073.30 | 1,101.00 | -28.75 | |

BSE 500

| Script | Open | High | Low | LTP | SBLIFE | 865 | 866 | 848 | 851.5 | TATACOMM | 990 | 1072.05 | 990 | 1040.25 | PHOENIXLTD | 743 | 754.6 | 725.8 | 733.6 | SCHAEFFLER | 3816.05 | 4310.9 | 3816.05 | 4219.8 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| IRCTC | 1588.95 | 1720 | 1584.95 | 1690.8 | TITAN | 1437 | 1437 | 1417.5 | 1425.25 | ADANITRANS | 440 | 444.85 | 427.4 | 439.8 | SUVENPHAR | 378.15 | 405 | 378.15 | 397.15 | KEI | 429.75 | 431.25 | 425.75 | 428.85 |
| SBI | 263.45 | 271.35 | 263.1 | 269.7 | INDIGO | 1740 | 1767.7 | 1722.65 | 1740.5 | TATAMTRDVR | 77.9 | 78.6 | 75.65 | 76.15 | UFLEX | 395 | 398.5 | 391.1 | 395.5 | QUESS | 499.25 | 509 | 493.6 | 500.85 |
| ICICIBANK | 504.1 | 515.5 | 504.1 | 510.65 | ACC | 1689.3 | 1689.3 | 1636.85 | 1660.05 | ITI | 3270 | 3339.65 | 3234.5 | 3269.65 | CSBBANK | 223 | 228.35 | 223 | 224.6 | PNBHousing | 385 | 385 | 377.4 | 378.2 |
| TATACHEM | 505.9 | 526.8 | 498.45 | 508.9 | ADANIGREEN | 1130.2 | 1140.35 | 1072.75 | 1108.55 | HINDZINC | 241 | 243.6 | 239 | 239.85 | JAGRAN | 42 | 44.25 | 41.85 | 44 | STARCEMENT | 99.4 | 99.6 | 96.35 | 97.85 |
| HDFCBANK | 1377 | 1379.4 | 1358.15 | 1372.15 | BHARATFORG | 561 | 561 | 544.5 | 549.05 | SOUTH BANK | 9.14 | 9.14 | 8.71 | 8.96 | TATAMETALI | 600 | 624.6 | 600 | 602.65 | HONAUT | 31000 | 31250 | 30871.95 | 30909.4 |
| BHARTIARTL | 497 | 510 | 495.4 | 508.95 | DELTACORP | 151 | 156.2 | 148.8 | 154.05 | AVANTI | 536.8 | 544 | 535 | 542.6 | VBL | 836.25 | 865 | 836.25 | 860.25 | ORIENTCEM | 79.7 | 81 | 79 | 80.6 |
| TATAMOTORS | 184.7 | 186.45 | 182.8 | 183.55 | JUSTDIAL | 607 | 643.55 | 604 | 631.4 | CANFINHOME | 481.25 | 502.2 | 481.25 | 490.9 | GHCL | 204.4 | 208 | 199.15 | 202.1 | GODREJAGRO | 520 | 527 | 508.5 | 519.35 |
| INFY | 1144 | 1151.4 | 1136.15 | 1144.05 | AASAS | 1693 | 1705 | 1667.55 | 1683.7 | TATAINVEST | 990 | 1075 | 990 | 1050.45 | DBL | 408.5 | 418.75 | 404.25 | 412.05 | GSPL | 222 | 224 | 220.4 | 222.2 |
| RELIANCE | 1942 | 1965 | 1942 | 1958.05 | PETRONET | 262 | 268 | 260.8 | 266.8 | ABCAPTAL | 90.5 | 93.1 | 90.5 | 92.25 | RAJESHSEXPO | 492 | 496 | 486 | 492.9 | IRCON | 92 | 92.6 | 90.35 | 90.8 |
| HDFC | 2246.4 | 2308.9 | 2222.2 | 2303.25 | SUMICHEM | 312.85 | 321.85 | 303.7 | 317.75 | HIMATSEIDE | 130.1 | 138.65 | 128.2 | 132.65 | ATUL | 6200 | 6218.75 | 6121 | 6139.65 | JCHAC | 2180 | 2246.55 | 21503 | 2226.9 |
| SRTRANSFIN | 1006.15 | 1086.75 | 1006.15 | 1062.95 | SCI | 64.65 | 74.2 | 64.65 | 71.3 | FSL | 77 | 77 | 73.65 | 74.45 | NESCO | 576.75 | 579.9 | 562 | 565.05 | TIMKEN | 1122 | 1166.5 | 1122 | 1163.5 |
| HINDUNILVR | 2188.15 | 2259.1 | 2187.05 | 2255.75 | HAVELLS | 828 | 839.9 | 823.9 | 825 | KPITTECH | 108.4 | 115 | 108.4 | 113.75 | CUMMINSIND | 567 | 578.9 | 564.8 | 567.55 | ERIS | 535 | 535 | 523 | 529.95 |
| INDUSINDBK | 918.9 | 935.2 | 914 | 935.6 | MOTHERSUMI | 158.5 | 161.1 | 158.5 | 159.05 | INDOSTAR | 358.1 | 412 | 358.1 | 372.9 | INFIBEAM | 91 | 95.5 | 91 | 92.95 | BIRLACORPN | 770.3 | 778.75 | 766.35 | 772.45 |
| DREDDY | 4935 | 5072.95 | 4905.9 | 5026 | HEROMOTOCOR | 3182 | 3162.55 | 3137.4 | 3173.75 | INDIACEM | 154 | 158.25 | 153.4 | 154.25 | DCMSHRIRAM | 388.7 | 395.05 | 381 | 391.75 | GODREJIND | 427 | 435 | 427 | 434.05 |
| BAJFINANCE | 4874.95 | 4923.15 | 4810.7 | 4825.25 | POWERGRID | 193.8 | 197.1 | 192.45 | 193.55 | PTC | 60.2 | 61.8 | 59.65 | 61.45 | FCONSUMER | 8.81 | 8.45 | 8.21 | 82.9 | GICRE | 140.95 | 142.6 | 139.45 | 141.45 |
| GLENMARK | 503.4 | 541.2 | 502.1 | 532.3 | BAJAJ-AUTO | 3324 | 3331.1 | 3269.8 | 3319.9 | MAHABANK | 14.4 | 15.15 | 14.31 | 15.08 | SHILPAMED | 456.2 | 464.5 | 454.95 | 457.55 | NETWORK18 | 36.7 | 38.25 | 36.7 | 38.15 |
| AXISBANK | 616 | 624.25 | 613 | 619.05 | EQUITAS | 67.25 | 71.4 | 66.9 | 69.9 | SLTTECH | 162.55 | 169 | 162.55 | 167.25 | SANOHI | 7905 | 8049.25 | 7835.1 | 8023.65 | LINDENDIA | 892.3 | 915 | 892.3 | 906.95 |
| ONGC | 90.85 | 94 | 90.85 | 91.95 | RAYMOND | 333.1 | 344.4 | 333.1 | 341.05 | UJIVJAN | 277.6 | 286.65 | 277.6 | 283.4 | RALLIS | 292 | 296.55 | 290 | 293.6 | LAXMINIACH | 4677.95 | 4766.45 | 4587.05 | 4622.75 |
| IRBBLANK | 237.15 | 244.8 | 230.6 | 242.9 | NESTLEIND | 17730 | 17899 | 17455.3 | 17560.15 | BDL | 330.85 | 345.3 | 328.85 | 342.45 | SUNTECK | 328.9 | 339.35 | 326.35 | 293.6 | MHIRL | 204.9 | 207.9 | 199.55 | 206 |
| TATASTEEL | 623 | 628.95 | 609.75 | 614.45 | LICHSGEIN | 348.5 | 354.5 | 344.5 | 348.55 | CUB | 180 | 181 | 175.15 | 176.05 | FORTIS | 142.5 | 145.7 | 142.5 | 145.05 | SOMANYCER | 301.15 | 307.55 | 296.3 | 305.9 |
| KOTAKBANK | 1847 | 1855.7 | 1805 | 1820.65 | IFCI | 8.09 | 8.7 | 7.75 | 8.7 | FINCABLES | 343 | 361.95 | 339.2 | 355.9 | VTIL | 949.75 | 997.1 | 924.75 | 967.55 | GALAXYSURF | 1906.95 | 1936.1 | 1904 | 1909 |
| SUNPHARMA | 570 | 591.5 | 567.25 | 582.3 | INDHOTEL | 128.2 | 139 | 128.2 | 132.65 | SRF | 5350 | 5420.1 | 5336.45 | 5362.7 | PARAGMILK | 121.7 | 125.35 | 117.2 | 118.2 | OBEROIRLTY | 523.55 | 534 | 518.5 | 522.45 |
| ZEEL | 208 | 216.55 | 206.5 | 215.75 | COLPAL | 1528 | 1558.45 | 1528 | 1543.2 | FDC | 344 | 367.85 | 343.55 | 364.4 | IEX | 217 | 217.85 | 214 | 214.35 | LAPOLIA | 229.05 | 233 | 220 | 223.9 |
| HINDALCO | 252.9 | 239.55 | 248.75 | 253.3 | BALKRISIND | 1665 | 1669.9 | 1632.55 | 1665.55 | GODFREYPHLP | 908.95 | 944 | 908.95 | 930.25 | OIL | 107 | 110.1 | 107 | 108.6 | INDIAMART | 5185 | 5185 | 5085.7 | 5118.5 |
| ADANIEXPORTS | 460.25 | 474.9 | 460 | 471.45 | SBICARD | 858 | 859.4 | 844.4 | 846.8 | RCF | 51 | 53.1 | 50.85 | 52.6 | WELCORP | 126.8 | 131.6 | 126 | 128.85 | BALRAMCHIN | 166.5 | 166.9 | 164.3 | 165.7 |
| IDEA | 9.77 | 9.83 | 9.56 | 9.61 | IGL | 477.5 | 485.4 | 474 | 480.85 | ASTRAZEN | 4550 | 4620 | 4530 | 4605.3 | TENTPOWER | 322 | 325.85 | 321.5 | 324.05 | PGLH | 6830 | 6857.9 | 6740 | 6777.05 |
| SAIL | 55.1 | 57.05 | 54.5 | 55.05 | TVSMOTOR | 50.5 | 517.3 | 497.85 | 510.6 | PPC | 116 | 118.1 | 115.05 | 118.1 | BALMALWRIE | 117 | 118.1 | 116.5 | 117 | IFBIND | 805 | 839 | 805 | 832 |
| ADANIPOWER | 61.8 | 61.8 | 54.25 | 56.8 | RVNL | 24.5 | 24.85 | 24.25 | 24.65 | AFPLE | 3899.9 | 3920.2 | 3712 | 3743.9 | OFSS | 3040 | 3060.95 | 3036.05 | 3049.05 | PRSMJOHNSN | 88.85 | 89.15 | 86 | 87.65 |
| ITC | 198.65 | 203.75 | 197.65 | 203.1 | TRIDENT | 9.47 | 10.19 | 9.26 | 9.97 | ISEC | 454 | 465.9 | 450.05 | 454.7 | ECLERX | 780.25 | 803.95 | 780.25 | 787.85 | SONATSOFTW | 345 | 349.5 | 344.5 | 347.55 |
| IBULHSGFIN | 195.8 | 206.4 | 193.8 | 203.05 | AMARAJAABAT | 917 | 924.5 | 912.7 | 918.7 | DIXON | 11378 | 11569 | 11353.5 | 11531.3 | SHK | 138.8 | 140.8 | 135.1 | 135.95 | BASF | 1632.35 | 1657.5 | 1615.5 | 1635.8 |
| CANBK | 111.55 | 119.2 | 111.35 | 117.55 | BINDPETRO* | 217.25 | 219.7 | 215.2 | 216.6 | JUBILANT | 825.2 | 848 | 825.2 | 838.65 | UCOBANK | 13.11 | 13.38 | 13 | 13.17 | MMTC | 19.9 | 20.4 | 19.75 | 20.15 |
| PNB | 35.5 | 36.4 | 35.45 | 35.8 | BOMDYEING | 73.55 | 77.8 | 73.55 | 76.9 | GRMINFRA | 26 | 26.65 | 25.95 | 26.3 | NLCINDIA | 53.85 | 55.35 | 53.85 | 54.7 | PGHH | 10950 | 11045.05 | 10879.1 | 10973 |
| LT | 1151 | 1171.9 | 1144.7 | 1169.6 | STAR | 799 | 843.7 | 788.45 | 825.2 | GMM | 3835.2 | 3845 | 3786.05 | 3793.3 | PNCINFRA | 185.95 | 185.95 | 182.85 | 184.25 | RATNAMANI | 1670.65 | 1694 | 1643.2 | 1688.05 |
| M&MFIN | 168 | 178.7 | 168 | 176.55 | EICHEMOT* | 2570 | 2578.8 | 2540 | 2560.75 | CENTRALBK | 14.9 | 15 | 14.57 | 14.95 | JYOTHYLAB | 148 | 148 | 145.45 | 146.15 | ENDURANCE | 1168.6 | 1185 | 1157.4 | 1160.9 |
| ICICIPRULI | 480 | 492.65 | 476.35 | 481.95 | LEMMTREET | 40 | 45.35 | 40 | 44.5 | SIEMENS | 1512.2 | 1553.85 | 1512.2 | 1536.3 | CATHERYAL | 568 | 587.65 | 537.9 | 543.05 | VARROC | 439 | 457 | 420.05 | 423 |
| BANKBARODA | 59.5 | 60.95 | 58.5 | 60.15 | GNFC | 228 | 244.7 | 223.1 | 241.3 | ALKYLAMINE | 3970 | 4040 | 3870 | 3896.25 | PERSISTENT | 1220.2 | 1227.95 | 1209.25 | 1219.2 | TTKPRESTIG | 5918.75 | 5894.8 | 5808.15 | 5842.95 |
| SUNTV | 447 | 464.8 | 446.45 | 463.55 | MCX | 1568 | 1592 | 155.5 | 1564.05 | CHAMBLEFIRE | 199.9 | 208.2 | 198.7 | 206.45 | COFORGE | 2446.4 | 2482.45 | 2446.4 | 2453.95 | GPPL | 81.2 | 92.6 | 89.5 | 92.2 |
| LUPIN | 938 | 969 | 933.65 | 967.3 | ITI | 126.45 | 135.65 | 126.2 | 131.1 | EIHOTEL | 99.35 | 103.65 | 97.5 | 101.5 | KALPATPOWR | 337.95 | 366 | 337.5 | 349.85 | GRINDWELL | 650 | 672.65 | 641 | 662.05 |
| BANDHANBNK | 394 | 414.7 | 394 | 410.75 | APOLLOHOSP | 2433.25 | 2467 | 2419.45 | 2433.6 | JAICORPLTD | 95.5 | 98.25 | 94.2 | 96 | KPRMILL | 824 | 849.4 | 809.45 | 840.85 | EMAMILTD | 422 | 426.1 | 419 | 421.5 |
| TATAPOWER | 72.9 | 73.35 | 71.2 | 71.6 | NMDC | 108 | 110.8 | 107 | 109.35 | AARTIND | 1210 | 1264.6 | 1194.3 | 1248.35 | COROMANDEL | 789.3 | 805.65 | 784.95 | 786.25 | CESC | 630 | 632.6 | 623.65 | 627.4 |
| FORCEMOT | 1284 | 1511.8 | 1280 | 1509.4 | BOSCHLTD | 13150 | 13545 | 13087.05 | 13434.25 | NAVINFLOUR | 2595 | 2613 | 2565 | 2579.35 | KNRCOR | 314 | 317 | 309.8 | 315.5 | SFL | 1660.65 | 1725 | 1660.55 | 1679.1 |
| GRANULES | 421.75 | 424.9 | 391.3 | 392.95 | TATAELXSI | 1669.8 | 1721 | 1669.8 | 1696 | HSCIL | 33.55 | 44.3 | 43.55 | 43.9 | MPHASIS | 1364.95 | 1364.95 | 1317 | 1321.65 | PRESTIGE | 289.9 | 294 | 287.55 | 288.9 |
| BAJAJFINSV | 9097 | 9124.9 | 8959.2 | 9045 | IDBI | 39.75 | 41.95 | 39.75 | 41.3 | COCHINSHIP | 364.25 | 372.7 | 364.25 | 369.75 | JKTYRE | 81.5 | 81.75 | 81 | 81.2 | VINATOIRGA | 1147.85 | 1156 | 1137 | 1143.5 |
| MARUTI | 7805.35 | 7831.9 | 7689.8 | 7740.15 | CAPPL | 496.5 | 525 | 493.55 | 513.4 | WELSPUNIND | 66.8 | 69.4 | 65.2 | 68.25 | DALBHARAT | 1132 | 1146 | 1110 | 1120.7 | GARBIFRES | 2190 | 2195 | 2157.45 | 2166.05 |
| COALINDIA | 133.2 | 137.2 | 132.95 | 136.8 | TRENT | 682.95 | 698 | 672.7 | 692.25 | ASTRAL | 1501.55 | 1503.3 | 1443 | 1454.5 | MOTILALOOPS | 653 | 676.6 | 647.45 | 649.65 | SUNDRMFAST | 535 | 550 | 530.3 | 538.35 |
| JUBLFOOD | 2575 | 2580 | 2510.05 | 2548.55 | RECLTD | 127.3 | 130.9 | 127.3 | 130.5 | BAJAJHLONG | 3150 | 3163 | 3103 | 3110.4 | BLUEDART | 3885 | 3993 | 3885 | 3952 | DRCORP | 88.9 | 91 | 88 | 89.95 |
| L&TFH | 88.3 | 92.35 | 88.3 | 91.25 | BBTC | 1285 | 1384 | 1282.2 | 1356.7 | BEMIL | 738.1 | 753.25 | 731.05 | 741.25 | AMBER | 2335 | 2341.95 | 2281.75 | 2291.05 | TVSRRICHAK | 1640 | 1640 | 1600 | 1615 |
| VEDL | 129.45 | 133.45 | 129.45 | 132.05 | NBCC | 28.9 | 29.1 | 28.4 | 28.85 | GSFC | 74.3 | 76.25 | 73.25 | 75.4 | SKFINDIA | 1684 | 1705.2 | 1663.2 | 1677.9 | TIINDIA | 840 | 840 | 810.7 | 828.2 |
| HDFCLIFE | 645.8 | 651.15 | 642.3 | 649.6 | SWSOLAR | 243.7 | 289.55 | 241.4 | 285.7 | METROPOLIS | 1999 | 2021.05 | 1954.9 | 1963.95 | SIS | 467.9 | 469.5 | 454 | 459.15 | TCSNBRANDS | 400.05 | 434.55 | 400.05 | 422.85 |
| DMART | 2442.05 | 2540 | 2415 | 2526.55 | DISHTV | 10.98 | 11.7 | 10.98 | 11.45 | FLOXELXIND | 658 | 668.55 | 650.4 | 661.9 | WESTLIFE | 429 | 446 | 427.75 | 439.7 | REDINGTON | 135.4 | 135.9</ | | |

AHEAD OF BIDEN'S PRESIDENCY

China calls for reset of its troubled ties with US

Beijing: China on Monday called for a reset of its troubled ties with the US under the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden to rebuild mutual trust and end months of hostility between the world's two largest economies. President Donald Trump's four-years in power is regarded as the worst phase in US-China relations as the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) headed by President Xi Jinping struggled to deal with Washington under an unpredictable American leader.

"The top priority is that both sides should work together to remove all kinds of disruptions and obstacles, and achieve a smooth transition in China-US relations," Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said during a video meeting with business leaders from the US-China Business Council. "At the same time, based on the direction of mutual benefits for our two peoples and countries, we need to strive to restart dialogue, return to the right track and rebuild trust in this next phase of relations," he was quoted as saying by the Hong Kong-based South China



Morning Post.

Trump, a Republican, pushed aggressively on all aspects of US-China ties, including with his relentless trade war, challenging China's military hold on the disputed South China Sea, its constant threats to Taiwan and branding coronavirus as 'China virus' after it emerged from Wuhan in December last year. The Trump administration also lobbied hard with allies against Chinese telecoms giant Huawei, sanctioning Chinese officials over human rights abuses in Muslim-majority Xinjiang. Earlier this month, Biden, a Democrat, confirmed that he

will not make any "immediate moves" to lift the punitive tariffs that the Trump administration has imposed on imports of Chinese goods before a full review of the existing phase one trade deal and consultations with US allies, dampening China's hopes that it would be able to renegotiate the trade agreement with the new US administration. A Write-up in official media here, however, say Biden's tenure could usher in a "buffering period" for already-tense China-

US relations, and offer an opportunity for breakthroughs in resuming high-level communication and rebuilding mutual strategic trust between the two countries. Outlining his eagerly awaited China policy, Biden in a recent interview with The New York Times said that the "best China strategy" was to get all traditional US allies in Asia and Europe "on the same page", which will be his major priority "in the opening weeks" of his presidency. **PTI**

Trump cementing death penalty legacy up to Biden inaugural

Chicago: As Donald Trump's presidency winds down, his administration is throttling up the pace of federal executions despite a surge of coronavirus cases in prisons, announcing plans for five starting Thursday and concluding just days before the Jan 20 inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden. If the five go off as planned, it will make 13 exe-

cutions since July when the Republican administration resumed putting inmates to death after a 17-year hiatus and will cement Trump's legacy as the most prolific execution president in over 130 years. He'll leave office having executed about a quarter of all federal death-row prisoners, despite waning support for capital punishment among

both Democrats and Republicans. In a recent interview with The Associated Press, Attorney General William Barr defended the extension of executions into the post-election period, saying he'll likely schedule more before he departs the Justice Department. A Biden administration, he said, should keep it up. **AP**

Hong Kong police arrest 8 over university protest

Hong Kong: Hong Kong authorities on Monday arrested eight people in connection with an unauthorised protest at a university campus last month, police and local media said, amid a widening crackdown on dissent in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory. The arrests were reportedly made in relation to a demonstration at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in which over 100 people protested a decision to hold graduation ceremonies online. Such ceremonies are often used as a way for students to express political views. Some protesters had called for Hong Kong's independence, and held up signs that read



"Liberate Hong Kong, Revolution of our times," which are considered to have secessionist notions and are outlawed under the city's national security law. Police said they arrested eight people for an unauthorised protest and inciting secession, but did not specify who they were or whether the

arrests were related to the university protest. Arthur Yeung, a graduate from the university who also ran in the city's district council elections last year, is suspected to be among those arrested. A post on Yeung's Facebook page said he was arrested at his home on Monday morning. Two district councillors, Isaac Lee and Eason Chan, were also arrested, according to posts on their respective Facebook pages. The eight arrested are currently being investigated by national security officers, according to local newspaper South China Morning Post, which cited unnamed sources. **AP**

Venezuelans wait for results from boycotted congress vote

AP ■ CARACAS

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro's socialist party was poised to gain control of the National Assembly, the country's last major independent institution, in congressional elections boycotted by the main opposition coalition. Official results had not yet been released by late Sunday night, but analysts they say are a near-foregone conclusion with the vote largely shunned by rival candidates and declared a sham by the US, European Union and several other nations.

Pakistan reports 3,795 new COVID-19 cases

Islamabad: Pakistan on Monday recorded 3,795 coronavirus cases, the highest spike in daily new infections since July 2, raising the nationwide case count to 4,20,294, the health ministry said. The country also reported 37 more deaths in the last 24 hours, pushing the total number of fatalities to 8,398. A total of 2,539 virus patients are in critical condition, said the Ministry of National Health Services. The 3,795-new cases has also raised the country-wide coronavirus positivity rate to 9.71 per cent. It was also the highest daily case count since July 2 when the country reported 4,087 cases, the Dawn newspaper said. Monday was also the fifth straight day that more than 3,000 new cases have been reported. **PTI**

HALEY OPPOSES BIDEN'S PLAN TO REJOIN IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

Washington: Nikki Haley, the US envoy to the United Nations, on Monday opposed President-elect Joe Biden's plan to re-join the Iranian nuclear deal, saying the Trump administration's sanctions on Tehran deprived the regime of the money it needed to harm American military. "The Iran deal is only as reliable & trustworthy as the partner who signs the agreement & Iran is neither of those.

Iran continues to enrich uranium, sponsor terrorists & call for Israel & America's destruction. Members of the Iranian parliament recently chanted 'Death to America,' Haley tweeted. In an interview to The New York Times, President-elect Joe Biden had expressed his desire to rejoin the Iranian nuclear deal, which was one of the key foreign policy accomplishments of the previous Obama Administration. **PTI**

New roads pave way for massive growth of Israeli settlement

Jerusalem: In the coming years, Israelis will be able to commute into Jerusalem and Tel Aviv from settlements deep inside the West Bank via highways, tunnels and overpasses that cut a wide berth around Palestinian towns. Rights groups say the new roads will set the stage for explosive settlement growth, even if the incoming US administration somehow convinces Israel to curb housing construction. The costly infrastructure projects signal that Israel intends to keep large swaths of the occupied territory in any peace deal and would make it even harder to establish a viable Palestinian state. "This is not another hundred housing units there or here," said Yehuda Shaul, an Israeli activist who has spent months researching and mapping out the new projects. "This is de facto annexation on steroids." Construction already is underway on a huge tunnel that Shaul says will one day allow settlers from Maale Adumim, a sprawling settlement east of Jerusalem, to drive into the city and onward to Tel Aviv without passing through a military checkpoint or even hitting a traffic light. South of Jerusalem, work is underway to expand the

main highway leading to the Gush Etzion settlement bloc and settlements farther south, with tunnels and overpasses designed to bypass Palestinian villages and refugee camps. Palestinians will be allowed to drive on many of the new roads, but the infrastructure will be of limited use to them because they need permits to enter Israel or annexed east Jerusalem. Israel seized the West Bank and east Jerusalem in the 1967 war and has since built a far-flung network of settlements that house nearly 700,000 Jewish settlers. The Palestinians want both territories for their future state and view the settlements as a violation of international law and an obstacle to peace — a position with wide international support. Supporters of settlements view the West Bank and Jerusalem as the historical and biblical heart of Israel, seeing the settlements as a way of preventing any partition of the Holy Land. But most Israelis live and work in the main cities. Except for an ideological minority, most Israelis would be uncomfortable living deep inside the West Bank, where two-lane roads pass through military checkpoints and Palestinian villages, and where clashes

and rock-throwing can erupt at any time. The new roads promise to change all that, transforming settlements into affordable suburban communities with safe, easy access to cities and public transportation. Shaul estimates the new infrastructure could facilitate plans for more than 50,000 settler housing units in the West Bank and another 6,000 in east Jerusalem. "People don't bring roads, roads bring people," he said. Shaul, an army conscript during the Israeli military's suppression of the second Palestinian uprising in the early 2000s, is a co-founder of Breaking the Silence, a group of former Israeli soldiers who document human rights abuses in the occupied territories. In recent months, he has turned his attention to Israeli planning. His findings are based on minutes from several meetings held in recent years by parliamentary subcommittees charged with improving West Bank infrastructure. He also cites a strategic plan presented by Transportation Minister Miri Regev, a hard-line supporter of settlements, to a group of settlement mayors last month. In a statement after the meeting, Regev called it "an

exciting day for the settlements and for the state of Israel, which builds and is building in all areas of the homeland." She said it provided a "holistic vision" for "a future development plan for the region." The ministry did not respond to requests for comment. Oded Revivi, the mayor of the Efrat settlement in the West Bank who attended the meeting, said the draft plan was "very thorough," and that the ministry was open to suggestions, "taking into account the needs of both populations, both the Jews and the Arabs." He said US President Donald Trump's Mideast plan, which would allow Israel to annex about a third of the West Bank, including all its settlements, had proven that the settlements are not an obstacle to peace. That plan was immediately rejected by the Palestinians and is likely to be scrapped by President-elect Joe Biden, who opposes annexation. Alon Cohen Lifshitz, an expert at Bimkom, an Israeli rights group that focuses on urban planning, said the main aim of the road projects is to create a "matrix of control" that ensures the free movement of Israelis while further fragmenting the areas governed by the Palestinian Authority. **AP**

Indonesian police kill 6 supporters of firebrand cleric

Jakarta: Indonesian police early Monday fatally shot six followers of a firebrand cleric who returned last month from a 3-year exile in Saudi Arabia after criminal charges against him were dropped, officials said, prompting fears of more violence. Jakarta Police Chief Muhammad Fadil Imran said police were following a car carrying 10 supporters of Rizieq Shihab, the leader of the Islamic Defenders Front, early Monday morning. The followers attacked the police with guns and swords, threatening the officers' safety, he said. "The officers then took firm and measured action so that six died from the group of 10 people," he said at a news conference. He did not give further details of the violence. An official of the Islamic Defenders Front, Ahmad

Shabri Lubis, gave a different account, saying that Shihab and his family were heading to a place to deliver a sermon and that guards traveling with them had been shot. "On their way to the sermon location, the group was intercepted by unknown people that we strongly believed were part of an operational group to stalk and harm him. Those unknown people stopped and did the shooting of the family guards," Lubis said in a statement. Imran said police had been scheduled to interrogate Shihab on Monday morning over an alleged violation of coronavirus health regulations during his daughter's wedding reception on November 14, and they had received information about plans for a mass mobilization of his supporters at Jakarta police headquarters during his questioning. **AP**

Australia bushfires killed or harmed more than 60,000 Koalas: Report

Sydney: More than 60,000 koalas were killed, injured or displaced in Australian bushfires last summer, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) has estimated, in what it called a deeply disturbing number for a species already in trouble.



Last summer's bushfires, which Prime Minister Scott Morrison has dubbed Australia's "black summer", also killed 33 people and razed over 24 million hectares (59 million acres) in the country. Nearly 3 billion native animals would have been in the path of the bushfires, the WWF study said. Even before the fires, koala habitats had been in rapid decline due to land clearing for agriculture, urban development, mining and forestry. A 2016 report by a panel of koala experts had put the koala population in Australia at 329,000 but there have been bushfires annually since then, reducing the number further. "That (60,000 figure) is a devastating number for a species that was already sliding towards extinction in Eastern Australia. We cannot afford to lose koalas on our watch," WWF-Australia Chief Executive Dermot O'Gorman said in the report. South Australia's Kangaroo Island was the worst-hit area for koalas, with some 40,000 koalas impacted by the fires, the WWF said. Nearly 11,000 in Victoria and 8,000 in New South Wales (NSW) were also affected. A NSW parliamentary inquiry in June concluded after a year-long inquiry that koalas in the state could become extinct by 2050 unless the government immediately intervened to protect them and their habitat. The WWF aims to double the number of koalas in eastern Australia by 2050. The plan includes a trial of drones to disperse seeds of eucalyptus trees which provide both food and shelter for koalas, and the establishment of a fund to encourage landowners to create koala safe havens. **AFP**

Tough budget talks risk delaying EU's new emissions target

Brussels: Under pressure to deliver an updated climate target this month, European Union leaders are unlikely to agree on a more ambitious number when they meet this week if they can't compromise on the 27-nation bloc's long-term budget, top European diplomat says. The last time EU leaders discussed climate targets in October, they could not immediately adopt a proposal requiring unanimous support to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 per cent by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, and decided to try again during their December summit. But a dispute over the bloc's money has since emerged as Poland and Hungary now threaten to veto a major coronavirus pandemic aid package and the EU's budget for 2021-2027 because of a mechanism linking EU funding with members' adherence to democratic standards. According to the diplomat, who was not authorised to speak publicly before the EU summit that starts talks Thursday, it will be "difficult to see" any agreement on climate if there is no agreement on the EU's long-term budget and recovery package. In her ambition to make the EU carbon neutral by mid-century, the president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has said she wants 37 per cent of the 750 billion euros (nearly USD 900 billion) in the coronavirus recovery money to be given to EU countries to spend on environmental objectives. A report published on Monday by environmental groups gave the EU a "high" performance rating for its climate efforts, weighed down by the poor performance of members such as Hungary, Slovenia and Poland. Audrey Mathieu, a senior analyst at the group Germanwatch, which co-publishes the annual Climate Change Performance Index, said the 27-nation bloc stands at a crossroads. Noting that the European Parliament has called for a 60 per cent drop in emis-

Giuliani tests Covid positive

Washington: Rudy Giuliani, the personal lawyer to Donald Trump, has tested positive for COVID-19, becoming the latest person in the US president's inner circle to be infected by the deadly virus. Giuliani, 76, has been taken to the Medstar Georgetown University Hospital in Washington DC, according to US media reports. The news of the former mayor of New York testing positive was first tweeted by President Trump on Sunday. The president and his team have been criticised for shunning COVID-19 safety guidance. Trump, 74, was tested positive in October. Trump, a Republican, who is yet to concede defeat in the November 3 presidential election, tweeted: "Get better soon Rudy, we will carry on!" Giuliani has been leading the Trump campaign's legal challenges to the 2020 election won by former vice president Joe Biden, a Democrat. In a tweet, Giuliani thanked well-wishers for their messages, and said he was "recovering quickly". Giuliani is considered at high risk for complications from the coronavirus due to his age, CNN reported. **PTI**



Romanian Prime Minister Ludovic Orban and head of the ruling National Liberal party, centre, waits for exit polls in the country's parliamentary elections were announced in Bucharest, Romania on Sunday **AP**

Romania's Opposition Social Democrats win national polls

AP ■ BUCHAREST

Romania's opposition Social Democrats have taken a surprise lead over the governing National Liberals after a parliamentary election but appear less likely to emerge on top in what promises to be a prolonged post-election wrangling to form a new coalition government. With 95 per cent of ballots counted Monday, the pop-

ulist, corruption-prone and fiscally reckless Social Democrat Party (PSD) had around 30 per cent of the vote, with the reformist center-right National Liberal Party trailing them by about 5 per cent. The progressive USR-Plus alliance, which has pledged not to be part of any Social Democrat-led government, won about 15 per cent of the vote.

DOCYARD
DR SMITA KAPOOR GROVER

Consultant Paediatric
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VISION EYE CENTRES, NEW DELHI



Watch out for kid eyes



Eyes are a window to the world and any damage to or weakening of these vital structures especially at a young age can determine the difference between a life of normalcy and fulfillment and a lifetime of misery and dependence. From the time of birth to early childhood and adolescence, eye care for children must be a special focus of families and paediatricians. Yet, India has the dubious distinction of not only having the largest number of blind in the world, but also possibly the largest number of blind children with estimates ranging between 1.6 to 2 million. Although blindness in children is a reflection of general health and nutritional deficiencies, there are many eye-related conditions arising either congenitally or due to complications during birth that lead to a child turning blind.

Traditionally, corneal clouding and scarring were considered the most common causes of childhood blindness in India. Studies in the early 2000s concluded that refractive errors constituted the biggest cause of childhood blindness followed by retinal degenerations, corneal opacities, congenital eye anomalies and amblyopia in that order. More importantly, it was treatable refractive error that constituted one-third of the cases of blindness among children. One-sixth cases were due to preventable causes such as Vitamin A deficiency and amblyopia post-cataract surgery.

The remaining cases of childhood blindness were found to be a result of congenital eye anomalies and retinal degeneration.

It is known that children have uncoordinated or cross eyes at birth. This is because it takes time for coordination between eyes to develop. However, if it is persistent, parents must visit a paediatric ophthalmologist

nearly one-third of children impacted. Similarly, nutritional blindness among children can be averted by timely administration of Vitamin A doses to children according to their age.

Deficiency of Vitamin A can lead to a range of eye conditions: from xerophthalmia (incapacity to produce tears) leading to severe dryness of the cornea and conjunctiva and nyctalopia (night blindness) to keratomalacia (clouding and softening of the cornea) which can lead to corneal rupture and permanent blindness. Congenital cataract can cause blindness but this can be prevented if treatment is undertaken at an early stage. After surgical removal of cataract, use of spectacles and patching can reverse the amblyopia.

Given the enormity of the problem, blindness among children can be addressed at the following levels.

First, at the family level, parents must be able to identify early signs of a disorder in the eye. It is known that children have uncoordinated eyes or cross eyes at birth. This is because it takes time for coordination between eyes to develop. However, if there is persistence of cross eyes, parents must visit a paediatric ophthalmologist. Cross eyes can be corrected by spectacles, exercises or surgery. In terms of preventive treatment, timely Vitamin A supplements should be administered to children as well as mothers post-delivery and children should be immunised against measles. Food rich in Vitamin A, leafy vegetables and milk must be consumed. Also, it is better to avoid any home treatment without consulting an ophthalmologist.

WARMFOODS

PARNSNIPS: The Parsnip is a root vegetable closely related to carrots. It contains high levels of minerals like calcium, potassium, manganese, magnesium, phosphorous, zinc, and iron. They have an impressive range of vitamins, including folate, thiamin, pantothenic acid, Vitamin B6, C, E, and K. They also have high levels of fiber, water, and protein.

The most important health benefits of parsnips include their ability to improve heart health, enhance digestion, reduce birth defects, aid in weight loss, and boost the immune system. Parsnips also enhance vision,

promote growth, boost oral and skin health, prevent diabetes and cancer, as well as strengthen brain health.

They have low carbohydrates, sodium, and calories. They also contain poly-acetylene antioxidants such as falcarinol, falcarindiol, panaxadiol, and methyl-falcarindiol.

Parsnips make delicious chips or wedges; chop and add to braises or stews; use in stir fries, salads, pies, soups, soufflés. Parsnips can be included with other roast vegetables; boiled and mashed with carrots and parsnip cake is similar in texture to carrot cake

Chiari malformation is one of the rare birth defects and reports suggest that its prevalence is only in one in a thousand births in the last decade. DR SK RAJAN tells you the symptoms to look out for and the treatment

Regardless of the cause, congenital disorders or commonly known as birth defects usually result in disabilities which may affect physically, intellectually or cause developmental delays. While such complications may hamper the quality of life of the child for life-long, timely intervention may help in curbing down the symptomatic complications and improve the functional outcomes.

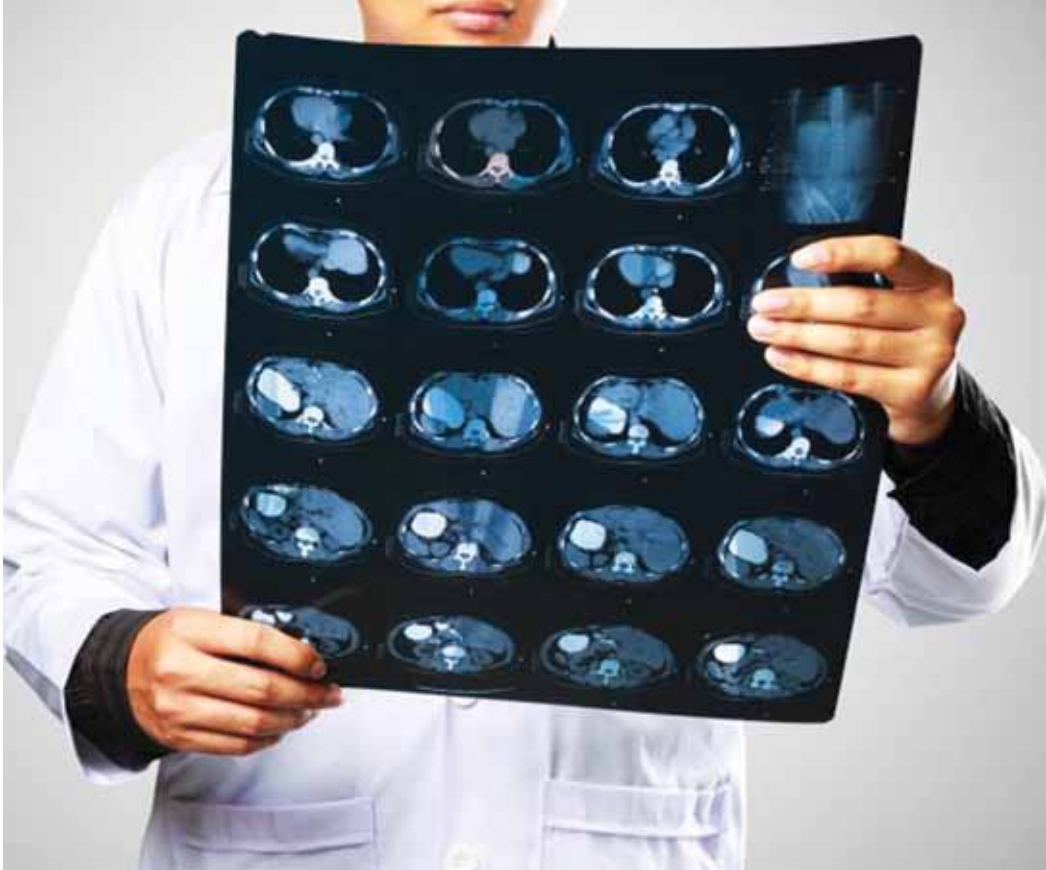
Chiari Malformation is one such defect which is majorly a congenital defect which may or may not present its symptoms until early teenage. It is a structural defect in the cerebellum part (which is responsible for controlling body balance), where the brain tissues extend into the spinal canal abnormally. This defect usually triggers its progression from the fetal development stage.

While the majority of the cases of Chiari malformation occurs during fetal development, only in a few cases the condition may be acquired at later stages of life when excessive amounts of cerebrospinal fluid may drain out due to some reason (injury/infection etc).

Attributing to a plethora of reasons including genetic mutation, improper diet during pregnancy by the mother due to lack of essential nutrients, trauma during pregnancy, infection or exposure to any toxic substance etc, the bony space at the base of the skull remains abnormally small. This in turn exerts pressure on the cerebellum blocking the flow of the CFS which surrounds and helps in protecting the brain and spinal cord.

Prevalence and identification

This condition is considered to be one of the rare birth defects, and various reports suggest that its prevalence is only one in a thousand births in the last decade. But with advancement in technology and diagnostic imaging techniques, the condition may have been under-reported. In most of the congenital cases, the new born do not have any visible symptoms or the symptoms become prominent



RARE BUT HAPPENS

around their adolescence, which make the exact estimation of this defect extremely difficult. For sporadic reasons, this defect is known to affect females more than male.

This complication can be classified into four categories:

Type I: The prevalence of this type of malformation is the most common among children, where only the lower part of the cerebellum (excluding the brainstem) extends into the opening at the base of the skull, which usually has opening only for the spinal cord. This is the only type which can be acquired.

Type II: This type is usually a consequence in children born with spina bifida (split spine defect). Also known as the classic Chiari Malformation, in this both, the cerebellum and the brain stem extend into the opening.

Type III: This, despite being a rare case, is the most serious form, as it involves herniation and protrusion of the cerebellum and the brain stem into the opening which has a great potential to cause severe neurological defects.

Type IV: Being the rarest of all the other types, this type of malformation involves an incomplete/underdeveloped cerebellum and is sometimes associated with exposed parts of the skull.

While birth defect in the spine (spina bifida) is a common reason, yet other conditions associated with the Chiari Malformation can be excessive build-up of the cerebrospinal fluid (hydrocephalus), cyst development in the central canal of the spinal cord

(syringomyelia), disorder in the spine which is progressive that leads to the attachment of spinal cord to the bony spine, or other spinal curvature deformities like scoliosis.

Symptoms:

Depending upon the type and severity of the malformation, the symptoms may vary from person to person. While some may be present with no symptoms until late adulthood, others may have persistent symptoms in the early childhood itself.

The most common symptoms include:

- Complications with body balancing and coordination
- Poor vision
- Mild to severe episodes of headaches
- Weakness in the muscles and numbness
- In mild cases of Type I, people suffering from this condition do not even know until the malformation is diagnosed accidentally. But in its severe form the patient may undergo severe pain in the lower back of the head connecting to the neck. This intensifying pain triggers with any activity that exerts pressure in the brain such as sneezing or coughing.

Unlike Type I, congenital patients with Type II develop excess CSF accumulation which causes debilitating pain during bending, coughing or sneezing, constipated bowel movement, or strenuous physical activities.

Is it treatable? – Yes!

Upon suspicion of the malformation, the treating doctors

require physical examination to confirm the condition which involves inspecting the proper functioning of the spinal cord and cerebellum. If the person has proper and normal body balance, motor skills, sensation, reflexes, this condition may be ruled out for further diagnostics. On the contrary, other diagnostics like CT scan and MRI may be used to identify the condition with precision.

If the symptoms are not persistent and do not hinder with the quality of life, then treatment may not be necessary.

While surgery remains the last resort to correct the functional outcomes or curb down the progression of the damage rate to the nervous system, the surgery aims to relieve the pressure on the brain and spine, and re-establish the normal fluid circulation.

Various surgical interventions include:

- Decompression surgery of the brain stem opening — this procedure requires to surgically remove a minor portion from the bottom of the skull or spinal column to rectify the irregular structure, and creates additional space for the proper circulation of the CSF.
- Spinal Laminectomy — In this procedure, a part of the arched bone roof in the spinal canal is removed to increase the canal size and reduce the pressure on the nerve roots and spinal cord.

INFUSED WITH GOODNESS

Unlike other caffeine-laden beverages, infusion teas are rich in nutritional value. DOLLY KUMAR tells you why one should include them in their routine



Apart from being popular as one of the country's leading exports, tea plays an integral role in Indian society. Our love for the beverage surpasses trade figures. For us, tea sets the tone for a hearty conversation. In fact, most of us begin our day with a cup of freshly brewed tea. After all, it gives us that refreshing zap of energy and much-needed warmth while hanging out with friends on a cold day.

However, various studies also link the consumption of highly caffeinated drinks with several unwanted health concerns. So, how to turn your tea into a cup of holistic health?

Well, let's take you into the amazing world of infusion tea.

An infusion tea is obtained by steeping flowers, fruits, spices, roots, and leaves of a particular plant in hot or cold water to extract its beneficial properties and aromas. They are a tasty and healthy spin to your regular tea and wholesome to incorporate into your daily life.

Fresh brew infusions or tea blends are for individuals who want to improve their health organically. Unlike other caffeine-laden beverages such as coffee, infusion teas are caffeine-free and rich in nutritional value. Infusions have multiple health benefits that can help with pain reduction, relaxation, improved digestion, a stronger immune system, among others. Here is how these infusions help you:

Sleep inducer and helps against insomnia: We know that a high intake of caffeine is bad, especially before bed, as the caffeine content makes your mind wide awake when your body seeks some rest. So what can we substitute as our bedtime drink to get a sound sleep? Rose infusion is the answer. It has a delicate flavor and alluring aroma and has been used for peace and relaxation since time immemorial. Rose petals also contain flavonoids and anxiolytic compounds that induce sleep.

Soothing and relaxing properties: Chamomile tea finds its origin in ancient Egypt and Greece and is known for its healing properties. It is known to alleviate sleep problems, menstrual cramps, muscle twitches, sore stomach, as well as anxiety and stress. It has a sweet intoxicating fragrance with a light and earthy flavor. This makes it the perfect hot beverage after a long and stressful day.

Helps in improving metabolism: The goal to lose weight, or say, staying fit stays on top of our minds. The good news is that you can accelerate your weight loss by drinking some of your favorite beverages. Instead of reaching for sugary sodas or dangerous weight loss pills, simply pour yourself a cup of infusion tea and sip your way to a robust metabolism, which is a key to overall well-being.

Helps strengthen immunity: Building immunity is a vital task, especially, during times like these when there is a heightened risk of illnesses. Most of the infusion teas possess catechins and theaflavins, to some level. Both these components could help in fighting viruses on the cellular level, thereby strengthening immunity.

The writer is Founder & Director at Cosmic Nutracos, Parent company of Gaia

DadiKaKehna

Urinary Tract Infection is common if one fails to drink plenty of water. However, women are more prone to such infection. ROSHANI DEVI shares easy home remedies that can help ease the pain and discomfort



Urinary Tract Infection or UTI can be extremely painful and uncomfortable for people of all ages. The burning sensation while relieving yourself or frequent visits to the washroom, are all symptoms of UTI.

Here are a few tips that can help to keep the infection at bay.


Water is life: Keeping yourself hydrated is the key to not inviting UTI. Drink plenty of water and other liquids.

Never skip your wash-room break: As weird it may sound, but it is essential to respond to the Nature's call and relieve yourself at regular intervals. Do this on

priority if you don't want to catch this nasty infection. Maintain hygiene: Keep good care of hygiene, especially if you have to use public washrooms. Make sure the area is clean and sanitised. You can carry a toilet seat sanitiser to be on the safe side.

Increase intake: Vitamin C is thought to work by increasing the acidity of the urine, thereby killing off the bacteria that causes infection.

Take help of unsweetened cranberry juice: Cranberries work by preventing bacteria from adhering to the urinary tract, thus preventing infection. A glass a day can help.



Welcome the change

Winters can be harsher than summers for your skin. PLABITA SHARMA tells you how a tweak in your skincare regime can help you welcome the season with a glowing skin

Let's welcome the change. Though everybody prefers cool & pleasant weather, winter can be harsher than summer especially for your skin.

Winter does come with some challenges like dullness, itchiness, chapped lips and parched skin. So, it is time to take a little extra effort to keep your skin soft, supple, healthy & glowing.

Fret not, be ready to combat these winter skin issues with a tweak in your regular skincare regime:

Cleansing: It is recommended to wash your face with lukewarm water and choose a mild moisturising cleanser to maintain the natural oil of your skin. Though it feels good to take hot showers it is advised to take quick showers and opt for mild shower gels & soaps containing natural oils, glycerin & humectants to avoid dryness.

Tip: Opt for SLES compared to SLS which are milder surfactants.

Moisturising: It is advised to opt for moisturiser that helps the skin to heal, hydrate and lock in the benefits. You may opt for moisturisers based on your skin type. If you have dry skin try rich cream or oil based whereas combination to oily skin can go for light weight gel based moisturisers. Ensure to always moisturise your skin to keep it healthy and fine line free. Opt for ingredients that has hyaluronic, glycerin or Vit E to form the skin protective barrier.

Sun protection: Most of us are unaware that the winter UV rays are equally damaging as the summer sun. UVA is always present and can penetrate deeper into the skin damaging elastin & collagen resulting into premature ageing. Sunscreen is an important preventive healthy habit that should be maintained all the

year. Choose a sunscreen that provides broad-spectrum protection and has anti-ageing properties. Remember to re-apply sunscreen every three-four hours to help maintain an even skin tone.

Care for your hands & feet: The skin on your hands & feet has fewer oil glands making the moisture to evaporate quickly. Make sure to use a gentle exfoliator and apply a moisturisers that heals & seals the dryness

Lip care: Lip skin is very thin and delicate and is often the first sign to feel the weather change. To keep your lips smooth and plump look for soothing and healing ingredients like shea, Vit E, hemp and sunscreen. Avoid licking and peeling the skin with your teeth or finger. Instead scrub it gently and apply balm or butter.

The writer is Beauty Training Manager, The Body Shop India

INBRIEF

Longer working hours, additional household chores, increased screen time and higher levels of stress and fatigue have been something that all of us have been trying to combat in the past few months. When coupled with a reduction in me-time, self-care and moments of unwinding, this shift in our lifestyles has had an unhealthy effect on our skin.

Presenting OxyBlast, a seven step in-salon facial that is now available at home in the form of a DIY single use kit. Specifically designed to provide an instant solution to skin that has lost its radiance and glow. Available for just ₹300 on Nykaa and Amazon.

Benefits:

Oxygen for your skin: Backed by science, this one of a kind facial provides your skin with a 'blast' of oxygen to revitalise and regenerate the skin by boosting cellular function and giving you visible radiance

The goodness of anti-oxidant ingredients: The anti-oxidant ingredients help in protecting the skin from everyday aggressions pollution, UV-induced damages and oxidation, fruit enzymes exfoliate dead cells to reveal fresh radiant skin and Vitamin E hydrates and nourishes the skin while aloe vera powder help in soothing skin.

Trend Slazer

Alia begins shoot for Rajamouli's RRR

Actor **ALIA BHATT** on Monday began shooting for her forthcoming multilingual, multistarrer **RRR**, directed by **SS Rajamouli**.

The **Baahubali** filmmaker on Monday retweeted a tweet originally posted by the film's official Twitter page to announce Alia joining the shoot. It reads, "A very warm welcome to our dearest #Sita, the supremely talented and beautiful @Aliaa08 on to the sets."

In the film, Alia will play a character called Sita. The film stars actor **Ajay Devgn**, Telugu actors **Ram Charan** and **Jr NTR** in central roles.



'I am thrilled that our little labour of love, Shakeela is all set to release this Christmas. I am so excited

about the film in which I've worked with the talented, Richa Chadha. I have a beautiful role. I play an actor for the first time in my career. I have always wanted to play an actor on-screen and bring out the idiosyncrasies of artists on screen.'

—Pankaj Tripathi

Singer **ARMAAN MALIK** might collaborate soon with rapper **DIVINE**.

Armaan said, "I really love Divine. He is one of the most phenomenal artistes in India. He is creating a hip-hop scene here, so I am really looking forward to doing a song with him. We have talked a bit in the recent past and have thought of collaborating. It's just about the right song now, so I am waiting for collaborating with him on an amazing song."

The young singer sees the win as "a step forward" in the journey that he's on.



Downey, Cheadle honour Boseman

Actor **ROBERT DOWNEY JR** and **DON CHEADLE** paid tribute to late Hollywood star and Marvel co-star **Chadwick Boseman** for his enduring legacy.

Black Panther star Boseman, who died in August after a four-year battle with colon cancer at

43, posthumously received the Hero of the Ages honour at the 2020 MTV Movie & TV Awards.

"The moment you first saw him on screen or had the opportunity to meet him in person, his energy and intensity was undeniable," Downey Jr said. "There was something special about Chadwick Boseman. He truly embodied what it meant to be a superhero," he added.



As the world awaits the vaccine for COVID-19, the unprecedented novel Coronavirus continues to rage on. While most lockdown restrictions have been lifted and the country has inched closer to normalcy, plethora of information on combatting the spread of the virus, preventing potential infection, and safeguarding oneself through the consumption of certain DIY immunity boosting concoctions is making rounds on social media. However, experts are noting a surge in side-effects amongst people who are consuming these homemade 'kadhas'; the issue being repeated and high dose consumption of these home remedies.

COVID-19 scare has prompted widespread consumption of *ekadha* (herbal concoction) that usually includes ginger, lemon, garlic, turmeric, pepper, aloe vera or berries.

Talking about the impact of excessive consumption of homemade 'kadhas', Dr Sanjay Shah, General Physician, Fortis Hospital, Mulund recalls a peculiar case. He says, "In a young patient, bleeding was spotted post-operatively; upon investigating the matter and detailed assessment of his medical history, we found that the patient was consuming a homemade *kadha* in large quantity. This had led to internal bleeding". Another patient was brought in to the ER with acute breath-

The right dose

Consuming too much *kadha* may have adverse effects. Experts say we must understand the strength of each ingredient and the frequency of its intake



lessness, he was pale and his hemoglobin levels were low. On investigating, it was noted that he was consuming four to five glasses of *kadha* on a daily basis, for the past five months." He added that, "The patient mentioned that his stools were black in colour for the last two

months and that he believed that toxins were being excreted, as a result of the *kadha*. Hence the patient prolonged his visit to the hospital, till such time he felt excessive fatigue."

While individuals continue to be inundated with social media messages

about homemade recipes or supplement marketers advocating vitamins and other immunity boosting alternatives, here's a reminder that there is no such magic pill or potion. Most often, these are offered to the family in a bid to safeguard them against COVID but what needs to be understood is that people react differently to it. As a rule of nature, anything consumed in the right manner and quantity will reap benefits. However, if consumed recklessly, it could be dangerous.

Profuse use, particularly by those who have comorbidities, patients who are on blood thinners or medications for chronic diseases, it could be dangerous, increasing the risk of bleeding tendency. Depending on the bleeding location, whether the brain or the intestine, the case criticality could range from normal to life threatening.

Consuming warm concoctions in excess could lead to side effects such as ulcers or superficial bleeding in the mouth. Condiments in homemade concoctions generate excessive heat in the body and could cause nose bleeding; it upsets the esophagus causing esophageal erosion, it also causes Gastro-Esophageal Reflux affecting digestion. When digestion is affected, this could potentially impact one's immunity.

Components in ingredients like turmeric and aloe vera, if used in

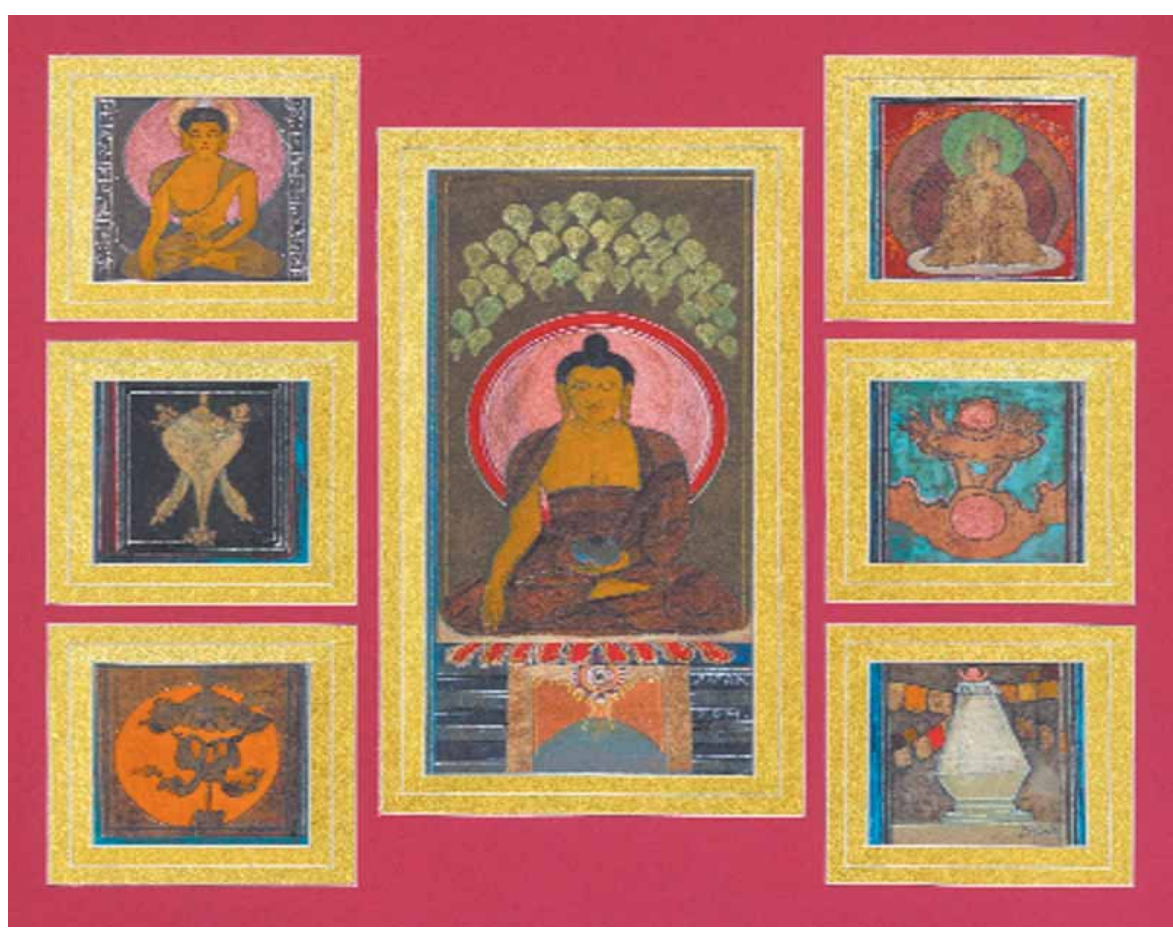
excess could harm the liver, which further increases the chance of being diagnosed with Jaundice. This may also cause bleeding in the organ which could lead to life threatening liver failure or injury.

Arsenic Album is another commonly used immunity booster. If used in limited and supervised quantities it could be beneficial to one's health; however, if used in excess it could harm the kidneys, liver or brain, at times leaving a patient unconscious due to arsenic toxicity and in need of critical care.

Excess Vitamin D increases the calcium content in the body leaving a person irritable and sometimes unconscious. Spike in blood and urine calcium levels due to high Vit-D levels causes nausea, dehydration, giddiness among other fluctuations. It is important to note that when consumed in small quantities and under medical guidance of your physician, these ingredients are harmless.

Serious consequences are faced when there is an imbalanced intake; be safe, be aware. Speak to your physician before beginning your course of homemade *kadhas*, understand the role of each ingredient and the frequency at which it is to be had; don't be reckless with these.

—IANS



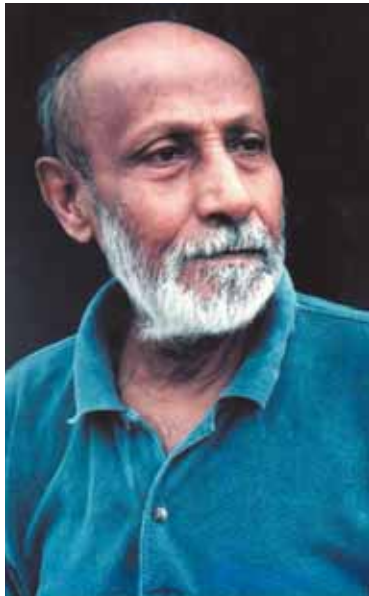
With the passing away of neo-tantric abstractionist and printmaker extraordinaire Dipak Banerjee, India loses a pedagogue and brilliant artist who wove into his work the principles of 'Purusha Prakriti' and the traditional nuances of Indian miniature painting.

Banerjee breathed his last in Kolkata on November 26. As a young artist, who graduated from Government College of Art, Kolkata, his first job for the Handicraft Board was to collect different cultural motifs. He used to copy motifs engraved on the walls of temples in Kolkata. From the little bylanes of Kolkata's temples and Kalighat elements, Banerjee got a prestigious scholarship from the French government and left for Paris in 1965. He studied printmaking under the famed William Hayter of Atelier 17 as well as Krishna Reddy.

MODERN MANDALAS

In 1990s Delhi, he used to have a show at Gallerie Ganesha annually. His intaglios were like modern *mandalas*, a medley of geometry and symbolism. The tantric elements and the motifs of Indian miniatures all meshed into meticulous variations that exuded a deep spirituality.

To gaze at a Dipak Banerjee print is to be drawn into a kingdom that seeped into your soul. His command of a free fluidity of lines and the warmth of colour



zones all became a precise permutation of in-depth exactness and balance of choreography.

His *Vishnupada*, *Chausath Yoginis* and *Kali* intaglios have about them an antique aura that is unseen in today's world.

He said during one of his shows in Delhi, "I am not a practicing tantric but I gradually moved to the tantric mode of self-realisation during my many explorations. In my collection of temple motifs, I was unconsciously gaining an album of tantric symbolic motifs like *Purusha Prakriti*, *Vishnu*, *Sahasra*, *Nathji* and *Kundalini*, which presented the spiritual dynamics of content in ancient Indian art. So you could say that the journey

which began in Paris got its final direction through the lanes of Benaras."

EARTH SONGS IN SPIRIT

After returning from Paris in 1967, Banerjee taught for years at Benaras Hindu University. As a pedagogue at the department of printmaking in BHU, he was among the finest. His attention to detail and the earth-toned colours talk about the spiritual and the sublime. Ornamentation in linguistic alphabets became the norm in his work. The gods and goddesses appeared as miniature divinities settled into the cosmic realm of his design dynamics.

Sometimes his works included a series of *mandalas* which involved designs like a circle within a square and a square within a circle. These variations made his

works iconic. Within the dictums of tantric symbolism, he found an intense expression of evocative elegance. His work was a quest that transcended beyond space and time, and was a communion with the Absolute.

Banerjee stood among the neo-tantric practitioners in India — stalwarts like Ghulam Rasool Santosh, Biren De, and Sohan Qadri. In his works, we can observe a lexicon that distilled the rootedness of Vedic sciences. His perfection of creating multi-hued colourative etchings showed his richness of repertoire and a controlled construction of the narrative. His last exhibition was held at Sanchit Art in 2017 in Delhi.

For him, Tantra was more than just a motif. It was a perspective that conveyed the

proverbial image of the omniscient. Juxtapositions and islands of luminosity were of an incandescent idiom. His understanding of the realms of the *chakra* went deep into exploring the mathematical nuances of absolute knowledge.

COLOUR AND COSMOS

His universe lay within the symmetric and geometric patterns of tantric symbols rooted in Hindu, Buddhist and Jain iconographies. His modernist interpretation was born of a voice both local and universal. Within the symmetry of his lines, we glimpse a thematic exactitude floating in the flow of colours, an embracing of Indian folk traditions expressed within the organic extension of technique into the realms of spiritual abstraction.

Rooted in a larger allegory of luminosity — both in terms of the canvas treatment and in the realm of our interpretation of cosmic unity/oneness — Dipak Banerjee leaves behind a suite of spiritual wonders. He brings alive the words of the great abstractionist Wassily Kandinsky who said, "Colour directly influences the soul. It is the keyboard, the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another purposively, to cause vibrations in the soul."

It's been a fruitful year: Chandan

Actor Chandan Roy Sanyal is one of the few performers to have shone to the fore with the digital boom in the entertainment industry. With a strong background in theatre, there is a method to the actor's madness and his body of work goes to show that he's a character chameleon.

In the course of his career, Sanyal has been appreciated for a string of performances. The latest one to have won him tremendous acclaim is for the role of Bhopa Swami in Prakash Jha's *Aashram* Chapter 2. The actor played the role of the right-hand man of

Kashipur Waale Baba Nirala. In the much loved crime series, he's a mercenary who silences his detractors in a matter-of-fact way.

Jha's digital foray has marked a turning point in the actor's career trajectory. The streak of acclaim began for him with the 2009 caper thriller film *Kaminey* and his Bengali debut, the 2010 film *Mahanagar* at Kolkata.

He then went on to receive recognition for his performances in the 2012 Bengali drama film *Aparajita Tumi* and as an insomniac artist in the 2013 romantic drama *Prague*.

Says Chandan, "Aashram gave me a special identity as an actor. I'm grateful that the year turned out so fruitful for me with such amazing and unique projects. Currently, I'm in the middle of finalising some super exciting projects and I can't wait to sink my teeth into different roles and collaborate with the greats of the industry."

His act as Swapan, a paralysed overlord in *Kaali Season 2* and as a husband looking to rekindle his married life in *Forbidden Love* are some of his other notable performances this year.



India target T20 whitewash

PTI ■ SYDNEY

The series pocketed and their confidence restored, India would eye nothing less than a clean sweep when they take on an Australian side significantly weakened by injury blows, in the third and final T20I at Sydney Cricket Ground on Tuesday.

Skipper Virat Kohli and his main protagonist of the white-ball leg, Hardik Pandya, will feel a sense of *deja vu* given that the script has panned out exactly like 2016 when the team got walloped in the ODIs but came back strongly to rout the Aussies 3-0 in the T20I series.

After a couple of crushing defeats in the first two ODIs, the Indians have turned a corner starting with the final ODI in Canberra.

Even the absence of a white-ball pro like Ravindra Jadeja didn't have an impact during their convincing six-wicket win in the series-clinching second T20 on Sunday.

What will boost the Indian team's morale manifold is the fact that it had the confidence to rest both Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah, relying on a troika of pacers, who between them haven't played even 40 games collectively.

India's new white-ball sensation Thangarasu Natarajan has had a superb initiation in international cricket with Australian batsmen still finding it difficult to read him.

As Pandya so rightly put it, Natarajan's spell and the 10 runs that Australia failed to



score became the difference between winning and losing.

The difference between both teams during the last game was the batting of the two teams during the middle overs.

Australia lost a bit of momentum after stand-in skipper Matthew Wade was dismissed while his opposite number Kohli played some outrageous shots after the Powerplay to up the ante.

Shreyas Iyer's induction in place of an injured Manish

Aus vs India (3rd T20)
Live from 1:40pm IST
SONY TEN 1, 3 & SIX

Pandey also worked well for the visitors.

The only glitch in an otherwise solid show was Yuzvendra Chahal's rare off-day. Not having a sixth bowling option meant that Kohli was forced to have his premier leg-spinner complete his quota.

For Australia, the absence of

regular skipper Aaron Finch, David Warner, Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood did have an impact although three of the five did play in the first T20I that India comfortably won by 11 runs.

D'Arcy Short hasn't looked the part as an opener in the two games and one would expect Marcus Stoinis and Glenn Maxwell to shoulder more responsibility as senior players.

But Australia's thin-on-experience bowlers will have to

play out of their skins to stop the Indian juggernaut which has started rolling.

A 3-0 win would be the perfect booster shot for it before the all-important Test series.

In case of Australia, while a thrashing would impact them a lot but they would try and look at it from a different perspective — most of their Test specialists will not have the scars of a clean sweep when they take on India under the lights at the Adelaide Oval, starting December 17.

Green's ton overshadows Indian bowlers

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Senior pros Umesh Yadav and Ravichandran Ashwin staked strong claims to be included in India's playing XI for the first Test with impressive performances against Australia A, which scored 286 for 8 on the second day, riding on Cameron Green's unbeaten century.

Australia now have a 39-run lead after India A declared their innings at 247 for 9 in the first hour of the second day, with skipper Ajinkya Rahane remaining unbeaten on 117.

With Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah being automatic choices, Umesh (18-3-44-3), fighting for third pacer's slot, certainly looked more penetrative compared to Mohammed Siraj (19-4-71-2) with the new ball.

The 'Vidarbha Express' removed both rival Test team openers Will Pucovski (1) and Joe Burns (4) in his third and fourth over with the new ball to make initial inroads.

Ashwin (19-2-58-2) also did his Test chances no harm.

For Australia A, the giant all-rounder Green continued his rich vein of Sheffield Shield form with an unbeaten 114 off 173 that had 10 fours and a six.

He showed good temperament against the Indian attack while adding 104 runs for the sixth wicket with his national skipper Tim Paine (44) after being reduced to 98 for 5.

Another 49 for the eighth wicket with paceman Michael Neser (33) ensured that Australia A recovered well from a batting collapse.

India started well with the



Australia A batsman Cameron Green celebrates after scoring hundred CA/Twitter

Australia A vs India A
Live from 5:00am IST
SONY SIX NETWORK

new ball as Umesh maintained a good channel outside off-stump as Pucovski trying to cut a back-of-length delivery gave a simple catch to Shubman Gill at point.

Burns edged one that moved a shade away to wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha behind the stumps.

Skipper Travis Head (18) and Marcus Harris (35) then added 55 runs to steady the innings before Siraj got into the act, cleaning up the Australia A skipper in the 21st over.

Siraj, who is also trying to seal a place in the Tests, troubled Harris (35) a lot with semi-new ball before Ashwin ended his stay with Rahane snapping one in the slip cordon.

The experienced off-spin-

ner was again in action in the 31st over when he trapped Nic Maddinson (23) with a delivery that kept straight.

Green and Tim Paine then scripted another recovery act to take Australia A to 186-5 at tea.

After the break, Umesh peppered Paine with bouncers with one hitting him on the helmet. The strategy worked as Paine pulled one only to be brilliantly caught by Prithvi Shaw at backward square leg, ending their 104-run stand.

Siraj then got his second scalp in the 67th over, removing James Pattinson (3) but Michael Neser (33) frustrated India A before being run-out in 80th over.

Green, who was dropped on 24 by Hanuma Vihari in second slip and then on 78 by Wriddhiman Saha, completed his hundred with a four in the 81st over.

Smith will do great job as captain: Wade

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia's stand-in T20 skipper Matthew Wade on Monday said batting mainstay Steve Smith, who has "plenty of say" in how the team is driven on the field, would do a "great job" if he is given the leadership role again.

Wade took over the captaincy reins for the second T20 on Sunday after Aaron Finch picked up an injury in the opening game.

Asked about Smith, who lost the captaincy role because of his role in the 2018 ball-tampering scandal, Wade said the team has a lot of options and they include the batting star.

"We have so many good leaders, I have been given the



captaincy but we have got Smith, we have got Moises (Henriques), who captains his BBL team. We have guys with a lot of experience, there is a lot of discussions among the seniors but we are all working together," Wade said.

"It is not me driving the field, obviously *Finchy* (Aaron Finch) is our captain and we all work together when he plays well. So Smith has plenty of say, he has been a great captain for a long time and he will do a great

job if he gets an opportunity," he added.

Coach Justin Langer said Australia's T20 against India on Sunday was too early for Steve Smith to regain the captaincy.

"Of course, we talked about a number of things," Langer told *Fox Sports*, when asked if Smith was considered. "We've got so many options. Steve has done a brilliant job in the past. There's probably a bit of a process we need to go through until he becomes captain again. We'll go through that."

Langer added: "When the English crowd gave him a standing ovation at The Oval last year — talk about earning respect ... he's doing all the right things to show leadership without a title at the moment."

Concussion & dodgy hamstring may keep Jadeja out of 1st Test

NEW DELHI (PTI): Indian all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja is likely to miss the opening Test against Australia owing to the concussion and a hamstring injury that he sustained during the opening T20I on Friday.

The 32-year-old, who is on the cusp of his 50th Test, is likely to be out for at least three weeks which certainly rules him out of the first Day/Night Test in Adelaide starting December 17.

In case it turns out to be a hamstring tear, it could well rule him out of the second Boxing Day Test in Melbourne from December 26.

"As per ICC's concussion protocols, after any head injury, a player needs to be rested for 7 to 10 days, which effectively rules Jadeja out of the three-day day/night warm-up game at

the SCG from December 11," a BCCI source told *PTI*.

"Therefore, it is next to impossible that the Indian team management would field Jadeja, without any warm-up game time ahead of the opening Test," the source added.

However, more than concussion, it is understood that the hamstring injury is likely to keep Jadeja out of action for at least one Test if not two.

In fact, one of the on-air commentators, during the second day of the warm-up game between India A and Australia A, said that "news is Jadeja is out for three weeks" due to concussion. However as per BCCI sources, while he is recovering well from concussion, to be fully fit from a dodgy hamstring may just take some time.



Poms South Africa tour called off

Virus outbreak in bio-bubble forced cancellation of ODI series

AP ■ CAPE TOWN

England's ODI series in South Africa was cancelled on Monday after an outbreak of Covid-19 cases at the luxurious Cape Town hotel where both teams are staying.

Both squads have had members infected, while two staff members at the hotel have also contracted the disease.

The decision to call off the series was taken by both the England and Wales Cricket Board and Cricket South Africa, the two federations said in a statement, and was made "to ensure the mental and physical health and welfare of players from both teams." The opening game of the series was scheduled for Friday but was postponed to Sunday after a South African player tested positive for Covid-19 on the morning of the game.

That first ODI was then cancelled completely on Sunday after it was revealed two hotel staff members had been infected with Covid-19, forcing the England contingent to undergo a new round of tests.

Two members of the England group then tested positive for Covid-19, although the ECB said it wanted the tests verified by an independent medical team before making a decision on the remainder of the tour.

Both the ECB and Cricket South Africa had hoped that the remaining two ODI games would be able to go ahead but that was ended with Monday's announcement.

The ECB and CSA said they were effectively postponing the series until a suitable time could be found for England to travel back to South Africa to play the games.

Williamson joins Kohli at No 2

PTI ■ DUBAI

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson on Monday moved up a rung to join his Indian counterpart Virat Kohli at the second spot in the latest ICC Test rankings for batsmen.

On the other hand, West Indies captain Jason Holder conceded his top ICC Test all-rounder's ranking to England star Ben Stokes after an unimpressive outing against New Zealand in the first Test which his team lost by an innings and 134 runs.

Australia's Steve Smith, with 911 points, kept his hold on the pole position in the batting charts ahead of Kohli and Williamson, who hit a match-winning double hundred against the West Indies in



Hamilton.

India's Cheshwar Pujara remained seventh on the list ahead of Stokes (8th) and England captain Joe Root (9th) respectively.

New Zealand opener Tom Latham entered the top-10 at the 10th position.

Ajinkya Rahane (11th) and Mayank Agarwal (12th) have both dropped a place each.

Perez races from last to first, wins Sakhir race

AFF ■ SAKHIR

Sergio Perez, who may be out of work next season, took advantage of his rivals' misfortunes on Sunday to drive from last position to claim his first Formula One victory in a chaotic and crazy Sakhir Grand Prix.

The 30-year-old Mexican recovered from a first-lap crash that dropped him to the back of the field in his 190th race.

Yet he benefitted from a shock Mercedes pit-stop tyre bungle and a late puncture for George Russell, who dazzled as substitute for Lewis Hamilton, to secure his maiden triumph.

Perez became the first Mexican victor in F1 since Pedro Rodriguez in 1970, ending a series of races dominated by



Racing Point driver Sergio Perez celebrates with his team after Bahrain GP win AP

Mercedes for whom Valtteri Bottas finished eighth and Russell ninth.

"I'm speechless," said Perez,

who wept through most of his victory lap after taking the flag. "I hope I'm not dreaming... Ten years it has taken me and I don't

know what to say.

"After that first lap, the race was gone, but I didn't give up. In the end, my pace was good enough to hold off George."

Perez is being released by Racing Point to be replaced by four-time world champion Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari next year, when the team will be rebranded as Aston Martin.

Perez is without a 2021 race seat, but he is in contention to replace Alexander Albon at Red Bull alongside Max Verstappen who crashed out on the opening lap along with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc.

Perez came home ahead of Esteban Ocon of Renault, who claimed his first podium finish, and Lance Stroll, his Racing Point team-mate.

Pak squad clears fifth Covid test

PTI ■ CHRISTCHURCH

The touring Pakistan squad has returned negative in a fifth round of Covid-19 tests and will now be able to leave their managed isolation on Tuesday, subject to clearance from the health ministry, New Zealand Cricket said on Monday.

The 53-member Pakistan team was denied the right to train while in managed isolation in New Zealand after eight members of the touring squad had tested positive for Covid-19.

"This is to advise the Pakistan squad's fifth and final day 12, Covid-19 tests have all been returned as negative," NZC said in a statement.

"As a consequence, and pending final Ministry of Health approval, the squad will leave managed isolation tomorrow and fly to Queenstown, where they will train ahead of the T20 and Test series against the BLACK-CAPS."

Fans return to Anfield for big win

AFF ■ LIVERPOOL

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said he had "goosebumps" as fans returned to Anfield on Sunday, roaring the Premier League champions on to a comprehensive 4-0 win against Wolves.

The Reds have not had the chance to play in front of their supporters since they ended their 30-year wait to be crowned English champions in June.

But they made up for lost time, swaggering to a comfortable win as the 2,000 fans permitted to attend due to coronavirus restrictions sang the club anthem "You'll Never Walk Alone".

Wolves showed glimpses of a threat early on but the result was rarely in doubt once Mohamed Salah had given the home side the lead midway through the first half.

Second-half goals from Georginio Wijnaldum, Joel Matip and a late own goal from Nelson Semedo underlined Liverpool's superiority as they joined leaders Spurs on 24 points.



"The game, the atmosphere, it was so nice I had goosebumps," an emotional Klopp told the BBC. "They started 'You'll Never Walk Alone' — really nice. I never knew it could feel that good."

"This started in February and we were waiting to get normality back. Normality is good — I don't think we appreciated it as much. It was very, very touching."

The home fans had something to cheer in the 24th

minute. There did not appear to be much danger when Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson sent a long ball over the top into the Wolves penalty area.

But Wolves captain Conor Coady, who used to be on Liverpool's books, got his calculations wrong. The ball came off his chest and Salah nipped in to fire home left-footed.

Wolves were awarded a penalty in the dying minutes of the first half after Mane was adjudged to have fouled Coady.

But VAR ruled out the spot-kick after the TV replay showed there had been no contact.

Wolves searched for a way back into the match in the early stages of the second half and Coady found himself in a threatening position in the Liverpool box before Fabinho whipped the ball away.

Seconds later, Liverpool were charging forward again on the counter-attack, towards the Kop. Henderson played a long ball which Wijnaldum collected before producing a measured, curled finish into the top left-hand corner of Rui Patricio's net.

Liverpool put the result beyond doubt in the 67th minute when Salah's inswinging cross was met by Matip, who headed in from close range. By now the home side were in total control.

Liverpool's fourth goal came when substitute Trent Alexander-Arnold, returning from injury, produced a delicious cross from the right which was turned in by Nelson Semedo for an own goal.

Five clear

Milan slip past Sampdoria to maintain Serie A lead

AFF ■ MILAN

AC Milan kept hold of their five-point lead at the top of Serie A on Sunday after a hard-fought 2-1 win at Sampdoria, while Napoli moved third after strolling to 4-0 victory over bottom side Crotone.

Franck Kessie's penalty on the stroke of half-time and Samu Castillejo's 77th-minute strike were just enough for the seven-time European champions, who were without injured talisman Zlatan Ibrahimovic, to move up to 26 points and keep second-placed local rivals Inter Milan at arm's length.

Ivory Coast midfielder Kessie coolly struck home his spot-kick after Jakub Jankto luckily handled while challenging for the ball with Theo Hernandez.

Sandro Tonali hit the post for Milan just after the break but the away side were on the back foot for much of the sec-



ond half until substitute Castillejo doubled their lead with his first touch, set up by a fine pull-back from Ante Rebic.

Stefano Pioli's team were left to sweat out the final minutes after Albin Ekdal's powerful header just escaped Gianluigi Donnarumma's clutches, and their lead at the top of the table would have been cut to three had Swede Ekdal not put another aerial effort wide with the last attack of the game.

Earlier, Napoli are six points back in third after goals from Lorenzo Insigne, Hirving Lozano, Diego Demme and Andrea Petagna earned the

away side a 4-0 win at Crotone.

Insigne opened the scoring with a trademark curling strike after cutting in from the left with half an hour gone, and then he laid on Lozano for the second with a superb long pass that left the Mexican with a simple finish, and Demme made sure of the result with a drilled low strike 14 minutes from the end following a lay-off from substitute Mertens.

Belgium forward Mertens then supplied the pass that allowed Petagna to hammer home the fourth in stoppage time as Napoli temporarily closed the gap between them and Milan.