

**WORLD 9**  
TRUMP LOYALISTS CONVERGING AGAIN  
ON WASHINGTON OVER ELECTION**SPORT 12**  
NZ DROP TAYLOR  
FOR PAK T20IS**BACKPACK 14**  
'NO ALTERNATIVE TO HARD  
WORK & HONESTY'Published From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL  
BHUBANESWAR RANCHI  
RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD  
VIJAYWADA

LUCKNOW, SUNDAY DECEMBER 13, 2020; PAGES 14-4 ₹3



## sunday pioneer

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**USUAL SUSPECTS**  
SWAPAN DASGUPTAMedia's influence on  
voting pick minimal

In the daily life of a nation, there are controversies and issues that have a very short life span. The pattern these days is for an issue or a stray remark to be noticed by a few over-zealous individuals, publicised in the social media — the new colloquialism is “going viral” — and then outraged over in the electronic or, more infrequently, the print media. The issue has a life span of anything between 36 and 48 hours and is then forgotten, only to be replaced by the next item of outrage.

Last week, West Bengal experienced such a three-day outrage over a remark by Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Maitra. The MP who also combines her constituency responsibilities and national public speaking roles with the more daunting post of being the president of the Nadia district TMC, was undertaking a meeting of polling booth committees in preparation for next year's Assembly polls. These events invariably tend to be chaotic, not least because too many people want to be seated on the dais and the media insists on access. It was this last issue that provoked Mahua to ask why the “two-paise media” had been granted access. Alas, in this age of over-intrusiveness, someone recorded her outburst on video and circulated it.

The results were predictable. Taking on the media as a collective is akin to taking on the might of a trade union. The outcome can never be satisfactory for any individual, least of all a politician. The MP for Krishnanagar was mercilessly berated on print, TV and the social media. The anger of the journalists was complemented by Bengali ‘intellectuals’ who, frustrated by their inability to attack the TMC directly — because it may end up helping the BJP in West Bengal — chose to direct their fire at one errant MP. They were helped by the fact that some TMC leaders were grudgingly forced to concede that Mahua should have been a bit more careful with her choice of words.

My own experience also suggests that the importance of the media in moulding public opinion is grossly over-stated by politicians. People in public life may feel irritated at the media's unending — and even needless — hostility towards them. The larger question is: does the coverage of a media organisation shape public perception or is public opinion moulded by people's own experiences? I personally believe that it is the latter. The media is important but not central to people's voting preferences

to the Bengali media, particularly at a time other advertising revenues are down. In short, they are repaying the TMC Government for the monetary lifeline that has been thrown at them.

I don't know the extent to which journalists working in media organisations favoured by the Chief Minister actually support the editorial stance of their proprietors. My own experience with the media suggests that there is a degree of alienation because journalists, being fiercely opinionated and with a self-image of intellectual independence, don't like being dictated to. This may explain the ferocity with which Maitra's stray comment was attacked. It also explains why a large number of individuals involved in the cultural life of Bengal joined in the outrage. Their target wasn't really one individual. The real focus of their attack was the Mamata Government. However, because this wasn't possible given the constraints that bind the media in the State, the guns were instead trained on Maitra. This is a familiar pattern in totalitarian states and it is amusing to see it being replicated in a corner of India.

My own experience also suggests that the importance of the media in moulding public opinion is grossly over-stated by politicians. People in public life may feel irritated at the media's unending — and even needless — hostility towards them. The Kolkata-based *The Telegraph*, a daily where I have been writing a fortnightly column since 2003 — without, I may add, any hint of censorship — is irrationally anti-Narendra Modi in its editorial views. Its front pages are often pamphleteering diatribes against Modi, a reason why the TMC loves it. However, in highlighting everything allegedly evil about the Modi Government, it glosses over local news that presents the State Government in an unfavourable light. The larger question is: does the coverage of a media organisation shape public perception or is public opinion moulded by people's own experiences?

I personally believe that it is the latter. The media is important but not central to people's voting preferences.

Farmers brace  
for long haul

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As the farmers' protest at Singhu border of Delhi has yet not found a breakthrough even on the seven-teenth day, farmers, mostly from Punjab and Haryana, continued to protest on the borders of the national Capital amid showers on Saturday.

Addressing a Press conference at Singhu Border, farmers on Saturday said if the Government wants to hold talks, they are ready but the farmers will first discuss repeal of three new farm laws.

“The farmers from Rajasthan's Shahjahanpur will start their Delhi Chalo march on Sunday around 11 am. They would be coming in thousands through Jaipur-Delhi highway,” said Kanwalpreet Singh Pannu, farmers' leader.

Pannu said farmers from other parts of the country are also on their way to join the protesters here and they will take the agitation to the next level in the coming days.

“If the Government wants to hold talks, we are ready, but our main demand will remain the scrapping of the three laws. We will move onto our other demands only after that,” the farmer leader said.

Farmer union leaders will also sit on a hunger strike between 8 am and 5 pm on December 14 against the new agriculture laws, he said.

Pannu alleged the Government tried to weaken the agitation, but the protesting farmers did not let it happen. The farmer leader vowed to keep the protest peaceful.

Following the call given by farmers to block toll plazas, police had made adequate arrangements and these include multi-layered barricading and deployment as many as 3,500 police personnel.

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

Agri laws will better  
farmers' lives: Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after several Central Ministers alleged that “divisive elements” have infiltrated the farmers agitation on the outskirts of Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday strongly defended the new agricultural laws saying farmers would benefit the most from the investments in the agriculture sector and will also get new markets and opportunities.

Backing the new farm laws, Modi said all the walls between the agriculture sector and associated sectors have now been removed to provide new opportunities to the farmers across the country.

“Recent farm reforms will

give farmers new markets, access to technology and help bring investments in agriculture that will benefit them,” he said as protesting farmers persisted with their demand for rolling-back of three farm laws which allow trade and contract-farming in the agriculture produce and remove all restrictions in hoarding by amending essential services act.

“In a vibrant economy, when a sector grows, it has a direct influence on other sectors as well. Reforms that we're doing are removing all such needless frameworks. Our economy doesn't need hurdles between sectors, but bridges to support each other,” said the Prime Minister.

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More coming from across nation to join stir; hunger strike on Mon

India being tested  
in LAC stand-off,  
says Jaishankar**'Country will rise to occasion and meet challenge'**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Terming the “events” along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) very disturbing, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday said India was being tested in the seven-month long standoffs with China in Eastern Ladakh.

Making this observation here, he, however, expressed confidence that the country will rise to the occasion and meet the challenge. This assertion came two days after he had said the relations between India and China were at their worst phase in the last 30-40 years.

In an interactive session at the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Jaishankar also said what has happened in eastern Ladakh was not actually in China's interest as it has significantly impacted public sentiment in India.

Calling the “events” along the LAC very disturbing, the External Affairs Minister said they have raised some very “basic concerns”.

Asked whether it will be a long haul or a breakthrough is expected soon, Jaishankar said: “I would not go into prediction zone at all whether it is going to be easy or not, and what will be the timelines and so on.”

“I also believe that what has happened is not actually in the interest of China. Because what it has done has significantly impacted public sentiment (in India). Professionally, I have seen the evolution of how the Indian public feels about China over the last many decades and I am old enough to remember much more difficult days, espe-



cially in my childhood and in my teens,” the Minister said. Jaishankar said a lot of work had gone into developing the relationship on both sides. “I do not believe that the events of this year have helped at all. In fact I think the real danger is that the goodwill which was so carefully developed will dissipate.”

“But I also would say that, yes, we are being tested. I have every confidence that we will rise to the occasion; we will meet that national security challenge. But beyond that, at this time, I would really frankly keep my own counsel,” Jaishankar said.

His comments came in the backdrop of talks at the military and diplomatic level to defuse the situation at the 1,700 km long LAC in eastern Ladakh failing. The ninth round of Corps Commander level talks between India and China are likely to take place soon.

Though India has all along favoured dialogue to address the outstanding issues, its forces are operationally ready to meet any challenge. The Army has deployed specially trained troops in mountain warfare in Ladakh besides ensuring uninterrupted logistical back up.

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MHA calls back 3 IPS officers  
responsible for Nadda's security**Move is likely to escalate tussle between Centre, Mamata Govt**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after West Bengal's Chief Secretary and DGP defied the summons, the Union Home Ministry on Saturday directed three IPS officers of West Bengal to report on Central deputation. The three officers — Bhalanath Pandey, SP of Diamond Harbour;

Praveen Tripathi, DIG of Presidency Range and Rajeev Mishra, ADG of South Bengal — were responsible for the security of the BJP chief JP Nadda, whose motorcade was attacked by the TMC cadre.

The move is likely to further escalate the ongoing tussle between the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress Government in West Bengal and the BJP-led Central Government following the attack on the convoy of Nadda two days ago.

“Three Indian Police Service officers belonging to the West Bengal cadre have

been called to serve in Central deputation in view of the lapses that led to the attack on Nadda's convoy in West Bengal,” an MHA official said.

The decision has been taken under the rules governing the all India service officers, the official said. Usually, the State Government's consent is taken before any all India service officer is called to serve in Central deputation.

In February 2019, Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar was also in a similar way repatriated to Central deputation.

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People walk on a snow-covered bridge after the town received fresh snowfall in Srinagar on Saturday

PTI

Lalu's kidney  
functioning at  
25%, situation  
alarming: Doc

Ranchi: The physician of jailed RJD chief Lalu Prasad, Dr Umesh Prasad, on Saturday said that the latter's kidney is functioning at 25 per cent and the situation can deteriorate at any time in future.

Dr Prasad has updated the authorities of Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), where Lalu is admitted, in writing about this situation.

“I have said earlier also that it is true that Yadav's kidney is functioning at 25 per cent. And this situation is alarming from this logic that his kidney functioning can deteriorate anytime. It is difficult to predict exactly when,” he told ANI.

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SWARN KR ANAND ■ NEW DELHI

My fight is an expression of my loyalty to the ‘zamindars’ (farm owners), on whose well-being our lives hinge on,” explains Mahak Bhatia, 25, who is part of the sit-in by a huge crowd of farmers protesting against the three farm laws, at Delhi's Singhu Border, “I have to support their cause as the new farm laws will not only affect their income, but will also destabilise the socio-economic system that has worked well till now. And this is the compulsive urge that has brought me and thousand others here.”

The resident of a village of Tohana in Fatehabad, Haryana, and the only son of his mother, Mahak recently lost his job with Cafe Coffee Day in Chandigarh during Covid-triggered economic slowdown and



Farm law protesters in conversation with the Pioneer at Singhu Border in Delhi Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

is seeking a “non-farming” employment in Delhi-NCR. However, his primary occupation at present is to actively

support the movement against the Central Government over the farm laws.

“I am unemployed and

completely broke. I don't have any means of sustenance of my own, but I am grateful to my zamindars for ensuring my mother and I have no scarcity of food. I have never been a farmer nor I have any farm land, but the landed farmers always take care of us. Now it's my turn to reciprocate their immense help by raising my voice against the maleficent laws that will diminish the riches of the ‘zamindars’ and in turn affect our lives,” Mahak articulates, feeling assured that his loyalty will be acknowledged.

However, he quickly corrects himself on the word “zamindars”. “They are all farmers but they employ farm workers as there are various other jobs to do in the farms. We live in the same village and we have cordial and fair rela-

tions. All are equal in the village. You can witness the cohesion here. All of us who have gathered here come from different backgrounds, castes and regions. But everything here is for everyone,” Mahak clarifies, but hesitates to let the cameraman snap a photo of his puffing on the community hookah. His comrades-in-arms on the carpet, however, encourage him to smoke the pipe for a group photo.

“Even non-farming communities have thrown their weight behind the grassroots of support for the farmers. I will soldier on till the farmers feel safe,” says Mahak.

There are many like Mahak from non-farming communities bogged down in the morass of popular antipathy to the farm reform laws.

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## SCHOOLSCAN



### GOLD MEDAL

Mohammad Azeen Siddiqui, a class V student of City Montessori School, Rajajipuram Campus-I, was awarded a gold medal in the national level inter-school online competition, 'Brainobrain Wonderkid - 2020', bringing laurels to the institution. The competition was organised under the aegis of educational institution Brainobrain. Students of over 1,500 noted schools participated in this competition, wherein Azeen showcased her exemplary talent in mental maths, logical ability, general knowledge and speed typing, and walked away with the gold medal. Organisers praised his multifaceted talent and awarded him a gold medal and a certificate.



### NOTICE

Om Prakash Maurya S/o Ram Dular Maurya / Om Prakash S/o Ram Dular Maurya, R/o 16/437, Indira Nagar, Lucknow, U.P. Both are same person and from now He should be identified as Om Prakash Maurya.

### NOTICE

This is to inform that in my Father's (Late Sushil Kumar Sharma) Service Book, my name Aditya Sharma and Date of Birth as 29.04.1998 is mentioned by mistake whereas my correct name is Aditya Kumar Sharma and Date of Birth is 29.04.1999. Consider this as true in all circumstances.

### NOTICE

I, Vishal Kumar Verma S/o Murari Lal (Brother Mahesh Varma Army No- 5254856 Rank - RFN) Vill. Satahriya, Post - Pawaara, Thana Mugara Badhashpur, Machhlishar, Dist-Jaunpur-222202 (UP), I have change my name VISHAL VERMA to VISHAL KUMAR VERMA.

### NOTICE

Be it Known to all that my name written in husband's service records as PUNITA UPADHYAY in place of PUNEETA UPADHYAY. My Correct name is PUNEETA UPADHYAY in future for all purpose. PUNEETA UPADHYAY W/o. JITENDRA UPADHYAY 28D/2A, AZAD NAGAR, ALLAHPUR PRAYAGRAJ

### NOTICE

I, Mr. Kanahaiya Lal Jaiswal, Sanjeev Kumar Jaiswal and Mahendra Kr. Jaiswal S/o Late Mahangi Ram R/o H.No. 14, Mainatali, Galla Mandi Chauraha, Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay Nagar (Chandauli) is going to take LOAN from Fullon India Home Finance Co. Ltd., Varanasi is going to mortgage his property H.No. 14 constructed over S.M. Plot No. 115/4 having area 4080 sqft. with covered area situated at Moh. Mainatali, Galla Mandi Chauraha, Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay Nagar (Chandauli). If some one has any objection in it, inform Harish Chandra Rai (Adv.), Chamber No. 110, Banaras Bar Building, Civil Court, Varanasi. Contact 9451525828 within 7 days. After this 7 days, no objection will be considered.

### आवश्यकता

प्रेम चन्द्र कालोज

सोनी, रमईपुर, प्रयागराज,

मो : 08858070000, 09120552055

आवश्यकता है

D.El.Ed. (B.T.C) पाठ्यक्रम हेतु प्रवक्तागण की राष्ट्रीय अभ्यास शिक्षा परिषद अधिनियम 2014 के अनुसार अर्हता धारी सुयोग्य अभ्यर्थियों की D.El.Ed. (B.T.C) पाठ्यक्रम में प्रवक्ता, कार्यलय अधीक्षक, कम्प्यूटर ऑपरेटर, कम्प्यूटर लेब असिस्टेंट एवं सुरक्षाकर्मियों पद पर रजिस्टर्ड डाक/सीडी पोस्ट/दस्ती माध्यम से आवेदन दिनांक 15/01/2021 तक आमंत्रित है। पदों पर चयन हेतु साक्षात्कार दिनांक 17/01/2021 को प्रातः 10 बजे विद्यालय परिसर में सम्पन्न होंगे।

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प्रवक्ता

# Yogi dedicates 19 residential, non-residential buildings

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the Revenue department was the pivot of the administrative and land system of the state and when a department did good work, confidence, which in turn strengthened democracy.

He pointed out that the Revenue department has a very important role in settling land related disputes and patted the department for consistently doing excellent, qualitative work in the public interest and making invaluable contribution in the progress of the state.

The chief minister expressed this view at his official residence here on Saturday while dedicating 19 residential and non-residential buildings in 12 districts of the state through virtual medium.

These residential and non-residential buildings, he said, had been constructed in order to solve the problems of the people in a time bound manner.

On this occasion, Union Minister of State for Road Transport and State Road, General (Retired) VK Singh also joined the program through virtual medium.

The chief minister said that the employees could work in districts and they could get accommodation at the local level itself so these residential buildings had been constructed in a time bound manner.

“Important works like those relating to land, disaster management and relief were done by the Revenue department, the chief minister said.

In the functions of the Revenue department, the divisional office, district magistrate office, deputy district magistrate office are the focal points of administration, where the public is directly concerned. The present government is continuously working towards providing a clean, accessible and well-organised environment in offices,” he said.

The chief minister said that a special campaign was being started by the state government to register heritage from December 15, 2020 and warned that callousness in registering a virasat would not be tolerated.

## ‘Raise awareness about e-Sanjeevani’

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Reiterating his government's commitment to further improving health services in the state, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday said that there was a need to make people aware of the e-Sanjeevani app so that the benefits of health services reached every person.

Presiding over a high-level unlock review meeting at his official residence here, the chief minister said that the guidelines issued by the state Government for protection from COVID-19 should be followed in totality besides, maintaining and effective system for protection and treatment of COVID-19 patients.

The chief minister stressed on consistent dissemination of awareness messages about protection from COVID-19. He said various modes of media and public address systems should also be used extensively to spread awareness and they should also be used at major crossings, markets and important places to disseminate information about containing the spread of novel coronavirus infection.

He said people should be made aware about the mandatory use of masks and contact tracing and surveillance systems should be further

After this, a special campaign of measurement would also be started, he added. The chief minister said that the Revenue department was constantly constructing office buildings of the board, district and tehsil.

“Also, for the redressal of public issues and to ensure timely attendance of officers and employees, residential buildings are being constructed for them near the office building.

As a result of the efforts made in this direction, 19 moving projects of the state have been completed at a cost of about Rs 100.20 crore,” he said.

The chief minister said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had implemented the ownership plan



strengthened. The chief minister said there should be special vigilance in Lucknow, Varanasi and Gorakhpur and a special work plan should be prepared for effective control of coronavirus infection.

Yogi also directed the district magistrates and chief medical officers to regularly hold meetings at the Covid hospitals in the morning and the Integrated Command and Control Centres in the evening and also prepare strategies for the future.

He said the construction of medical colleges should be completed within the stipulated time frame and action plan should be prepared to complete the new medical col-

leges for which proposals had been received.

He also directed the officials to complete all the formalities for COVID-19 vaccination by December 15. He asked the chief medical officers, district magistrates and district police chiefs to hold a meeting in this regard and ensure safety and security for a successful vaccination drive.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary RK Tiwari, Infrastructure and Industrial Development Commissioner Alok Tandon, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Awasthi, Additional chief Secretary (MSME and Information) Navneet Sehgal.

(Swamitva Yojana) in the country.

“Rapid work is being done on this scheme in the state. Through this, citizens will get possession of their land, which will also provide them the facility to take loans,” he said.

Yogi said that on December 25, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a special campaign for distribution of houses would be launched under the ownership scheme in the state.

The chief minister said that the Revenue department had done excellent work during the coronavirus period and successfully discharged responsibilities such as providing ration to migrant workers,

supplying essential commodities and skill mapping.

Addressing the programme, Minister of State for Revenue and Flood Control Vijay Kumar Kashyap said that the Revenue department was working with full capacity under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. He said villages were being empowered through the ownership scheme.

On this occasion, Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue) Renuka Kumar thanked everyone.

It is to be mentioned that these residential and non-residential buildings are located in Kanpur Dehat, Shamli, Budaun, Sitapur, Mainpuri, Hapur, Auraiya, Kasganj, Hapur and Kushinagar districts.

## CM: Purvanchal's economic disparity will be removed

**Lucknow (PNS):** Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said regional disparity always hindered the process of development and that was why Uttar Pradesh was divided into four economic zones – Purvanchal, Madhyanchal, Bundelkhand and Paschimanchal — and two development boards – Purvanchal and Bundelkhand — had been formed so that economic disparities could be removed.

The chief minister said this while virtually addressing the concluding session of the three-day webinar-cum-seminar on ‘Sustainable development: issues, strategies and future direction of Purvanchal’, held at Deendayal Upadhyay Gorakhpur University, in Gorakhpur. He said, “All departments and institutions would have to come together for the development of Purvanchal as the region has enormous natural resources and potential.”

“Despite being the oldest land of civilisation, we remained the most backward, considering ourselves as poor. I have visited all the districts of the eastern UP and I did not see any shortage of water. The main factor for human civilisation is present here in abundance,” he said.

The chief minister said the problems of the region had to be resolved at the local level and through local institutions.

“There are all possibilities to increase the per capita income. Agricultural research centres have been linked with agricultural universities so that the farmers can get better value for their produce by increasing production. To bring their produce to the market, a comprehensive prospect has been prepared by bringing an exports policy,” he said.

The chief minister said that keeping in view the suggestions received in the seminar for the development of eastern UP, a cabinet sub-committee would be constituted to give its recommendations on the suggestions with regards to

the development plan for Purvanchal and their implementation.

He said that there were immense possibilities in the service sector and of the six Buddhist tourism sites, five were in the eastern region. “We have to build good chains of hotels to promote tourism. International airports are being built in Kushinagar and Ayodhya. The Purvanchal Expressway will become the backbone of the economy of the eastern region and the youth of Purvanchal will get employment here,” the chief minister emphasised.

Yogi Adityanath said that the youth did not have much information about the government schemes and universities and educational institutions would have to take the responsibility of making these schemes accessible to the youth.

“Youth are not having the information of schemes like PM Mudra Yojana, ODOP Scheme, CM Swarojgar Yojana, Atmanirbhar Yojana, etc. Educational institutions should ensure that youth benefit from these schemes and get self-employed,” he said.

The chief minister said the new education policy was going to bring a big change across the country and the educational institutions should form a committee and prepare an action plan.

“An action plan has to be prepared to make government schemes effective and also to ensure that they reach the youth,” he said.

The chief minister said that the state government ended the dependency on China and this Deepawali, diyas (clay lamps) were lit in every household.

“Be it the idols of Lakshmi and Ganesh or diyas, we were dependent on China despite the fact that we had all the resources in UP. We (the UP government) ended the dependence on China and this Deepawali, Lakshmi and Ganesh idols made by our artisans were worshipped and this also encouraged self-reliance and business of the local artisans,” he said.

## DyCM: UP emerging as start-up ecosystem

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh's Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma said that due to the efforts of the state government to encourage start-ups, UP had been placed in the category of Emerging Start-up Ecosystem under the State Start-up Ranking, 2019.

The deputy chief minister said the newly launched Uttar Pradesh Start-up Policy, 2020 covered start-ups in all sectors, including agriculture, medicine and health, energy, khadi, education, tourism, transport.

He said the policy aimed at setting up more than 100 incubators, a minimum one in each district of the state, and creation of an eco-system compatible with the establishment of at least 10,000 start-ups in the state.

He said with the implementation of the policy, it was expected to generate direct employment for 50,000 youth



and indirect employment for 10 lakh persons in the state.

Sharma said in the recently concluded policy implementation meeting, seven new incubators were approved in Banda, Varanasi, Noida, Lucknow, Mathura and Ghaziabad districts.

He said under the Start-up Policy, 2020, three state-of-the-art centres of excellence would be set up in the state, out of which the construction of the Centre of Excellence in Medi-tech, Technology would be on the SGPIMS campus in

Lucknow was in progress.

He said a new dedicated policy was proposed to attract investment in data centre industry in the state.

Sharma said under the proposed data centre policy, 250 megawatts data centre industry was to be developed in the state, attracting an investment of about Rs 20,000 crore and three state-of-the-art private data centre parks would be set up in the state.

He said under the policy, various non-financial incentives were proposed to data

centre parks and data centre units, in addition to capital subsidy, interest subsidy, exemption in stamp duty on purchase/lease of land and financial incentives related to energy. He said additional incentives had been proposed for Bundelkhand and Purvanchal regions.

The deputy chief minister said to eliminate the interference of anti-social elements in transparent and clean administration and tendering process, e-tendering system had been implemented by the government in all departments since May 2017 in which all tenders above Rs.10 lakh were being invited through e-tendering only.

He said UP was the first state to have implemented the e-tendering system and was given the ‘Best Performance Award’ among the top-performing states during the period from April 2017 to March 2018.

## UP govt simplifies bar licence rules

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has simplified the process of granting licence for opening bars in the state.

The new rules, Uttar Pradesh Excise (Grant of Bar Licences) Rules, 2020, were approved by the cabinet which met here on Friday.

As per the new rules, the provision of granting bar licences on the recommendation of the committee headed by the divisional commissioner has been scrapped. The excise commissioner has now been delegated the authority to issue the licence on the recommendation of the committee in each district headed by the district magistrate.

The rules provide for decentralisation of approvals and simplification of the process and therefore reduce the number of process transactions from around 28 to just eight.

The new rules will take far less time now in the grant of bar licences and will help the hospitality industry besides bringing higher revenue to the exchequer.

Earlier, as it was mandatory for the restaurant to be operational in the premises at the time of applying for the bar licence, the applicant had to incur losses and unnecessary expenditure in running the restaurant without the bar.

Under the new rules, a restaurant has to be made operational in the premises by

the time of depositing the licence fee after the approval of the bar licence by the excise commissioner.

The new rules are futuristic in nature. To promote tourism, bar licences will be provided in airport lounges, special trains and domestic and international cruises. Besides, now every bar and club licensed premises will be geo-tagged.

To ensure transparency and ease of doing business, the process of granting bar licence shall be online.

Earlier, the licence fee was charged for the entire year, irrespective of the month of sanction of the bar licence. Now, the licence fee will be charged only for the remaining period of the year, exempting the licence fees of the quarters prior to the month in which the licence is sanctioned.

It will be mandatory to have a minimum floor area of 200 square metres and a minimum seating capacity of 40 persons for the premises for which the bar licence is sought.

Earlier, it was mandatory for bar licences premises to have sufficient parking space. Now private parking, valet parking arrangement within 500 metres of the premises will be considered sufficient.

If a bar is located in a mall or in any commercial complex, then the parking facilities and washrooms of the mall or complex will be considered as the facilities for the bar.

It will be compulsory to enclose com-

pletion certificate of the building or an affidavit along with supporting documents under the provisions of Section 15-A (2) of the Uttar Pradesh Municipal Planning and Development Act, 1973 with the application form.

In case of being aggrieved by the decision of the district level bar committee regarding the sanction of licences, an appeal can be filed before the divisional commissioner.

Changes in licensed premises of bar can be approved by the excise commissioner on the recommendation of the district level committee by charging 10 percent of annual licence fee.

Event bar licences for a special event will be issued online for a period of continuous six hours in between 8 am to 12 midnight, which can be extended up to 1 pm with the prior approval of the licensing authority on payment of additional licence fee.

Official sources said that the new rules were fair and just with respect to penalties and compounding so that no licensee felt the brunt of penal action, if he ensured compliance with the rules.

In case of being found indulging in activities like holding liquor consumption competition in order to boost the sales, a fine of Rs.25,000 will be imposed for the first offence and Rs.50,000 for the second offence and on the third time, the licence will be cancelled.



# 267 test Covid +ve, 7 die

Provision made for storage of 1,270 litres of vaccine

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

On Saturday, 267 persons tested positive for coronavirus in Lucknow taking the total number of cases to 74,815. Besides, 315 patients recovered taking the recoveries to 70,677. With seven more deaths, Lucknow's death toll climbed to 1,050 while there are 3,088 active cases. The fresh cases included 29 from Gomtinagar, 15 from Indiranagar, 13 from Rae Bareilly road, 12 each from Vikasnagar, Hasanganj, Hazratganj & Chowk, 11 from Aliganj and 10 from Thakurganj.

Across the state, 1,520 persons tested positive, including 43 in Kanpur, 95 in Ghaziabad, 96 in Gautam Buddh Nagar, 64 in Varanasi and 176 from Meerut, taking the UP tally to 5,64,132. There were 32 deaths in the state, including five in Varanasi, three in Gorakhpur, two each in Kanpur, Prayagraj, Ghazipur & Azamgarh, and one each in Ghaziabad, Aligarh Moradabad, Agra, Bulandshahr, Gonda, Baghpat & Etah, taking the toll to 8,056. Besides, 1,761 patients recovered, taking the number of recoveries to 5,35,985.

Meanwhile, provision has been made for storage of 1,270 litres of Covid-19 vaccine in



Health officials conducting Covid testing in a locality in Narhi on Saturday  
Pioneer

Lucknow for the immunisation which is expected next year. Additional CMO and district immunization officer MK Singh said if the district requires more vaccine, it would be provided by the state government.

The vaccine will be stored in four ice-lined refrigerators of 225 litres capacity each, along with two old refrigerators. Singh said there will be three rooms at the vaccination site. "There will be a waiting room for the beneficiaries who will be there following the Covid-19 protocols. The vaccination will be carried out in the second room while the third will be an

observation room where the beneficiaries will have to stay for 30 minutes. There will be a team of doctors, in case there is any problem faced by the beneficiaries after vaccination," Singh said.

He said the hospitals will be on high alert when the vaccinations are carried out. "December 15 is the deadline for complete renovation of District Immunisation Centre in Aishbagh where the vaccine will be kept. "There are clear-cut directions that the storage area should be newly constructed or fully renovated," he pointed out.

Nodal officer for Covid-19 at KGMU Dr D Himanshu said viruses have witnessed a sequential decline with the passage of time and the same is happening to the coronavirus with people developing herd immunity. "The positivity rate has declined to a great extent as people have developed antibodies. The virulence of the virus has decreased which will impact its spread, it will continue to affect people in high-risk category depending on their immunity levels," he said. He pointed out that trials of the drug developed by CDRI are in the final stages.

## Two cars stolen from Ashiyana

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two cars were stolen in Ashiyana in the last 24 hours. The complainants were identified as Ravi Kumar Tripathi of Prayagraj and Ashok Kumar of Barabanki.

As per reports, Ravi Kumar Tripathi was in Lucknow to attend a wedding at Chancellor Club. He parked his SUV in the parking area and went inside to attend the function. When he returned late in the night, he found the vehicle missing. He informed the police control room and a case was registered in this connection.

Meanwhile, Ashok Kumar, who is a contractor, had visited the house of a friend in sector-L of Ashiyana and parked his luxury car outside. In the morning, Ashok found the car missing. Two strikes by auto-lifters exposed the police claim regarding night vigil. "Senior officers are conducting night inspections at different police stations to keep the cops on toes. These two cases have come as an embarrassment for senior officers," sources said.

In another incident, cash and ornaments were stolen from a house. Reports said the marriage of Mohammed Wasim of Garhi Peer Khan was scheduled for Friday and he, along with other family members, was at the wedding venue. Around 12:40 am, a neighbour informed Wasim about the theft and he reached the scene. "The thieves decamped with cash and ornaments breaking the almirah," he told the police. A case was registered in this connection.

## Man blackmails female friend after securing obscene pics

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A building material supplier was accused of blackmailing his female friend by threatening to share on social media her obscene photos which he took by a trick, in Gudamba. As per reports, the woman met the accused in connection with the purchase of bricks for construction of her house a few years back. The accused took Rs 50,000 from the woman but did not buy bricks for her. When the victim demanded her money back, the accused promised to help her purchase land at lower rates.

He befriended the woman and started visiting her house.

THE WOMAN GAVE THE ACCUSED TWO BANGLES TO GET THE DATA DELETED, BUT THE ACCUSED KEPT AT IT

He spiked her soft drinks one day and clicked her pictures in an obscene way. He later started blackmailing the woman by threatening to upload the content on social media. The woman gave the accused two bangles to get the data deleted, but the accused kept at it the woman continued to give her money and ornaments from time to time. Left with no

option, the woman sought help from the police.

### ELECTROCUTED

A 55-year-old man was electrocuted while another youth suffered severe burns and he is battling for his life at a hospital in Gudamba. The incident took place during a house construction work. The deceased was identified as Lajli aka Lala of the area. He was working at the house being constructed by Qadir of Daliganj. Qadir's son Adil was also at the construction site and he was helping the workers. Around 3 pm, both suffered electric shock and were rushed to a hospital where Lajli was declared brought dead.

## Mayor presents report card on completion of 3 years



Governor Anandiben Patel, minister Ashutosh Tandon and mayor Sanyukta Bhatia at a programme organised on Saturday  
Pioneer

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia presented the report card of Nagar Nigam regarding the work done in the last one year, on the completion of three years of her tenure in a programme organised on Saturday. The chief guest on the occasion was Governor Anandiben Patel. Also present was minister Ashutosh Tandon.

Addressing the gathering, the mayor said that despite the challenges due to coronavirus, they increased the resources and carried out all public-centric development works in the 110 wards of the state capital. "We carried out mass sanitisation work in Covid-19 times and 35 tankers were used to

sanitise each and every part of the city. A community kitchen was started during lockdown in which nearly 80,000 people were fed daily and 35 lakh food packets distributed. The 'Hello Doctor' facility was started by Nagar Nigam and sanitary napkins were distributed among women. We have even run green ambulances for watering the plants at the time of lockdown and put Rs 1,000 in the accounts of over 72,000 daily-wagers," she said.

She said Lucknow achieved 12th spot in the Swachhata Survekshan. "Currently, our focus is door-to-door garbage collection and 400 new vehicles have been pressed into service in the state capital and cleanliness work is being done on a

daily basis," Bhatia said.

She said regular cleanliness work is being carried out in the city and health check-ups of safai workers and their insurance are also being conducted.

The mayor pointed out that regular cleaning of Gomti river and heritage monuments is also being carried out.

"The biggest achievement has been the release of the LMC bond as Nagar Nigam became the first urban unit in the country to issue its bond," she pointed out.

About future plans, she said that under the Mission Shakti programme, a women's degree college of Nagar Nigam would be established.

"To provide jobs to the poor and needy women, they will be associated with the making of sanitary pads which will be distributed in slums. New commercial centres will be established, a community hall for Valmiki Samaj will be established and resources will be increased in the year's time for door-to-door garbage collection," she added. The mayor said that the vendors would be better organised and all efforts would be made to see that Lucknow reaches number one position in the Swachh Survekshan. She said matters related to Nagar Nigam properties would be resolved in a better manner and beautification of crossings and vantage points would be carried out.

## SGPGI to celebrate Research Day today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGIMS) will celebrate its first Research Day on Sunday (December 13). It has been decided to celebrate December 13, a day prior to the Foundation Day as Research Day every year to acknowledge the work done in this field and to incentivise quality research.

"SGPGI Foundation Day is celebrated on December 14 every year. Other institutes of excellence such as PGIMER (Chandigarh) and KGMU have had a tradition of observing Research Day every year. SGPGIMS, a much younger institute, is now taking this important step too," the spokesperson said.

She said SGPGIMS, since its inception, has given due importance to research activities and has achieved significant progress in frontline research. "It has been recognised as one of the leading and outstanding medical institutes for conduct-

ing exceptional research. Scientists have brought laurels to the institute through their publications nationally and internationally," she added.

The spokesperson said that the ongoing coronavirus pandemic has proven how important medical research is in improving our knowledge of various aspects of a disease in order to enhance patient outcomes. "As we navigate through and beyond the pandemic, it is important to recognise and address all possible opportunities and strategies for research, be it clinical or basic. Research Day will be an excellent opportunity for all the faculty members, research scholars and students to exchange and exhibit their ideas on research and showcase past and current ideas and results and gain insights for further work," she said. There are 12 awards in basic research, medical and surgical categories which will be given away to the best research posters in these categories.

## 'Learning a continuous process'

**Lucknow (PNS):** Director of PGI (Chandigarh) Prof Jagat Ram stressed that learning is a continuous process which involves setting of goals, being innovative, working with dedication and finding joy in chosen career. He was speaking at the 11th Prof MK Mehra Oration at KGMU, which was organised by the department of Ophthalmology.

The annual event was conducted in the memory of Prof Mehra, who was a stalwart of ophthalmology and former head of the department. A senior faculty member said that renowned ophthalmologists are conferred this honour and they deliver the oration lecture on their sub-specialty. This year, the lecture was delivered by Prof Jagat Ram.

Prof Ram was awarded the Padma Shree in 2018-2019. Head of Ophthalmology department Prof Apjit Kaur introduced Prof Mehra as a visionary whose midas touch glorified the destiny of the department.



## भारत निर्वाचन आयोग

### विशेष संक्षिप्त पुनरीक्षण/मतदाता (वोटर) पंजीकरण कार्यक्रम

**दिनांक: 17 नवम्बर, 2020 से 15 दिसम्बर, 2020 तक**

**लोकसभा/विधानसभा क्षेत्रों की मतदाता सूची में पंजीकरण कराने हेतु सूचना**

**मतदाता बनने की पात्रता :-**

- भारतीय नागरिक हों एवं उत्तर प्रदेश के सम्बन्धित निर्वाचन क्षेत्र में सामान्यतः निवास कर रहे हों।
- 18 वर्ष की आयु पूरे कर चुके हों अथवा 01 जनवरी, 2021 को 18 वर्ष की आयु पूर्ण कर रहे हों।

**आवेदन की व्यवस्था**

मतदाता सूची में नाम जुड़वाने एवं संशोधन इत्यादि करने हेतु भारत निर्वाचन आयोग द्वारा एक ऑनलाइन वेबपोर्टल [www.voterportal.eci.gov.in](http://www.voterportal.eci.gov.in) विकसित किया गया है, जिसके माध्यम से जन सामान्य निम्नलिखित सेवाएं प्राप्त कर सकते हैं:-

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| 1. निर्वाचक नामावली में नाम को सम्मिलित करने के लिए -  | फार्म-6  |
| 2. किसी प्रवासी निर्वाचक द्वारा निर्वाचक नामावली में नाम सम्मिलित किए जाने के लिए -              | फार्म-6ए |
| 3. निर्वाचक नामावली से नाम विलोपित कराने के लिए -  | फार्म-7  |
| 4. निर्वाचक नामावली में प्रविष्टियों की शुद्धि के लिए -  | फार्म-8  |
| 5. एक निर्वाचन क्षेत्र में निवास स्थान को एक स्थान से दूसरे स्थान पर स्थानान्तरित कराने के लिए - | फार्म-8ए |

उपरोक्त सेवाएं जन सामान्य [www.voterportal.eci.gov.in](http://www.voterportal.eci.gov.in) पर अपने Mobile Number / E-mail ID / Voter ID Number अथवा अपने Facebook / G-mail / Twitter and Linkdin द्वारा Login करके प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

उक्त सेवाएं भारत निर्वाचन आयोग द्वारा विकसित Voter Helpline app द्वारा भी प्राप्त की जा सकती हैं।

फार्म-6, 6ए, 7, 8 व 8ए में सम्बन्धित आवेदन ऑफलाइन भी यथानिर्दिष्ट स्थानों पर जमा कर सकते हैं।

**आवेदन की सामान्य व्यवस्था**

- संक्षिप्त पुनरीक्षण की अवधि में सभी फार्म अपने बूथ लेवल अधिकारी, पदामिहीत अधिकारी, तहसील स्थित मतदाता पंजीकरण केन्द्र, जिला निर्वाचन अधिकारी के कार्यालय से अथवा वेबसाइट [www.ceouttarpradesh.nic.in](http://www.ceouttarpradesh.nic.in) से डाउनलोड कर प्राप्त किए जा सकते हैं।
- सम्बन्धित फार्मों पर अपना आवेदन (फोटो, पता, जन्मतिथि के प्रमाण सहित) निम्नलिखित स्थानों पर जमा कर सकते हैं:-
  - सम्बन्धित पोलिंग बूथ के बूथ लेवल अधिकारी के पास
  - तहसील स्थित मतदाता पंजीकरण केन्द्र पर
  - तहसील के उप जिलाधिकारी / निर्वाचक रजिस्ट्रीकरण अधिकारी के कार्यालय में
  - तहसील के तहसीलदार / सहायक निर्वाचक रजिस्ट्रीकरण अधिकारी के कार्यालय में
  - जिलाधिकारी / जिला निर्वाचन अधिकारी के कार्यालय में
- उपरोक्त सभी आवेदन चयनित CSC (कॉमन सर्विस सेन्टर) के माध्यम से भी निर्धारित शुल्क का भुगतान कर किए जा सकते हैं।

**आवेदन की सामान्य व्यवस्था**

1. मतदाता सूची में नाम देखने की व्यवस्था :-

1. मतदाता सूचियों का आलेख्य 17 नवम्बर, 2020 से 15 दिसम्बर, 2020 के मध्य सभी मतदान केन्द्रों पर देखने के लिए उपलब्ध होगा।

2. वेबसाइट [www.ceouttarpradesh.nic.in](http://www.ceouttarpradesh.nic.in) पर Search your name Electoral Roll बटन पर क्लिक कर मतदाताओं द्वारा अपने से सम्बन्धित विवरण को देखा जा सकता है।

3. आप <https://electoralsearch.in> पर भी अपना नाम देख सकते हैं।

**मतदान केन्द्रों पर पंजीकरण हेतु विशेष अभियान दिवस**

**13 दिसम्बर 2020 रविवार**

**मतदाता सूची में नाम देखने की व्यवस्था :-**

1. मतदाता सूचियों का आलेख्य 17 नवम्बर, 2020 से 15 दिसम्बर, 2020 के मध्य सभी मतदान केन्द्रों पर देखने के लिए उपलब्ध होगा।

2. वेबसाइट [www.ceouttarpradesh.nic.in](http://www.ceouttarpradesh.nic.in) पर Search your name Electoral Roll बटन पर क्लिक कर मतदाताओं द्वारा अपने से सम्बन्धित विवरण को देखा जा सकता है।

3. आप <https://electoralsearch.in> पर भी अपना नाम देख सकते हैं।

**टोल फ्री नम्बर 1950**

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**Website: [www.ceouttarpradesh.nic.in](http://www.ceouttarpradesh.nic.in)**

**मुख्य निर्वाचन अधिकारी, उत्तर प्रदेश**

**कोरोना से डरें नहीं, बचें**

**दो मज की दूरी, मास्क है जरूरी**



# Sharma: IT, electronic policy showing results

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The new information technology and electronic manufacturing policy of the Uttar Pradesh government has given encouraging results as in just three years, investment of Rs 20,000 crore investment has been made in the state by around 30 investors. The investment has resulted in creation of three lakh fresh jobs. The Electronics Manufacturing Policy 2017 was announced in December 2017 to attract investment in the electronics sector in the state. Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma and State Minister for IT Ajit Pal Singh told reporters here on Saturday about the achievement of the IT sector.

"In less than three years, we have achieved a lot in IT sector with Rs 20,000 crore investments and three lakh jobs," they claimed.

Under the policy, Noida, Greater Noida and Yamuna Expressway areas located in the National Capital Region were declared as Electronics Manufacturing Zones.

The policy had great success and has been able to achieve its targets of attracting investment and employment both. Many reputed companies from China, Taiwan and Korea set up their manufacturing units in UP and an Electronics Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) was developed in an area of 100 acres in Greater Noida.

After the successful imple-

mentation of the Electronics Manufacturing Policy 2017, the state government announced the new Electronics Manufacturing Policy 2020 covering the entire state for uniform development of the electronic industry in all the regions of the state.

Sharma said the new policy targeted investment of Rs 40,000 crore over the next five years and generation of 4,00,000 jobs.

The establishment of three electronics manufacturing clusters in the state, an electronic city near Jewar Airport along Yamuna Expressway, Defence Electronics Manufacturing Cluster in Bundelkhand and Medical Electronics Manufacturing Cluster in Lucknow-Unnao-Kanpur zone are proposed.

To promote research, innovation and entrepreneurship in the industry, world class infrastructure will be created in the state as three Centres of Excellence in collaboration with the Union government and industry associations. In this order, the Centre of Excellence (COE) for product-based Li-ion cells has been given in-principle approval by the state government.

To promote the information technology industry, the IT Parks are being developed with an investment of approximately Rs 200 crore in all 18 divisions of the state by Software Technology Parks of India (STPI), a Central gov-

ernment organisation. Operation in these IT Parks in Meerut, Agra, Gorakhpur and Varanasi is expected to begin in the first-half of next fiscal.

Apart from this, actions are being taken to start the work for development of IT Parks in Aligarh, Saharanpur, Azamgarh and Jhansi.

Additionally, 40 acres of land has been acquired in the state capital Lucknow to develop a state-of-the-art Information Technology Park on PPP model. Out of this, 4 acre land has been allocated to STPI to set up the country's largest incubation centre in Uttar Pradesh.

As a result of the state government's initiative, 18 incubators in prestigious educational institutions of the state like IIM-Lucknow, IIT-Kanpur, IIT-BHU, Abdul Kalam University of Technology, Amity University, KIET Ghaziabad have started their operations after approval by the state government.

The ministers said at present more than 3,300 start-up units had become operational in the state. They said an online portal had been launched to promote incubators, start-ups and other ecosystem stakeholders to engage with respective nodal agencies.

To meet the financial requirements of the needy start-ups, a Rs 1000 crore fund has been set up by the state government with the help of SIDBI which is expected to be operational soon.

## One injured in firing during panchayat

**Lucknow (PNS):** One person was critically injured when two unidentified motorcycle-borne miscreants opened indiscriminate fire, creating panic during a panchayat called in Azamgarh to settle a mobile snatching dispute on Friday evening.

The injured was first rushed to the district hospital from where he was referred to the medical college in Varanasi when his condition deteriorated. A case was registered in this regard and efforts were being made to trace out the assailants and arrest them. Reports said that Parvendar Yadav, a resident of Abaypur village under Akharula police station in Azamgarh, was irrigating his field last Wednesday when two youths snatched his mobile phone and escaped.

The incident was witnessed by 32-year-old Durgvijay, a resident of the same village, but he allegedly helped the miscreants escape safely.

Yadav alleged the role of Durgvijay in the mobile phone snatching and so a panchayat was called in the village on Friday evening to resolve the differences.

Some people from the village of Parvendar Yadav and some of the villagers questioned Durgvijay during the panchayat to find out the truth. Sources said that when Durgvijay was disclosing what happened on the fateful day, two youths riding a motorcycle stopped at the place where the panchayat was being held and fired half-a-dozen rounds indiscriminately and escaped.

Two bullets reportedly hit Durgvijay, injuring him seriously. He was rushed to the community health centre at Akharula from where the doctors sent him to the district hospital. The doctors at the district hospital referred him to Varanasi.

Four separate cases were registered in connection with the incident and investigations were on.

# Despite PM's push for Divyangs, this doctor at receiving end

**ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI**

At a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been emphasising on empowering the divyangs and showing sensitivity towards their needs, the BJP-run civic body, North Municipal Corporation of Delhi (North MCD), has chosen to turn a blind eye to ensuring even the basic rights of Dr Sumit Anand, a Medical Officer with locomotor disability.

Not only has he been denied his due salary increment for the last four years since he joined the medical cadre, the young doctor, at an urban health centre at Karol Bagh, has also not been paid his salary since June, this year.

As if this unlawful denial is not enough. His application for disability rights and privileges, enshrined under the guidelines issued by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DPwD), Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, is gathering dust in his depart-

ment for the last two years.

In another instance of the civic body's stark insensitivity towards the needs of the persons with disabilities, the young officer has also not been provided with a disabled-friendly chair to help him carry out his day-to-day official activities.

Dr Anand, however, has not let this indifference hinder his performance. During the lockdown period due to Covid-19, Dr Anand reported daily for duty, for which he was recognised with Corona Warrior certificates, first by the then Deputy Commissioner, Central Delhi Arav Gopi Krishna and then Balram Meena, SDM, Karol Bagh.

"When I complained about non-payment of salary to the department, the officials are pressurising me to sign a faulty salary pay-bill without increment and disability-related benefits," he said adding the apathy has left him and his old parents, who are dependent on him, mentally and financially drained out.

Having failed to get justice from the civic body, the



Dr Sumit Anand

Dr Anand, however, has not let this indifference hinder his performance. During the lockdown period due to Covid-19, Dr Anand reported daily for duty, for which he was recognised with Corona Warrior certificates, first by the then Deputy Commissioner, Central Delhi Arav Gopi Krishna and then Balram Meena, SDM, Karol Bagh

Lieutenant Governor, New Delhi, the Union Health Ministry, the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Dr Anand

is now pinning hopes on the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), which has registered his case for further action.

Talking about his disability, Dr Anand said, his was a case of medical negligence when treatment for an enlarged lymph node led to the gradual paralysis of a nerve leading to his right shoulder when he was doing his MD. He had to give up his dreams of doing specialisation and joined the North MCD in the medical cadre.

"It is very disappointing that bright people like Anand, who cleared MBBS and then UPSC in the first attempt have to go through such discrimination only because they are physically disabled.

"Instead of honouring their commitment and boosting their morale, the North MCD is finding new ways to harass such Corona warriors. This must stop and he should be delivered his dues immediately to send a positive message among the community," said Dr Satendra Singh, an activist for people with disabilities.

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

### FARMERS BRACE...

"Measures were taken to ensure commuters do not face inconvenience at places where protest are being staged," said police.

The Delhi Traffic Police has deployed its personnel across important border points to ensure commuters do not face difficulties and is constantly updating people about open and closed routes on its Twitter handle.

In series of tweets, the traffic police on Saturday informed commuters about the closure of the Singhu, Auchandi, Piau Maniyari and Mangesh borders.

Since these borders are closed, it suggested that motorists take alternative routes via Lampur, Safiabad, Saboli and Singhu School toll tax borders.

Traffic has been diverted from Mukarba and GTK Road. So, commuters have been advised to avoid Outer Ring Road, GTK Road and National Highway-44, the traffic police said.

Due to the ongoing farmers' protests, it said both the Chilla and the Ghazipur borders are also closed for traffic from Noida and Ghaziabad.

"The Chilla & Ghazipur borders are closed for traffic from Noida & Ghaziabad to Delhi due to farmers' protests. People are advised to take alternate route for coming to Delhi via Anad Vihar, DND, Apsara & bhopra borders," it tweeted.

The Tikri and the Dhansa borders are also closed for traffic movement but the Jhatikara border is open only for two wheelers and pedestrian movement, the traffic police said in a tweet.

Those going towards Haryana, can take Jharoda (only single carriage-way), Daurala, Kapashera, Badusara, Rajokri NH 8, Bijwasan/Bajghera, Palam Vihar and Dundaheira borders as they are open, the traffic police said.

Meanwhile, the Sonapat district administration has offered coronavirus testing facility to protesting farmers but most of them are unwilling to get tested, fearing they would be isolated if found positive and this would weaken their agitation.

### AGRI LAWS...

In the last few years, we've made reforms to break all such hurdles. The agriculture sector is one such example.

Today, farmers of India can sell their produce both at the mandis, as well as outside. Farmers can also sell their produce on digital platforms. We are taking all these initiatives to increase the farmers' income and make them more prosperous", said Modi while virtually addressing 93rd annual convention of FICCI. "If the farmers of the country become prosperous, the country becomes prosperous", said the PM.

The PM's comment in support of new laws come soon after two senior Central Ministers Ravi Shankar Prasad and Piyush Goyal alleged "infiltration" of 'tukde-tukde-gang' and that of 'ultra-left' elements into the agitation.

Stating that obstacles are being removed between the agriculture and it's closely related processes, Modi said the cold storage infrastructure will be modernised and would result in more investments in the agriculture sector. Farmers will be benefitted the most from it, he said.

"The farmers have options to sell their crops in mandis as well as to outside parties," he said assuring that the 'Mandi System' would continue.

Protesting farmers, particularly those from Punjab and Haryana, are apprehensive that with the coming of corporate traders (new laws allows contract farming between outside investors and the farmers), the "mandi system" with middle-men (adhatiyas) in operation could be abolished as also the system of Minimum Support Price (MSP).

Interestingly, trading of farm produce is already in practice in the coun-

try, including Punjab, and only six per cent of agriculture produce is purchased under the MSP system (operating mostly in Punjab and Haryana).

As the agitation has entered its third-week (17th day), Opposition parties are backing the farmers while the Centre is saying "no" to the roll-back of the farm laws though not unwilling to amend them and guaranteeing the MSP. The PM's comments in support of farm laws have come close to the BJP launching its own big awareness campaign with farmers across more than 700 districts in the country. As the slugfest between the sides continues, Government has allowed doors of negotiations open asking farmers to walk the middle ground.

### 'MY FIGHT IS...

In fact, Haryana and Punjab are predominantly agrarian society and almost all the elite of the non-farming communities, whether artists or other professionals, come from farming backgrounds, or have close symbiotic relations with the landed farming community --- the farm workers are mostly from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and some from the grim underbelly of Punjab Haryana's rural areas which are remnants of a caste-ridden feudal system.

A farm transporter, one of the elderly among the protesters, claims the new farm laws will affect the ecosystem in Haryana and Punjab whose agriculture survives on State subsidies in the form of high MSP (minimum support price) and well-established Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMC) mandis.

### WILL ENSURE...

In a related development a group of 29 farmers met Tomar and extended their support to the new bills, threatening to stage a protest if those are repealed. The delegation, led by Bharatiya Kisan Union's (Mann) Haryana State leader Guni Prakash, submitted a "letter of support" to Tomar on the farm laws passed by Parliament in September and demanded the Government to continue with these legislations.

Chautala, who's Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) counts farmers as an important constituency and has faced prickly questions about his alliance with the BJP amid the mounting pressure to withdraw from the BJP-led Government in the State, had earlier said he will resign if the MSP system is threatened.

The Haryana Government could topple if key ally JJP pulls back support from the BJP-led Government in the State. The BJP holds power in Haryana with its 40 seats out of the 90-seat Haryana Assembly and the support of 10 JJP MLAs and five Independent MLAs. The Congress, on the other hand, has 31 seats. Farmer unions, particularly in Punjab and Haryana, said the new laws will lead to the dismantling of the MSP system under which Government agencies buy their crop at an assured price. After the meeting, Chautala said the crop procurement at the Government-decided MSP (minimum support price) would be ensured for each farmer till the time he was part of the State Government.

### MHA CALLS BACK...

Terming it a "political move" by the Centre, senior Trinamool Congress lawmaker Kalyan Banerjee wrote to Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla, saying that law and order is a State subject. Banerjee alleged that the Centre was resorting to coercive means to intimidate the State administration, and the top officials were summoned at the instance of the Home Minister Amit Shah.

On Friday, Bengal Chief Secretary Alapan Bandopadhyay and Director

General of Police Virendra refused to heed the orders of the Union Home Ministry asking their presence in the North Block after serious security lapses occurred during Nadda's visit to Diamond Harbour.

His convoy was attacked by miscreants on Thursday damaging a number of vehicles and causing injury to party men including senior BJP leaders.

The Home Ministry promptly made an unprecedented move directing the top Bengal officials to appear before it and explain the security lapses. Incidentally Home Minister Amit Shah who is personally monitoring the Central probe into attack on Nadda's convoy is likely to visit Bengal on December 19 and will stay here for two days, sources said. In response to the Home Ministry's letter the Chief Secretary wrote back saying his and DGP's presence in Delhi was avoidable as the matter was "already being examined" by the State Government.

### LALU'S KIDNEY...

"The rate at which his disease is getting worse and since he has diabetes for the last 20 years, his end organ is damaging in an escalating manner. So, the situation is alarming for the patient's health. The higher authorities of Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) have been informed in writing about Yadav's health that emergency situation can arise at any time," he added.

Dr Prasad also said, in his opinion, there is no need to transfer Lalu Yadav to any other medical facility as organ damage due to diabetes is irreversible and no medicine can cure it.

"The court or the government has to decide on whether he needs to be taken somewhere else for treatment. In my opinion, there will not be any major impact on his health if he is taken outside for treatment. This is because the damage in body organs due to diabetes is irreversible. There is no medicine which will make the kidney function at 100 per cent from 25 per cent. Otherwise, there will be no need for dialysis or kidney transplant," he said.

"We have taken a decision that we will consult the resident nephrologist and decide on the further course of treatment of Lalu Prasad Yadav," he added. On Friday, the Jharkhand High Court deferred Lalu Yadav's bail plea hearing in the fodder scam case to January 22, 2021 after considering a request made by his lawyer.

The RJD leader was admitted to RIMS on August 30, 2018, after he surrendered at Birsamunda Central Jail on Jharkhand court's orders in the fodder scam. Mr Yadav had in October secured bail in connection with the Chaibasa treasury case related to the fodder scam. However, he is yet to secure bail in the Dumka treasury case.

Mr Yadav, who had been in prison since December 2017, was sentenced to seven years imprisonment in 2018 under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and seven years under the Prevention of Corruption Act in connection with the fodder scam case. Both the sentences are being served consecutively. The case pertains to the fraudulent withdrawal of ? 3.5 crores from the Dumka treasury by Animal Husbandry Department officials between 1991 and 1996 when Mr Yadav served as the State's Chief Minister.

### INDIA BEING...

This includes adequate number of prefabricated heated huts for troops and winter clothing.

At present, more than one lakh troops from both the sides are stationed at the LAC in the standoffs and prepared for long haul. They have made preparations for staying put in the harsh winter months when temperatures dip to minus 30 degrees.

**National Yuva Cooperative Society Ltd**  
Regd Office : 209, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, A2/B, Vardhman Janak Market  
Janakpuri, New Delhi - 110058, Phone: 011-25531063  
E-mail: regdoffice.nycslimited@gmail.com, Website: www.nycsindia.com

**NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given that 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Representative General Body Meeting (RGB) of National Yuva Cooperative Society Ltd. will be held on 29<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 3:00 pm at NYCS, B3/97, Basement, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi - 110029. All the Members of the RGB and Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies, are requested to participate in the meeting. Detailed Agenda of the meeting can be viewed in the website: www.nycsindia.com  
Date : 13<sup>th</sup> December 2020  
Place: New Delhi  
Dr. Umesh Londhe  
Chief Executive Officer

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ**  
**INDIAN RAILWAY "PUBLIC NOTIFICATION"**  
Notice is hereby given to all user of Railway line and premises situated on the completed section of the under noted section of North Central Railway, that the 25000 volt 50Hz AC over head traction wire will be energized on after the date specified against the section. On and from the same date, the over head traction line shall be treated as live at all times and no unauthorised person shall approach or work in the proximity of the said over head line.

| Section  | KM/Location/Chainage  |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | From  | To   |
| Electrification of Bhaupur Yard<br>Remodelling work in connection with 3rd & 4th line work between Kanpur to Ghaziabad Section under North Central Railway, Prayagraj. | <b>DN LINE</b><br>1040/22 N-1<br>(1040/535.72)<br><b>UP LINE</b><br>1040/19N<br>(1040/459.22) | <b>DN LINE</b><br>1037/20A<br>(1037/660.45)<br><b>UP LINE</b><br>1038/21N<br>(1038/778.45) |

Date of Energization:- 27.12.2020 1375/20(P)  
North central railway www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @ CPONCR

**कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता नलकूप निर्माण खाण्ड, अयोध्या**  
आनलाइन (ई टेंडरिंग) निविदा सं-02/3030/2020-21 का  
पत्रांक-773/नॉटिफिकेशन/अयोध्या/सुवि-एच  
उपरोक्त के सम्बन्ध में अगस्त कराना है, कि इस कार्यालय के पत्रांक-725/अभियन्ता/नॉटिफिकेशन/2020-21 दिनांक : 26.11.2020 द्वारा जारी की जागी हेतु निविदा सं-02/अभियन्ता/2020-21 आमंत्रित की गयी थी, जो दिनांक 07.12.2020 से etender.up.nic.in साइट पर अपलोड किये जाने से, यिनकी सुलने की तिथि-12.12.2020 व समय अपराह्न : 01.00 बजे थी, जो तकनीकी कारणों से अपलोड नहीं किये जा सकी।  
अतः उक्त निविदा की तिथि को संशोधन कर दिनांक 17.12.2020 प्रातः 10 बजे से 22.12.2020 को प्रातः 10.15 तक साइट पर अपलोड किये जायें, जिसकी सुलना निम्न है।

| क्र. सं. | निविदा संख्या          | निविदा की तिथि | निविदा सुलने की तिथि | संशोधित निविदा सुलने की तिथि | आकस्मिक रूप से सुलने की तिथि व समय | निविदा सुलने की तिथि व समय |
|----------|------------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1        | 02/EE/TWCD.AYO/2020-21 | 07-12-2020     | 12-12-2020           | 17-12-2020 to 22-12-2020     | 22-12-2020 Time10.15               | 22-12-2020 Time 01.00      |

शेष सारे पुराले संशोधी।  
उपरोक्त 157784 दिनांक 11.12.2020 विज्ञान वेबसाइट www.upgov.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है।  
अधिशासी अभियन्ता नलकूप निर्माण खाण्ड, अयोध्या

**Office of The Executive Engineer, Provincial Division P.W.D., Kanpur Dehat**  
No.: 2283/4A E-TENDER NOTICE (SECOND CALL) Dated : 8.12.2020  
The Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, P.W.D., Kanpur Dehat on behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP PWD Class 'A', 'B', 'C' & 'D' (Road Work) for following works :

| Sl. No. | District     | Name of Work   | Estimated Cost (Rs. In Lacs) | Bid Security (Rs.in Lacs) | Cost of Bid Document (Rs.)          | Time of Completion (with rainy season) |
|---------|--------------|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1       | 2            | 3  | 4                            | 5                         | 6                                   | 7                                      |
| 1       | Kanpur Dehat | Maintenance and Repair of Behmai Pantoon Bridge on Yamuna River. | 13.00                        | 1.30                      | 500.00+300.00+144.00 (GST) = 944.00 | 12 Months                              |

Bid document is available on website <http://etender.up.nic.in> from 21.12.2020 to 29.12.2020 which may be uploaded on above website on 29.12.2020 upto 12.00 noon. Technical bid will be opened on 30.12.2020 at 12.30 noon.  
Extra information of Tender is available on website <http://etender.up.nic.in>.  
(Santosh Kanaujia) Assistant Engineer, Provincial Division, PWD, Kanpur Dehat. U.P.: 157765, Date : 11.12.2020 विज्ञान वेबसाइट www.upgov.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है। (Prakash Chandra) Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, PWD, Kanpur Dehat.

**DELHI JAL BOARD: DELHI SARKAR**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SOUTH)-II**  
**JAL SADAN: LAJPAT NAGAR: NEW DELHI-110024**  
"STOP CORONA; Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"  
NIT No. 33/S-II/2020-21 Press Tender

| S. No. | Name of Work  | Reserve price | Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution | Last date and time for download & RTGS through e-procurement solution |
|--------|---|---------------|---|---|
| 1.     | Improvement of sewerage system by replacement of old damaged peripheral sewer line by using pipe bursting technology in front of D-Block, Jangpura Extension along Railway line under EES-II (AC-42 Kasturba Nagar) | Item rate     | 2020_DJB_197374_3 10.12.2020                        | 24.12.2020 upto 2.00 PM   |

Further details in this regard can be seen at [govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in](http://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in) ISSUED BY P.R.O (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 252/2020-21 (S.Ghuan Sajjad) EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SOUTH)-II

## Min: J&K will get back 17K hectares grabbed under Roshni Scheme

**Srinagar:**Union Minister Anurag Thakur on Saturday expressed confidence that J&K will get back 17,000 hectares of land that was grabbed through the Roshni Scheme, and action will be taken against corrupts.

"Roshni Act has been struck down by High Court and (it) termed the Act illegal and unconstitutional. It clearly defined why this Act had been brought in...Just to help a few big names," Thakur, who is the BJP's election in-charge for Jammu and Kashmir, told reporters here.

Thakur said he was glad that the court had taken an initiative and there has been a fair inquiry into it.

"I am sure that 3.42 lakh kanal (17,000 hectares) of land will be returned to state of Jammu and Kashmir. There will be action against those who were involved in the corrupt practice," he added.

The Jammu and Kashmir government has filed a review petition in the high court seeking to distinguish between landless cultivators and wealthy land grabbers who had benefitted from the law which has been struck down. The petition will come up for hearing on December 16.

Commenting on the ongoing District Development Council elections in Jammu and Kashmir, Thakur said the people will decide which part wins or loses.

"However, the response to the five phases of elections so far means that people have already ensured the victory of democracy. The important thing is that these polls have been free, fair and fear-free," he said. The union minister said there were attempts the scare the people ahead of the elections "but they (voters) were not scared."

## Fresh spells of snowfall in J&K

1PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Ahead of the sixth phase of District Development Council elections, parts of Kashmir valley witnessed fresh spells of snowfall in plain areas of Srinagar and higher reaches of tourist resorts of Gulmarg, Pahalgam and North Kashmir districts of Baramulla and Kupwara. In Jammu region, famous tourist resorts of Patnitop, Bhaderwah, Bani, Trikuta hills where the cave shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi is located also witnessed fresh snowfall. Due to inclement weather conditions movement of smooth traffic was also halted on the 300 km long Jammu Srinagar National Highway. Several interior roads in snowbound areas also remained covered with thick blankets of snow.

On the other hand, two civilians were injured in a grenade attack on a police post in Sopore area of Baramulla district. This is the third grenade attack in Kashmir valley in the last 48 hours, official sources said.

In Jammu region, Pakistan army violated ceasefire agreement by resorting to mortar shelling in Balakote sector of Poonch. According to a Jammu based Defence Spokesman, Lt-Col Devender Anand around 6.00 p.m Pakistan army resorted to unprovoked ceasefire violation by using small arms firing and mortar shelling in the Balakote sector of Poonch. In response the Indian army retaliated strongly, spokesman added.

## Goa's Covid tally nears 50,000

PTI ■ PANAJI

Goa's coronavirus caseload went up by 70 and reached 49,305 on Saturday, while two deaths took the toll to 705, an official said. He said 47,489 people have been discharged so far, including 144 on Saturday, leaving the state with 1,111 active cases. The official said 2,069 samples were tested for the infection during the day.



# Police force deployed at toll plaza

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The police force and PAC personnel were deployed at Dafi Toll Plaza on Saturday to avoid any confrontation following the announcement by agitating farmers to make toll plaza free for the commuters and block highways in protest against the Centre's new three farm laws. The police were also alerted to keep close vigil on the highways. Meanwhile, the police made the former district president of the Samajwadi Party (SP) Satish Fauzi and his son Ajay Yadav house arrest as a precautionary measure.

In order to intensify their agitation against the Centre's three new farm laws the agitating farmers had announced to block highways and make toll plaza free for the commuters on Saturday and in view of this, the police force and PAC personnel were deployed at Dafi Toll Plaza here to avoid any confrontation between the agitators and



Security at Dafi Toll Plaza in view of farmers' stir in Varanasi on Saturday

Pioneer

employees working at toll plaza and also ensure that the commuters face no inconvenience. The police personnel of police stations situated particularly in rural areas were made alert to keep close watch on the highways.

No confrontation was reported at this toll plaza and it functioned normally as usual. No protest was also

reported at this toll plaza and highway as well. The police and PAC personnel were deployed at the toll plaza even in the wee hours to ensure the functioning here as usual. Nothing untoward happened and the function at toll plaza remained normal, the police claimed.

Meanwhile, the police also made the former district pres-

ident of the Samajwadi Party Satish Fauzi and his son Ajay house arrest. It is pointed out here that the SP has announced to support the agitation of the farmers and its activists also staged a protest in favour of farmers' agitation during the Bharat Bandh on December 9 last.

Fauzi and his son were asked to remain at home in Seergverdhan under Lanka police station and not hold talks with others just as precaution in view of the announcement of the agitating farmers to block highways and make toll plaza free, the police informed. The police also kept close watch on the activities of those of the adjoining areas of toll plaza who had been in controversy in the past.

The personnel of local intelligence unit (LIU) were also put on alert so as the input could be gathered on time in case the farmers gather in groups for the agitation.

# Meeting on COVID-19 vaccination held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A meeting of the district-level Task Force Committee of COVID-19 Vaccination was held under the chairmanship of District Magistrate (DM) Kaushal Raj Sharma here on Friday. In the meeting, Health department officers have informed that the construction work of vaccination storage room will be completed by December 31 and three ILRs (Ice Linked Refrigerators) have become available to the district from the state. The vaccination of health care workers from both government and private hospitals will be done in the first phase and then in the further stages, vaccination of frontline workers and citizens above 50 years of various departments will be done. Vaccination will be done both in government and private hospitals.

DM directed that district-level micro plans should be prepared as per the guidelines of the Central and state governments and employees related to vaccination should be trained. Special arrangements should be made for the safety and maintenance of the vaccines. Other



DM KR Sharma reviewing preparations for COVID-19 vaccination in Varanasi on Friday

Pioneer

departments should be informed in time for cooperation in the drive. Sharma also reviewed the status of corona infection. He said that the number of corona cases has increased slightly in the past, so there is a need to remain alert completely. The work of surveillance should be expedited, sampling work should also be done on priority and if positive patients are found in them, they should be immediately admitted to Covid dedicated hospitals.

Special monitoring of old

patients should be done intensively by the concerned community and primary health centres (CHCs/PHCs); he said, instructing the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh to make a calendar and prescribed doses of tablet Ivermectin to be distributed free-of-cost to the targeted groups. Earlier, SMO of WHO made a power point presentation of the district level action plan of Covid vaccination. Chief Development Officer (CDO) Madhusudan Hulagi, ACMOs, medical officers, District Programme

Officer (ICDS) and others including the employees of UNICEF, WHO, Zapigo and MicroSave were present in the meeting.

Meanwhile, the DM also reviewed the revision work of the voter list on the basis of eligibility date January 1, 2021 as directed by the Election Commission of India. He directed that BLOs to remain present at all polling stations in the district on Sunday and their supervisory officers AROs / EROs should continue to conduct rounds at their respective booths. He informed that a total of 2,920 BLOs and 300 supervisors have been deployed in the district. During this campaign special emphasis was laid on adding the names of women and young voters. The DM has set a target of getting at least 10 forms for each BLO. Action will be taken against the BLO for not meeting the target. The worst-case ratio of female and male voters is in Rohania, City South and Varanasi Cantonment assembly constituencies.

Special emphasis should be laid on increasing the number of women voters in these assembly constituencies.

# 65 more test positive in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 65 more new patients have been detected in the district on Saturday, increasing the total number to 20,189. The day also saw two more deaths, increasing the toll to 333. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 92 and 90 of them have been recovered from home isolation while two from the hospitals, increasing the number to 16,210 and 2,886 respectively. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far

is 19,096, leaving 760 active cases. The recovery rate is 94.58 per cent, while the mortality rate is 1.64 per cent.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh has informed that in the first report of the day, 43 positive patients were found out of 2,735 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 4,63,557 and the results of 3,365 are awaited. Out of them, 4,43,370 were negative while 20,187 positive. The total number of samples collected was 4,85,132. Earlier,

two males aged 59 and 75 from Puari Kala (Badagaon) and Nagwa (Lanka) respectively succumbed to Covid-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU). With the addition of five new red zones, the total number of hotspots has increased to 2,555 including 225 red zones. Two green zones have been converted into red zones once again. There are 2,330 green zones with eight new ones.

Meanwhile, on the instructions of the District Magistrate (DM) Kaushal Raj Sharma,

mass/ group antigen tests continued to be conducted at Varanasi Junction (Cantt.) and Manduadih railway stations but all the 79 and 41 tests done there respectively were found negative. Besides, all the 145 tests have been found negative at Shree Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Hospital, Kabirchaura, 176 at LBS Hospital Ramnagar, 155 tests at Government Women's Hospital, 31 at CHC Shivpur, 45 at Swami Vivekanand Hospital, Bhelupur and 105 at SSH BHU.

# Notice to Irrigation dept for slow work

**VARANASI (PNS):** UP Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Tourism, Culture, Religious Affairs and Protocol, Dr Neelkanth Tiwari has taken the officers of Irrigation department to task and issued a notice to them for the slow progress of development and beautification work being done at Sangam Ghat (confluence of rivers Ganga and Gomti) in Kaithi near Markandeya Mahadev temple with the cost of ₹1065.66 lakh. He was reviewing the progress of ₹11,731 lakh projects of Tourism department at its Chowkaghat office here on Friday.

The minister instructed the officers of the department to complete the projects in time by launching a drive on war-footing and ensure maintaining of quality of work. He also directed the concerned officers to complete the project being done at cost of ₹1514.02 lakh at Seer Govardhan before the forthcoming Sant Ravidas Jayanti. He said that the construction work on open theatre and changing rooms being done with a cost of ₹59.91 lakh should be completed by February 15 so that the programme can be organised there on the occasion of forthcoming

festival of Mahashivratri. Besides, Tiwari also instructed complete lane road repairing work in Ramapura, Benia, Katuapura, Haraha, Gola Dinanath, Piarikala, Chetganj, Habibpura, Pandariba, Prahladghat, Omkaleshwar, Rajghat, Madhyameshwar and Daranagar wards by July next year. The minister asked the concerned officers to start helipad construction work in Domri by approaching the court to remove the stay. He said that he will lay the foundation stone of ₹382.32 lakh project for the development of pond at Bhadrakali temple in Sarawa on January 1 next. He expressed his concern over the slow progress in the construction work between Godowlia and Dashashwamedh Ghat being done with the cost of ₹1077.56 lakh and asked the concerned officers to ensure completion of work soon.

Meanwhile, the minister has informed that the headquarters (Directorate) of the Department of Religious Affairs will be made in Varanasi as it was decided in a cabinet meeting held in Lucknow on Friday under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. This will be the first directorate to be made at

state level in the city. According to him, in 1985, the department was created but its directorate has not yet been formed. He said that with the formation of the Directorate of Religious Affairs in the city, the activities of the shrines, temples and monasteries will be connected and the schemes related to their beautification and development works will gain momentum.

**IIT-BHU DIRECTOR FLAGS OFF SHOP-ON-WHEELS:** Director of Indian Institute of Technology, Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU) Prof Pramod Kumar Jain flagged off shop-on-wheels of Grihashtha Georgic Pvt Ltd, a start-up incubated at RKVY-RAFTAAR Agri Business Incubator (R-ABI) on Friday. Prof Rajiv Prakash, Dean (R&D), Prof Pradeep Kumar Mishra, Dean (Student Affairs) and Principal Investigator, RKVY-RAFTAAR scheme were also present. Thereafter, Jain visited the Bioreactor Facility & Food Technology Lab for analytical testing of agri and food products established in Malviya Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship (MCIEE).

Grihashtha has created a farm to folk platform, Family

Farmer to provide better price to the farmers for their agri produce and to provide quality products to the customers at their doorstep. Shop-on-wheels is one of the milestones of Grihashtha recommended by the Incubator Committee. It is starting now in Varanasi region. It will help people in the region to instantly get the good quality agri products.

Earlier, IIT-BHU had organised a 60-hour online Agri-prenursery Orientation Programme (AOP) recently in which 31 start-ups shortlisted under RKVY-RAFTAAR Agri Business Incubator (R-ABI), participated from UP, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Bihar, New Delhi, Punjab and Haryana. The online valedictory of the programme was held on Thursday in which Prof Pradeep Kumar Mishra welcomed the chief guest and IIT-BHU Director Prof Pramod Kumar Jain and guest of honour Prof Rajiv Prakash, Dean (R&D), IIT-BHU. In his address, Prof Jain congratulated the selected start-ups and emphasised on usage of AI, IOT and precision agriculture in the start-up ideas so that AtmaNirbhar Bharat, dream of Prime Minister Narendra Modi can be realised.

# Dhotre reviews performance of UP Postal Circle

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Union Minister of State for Education, Communications and Electronics and Information Technology, Sanjay Dhotre, visited Allahabad Region of UP Postal Circle. Chief Post Master General Uttar Pradesh Kaushlendra Kumar Sinha, Post Master General Allahabad Suwendu Kumar Swain and other dignitaries of the Department of Posts were present during the visit.

The minister reviewed the performance of UP Postal Circle on different revenue and operational parameters and gave inputs/suggestions to improve the performance. The minister announced the names of villages covered under the scheme '5 Star Village' in Uttar Pradesh Postal Circle. The Department of Posts launched this scheme to ensure universal coverage of Postal schemes in rural



areas. This aims at financial inclusion of citizens under different schemes offered by Post Offices.

The concept of the Five Star Villages is to ensure 100 household coverage of all schemes. One scheme is equal to one star rating. If a village complete all five schemes the village gets status of 5 Star rating.

ing.

Passbooks to the girl child — the beneficiaries of Sukanya Samirdhhi Yojna - ambitious scheme serving the vision of the Prime Minister for 'Beti Bachao and Beti Padhao' were distributed by the minister who also distributed cheques to the beneficiaries of SCWF Senior

Citizen Welfare Fund) and offered POSB schemes.

During a press conference, the minister briefed print and electronic media about the role being played by Department of Posts.

He stated that as a service provider, UP Postal Circle is committed to provide the quality service to the customers and to serve the citizen in general.

The concept of welfare state, the vision of good governance and the goal of digital India are being conceptualised and realised by the UP Postal Circle.

The minister informed the media about the achievement of UP Postal Circle. He highlighted the role played by Post Offices in Covid lockdown Department of Posts has played a crucial role in the pandemics of COVID-19 by delivering cash at the door step of citizens with the help of APS (Aadhar Enables Payment System).

# NCR promoting Fit India campaign

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

North Central Railway is actively participating and promoting 'Fit India' campaign launched by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. A series of activities have been planned under this initiative during December 2020 to promote fitness across nation.

On Saturday a fitness camp was organised by NCR Sports Association in Railgaon, Subedarganj Stadium. President, NCRSA and Principal Chief Engineer Sharad Mehta welcomed all participants on this occasion and briefed on importance of fitness in our daily life and benefits of this initiative. Under the 'Fit India' campaign a schedule of physical exercise including running, walking



and stretching has been designed by experts for railway employees and their family members inline with theme of this campaign 'Fitness Ka Dose Aadha Ghanta Roz.'

All officers, staff and their family members present on this occasion were imparted training on these exercises by expert coaches of NCR sports association. Sharad Mehta fur-

ther instructed the coaches to continue guiding officers, staff their family members and encouraged everyone to increase participation in this important fitness initiative.

The event witnessed participation from Ajai Mathur Principal Financial Advisor and Navin Kumar Sinha Senior Deputy General Manager other head of departments, general secretary NCRSA Ankur Chandra, joint secretary Vijay Kumar, sportspersons of NCR from various sports disciplines - Athletics, Gymnastics, Hockey, Cricket, Badminton, Golf, Football and other Railway employees and officials on NCRSA. The Fit India Campaign is being organised to encourage fitness. The campaign will cover Fit India Thematic Campaign "Fitness Ka Dose Aadha Ghanta Roz.

# 43 new Covid cases in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Prayagraj reported a total of 43 positive cases of the COVID-19 within the last 24 hours. At the same time, 122 patients also became infection free on the same day on Friday evening. About 110 persons also completed their home isolation, while 12 patients also discharged from different Covid hospitals. With this number of people completing their home isolation, a total of 19,695 persons have completed

their home isolation till today.

One patient also succumbed to the deadly virus on the same day. On Friday evening, a total of 5,510 persons got their corona test conducted. Of them, as many as 43 persons were tested positive for COVID-19.

Meanwhile, a total of 20 people, including about half-a-dozen employees of two marriage halls of Lohar village of Belkharath development block and the former village

head in Bhangwachungi town were found corona infected in the Pratapgah district. This stirred up. However, the administration closed the marriage hall for 24 hours and got it sanitised.

The Health department has been involved in preparing the list of the people involved in the marriage hall since the last three days. Those involved in the matrimonial programme will be tested by taking a sample. CMO Dr Arvind Srivastava said that he has now made

arrangements to send samples of the marriage hall operators and employees for testing.

A 66-year-old woman died on Friday from Corona. She was a resident of Jhansi. She was undergoing treatment at Swaroop Rani Nehru Hospital. Apart from this, Senior Resident of SRN Surgery Department, Signal Maintenance worker of Railways, Branch Manager of Baroda Bank, MR of a pharmaceutical company have been affected due to coronavirus.

# Construction of pontoon bridges starts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

A 30-year-old man, who was going home with his brother, was shot dead by some unidentified miscreants on Friday night near Avatar Talkies under the Shivkuti police station. After the incident, all the top officials including DIG reached the spot and reviewed the situation there. It was learned that the man who was shot dead was accused of killing property dealer Wasim two-and-a-half years ago. He was released on bail shortly before. After talking to the kins, the police raided several places in the Mehndori area and picked up five suspects.

They are being interrogated. Police said that prima facie it appeared that old enmity could be the reasons behind his murder. His brother has seen the accused. Police came to know about some suspects. Based on the same, the police are conducting raids to trace the whereabouts of the accused persons.

Neeraj Jaiswal, a resident of Jondhal, has a garment shop in Azad Market in Telarganj.

# Man shot dead by miscreants

lums escaped. Perturbed Dheeraj immediately informed the family and the police about the incident..

The police immediately rushed to the SRN with Neeraj where doctors declared him dead.

By then the force of several police stations including DIG, SSP Sarvashreshth Tripathi, SP City Dinesh Singh, CO Sudhir Kumar had reached the spot. Neeraj's brother Dheeraj informed the police about the enmity on the basis of which some suspects were hauled up immediately in Mehdauri.

Police have picked up five people in this connection. Some people who are under suspicion were not found at home. Search is underway to catch hold of them.

SSP Sarvshreshth Tripathi said that Neeraj was jailed in the Wasim murder case which took place two-and-a-half years ago. He had come out on bail shortly before. Police have found extremely important clues in the murder case. The case will be worked out soon. Wasim, a property dealer from Mehndori, was murdered on the night of May 17, 2018. His body was found in Malak Balau village of Nawabganj. In this case, the police had sent half-a-dozen to jail including Vipin, Neeraj Jaiswal. Neeraj was released from jail shortly before. Wasim and Neeraj had a dispute over money and the murder took place over the same issue, added the SSP.

**PRIEST KILLED IN MISHAP:** A priest was killed while four others including the cyclist sustained grievous injuries when the car in which they were returning from a barat in front of Iradatganj railway station in the district's Ghorpur police station area collided with a truck after hitting a cyclist. When the news of the priest's death reached his house in the accident, a pall of gloom prevailed over his family members. The kins reached the spot weeping and wailing.

On Friday evening, baarat of Dipendra Tiwari, son of Gauri Shankar Tiwari, resident of Pachkhara village of Jasra, went to Neeva village of Dhumanganj. A car was returning from the barat on Saturday morning. As soon as the car reached near Iradatganj, in the meantime, an employee of the brick kiln, Chhote Lal (65) son of Babadin was going to his house in Jamuli by bicycle. In an attempt to save the cyclist, the car crashed into the parked truck while hitting the bicycle.

Utkarsh Tiwari (28) son of Vinod Tiwari sitting in the car died. While driving in the car, Vishambhar Dwivedi (55) and the groom's father Gauri Shankar Tiwari (60) and the groom's nephew Rachit Tiwari (13) son of Ravindra Tiwari were seriously injured. In the accident, Utkarsh died while on the way to the hospital. Utkarsh Tiwari was a priest of the marriage procession.





The Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar chairing the Udyog Bandhu meeting at his camp office

Pioneer

# DC concern over RIA drainage problem

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Raj Shekhar has expressed concern over the apathy of authorities concerned to solve the drainage system problem in the Rania Industrial Area (RIA) in the past three decades.

He directed the Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority, the stakeholders and the Udyog Bandhu to work out a solution to this long-pending problem.

The divisional commissioner also directed the UPSIDA to prepare a detailed project report (DPR) latest by March-April 2021 after due consultation with the National

Highway Authority of India, the Irrigation department, the Pollution department and the Industries.

He said the DPR should be prepared in two phases, the first for the area where industries had been established and the second phase for the rest of the area to be taken up.

He also directed the UPSIDA to prepare a preliminary report by the end of this month with technical and professional agencies while roping in the Indian Institute of Technology. He said this should be done after due consultation with the stakeholders.

Shekhar said it was a matter of great concern that the drainage problem was pending

for the past three decades and none of the stakeholders and authorities concerned had made any effort to solve it.

Prominent among those present in the meeting included Joint Commissioner Sarveshwar Shukla, UPSIDA RM Rakesh Jha and officials of NHAI, Irrigation, Pollution and other departments concerned.

## UPMRC GIVING FINISHING TOUCHES TO METRO STNS

Kanpur Nagar (PNS): the Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (UPMRC) has started giving finishing touches to the IIT and

Kalyanpur metro stations.

It has given the contract for finishing work of nine metro stations (constructed between Motijheel and IIT-Kanpur) in the priority corridor to Sam India Builtwell Private Limited.

The finishing works include construction of rooms at the metro stations, plaster and painting of civil structures, water supply, drainage, fire fighting systems, electronic and maintenance works.

The track beam work has been completed at the IIT metro station and it will be completed at the Kalyanpur metro station very soon.

The track was laid on the track beam.

## 37 more test positive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar reported 37 more coronavirus positive cases on Saturday evening. Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said that 37 more people had tested positive for coronavirus infection between Friday evening and Saturday evening taking the tally of confirmed cases to 31,417 cases. He said that 10 patients were discharged from hospital. He said no COVID-19 deaths in the city was reported till Saturday evening keeping the death toll to 800. The CMO said at present 699 active cases were undergoing treatment. Dr Mishra said 3381 samples were sent for testing in the city.

## 9-year-old boy killed by kin

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

In a tragic incident, a nine-year-old boy was strangled, allegedly by his relative, in Ghatampur police station area on Friday night.

His body was recovered from a footpath near Noan river on Saturday morning.

The boy had gone there to attend a marriage ceremony with his parents.

After going through the video footage, as the handkerchief tied with on throat of the deceased matched with the one held by his brother-in-law present in the marriage ceremony and the blood stains found on his shoe, the latter was brutally beaten up and handed over to police.

According to reports, the marriage of Kiran, daughter of Suresh Nishad of Chitauli village, was scheduled to be held on Friday.

Suresh's brother-in-law, Chhote Nishad of Guraiyanpurwa village, had also gone to attend the marriage with family members. In the night, Chhote's son Arvind alias Krishna (9) was strangled and his body was dumped on the footpath near Noan river bridge about 200 metres from the house.

During search on Saturday morning, Arvind's body, with a handkerchief tied on his throat, was recovered.

On going through the marriage video, when the handkerchief tied on the throat of the deceased matched with the one held by his brother-in-law Arvind alias Chintu Nishad of Misrapur village and the blood stains found on his shoe, villagers took nabbed him.

After he confessed his crime, the villagers brutally beat him up and handed him over to police.

Chintu had a love affair with Arvind's sister and had married her about four years ago. Station House Officer Ravendra Misra said the accused had also beaten up his wife during the marriage ceremony.

He was taken into custody and investigations were on, he added. The body was sent for autopsy.

# LTT-Gkp puja spl timing revised

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration has revised the timing of special trains being run for the convenience of the people. Passengers are requested to seek information about the revised timetable of trains while making reservation or before travelling in order to avoid inconvenience. All coaches in these trains will be reserved category and passengers travelling in them will have to follow the Covid-19 guidelines, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) PK Singh said.

The 01079 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Gorakhpur Puja weekly special will from December 3 to 31 depart from Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 15.50 hrs every Thursday, from Kalyan at 16.25 hrs, from Nasik Road at 19.25 hrs, from Bhusaval at 22.55 hrs, from Khandwa at 01.10 hrs on the second day, from Itarsi at 03.40 hrs, from Habibganj at 05.10 hrs, from Vidisha at 06.00 hrs, from Jhansi at 09.25 hrs, from Orai at 11.05 hrs, from Kanpur Central at 13.50 hrs, from Lucknow at 15.45 hrs, from Barabanki at 16.55 hrs, from Jarwal Road at 08.02 hrs, from Colonelganj at 18.24 hrs, from

Gonda at 19.05 hrs, Balrampur at 20.07 hrs, Jharkhandi at 20.16 hrs, Tulsipur at 20.42 hrs, Barhni at 21.29 hrs, Siddharthnagar at 22.15 hrs, Anandnagar at 22.41 hrs and reach Gorakhpur at 00.20 hrs.

During the return journey the 01080 Gorakhpur-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus weekly puja special will from December 5 to January 2 every Saturday depart from Gorakhpur at 05.30 hrs, Anandnagar at 06.20 hrs, Siddharthnagar at 06.47 hrs, Barhni at 07.55 hrs, Tulsipur at 08.35 hrs, Jharkhandi at 08.59 hrs, Balrampur at 09.20 hrs, Gonda at 10.35 hrs, Colonelganj at 11.02 hrs, Jarwal Road at 11.19 hrs, Barabanki at 12.50 hrs, Lucknow at 14.05 hrs, Kanpur Central at 16.05 hrs, Orai at 17.32 hrs, Jhansi at 20.00 hrs, the second day from Habibganj at 00.50 hrs, Itarsi at 02.40 hrs, Harda at 03.24 hrs, Khandwa at 05.40 hrs, Bhusaval at 07.30 hrs, Nashik Road at 10.55 hrs, Kalyan at 13.50 hrs and will reach Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 15.10 hrs.

**STOPPAGE PROVIDED:** The railway administration for the convenience of passengers has decided to provide additional stoppage to the

05045/05046 Gorakhpur-Okha-Gorakhpur special train for two minutes at Khambhaliya station, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh said. As a result from December 12 the 05045 Gorakhpur-Okha special train will arrive at Khambhaliya station at 01.26 hours and will leave at 01.28 hrs. Likewise during the return journey from December 13 the 05046 Okha-Gorakhpur special train will arrive at Khambhaliya station at 23.00 hrs and leave at 23.02 hrs.

**COMPOSITION CHANGED:** The railway administration has changed the composition of the 05004/05003 Gorakhpur-Kanpur Anwarganj-Gorakhpur Chauri Chaura special train from December 16 till further notice, CPRO PK Singh said. In the 05004/05003 in Gorakhpur-Kanpur Anwarganj-Gorakhpur Chauri Chaura special train from December 16 as per the revised coach structure, a total of 19 coaches, including two of GSLR, six of general second class, six of sleeper class, three of AC third, one of AC second and one of first-cum-second AC coach will be attached.

# 62-yr-old woman meets tragic end

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

A 62-year-old woman died in a road accident under Adalahaat police station on Friday. As per the reports, Champa Devi (62), a resident of Bhaapir Khurd village, was crossing the road on Adalahaat Sakraudi road when she was hit by a motorcyclist. As a result she sustained serious injuries and was admitted to a private nursing home located at Narainpur. During treatment the women died. After the accident the motorcyclist managed to flee from the spot. After registering the case the police completed the legal formalities and launched a search for the

motorcyclist. Meanwhile in a head-on collision between a Roadways bus and a trailer 16 persons were injured. Out of themfour had been admitted to the district hospital. As per the reports, a Roadways bus carrying 42 passengers was on the way to Lucknow from Mirzapur on Friday. The bus passengers got injured when a uncontrolled trailer knocked it near Rannopatti village on Mirzapur Prayagraj road under Jigna police station. On the information the area police reached the spot sent the injured to a hospital and registered a case against the driver of the trailer. However, the bus driver was safe. After the acci-

dent the trailer driver managed to flee from the spot.

**ASSAULTED:** A contractual lineman was assaulted by some miscreants on Friday. The Madhian police registered a case and investigation into the matter was on. As per the reports, the staff of the Electricity department was returning from Rekha Khurd village under Madhian police station after disconnecting an illegal electricity connection when some miscreants assaulted the lineman.

On the application of the victim the police registered a case and was investigating the matter. However, no arrest has been made yet, last reports said.

# Ethanol production to increase revenues of sugarcane value chain: Prof Mohan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

National Sugar Industry Director Prof Narendra Mohan on Saturday said with the growing vehicular population and considering a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8.83 percent per annum, the petrol sale during 2020-21 and 2021-22 was estimated to be around 38,075 million and 41,266 million litres respectively and this engendered the need for blending it with 10 percent ethanol to meet the fuel requirement.

He said the government was working on both fronts—capacity building for ethanol production and availability of alternative feed stocks.

Prof Mohan said every effort was being made to increase the supply to more than 3,200 million litres and 4,250 million litres during 2020-21 and 2021-22 ethanol

years respectively.

He said as a result of surplus sugar production consistently from the last couple of years, sugar factories had been reeling under financial stress and ethanol had emerged as a saviour of the sugar industry.

He said ethanol production, which ensured dual advantages of economic and environmental sustainability, was now being considered as a reliable tool not only to balance the sugar demand-supply scenario but also to increase revenues in the entire sugarcane value chain besides addressing the environmental issues.

Prof Mohan said the differential pricing policy announced by the government offering ₹ 43.75, ₹ 57.61 and ₹ 62.65 per litre for ethanol made from heavy molasses and also heavy molasses and sugarcane

juice/syrup, respectively, had attracted the sugar industry to opt for producing more of ethanol by sacrificing sugar and during the current sugar season, it was expected that about 20 lakh tonnes of sugar through different routes shall be diverted for ethanol production enabling additional ethanol production of about 1,200 million litres.

He said to facilitate capacity creation, the government had already launched a scheme for extending financial assistance to molasses based distilleries for enhancement and augmentation of ethanol production capacity which may result in additional capacity creation of 6,000 million litres per annum, keeping in view the requirement to meet 20 percent blending targets by 2030.

Prof Mohan said the NSI had formulated various mod-

els for production of ethanol from various sugar factory intermediates which result in reduction in sugar production, increase in ethanol production and ensures higher returns.

The NSI director said in one such model of sugar syrup, heavy molasses diversion, a sugar factory of 2500 TCD having integrated distillery could have additional income to the extent of ₹1,000 lakh during the crushing season.

He said the assured market of ethanol and timely payments by Oil Marketing Companies made the proposition attractive for the millers and keeping it in view, the sugar factories were working on various other options for producing ethanol using cassava, sweet potato, sweet sorghum, sugar beet and surplus grains so as to work round the year

# Mixopathy to prove suicidal: Ex-CMO

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Granting legal sanction to Ayurveda doctors to perform surgery will prove suicidal and it is likely to backfire dangerously, according to former chief medical officer Dr VC Rastogi.

Dr Rastogi, who is spearheading the agitation against the government's decision to allow Ayurvedic practitioners to perform surgeries, said allowing 'mixopathy' would lead to a fall in medical treatment standards and it would reflect on future doctors and the general masses.

There is no denying the fact that there is an acute crisis of doctors in the country, but any attempt to bridge the gap with ill-prepared practitioners of traditional medicine systems will have dangerous repercussions in the times to come," he said.

Dr Rastogi said if the government remained adamant then the medical professionals would have to give further momentum to their agitation. He added that the medical

professionals did not want to go in for a confrontation but would prefer an amicable solution in the larger interest of the country and the doctors as well.

He said a surgeon shaped after over 10-year meticulous practical practice and if 'mixopathy' was allowed, it would increase the number of quacks all over India and the current image of India in the world as the most preferred medical tourism destination would nose-dive.

Dr Rastogi said the Indian Medical Association (IMA) was not against the AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) doctors but was in favour of these doctors practising in their own areas instead of overstepping into a zone meant for allopathic doctors who were shaped after hard work put in for over 10 years of studies and then 10 years of practice.

He said the IMA wanted the AYUSH doctors to be promoted in their respective streams.

# Woman strangles divyang daughter, commits suicide

KANPUR (PNS): Upset by the prolonged illness of her daughter, a woman strangled her and then hanged herself in Barra police station area on Friday night.

Family members broke open the doors of her room on Saturday morning and rushed the mother-daughter duo to a nursing home in Naubasta where doctors pronounced them dead. Vikas Singh of Barra-4 is employed in a tyre company and lives with his mother, Saroj, father, Shashi Singh, elder brother, Avinash, wife, Priya Singh (30) and daughter, Ananya (5). Local residents said that Ananya was a divyang since birth and despite treatment, she had failed to recover from her ailment. This had upset Priya Singh. On Friday night, after Vikas returned from office, Priti took Ananya to a room on the second floor of the house on pretext of teaching her. There, after strangling the girl, Priti hanged herself.

Circle Officer of Govind Nagar, Vikas Pandey, said as the kin did not want autopsy, the bodies were handed over to

them after informing the senior officials.

**TWO COMMIT SUICIDE:** Two persons, including a girl, committed suicide by hanging themselves in the city during the past 24 hours.

While a factory worker, Mangal Singh (32) of Nasimabad Colony in Fazalganj, hanged himself late Friday night, the 23-year old daughter of Uttam Chand of Talpura, Jhansi, ended her life in a hostel room in Kalyanpur police station area. She was preparing for NEET here.

Mangal Singh was employed in a boiler factory. His father, Chandrika Prasad, had died several years ago. His family comprised mother Shanti Devi, wife Shipra and younger brother Ravi. Fazalganj Station House Officer Ajay Pratap Singh said the marriage of Mangal's nephew was scheduled to be held in Jhansi on Friday. While all other family members had gone to attend the marriage ceremony, Mangal did not go there.

He returned from duty late in the evening and went to rest

in his room. In the night, when his uncle, Man Singh, returned and called him for dinner, he found him hanging from the ceiling fan. No suicide note was found in the room.

The SHO said it was not clear what pushed Mangal Singh to take the extreme step.

In another incident, Kirti Sharma was preparing for NEET by living in the hostel opened by Ravindra Sharma in Sharda Nagar, Kalyanpur. She hanged herself from the ceiling fan late Friday night.

When the hostel incharge did not get response from her room on Saturday morning, he peeped through the window and found her hanging.

The body was sent for autopsy. Kalyanpur Inspector Ajay Seth said efforts were on to ascertain cause of incident with the help of her cellphone.

**ELECTROCUTED :** Meanwhile, an elderly home guard was electrocuted due to electric short-circuit in his room in Majhawan village of Vidhnu police station area on Saturday morning. In a bid to rescue him, his younger son also sustained serious burns.

CORRESPONDENT ■ CHANDAULI

Cabinet minister Anil Rajbhar and CUP Minister of State for Energy and minister incharge of the district, Ramashankar Patel, inaugurated a multi-specialty Aditri Child and Dental Hospital located in Bechpur Naibasti on Friday. On the occasion its incharge Dr Nidhi Singh said that the said hospital had been equipped with

necessary facilities for dental diseases and those related to children and besides treatment has been arranged by specialist doctors. UP Cabinet Minister Anil Rajbhar said that a spirit of service is required for the uplift of society. He said the hospital was a huge achievement for



Singh, Vishal Tiwari, Shivay Shah, Hariom, Sunil Srivastava, Rishi Chauhan, Pradeep Singh, Arvind Pandey, Dr KN Singh, Taufiq Ahmed, Nikhil Gupta, Ramesh Jaiswal, Mahendra Singh, Amar Pratap Singh, Ranvijay Singh, Sanjay Singh, Sachin Agarwal and Archit Chaurasia.

# Multi-speciality hospital inaugurated

CORRESPONDENT ■ CHANDAULI

Under the joint aegis of the Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW)'s Safety Department and Railway Protection Force (RPF) a safety demonstration and training workshop was organised at the western gate of the workshop premises on Friday. The demonstration of initial action under special circumstances by the on duty railway employ-



ees at the time of fire accident and use of correct method of firefighting under special circumstances and training was

attended by 91 employees working in the Loco Division (LAS workshop) and the RPF. It may be pointed out here that this is the fourth such event in BLW. Earlier training was organised in the administrative building on November 20, at Engine Division on November 27 and in Stores division on December 4. Another similar event will be organised in the Block and Plant Division on December 18.



# Seized gold went missing from accused’s safe: CBI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

While the CBI has set up an “internal inquiry” after 103 kg gold worth Rs 43 crore, seized and sealed by it eight years ago, went missing, it clarified on Saturday that the missing gold in Tamil Nadu was not kept in its “malkhana” (vault) and was inventoried and kept in the safe of accused firm Surana Corporation.

“It is clarified that CBI searched the building of Surana Corporation Limited, NSC Bose Road, Chennai and prepared a search list. The search list mentioned that 400.47 kg gold has been inventorised and was kept in safe and vaults of Surana, sealed in presence of independent witnesses and the MD of Surana corporation and its officials,” the CBI said in a statement.

As per the directions of the Madras High Court, the vaults were opened in the

presence of official liquidator, officials belonging to six Banks and independent witnesses inspected from February 27, 2020, to February 29, 2020, to hand over the gold to the lender banks of Surana Corporation, it said.

“The seals affixed on the vaults were found intact. However, gold weighed only 296.66 kgs. As the discrepancy between the quantity mentioned in search memo and as per the weight came to notice, CBI promptly ordered an internal inquiry by a senior officer to look into the role of its officials, if any,” the agency said.

“It is clarified that the inventorised gold was not kept in Malkhana of CBI. Rather it was in premises of Surana only under the seal. While the enquiry was on, the petition was filed in High Court and accordingly High Court passed an order dated 11.12.2020,” it said.



CBI’s internal enquiry continues and if any adverse role of any CBI officials surfaces, strict action will be taken against them, it further said, adding, the Madras High Court has observed that CBI under the DSPE Act does not have authority to register a theft case which falls within

the domain of local police.

The theft case will be registered by the CB-CID of Tamil Nadu and investigation will be conducted by an officer of the rank of SP in CB-CID, it added.

The gold is part of 400.47-kg bullion and ornaments confiscated by the CBI when

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matter in the Madras high court, the agency’s lawyer submitted that “an internal inquiry is being conducted by the CBI in this regard”.

“When this Court expressed its opinion, as to why no FIR was registered for theft, the learned Special Public Prosecutor submitted that an internal enquiry is being conducted by the CBI in this regard. He requested this Court to give a direction to the CBI to register an FIR for theft and conduct investigation. He even suggested that this Court could direct the CBI of the neighbouring State or the National Investigating Agency to conduct the investigation,” the high court bench said.

A regular FIR for theft should have been registered in the jurisdictional police station and the police investigation under Chapter XII of CrPC should have been conducted,” the high court noted.

## India pledges \$2 billion to strengthen care for women, kids, adolescents



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Friday pledged a commitment of USD 2 billion at the World Health Organisation’s “Lives in the Balance” summit to provide essential services to women, newborns, young children and adolescents across the world.

The summit organised by WHO’s The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH), a global alliance of more than 1,000 organisations, registered a total commitment of USD 20.6 billion from a group of high income, low and middle-income countries and charitable foundations across the world. “USD 6.6 billion (32 per cent) of the total pledge is from money committed by low and middle-income countries themselves, including Afghanistan, India, Kenya, Liberia, and Nigeria. An additional USD 14 billion (68 per cent) is from official development assistance and grants given by Germany, Canada, Sweden, UK, USA and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation,” the PMNCH said in a statement.

India’s commitment of USD 2 billion will be used to strengthen all levels of care in response to the pandemic and to ensure essential public health functions during the year 20-21.

“As important as this USD 20.6 billion is, it only will partially solve the problem of providing basic essential services for women, newborns, young children and adolescents,” Rajesh Bhushan, Union Health Secretary said. “Comprehensive efforts and collective advocacy are needed to ensure availability of substantially enhanced

financial resources for this noble cause,” he said. The recent WHO data from 105 countries shows that 90 per cent of countries have experienced disruptions to health services, with low-and middle-income countries reporting the greatest difficulties.

According to early estimates of the indirect impact of Covid-19 on child and maternal mortality, more than 2 million additional deaths are estimated over 12 months (2020-2021) above the pre-pandemic level because of disruptions to essential health and nutrition services. “The health and well-being of women, children and adolescents are now at great risk, with inequities compounded by narrowing access to essential health services such as antenatal care, skilled assistance at child birth, postnatal care, immunizations and family planning. Our concern is that resources — insufficient to begin with — are being diverted away to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic,” Helen Clark, Chair of PMNCH and former Prime Minister of New Zealand, said.

As of November 2020, 2.8 million children and adolescents have contracted Covid-19 in 87 countries, according to UNESCO. It said that in April, 1.5 billion students were affected by educational institutions closures in 195 countries this year, leading to loss of school meals and critical impacts on child nutrition. “This funding will ensure women, children and adolescents can access health services and priority social protections throughout the Covid-19 crisis and recovery periods,” Clark said.



Sushil Kumar Modi from Bihar signs after taking oath as a member of the Rajya Sabha, in New Delhi, on Saturday

## CTA polls: US, China play intelligence game

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The US and China both are engaged in a fox game of Intelligence to outsmart each other ahead of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) elections early next year in Dharamshala in their bid to gain dominance in Tibetan politics even as the challenge for the Indian administration is to install a leadership amenable to its security interests.

Through this game, both the US and China-based organisations are ostensibly also seeking to size up the stature of the Dalai Lama by pumping money in the run up to the CTA polls and install leadership inclined to them, sources said. While two Trusts were created in the US three years back to transfer donations to the Dharamshala-based Social and Resources Development Fund (SARD), a non-profit organization established in 1997 by the CTA.



Instead of distributing the donations from the US to the community, the SARD offered loans to the Tibetans based in Dharamshala for various purposes including business and reconstruction, they said. The chairmen of both the US-based trusts are contesting the CTA elections in early 2021 in what is a direct American agenda of influencing the Tibetan elections, they further said.

The US-based trusts have funded SARD to the tune of several crores which was ultimately distributed as loans and even as relief to fight Covid-19.

In addition to this, the American Christian missionar-

ies have also funded SARD significantly in a clear signal that even religion is negotiable for the US-based Tibetans in fray for the CTA polls next year, they said. Likewise, China is also seeking to influence the CTA polls in order to garner support from Dharamshala for backing the Dalai Lama it aims to foist and get recognition for the tallest spiritual leader of the Tibetans. China, the sources said, adopted a trick different than the US and used arrested Chinese national Luo Sang alias Charlie Peng to funnel money in the CTA elections. Sang, nabbed in a money laundering case worth over Rs 1,000 crore,

transferred money through hawala to the Tibetan leadership in Dharamshala.

“The Tibetan cause has gained a bigger proportion globally and both the US and Chinese intelligence agencies are seeking to influence the CTA polls despite the fact that India has single handedly contributed the most in taking care of Tibetan refugees. The security establishment here is grappling with the challenge of pushing candidates close to Dalai Lama, a known supporter of New Delhi or those considered close and loyal to India,” an official familiar with the developments in Dharamshala said.

## CLIMATE AMBITION SUMMIT 2020 India doing beyond expectations: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is not only on track to achieve its Paris Agreement targets but to exceed them beyond expectations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday at the Climate Ambition Summit 2020 through video conference.

“Today as we are looking to set our sight even higher, we must also not lose sight of the past. We must not only revise our ambitions but also review our achievements against targets already set. Only then can our voices be credible for future generations,” he said at the summit on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the landmark Paris Climate Agreement.

Sharing details on the achievements achieved by India under the pact, Modi said that “We have reduced our emission intensity by 21 per cent over 2005 levels. Our solar capacity has grown from 2.63 GigaWatts in 2014 to 36 GigaWatts in 2020. Our renewable energy capacity is the fourth largest in the world.

“It will reach 175 GigaWatts before 2022. And, we have an even more ambitious target now — 450 GigaWatts of renewable energy capacity by 2030,” he pointed out. We have also succeeded in expanding our forest cover and safeguarding our biodiversity, said the Prime Minister who asserted that “on the world stage, India



has pioneered two major initiatives is the International Solar Alliance, and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure to cut down climate change.

Asserting that India is committed to walk on green path, the Prime Minister, addressing the global leaders at the summit, said that in 2047, as India will celebrate 100 years as a modern, independent nation, it will not only meet its own targets, but will also exceed your expectations.

The Summit provides a platform for leaders to announce ambitious new com-

mitments under the Paris Agreement. This agreement is a landmark deal in the multi-lateral climate change process.

For the first time, a binding agreement brought all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects.

It is a legally binding international treaty on climate change which was adopted by 196 Parties at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Paris, on the 12th of December 2015 and came into force on the 4th of November 2016.

## India, Iran and Uzbekistan to hold talks tomorrow on joint use of Chabahar port

**New Delhi:** For the first time, India, Iran and Uzbekistan will hold a trilateral dialogue on Monday on joint use of the strategically located Chabahar port which is being increasingly seen as a fulcrum of connectivity to Central Asia.

The announcement of the meeting was made by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). “The first trilateral working group meeting between

India, Iran and Uzbekistan on joint use of Chabahar Port will be held virtually on December 14,” the MEA said.

The port is being developed by India, Iran and Afghanistan to boost trade ties among the three countries in the wake of Pakistan denying transit access to New Delhi. Located in the Sistan-Balochistan province on the energy-rich Iran’s southern

coast, the port can be easily accessed from India’s western coast, bypassing Pakistan. It is considered to be a major transit point to connect with several Central Asian countries.

The trilateral meeting is taking place in the backdrop of India pitching for participation of Uzbekistan in the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) project.



## शिक्षा व्यवस्था में बढ़ते कदम

# वर्चुअल स्कूल

**कक्षा-10 एवं 12 के विद्यार्थियों के लिए दूरदर्शन, उत्तर प्रदेश (DD UP) चैनल और कक्षा-9 एवं 11 के विद्यार्थियों के लिए चैनल e vidya-9 एवं e vidya-11 पर शैक्षणिक वीडियो के माध्यम से**

**14.12.2020 से 18.12.2020 तक ई-लर्निंग प्रसारण का सत्रहवां चरण**

| दूरदर्शन, उत्तर प्रदेश (DD UP) चैनल पर यू.पी. बोर्ड की कक्षा-10 एवं 12 हेतु शैक्षणिक प्रसारण की समय-सारिणी |  |   |   |  |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| दिनांक तथा समय   | कक्षा-10   |   |   |  | कक्षा-12   |  |   |  |
|  | अपराह्न 1:00 से अपराह्न 1:30 बजे तक              | अपराह्न 2:30 से अपराह्न 3:00 बजे तक                     | अपराह्न 4:00 से अपराह्न 4:30 बजे तक                     | सायं 5:30 से सायं 6:00 बजे तक                              | अपराह्न 1:30 से अपराह्न 2:00 बजे तक                      | अपराह्न 3:30 से अपराह्न 4:00 बजे तक            | अपराह्न 4:30 से सायं 5:00 बजे तक                    | सायं 6:00 से सायं 6:30 बजे तक                  |
| <b>14-12-2020</b><br>सोमवार  | मिशन शक्ति, महिला सशक्तिकरण प्रशिक्षण भाग-2      | विज्ञान अध्याय-11 मानव नेत्र तथा रंग-विरंगा संसार भाग-2 | विज्ञान अध्याय-11 मानव नेत्र तथा रंग-विरंगा संसार भाग-3 | हिन्दी अध्याय-3 रसखान सवैये-कवित्त भाग-1                   | हिन्दी अध्याय-9 रामधारी सिंह निनकर अभिनव मनुष्य भाग-1    | हिन्दी अध्याय-4 अमरकान्त बहसुर भाग-1           | संस्कृत अध्याय- व्याकरण संस्कृत अनुवाद भाग-3        | रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-2 एकक विलयन भाग-2         |
| <b>15-12-2020</b><br>मंगलवार   | मिशन शक्ति, महिला सशक्तिकरण प्रशिक्षण भाग-3      | हिन्दी अध्याय-3, रसखान सवैये-कवित्त भाग-2               | हिन्दी अध्याय-3, रसखान सवैये-कवित्त भाग-3               | हिन्दी अध्याय- व्याकरण शब्द रचना के तत्व भाग-1             | संस्कृत अध्याय- व्याकरण संस्कृत अनुवाद भाग-4             | संस्कृत अध्याय- व्याकरण संस्कृत अनुवाद भाग-5   | वाणिज्य अध्याय-4 अंश-आंश, प्रकार व लेखांकन, भाग-3   | रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-2 एकक विलयन भाग-3         |
| <b>16-12-2020</b><br>बुधवार  | मिशन शक्ति, महिला सशक्तिकरण प्रशिक्षण भाग-4      | हिन्दी अध्याय- व्याकरण शब्द रचना के तत्व भाग-2          | गणित अध्याय-3 दो चरों वाले रैखिक समीकरण, भाग-2          | सामाजिक विज्ञान अध्याय-2 भारत में राष्ट्रवाद भाग-1         | इतिहास अध्याय-7, विजयनगर- एक साम्राज्य की राजधारी, भाग-1 | रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-9 उपसहसंयोजन यौगिक, भाग-1 | अर्थशास्त्र अध्याय-2 राष्ट्रीय आय का लेखांकन, भाग-1 | रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-2 एकक विलयन भाग-4         |
| <b>17-12-2020</b><br>गुरुवार   | मिशन शक्ति, महिला सशक्तिकरण प्रशिक्षण भाग-5      | सामाजिक विज्ञान अध्याय-2 भारत में राष्ट्रवाद भाग-2      | गणित अध्याय-4 द्विघात समीकरण, भाग-1                     | गणित अध्याय-4 द्विघात समीकरण, भाग-2                        | रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-9 उपसहसंयोजन यौगिक, भाग-2           | रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-9 उपसहसंयोजन यौगिक, भाग-3 | गणित अध्याय-2, प्रतिलोम त्रिकोणमितीय फलन भाग-1      | गणित अध्याय-2, प्रतिलोम त्रिकोणमितीय फलन भाग-2 |
| <b>18-12-2020</b><br>शुक्रवार  | सामाजिक विज्ञान अध्याय-1 सत्ता की साझेदारी भाग-1 | गणित अध्याय-3 दो चरों वाले रैखिक समीकरण, भाग-3          | गणित अध्याय-3 दो चरों वाले रैखिक समीकरण, भाग-4          | अर्थशास्त्र अध्याय-2 भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था के क्षेत्र, भाग-1 | रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-9 उपसहसंयोजन यौगिक, भाग-4           | रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-9 उपसहसंयोजन यौगिक, भाग-5 | गणित अध्याय-2, प्रतिलोम त्रिकोणमितीय फलन भाग-3      | गणित अध्याय-2, प्रतिलोम त्रिकोणमितीय फलन भाग-4 |

**नोट : DD-UP, अब आप इन चैनलों पर भी देख सकते हैं, डी डी फ्री डिश-45, डेन-137, नेटविजन-138, डिश टीवी-229, लखनऊ 9-237, बिग टीवी-250, एयरटेल-400, हाथवे-400, सिटी केबल-671, वीडियोकॉन डी 2 एच-889, टाटा स्काई-1195**

| चैनल e vidya-9 पर कक्षा-9 एवं चैनल e vidya-11 पर कक्षा-11 यू.पी. बोर्ड हेतु शैक्षणिक प्रसारण की समय-सारिणी |  |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| दिनांक तथा समय   | कक्षा-9  |   | कक्षा-11  |   |
|  | प्रातः 8:30 से प्रातः 9:00 बजे तक  | प्रातः 9:00 से प्रातः 9:30 बजे तक   | सायं 6:30 से सायं 7:00 बजे तक   | सायं 7:00 से सायं 7:30 बजे तक   |
| <b>14-12-2020</b><br>सोमवार  | संस्कृत, अध्याय-2-खण्ड-क संस्कृत गद्य भारती (गद्य-पद्य तथा आधुनात) आदिकवि: वाल्मीकि, भाग-1/2           | गृह विज्ञान, अध्याय-6 (स्वास्थ्य रक्षा) स्थानीय स्वास्थ्य संस्थाएं, प्रशासन एवं सेवाएं इकाई-2 भाग-1/3 | हिन्दी, अध्याय-4 खण्ड-क, सुरदास-विनय, वात्सल्य, भ्रमरगीत (गद्य कथा साहित्य, काव्य संस्कृत दिग्दर्शिका), भाग-1/3 | गणित, अध्याय-6 रैखिक असमिकाएं भाग-1/4   |
| <b>15-12-2020</b><br>मंगलवार   | अंग्रेजी, अध्याय-2 Tenses: Form and Uses (Words Expressions Workbook) भाग-1/3                          | संस्कृत, अध्याय-2-खण्ड-क संस्कृत गद्य भारती (गद्य-पद्य तथा आधुनात) आदिकवि: वाल्मीकि, भाग-2/2          | गणित अध्याय-6 रैखिक असमिकाएं भाग-2/4  | रसायन विज्ञान, अध्याय-3 तत्वों का वर्गीकरण एवं गुणधर्मों में आवर्तिता भाग-1/7                                   |
| <b>16-12-2020</b><br>बुधवार  | गृह विज्ञान, अध्याय-6 (स्वास्थ्य रक्षा) स्थानीय स्वास्थ्य संस्थाएं, प्रशासन एवं सेवाएं इकाई-2, भाग-2/3 | संस्कृत, अध्याय-1 (खण्ड-ख) महेश्वर सूत्र एवं वर्णों का उच्चारण भाग-1/2                                | रसायन विज्ञान, अध्याय-3 तत्वों का वर्गीकरण एवं गुणधर्मों में आवर्तिता भाग-2/7                                   | हिन्दी, अध्याय-4 खण्ड-क, सुरदास-विनय, वात्सल्य, भ्रमरगीत (गद्य कथा साहित्य, काव्य संस्कृत दिग्दर्शिका), भाग-2/3 |
| <b>17-12-2020</b><br>गुरुवार   | अंग्रेजी, अध्याय-2 Tenses: Form and Uses (Words Expressions Workbook), भाग-2/3                         | वाणिज्य, अध्याय-6 प्राथमिक लेखों की पुस्तकें खतौनी तथा तलपट, भाग-1/2                                  | संस्कृत, अध्याय-खण्ड-क (पद्य) रघुवंशमहाकाव्यम् (द्वितीय सर्ग) भाग-2/4   | गणित, अध्याय-6 रैखिक असमिकाएं भाग-3/4   |
| <b>18-12-2020</b><br>शुक्रवार  | संस्कृत, अध्याय-1 (खण्ड-ख) महेश्वर सूत्र एवं वर्णों का उच्चारण भाग-2/2                                 | अंग्रेजी, अध्याय-2 Tenses: Form and Uses, (Words Expressions Workbook), भाग-3/3                       | रसायन विज्ञान, अध्याय-एकक-3 तत्वों का वर्गीकरण एवं गुणधर्मों में आवर्तिता भाग-3/7                               | संस्कृत, अध्याय-खण्ड-क (पद्य) रघुवंशमहाकाव्यम् (द्वितीय सर्ग) भाग-2/2   |

**नोट: e vidya-9, जियो टीवी एप, डिश टीवी चैनल-950, वीडियोकॉन चैनल-447, एयरटेल चैनल-440, फ्री डिश-128 तथा टाटा स्काई चैनल-756 पर उपलब्ध है। e vidya-11, जियो टीवी एप, डिश टीवी-952 तथा NCERT OFFICIAL YouTube पर उपलब्ध है।**

**माध्यमिक शिक्षा विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश की एक पहल**



**NADDA'S CONVOY ATTACK**

# Not accountable to Home Min: TMC hits out on summons

**Kolkata:**Senior Trinamool Congress lawmaker Kalyan Banerjee wrote to Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla on Saturday, saying that West Bengal's chief secretary and director-general of police were summoned to Delhi over the attack on BJP chief JP Nadda's convoy with "political motive", asserting that law and order is a state subject.

Banerjee, the chief whip of the TMC in the Lok Sabha, alleged that the Centre was resorting to coercive means to intimidate the state administration, and the top officials were summoned at the instance of the Union Home Minister.

BJP national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya, however, said that everyone saw how Nadda's convoy was attacked by alleged TMC workers on December 10 and Banerjee's letter to Bhalla has

"little merit".

"We want to inform you that law and order is within the domain of the state under 7th Schedule of the State list... How in respect of the law and order situation you can call both the officers for any sorts of discussion?" the TMC MP said in the letter.

"It appears that with a political motive and at the instance of your minister, who is a political person belonging to Bharatiya Janata Party, you have issued the said letter. You are trying to coerce the officers of West Bengal with political vindictiveness. It appears you are interfering with the federal structure," Banerjee added.

He said that in respect of law and order, the state government is accountable to the legislative assembly "but not to you or to your home minister".

The TMC leader also

claimed that a person, who is a convict in a case and named in 59 other criminal cases, was in the convoy of Nadda on December 10 and "made provocative gestures" to the TMC supporters standing on the roadside.

"Laws have been thrown out in river by your action at the instance of Shri Amit Shah, BJP leader and Union Home Minister," the lawmaker said, adding that indirect attempts were being made to impose emergency in West Bengal.

Banerjee said that with Parliament not in session, he was voicing strong opposition to the move by the Centre through the letter on behalf of his party. In response to the letter, Vijayvargiya said, "Everyone saw what happened on December 10, how the convoy was attacked by TMC men."

**PTI**

## Rajini's entry into politics will not have any impact: TN Minister

**Madurai:** Actor Rajinikanth's proposed party Would not have any impact on Tamil Nadu politics and not everyone can be as successful as AIADMK founder M G Ramachandran or late J Jayalalithaa, Minister for Cooperation Sellur K Raju said on Saturday.

Chief Minister K Palaniswami's wave was sweeping through Tamil Nadu and people knew who should rule in the Centre and the state, he told reporters here.

Referring to Rajinikanth's decision to float a political party in January 2021 and face the assembly polls, he said, "Actors who were confined to their house until yesterday have come to the public domain today."

"Tamil Nadu politics will not see anything new with the entry of Rajinikanth," he claimed. The Minister further said the voters would teach a good lesson to the new entrants.

"No one can enter politics and be successful like late MGR or Jayalalithaa... Only those who toil for the people would emerge successful in the state," he added.

**PTI**

# Article 370 allowed rampant corruption in J&K: Union Min

**PTI ■ SAMBA**

Union Minister Jitendra Singh Saturday said the now-scrapped Article 370 had paved the way for rampant corruption in Jammu and Kashmir as successive state governments used it to make their own anti-graft laws, customised allegedly for convenience.

He said the setting up of the District Development Councils (DDC) will bring further accountability, transparency and outcome-oriented approach in the working of the administration in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The Article 370 had paved the way for rampant corruption in Jammu and Kashmir because it gave the successive governments in the state the right to enact their own anti-graft laws which were inadequate and tailor-made for convenience," he told an election rally in support of BJP candidates in the DDC polls.

At the same time, Article 370 also

gave the state rulers the prerogative not to allow the Centre's Prevention of Corruption Act to be implemented in Jammu and Kashmir like the rest of the country, he said.

Singh, the Union Minister for the Prime Minister's Office, said the Prevention of Corruption Act was implemented in Jammu and Kashmir only after the abrogation of Article 370 and the state having turned into a Union Territory.

The Article 370 was abrogated on August 5, 2019, and subsequently the erstwhile state was divided into two UTs -- Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Singh, who hails from Jammu and Kashmir, said there was no effective curb on corruption in the past because the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir had its own anti-corruption law and probes into corruption cases carried on indefinitely, allowing the officials concerned to get superannuated, or making too late to bring them to

book.

"As a result, corruption in Jammu and Kashmir, both in lower as well as in higher offices, became a norm rather than an exception and the common impression was that anybody who was smart enough to get away with it, could also manage to go scot-free," he said. With the implementation of the Prevention of Corruption Act in Jammu and Kashmir now, the minister said, now there are timelines fixed to dispose corruption cases and at the same time, not only the bribe-taker but also the bribe-giver is held guilty.

Singh said that in the last one year, there is a visible change in governance and the good governance practices followed by the Centre are also being gradually implemented in Jammu and Kashmir, one after the other.

"This has also led to a conspicuous change in the work culture in the government setup which was grossly lacking in the past," he said.

## 7-yr-old gang-raped in Muzaffarnagar

**PTI ■ MUZAFFARNAGAR (UP)**

A seven-year-old girl was allegedly raped by two men in a village in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar district, police said on Saturday.

The minor had gone missing for some hours, after which her family started searching for her. She was found unconscious and bleeding on the roof of a nearby house in the village under Budhana police station limits on Friday evening, they said.

A case has been registered against the two men under

Indian Penal Code Section 376D (gang rape) and the provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, Circle Officer (CO) Girija Shanker Tripathi told PTI.

The two accused were arrested, the CO said.

In his police complaint, the minor's father alleged that the accused took her to a nearby house and raped her. He said they left her on the roof of the house in an unconscious state. The family members rushed her to hospital, the girl's father stated.

## UP court sentences man to 7 years' rigorous imprisonment for raping minor girl

**Mainpuri:** A local court here has sentenced a person to seven years' rigorous imprisonment in connection with the rape of a minor girl in 2012 and also slapped a fine of Rs 11,000 on him.

The court passed the order on Friday, assistant district government counsel Pushpendra Singh Chauhan said here on Saturday. He said Pradip Kumar, a resident of Udhav village of the district, had on January 16, 2012 kidnapped a minor girl aged 13. After a search by the minor's mother and her family members yielded no results, a complaint was lodged against Kumar at the local police station the next day, Chauhan said.

**PTI**

## TN: 4 dead, 10 hurt as truck rams into several vehicles

**Chennai:** Four persons died while 10 others were injured after a truck laden with cement bags rammed into as many as 10 vehicles, on the Thoppur road in Dharmapuri district, the police said on Saturday.

According to the police, the brakes of the cement bag-laden truck failed and it dashed against 10 cars and a small van, killing four and injuring 10 others.

The injured have been admitted to the hospital. The damaged cars, vans and the trucks were removed by a crane so that traffic on the stretch could resume.

Such accidents are common in this stretch owing to bad road design, locals said.

**IANS**



Workers pluck flowers from an orchard in Nadia district on Saturday

PTI

# Farmers force open Gzb toll gates for free ride

**STAFF REPORTER ■ GHAZIABAD**

On the seventeenth day of the farmers protest, the farmers freed the tolls in the Ghaziabad area. Following the call given by farmers, they were stationed at all the toll points in Ghaziabad and let the vehicles pass through it without any payment.

Farmers on Saturday also took out a protest march on the UP-Gate. The farmers started gathering at Pilkhua and Duhai toll plazas since morning.

There was heavy police force deployed at both the tolls. Despite this, the farmers completely free both tolls as per the schedule. During this time, the farmers took out vehicles for two hours at both the tolls

without paying any toll.

Although the officials present on the spot tried to convince the farmers and even forbade them to do so, the farmers refused to obey them and freed the toll.

Meanwhile, during the agitation, an ambulance arrived during the farmers' strike on NH-9, to which the farmers gave way. Farmers stayed on NH-9 even in the mild drizzle in the morning.

At the same time, agitating farmers intensified the agitation today demanding the repeal of the Agricultural Law under the flyover at UP Gate. According to the announcement, farmers mostly made toll plazas free. The toll on all roads connecting Delhi was made free.



## DU girl student dupes neighbour of ₹2.38L, held

**STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI**

A Delhi University (DU) Bachelor of Arts (BA) student has been arrested by the Delhi Police for allegedly duping a neighbour to the tune of Rs 2.38 lakhs in National Capital. The 20-year-old girl is a resident of Nehru Vihar area and she is a student of Bachelor of Arts (BA) from School of Open Learning in DU. According to Anto Alphonse, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), North district, a complaint was received in which the complainant alleged that during lockdown when he checked his mother's savings bank account there was zero balance.

"Following this, he contacted the Bank at Mukherjee Nagar and found out that Rs 2.38,000 were deducted from his mother's account between November, 2019 to March, 2020. The complainant also checked messages for deduction in her mother mobile number but was not able to find any such message. The complainant made a complaint in Bank regarding unauthorised transaction, where he came to know that transactions were OTP secured, which were sent to registered

mobile number in bank," said the DCP.

"A case under section 379/420 of Indian Penal Code (IPC) at Timarpur police station and investigation was taken up. During investigation, it was revealed that the money was transferred from account to PayTM. Notice was also sent to PayTM which provided relevant details following which the beneficiary was identified as Swati (name changed), who is also a neighbour of the victim," said the Deputy Commissioner of Police.

"Bank Account Statement of Swati was also collected and it was found that money was transferred from PayTM to her bank account. Subsequently she was apprehended," said the Deputy Commissioner of Police.

"During interrogation, the accused confessed to her crime and told police that after helping the victim to activate her new debit card, she also added the card in her PayTM account. She after transferring the money deleted OTP messages from the victim's mobile phone. She spent the money on buying clothes, household items, food and recharge," said the Deputy Commissioner of Police.

## Experts discuss ways to treat, manage spinal injury

**STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI**

Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Thawar Chand Gehlot on Saturday inaugurated the 20th International Spine and Spinal Injuries Conference (ISSICON 2020: Virtual), where medical experts from all over the world gathered to discuss the challenges of treating and managing spinal injury patients and way ahead in the aftermath of global Covid-19 pandemic.

With increasing spinal injuries due to road accidents and its changing pattern in the developing world, surgeons and experts attending ISSICON 2020 virtually deliberated on various

ways to cushion the impact of COVID-19 pandemic among the spinal cord injury (SCI) patients and their reintegration in workforce for economic self-reliance. The five-day conference is being organised by the Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (ISIC), New Delhi in collaboration with the Spinal Cord Society.

"According to estimates, India records about 20,000 new cases of spinal cord injury. It is important to treat them comprehensively and manage their condition. But at the same time, it is important that they do not remain dependent on others. At a time when the world has moved inside and working from their homes, spinal injury

patients should not be left behind or out. I am happy to know that the best professionals have gathered here to deliberate on this," said Gehlot.

"The mission of ISSICON 2020 is spreading awareness and prevention of spinal injury, provide education and training, as well as social inclusion and community outreach for people with spinal injury, especially in this extraordinary situation. The whole world has changed in past 12 months. I hope that the vaccine will be available throughout the world and not just in wealthy countries," said Dr Ruth Marshal, president of International Spinal Cord Society.

Dr H S Chhabra, president - Association of Spine Surgeons of India, Secretary - Spinal Cord Society and Chief of Spine Service and Medical Director of Indian Spinal Injuries Centre said "Spine problems in developing countries are increasing at a rapid pace - road traffic injury deaths have increased by six times during the last 5 years. Besides, with better socio-economic conditions, the pattern of spine injury is changing. The conference helped us gather knowledge from the best practices followed around the world for better preventive, surgical as well as rehabilitative care and comprehensive treatment", he added.

# Delhi's daily Covid count down 1,935

**STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI**

The national Capital on Saturday reported 1935 new cases of Covid-19 taking the total number of people infected with Coronavirus to 605470 while the positivity rate came down to 2.64 per cent.

According to the health bulletin, which details information about the fresh cases registered in the last 24 hours, 73413 tests (32578 RT-PCR, CBNAAT and True NAAT tests figures; 40835- Rapid Antigen). The number of containment zones stood at 6451.

As per the bulletin released by the Delhi government, 578116 patients have recovered, been discharged or migrated so far, while number of active cases stood at 17373, it said.

Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain said that the third wave of covid in Delhi is on the wane and urged everyone to continue following the precautions to effectively combat the virus.

"November 7 was the peak of the third wave in Delhi. The positivity rate was 15.26 per cent on that day, which has been on the perpetual decline ever since. For the past 10 days, the positivity rate has been below five per cent. I can say



that the third wave is on the wane. More than 70,000 tests however are still being carried out," the health minister had said on Friday.

"The situation is very much under control, but still, I will request you all to wear a mask, follow social distancing. Wearing a mask will help us in eradicating the virus from the city. I applaud the citizens for their continued support, as well as the healthcare workers who have been working tirelessly," he added.

As per the bulletin, 94 beds in COVID care centres are occupied by persons under quarantine, including travellers who have returned by Vande Bharat Mission and bubble flights, it said.

## Lack of awareness still deterrent for providing jobs to PwDs

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Mindsets, attitudinal barriers, and lack of awareness are still a deterrent for providing jobs to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), experts here lamented at an event held recently.

"One area that all companies should look at is to find ways in which the abilities of persons with disabilities can get utilized. If we use persons with disabilities as wallflowers, it becomes a lose-lose situation, for the company and the employee," said Arundhati Bhattacharya Chairperson and CEO Salesforce (India). He was speaking at a discussion at the NCPEDP- Mindtree Helen

Keller Awards 2020 event where 11 persons were felicitated virtually as a recognition of their exemplary work towards furthering employment opportunities for PwDs. Saurabh Chandra, Trustee NCPEDP said, "The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwDs Act) is one of the strongest disability legislations in the world, however problem lies in its implementation because of lack of understanding, awareness, or maybe because of a belief that providing jobs to PwDs comes at a high cost. This mindset needs to be changed." Som Mittal, industry doyen and Chairman NCPEDP, talked about the myriad of challenges-the consequences of the

Covid-19 pandemic-on PwDs like access to finance, pension, healthcare facilities, transport and livelihood. He said, leaving no one behind is the key to a resilient and sustainable society. Thus, actions must be prioritised as per the most marginalised".

Arman Ali, Executive Director, NCPEDP said by felicitating Helen Keller Awards, we celebrate the leadership of people with disabilities and equal opportunity employers. They are showing everyone the way by including disability into businesses and beyond their call of duty. In this new normal, it's all about diversity and of the winners and is no longer limited to big cities".

## 2 held for cheating firm of ₹3 cr

**STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI**

The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Delhi Police has arrested two men for allegedly cheating a finance company to the tune of Rs three crore.

The accused have been identified as Essa Ismail Merchant (47) and Amrendra Shashkant Totade (55), both residents of Mumbai.

According to Dr O P Mishra, the Joint Commissioner of Police, EOW, a loan (Equipment Finance) was applied by the accused persons with CLIX Finance India Private Limited through their company Advanced Computers and Mobiles India to purchase Machinery for packing, wrapping and sealing

and of mobiles devices.

"The loan was sanctioned and as per sanction letter, accused persons were to remit 25 per cent of equipment cost to the vendor as margin money. The accused persons remitted Rs one Crore to the vendor in Dubai. The proof of remittance was provided to the NBFC, which released the loan amount to the bank account of the alleged borrower company," said the Joint CP.

"The loan thus received was not remitted to the vendor and it was misappropriated by the Directors of the company in repayment of their other outstanding. A case under relevant sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC) was registered at EOW police station and inves-

tigation was taken up," said the Joint CP.

"During investigation, it also emerged that the alleged company remitted the margin money to the Vendor and got the loan disbursed. Thereafter the loan amount was misappropriated in repayment of an LC already availed by the alleged Company from YES Bank," said the Joint CP.

"After a few months, the margin money was also received back by the alleged company from the vendor at Dubai. It was further revealed during investigation that the accused persons have availed loans amounting to Rs 150 Crores from different institutions and all of these loans have been defaulted," said the Joint CP.



**BID TO OVERTURN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULT**

# SC rejects Trump-backed lawsuit

**Washington:** The US Supreme Court has rejected a lawsuit seeking to overturn the results of the presidential election in several key battleground states won by Joe Biden, effectively ending President Donald Trump's bid to challenge the outcome of the November 3 polls.

The Supreme Court on Friday rejected a bid from Texas' attorney general and backed by President Trump to block the ballots of millions of voters in battleground states of Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin that went in favour of President-elect Biden.

Supreme Court Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas said they believed the court was required to hear the case but expressed no position on Texas' claim. As many as 126 Republican Congressmen had also backed the lawsuit.

"Texas has not demonstrated a judicially cognisable interest in the manner in which another State conducts its elections. All other pending motions are dismissed as moot," the Supreme Court said in a brief unsigned order on Thursday, delivering a devastating blow to the efforts of the Republican president to challenge and overturn the election results decisively won by Biden, a Democrat.



Biden not only bagged the most popular votes in the presidential electoral history of the United States, his tally in the electoral college was 306, more than the 270 votes required for winning the race to the White House. Trump received 232 electoral votes. The election results are scheduled to be formally certified next week by the 538-member Electoral College.

Reacting to the verdict, an angry Trump tweeted, "The Supreme Court really let us down. No Wisdom, No Courage!"

He also said the verdict was a "legal disgrace" and "an embarrassment to the USA."

Trump and his campaign team have been making unsubstantiated allegations of mas-

sive voter fraud and electoral malpractice in the election. State election officials and mainstream media say they have not found any such evidence.

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton in his lawsuit alleged that four battleground states -- Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin -- had violated their own state laws, and thus the US Constitution. The lawsuit urged the court to bar these four states from casting their electoral votes for Biden and as such shift the selection of electors to the states' legislatures.

Trump had said he expected to prevail in the Supreme Court.

Pennsylvania, in its response to the lawsuit, alleged

that Texas wanted the justices to disregard the Constitution, not interpret it.

It said Texas' filings attempted to construct a surreal alternate reality.

"Texas' effort to get this Court to pick the next President has no basis in law or fact. The Court should not abide this seditious abuse of the judicial process, and should send a clear and unmistakable

signal that such abuse must never be replicated," said the response filed by the State of Pennsylvania.

Reacting to the development, Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, said, "The Court has rightly dismissed out of hand the extreme, unlawful and undemocratic GOP lawsuit to overturn the will of millions of American voters." **PTI**

## Trump loyalists converging again on Washington over election

**AP ■ WASHINGTON**

Supporters of President Donald Trump are returning to Washington for a pair of rallies to back his desperate efforts to subvert the election that he lost.

The rallies Saturday come a month after a pro-Trump demonstration that drew at least 10,000 people to the capital. That day began with Trump thrilling supporters when his motorcade passed by and ended with scattered clashes between his loyalists and local activists near Black Lives Matter Plaza near the White House.

Saturday's rallies are meant as a show of force just two days

before the Electoral College meets to formally elect Democrat Joe Biden as the next president. Trump refuses to concede the election, citing baseless claims of fraud.

The Supreme Court on Friday rejected a lawsuit to overturn Biden's election victory, ending an attempt to get legal issues rejected by state and federal judges before the nation's highest court.

Trump planned to leave the White House around midday to attend the Army-Navy football game in West Point, New York. One of the rallies will be at Freedom Plaza downtown and the other nearby on the National Mall.

## Shadowy Ethiopian massacre could be 'tip of the iceberg'

**Umm Rakouba (Sudan):** The only thing the survivors can agree on is that hundreds of people were slaughtered in a single Ethiopian town.

Witnesses say security forces and their allies attacked civilians in Mai-Kadra with machetes and knives or strangled them with ropes.

The stench of bodies lingered for days during the early chaos of the Ethiopian government's offensive in the defiant Tigray region last month. Several mass graves have been reported.

What happened beginning November 9 in the agricultural town near the Sudanese border has become the most visible atrocity in a war largely conducted in the shadows.

But even here, much remains unclear, including who killed whom.

Witnesses in Mai-Kadra told the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and Amnesty International that ethnic Tigrayan forces and allies attacked Amhara — one of Ethiopia's largest ethnic groups but a minority in Tigray.

In Sudan, where nearly 50,000 people have fled, one ethnic Amhara refugee gave the Associated Press a similar account.

But more than a dozen Tigrayan refugees told the AP it was the other way around: In strikingly similar stories, they said they and others were targeted by Ethiopian federal forces and allied Amhara regional troops.

It's possible that civilians from both ethnicities were targeted in Mai-Kadra, Amnesty now says.

"Anyone they found, they would kill," Tesfaalem Germal, an ethnic Tigrayan who fled to Sudan with his family, said of Ethiopian and Amhara forces.

He said he saw hundreds of bodies, making a slicing gesture at his neck and head as he remembered the gashes.

But another refugee, Abebetefe, told the AP that many ethnic Amhara like him who stayed behind were massacred by Tigrayan forces.

"Even the government doesn't think we're alive, they thought we all died," he said. **AP**

## Iran executes journalist who encouraged 2017 protests

**Tehran:** Authorities say Iran has executed a once-exiled journalist over his online work that helped inspire nationwide economic protests in 2017.

Iranian state television and the state-run IRNA news agency said that Ruhollah Zam was hanged early Saturday morning.

In June, a court sentenced Zam to death, saying he had been convicted of "corruption on Earth," a charge often used



in cases involving espionage or attempts to overthrow Iran's government.

Zam's website and a channel he created on the popular messaging app Telegram had

spread the timings of the protests and embarrassing information about officials that directly challenged Iran's Shiite theocracy.

Those demonstrations, which began at the end of 2017, represented the biggest challenge to Iran since the 2009 Green Movement protests and set the stage for similar mass unrest in November of last year. **AP**



An Afghan boy holds the remains of a vehicle which was carrying and shooting the rockets in Kabul on Saturday

## 'Cuomo among contenders for attorney general pick'

**Washington:** New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo is one of several contenders under consideration by President-elect Joe Biden for the role of attorney general, a person with knowledge of the search process said on Friday.

The other three contenders at the moment include former Alabama Sen. Doug Jones, federal appeals court judge Merrick Garland and former Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates, said the person, who cautioned that no decision had

been reached and no announcement was expected imminently.

The person was not authorized to discuss the search process by name and spoke on condition of anonymity to The Associated Press.

The Associated Press reported earlier in the week that Jones, who lost his Senate seat last month, and Garland, who was spurned by Republicans four years ago for a spot on the Supreme Court, had emerged as the two front-

runners in the search process.

Spokespeople for Cuomo did not immediately return emails seeking comment on Friday.

It was not clear to what extent the disclosure this week that federal prosecutors were investigating the finances of Biden's son, Hunter, might have scrambled the attorney general search process given that the person who has picked would inherit the probe assuming it remains active next month. **AP**



Jimmy Lai, centre, who founded the Apple Daily tabloid, is escorted by Correctional Services officers to get on a prison van before appearing in a court in Hong Kong on Saturday

**AP**

### HONG KONG

## Jimmy Lai denied bail as Pompeo tweets support

**Hong Kong:** Jimmy Lai, the 73-year-old Hong Kong media tycoon and advocate for democracy, was denied bail on Saturday after being charged the previous day under the semi-autonomous Chinese territory's new national security law.

Lai faces a charge of collusion with foreign elements to endanger national security, apparently for tweets he made and interviews or commentaries he did with foreign media.

The Apple Daily, a feisty pro-democracy tabloid owned by Lai, said he is accused of asking a foreign country, organization or individual to impose sanctions or engage in other hostile activities against Hong Kong or China.

His case was adjourned to April 16 at the request of prosecutors, who said police needed time to review more than 1,000 tweets and comments made on his Twitter account, the Apple Daily reported.

The newspaper said his

charge sheet listed several foreign politicians who followed Lai on Twitter and cited commentaries he wrote and interviews he did with foreign media.

Lai, who was already being held on other fraud charges after police raided his media company, could be seen handcuffed to a chain around his waist as guards led him to a van to go from prison to court. He wore a navy blazer and an open-neck shirt.

Beijing imposed the national security law on Hong Kong earlier this year after stormy protests in 2019 that started over an extradition bill and expanded to include demands for greater democracy in the former British colony.

The new law outlaws secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces to intervene in Hong Kong's affairs. It has constricted free speech in the city, and democracy activists see it as a way to suppress dissent. **AP**

## Relatives make plea for info on Hong Kong detainees in China

**Hong Kong:** Relatives of a dozen Hong Kong residents who have been detained in mainland China for more than 3 1/2 months made a plea Saturday to be informed of the timing of any trials and whether they can attend.

The request underscored the sharp contrast between the relatively open legal system in Hong Kong, a semi-autonomous Chinese territory, and that of the mainland, where often little information is divulged until a trial is over.

"I miss my son so much," the mother of Wong Wai-yin, one of the detainees, said, choking up. "I want to visit him so badly. I haven't seen my son in a very long time — it's almost four months. Please tell me (about the trial). I'm just an ordinary mother." The 12 were arrested at sea in August while they were apparently making a bid to flee to Taiwan after a tough national security law took effect in Hong Kong earlier this year.

They were picked up after entering mainland waters for crossing the maritime border without permission. **AP**

## money

# Eco indicators show encouraging signs

**Govt committed to minimum governance to boost investment: PM**

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Economic indicators have shown encouraging signs of recovery of the Indian economy post-pandemic, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday as he vowed to keep government controls to a bare minimum and encourage private capital.

In this time of pandemic, he said, the government has accorded highest priority to saving lives of Indians and the way India has handled the crisis through concerted effort has surprised the world.

Compared to February when the pandemic started, things have changed in December, he said, adding, there is a road map to deal with

this now.

"Even the economic indicators are encouraging," he added. Various measures taken by the government in the last six years has instilled confidence among global investors, he said.

As a result, he said, "India has seen record Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Foreign Portfolio Investment inflows during the pandemic."

Addressing the FICCI Annual Convention, he said, a decisive government always strives to remove obstacles for others and always tries to contribute towards the society and the nation.

Recalling the time when government was in all the sectors, he said, a visionary and decisive government, on the other hand, encourages all the stakeholders to realise their potential.

Modi pointed out that in the last six years, the government has encouraged stakeholders in all sectors and this is reflected in the all-round

reforms in sectors ranging from manufacturing to MSME; agriculture to infrastructure; from tech industry to taxation and from real estate to regulatory easing.

Talking about various reforms undertaken by the government in the last six years, he said changes have been brought in manufacturing, MSMEs, agriculture, infrastructure and regulatory easing.

As a result of taxation reform, he said, India has got competitive advantage in corporate tax rate and initiated faceless assessment and faceless appeal leaving behind the scar of tax terrorism and Inspector Raj.

Pointing out that the old policies protected inefficiencies while 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' is guided to promote efficiency in all the sectors, he said the government has introduced Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to promote sunrise sectors and technology based industries.

## Finance Min OK's ₹9,879 cr capital exp proposal of 27 States

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

The Finance Ministry on Saturday said it has approved ₹9,879.61 crore worth capital expenditure proposals of 27 states.

Of this, ₹4,939.81 crore has been released as the first instalment.

In a statement, the ministry said all states, except Tamil Nadu, have availed benefits of the newly announced scheme for 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure', which was announced on October 12 as part of Aatmanirbhar Bharat package.

"So far capital expenditure proposals of ₹9,879.61 crore of 27 states have been approved by the Ministry of Finance."

An amount of ₹4,939.81 crore has already been released to the states as the first instalment under the scheme," it said.

The ministry said the scheme is aimed at boosting capital expenditure by the state governments who are facing

difficult financial environment this year due to the shortfall in tax revenue arising from the COVID 19 pandemic.

"Capital Expenditure has a higher multiplier effect, enhancing the future productive capacity of the economy, and results in a higher rate of economic growth."

Therefore, despite the adverse financial position of the Central Government, it was decided to extend a special assistance to the state governments in respect of capital expenditure, in financial year 2020-21," it added.

The capital expenditure projects have been approved in diverse sectors like, health, rural development, water supply, irrigation, power, transport, education, urban development.

As part of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Package, the government had announced that the Centre will offer Rs 12,000 crore special interest-free 50-year loan to states, exclusively for capital expenditure.

## '5% growth amid de-globalisation to be significant achievement for India'

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Morgan Stanley Chief Global Strategist Ruchir Sharma on Saturday said if the Indian economy grows at 5 per cent in the era of deglobalisation, then it will be a significant achievement.

Addressing the FICCI Annual Convention, Sharma further said India hastily passed agriculture and labour reforms during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Our expectations have to be realistic...If we can grow at more than 5 per cent in a year,

that is a significant achievement," he said.

Sharma also noted that it is no longer feasible in the world of deglobalisation to grow at 7 per cent as exports cannot grow at 20 per cent or 30 per cent in a year, which was good in an era of globalisation.

"So, for an economy like India's, growth rate of 5 per cent will be pretty credible even in this era where I think emerging economies in general will make some sort of a comeback," he added.

Sharma pointed out that

there were about 100 economies that were growing at 7 per cent or more in 2007.

"That has never happened in the history of the global economy. In the last decade, only 10 economies in the world have grown 7 per cent or more in any year," he said.

Sharma also argued that if the population growth of a country is slowing, then that country can't grow at the same pace as it did in the past.

According to the RBI, Indian economy is likely to contract by 7.5 per cent, in 2020-21.

## Now Oracle to move Silicon Valley HQ to Texas

**San Francisco:** Cloud major Oracle has announced to move its California-based headquarters to Austin, Texas and cited flexibility of employee work as the key reason behind the decision. The decision came a day after the company posted revenues of \$9.8 billion in its fiscal second quarter, a growth of two per cent (on-year) and Cloud services and licence support revenues were up four per cent to \$7.1 billion.

"Oracle is implementing a more flexible employee work location policy and has changed its Corporate Headquarters from Redwood

City, California to Austin, Texas. We believe these moves best position Oracle for growth and provide our personnel with more flexibility about where and how they work," a company spokesperson told CNBC on Friday.

"In addition, we will continue to support major hubs for Oracle around the world, including those in the US such as Redwood City, Austin, Santa Monica, Seattle, Denver, Orlando and Burlington, among others, and we expect to add other locations over time," Oracle said. **IANS**



HOME THEATRE

Thriller helmed by women



**A CALL TO SPY**  
Amazon Prime Original  
\*ing: Radhika Apte, Sarah Megan Thomas, Stana Katic  
Rated: 7/10

War-time spy thrillers come with their own nostalgia attached to the sepia shades of a bygone era of conquest and cruelty. *World War 1* stars in such big screen saga in a big way and pretty often but this one comes as a women's special, made even more special by the sterling performances of all the ladies involved — one jew, the other part Indian and yet another a French woman. These three women are employed for the first time ever in war territory, by British establishment, and the three of them, guided by a Jewish head of

operations back in London, weave a story that keeps you on edge despite the slow moving events. Radhika Apte as a sufi signals woman stands out not just because of her exotic looks but also because of her short spurt performance in a role that is small but highly impactful. The arresting thing about this spy story is the fact that it is helmed by women, unthought of in that era. The story has been spun from a no-nonsense to the bone plot which leaves no space for pauses. So sit tight and enjoy this true story of spies who wore skirts, were courageous, innovative and determined to save the world from Hitler and his dreaded Gestapo even as country after country falls to the Jewish pogrom.

Confusing humdrum

**I AM YOUR WOMAN**  
Amazon Prime Original  
\*ing: Rachel Brosnahan, Arinze Kene, Marsha Stephanie Blake, Bill Heck, Frankie Faison, Marceline Hugot, James McMenamin  
Rated: 4/10

This underworld story, not so much about the underworld, but its fallout on the families of criminals, is slow moving, a bit boring and sometimes confusing. In the end, however, it grows on you as the story progresses. A desperado does shockingly loving things like presenting a child to his wife who can have her own. Then he vanishes, leaving his wife and the little one to go on the run.



The story goes on in the badlands of a 70s America where co-criminals are on the hunt for the wife of this desperado Eddie to find out where he is. The run gets interesting when an ex-wife pops up along with a son and lover who is helping the women be safe. Not too much of anything to write home about.

Has heart in right place



**TORBAAZ**  
Netflix  
\*ing: Sanjay Dutt, Nargis Fakri, Rahul Dev  
Rated: 5.5/10

Here is a film that has a lot of promise and after a bit of a shaky start, it manages to suck one into the lives of those who have lost everything and hence hope and chance to pick themselves up and start over in a war-torn country like Afghanistan where the

only hope for the children is to not get sucked into a system that will put them on a path of death and destruction. Girish Malik's *Torbaaz* takes you on a journey that is full of emotions, has a message, is touching and told from a very different fresh perspective. It is rare for Hindi cinema to tell such powerful stories. But then it has kids, there is bound to be a message and some tears involved. It is good to see Sanjay Dutt play a man who plays the role of an Army man here and despite his personal loss is able to once find purpose when he comes in contact with the children in a refugee camp. His transformation from a man who wants nothing to do with a country where he suffered a loss to a man who is willing to give up his life for the sake of one change for the kids is not without making one sentimental and find a connection— how a parent would do anything to protect his kids and give them a purpose. Together with the kids who give a stellar performance, Dutt carries the movie on his shoulders rather well. Sadly, Nargis Fakri doesn't have much to do here. Rahul Dev plays the part of the Taliban well. His body language makes him fit for the role. The barren landscape is in keeping with the whole idea of how desolate the lives of the people in refugees camps are and how little they have in terms of a good future. Overall a movie for those who are love good subject and content.

— Shalini Saksena

Low on scare quotient

**DURGAMATI: THE MYTH**  
Amazon Prime Video  
\*ing: Bhumi Pednekar, Arshad Warsi, Jisshu Sengupta, Mahie Gill  
Rated: 5.5/10

The general premise is that remakes never live up to the expectations of the people. This is because one expects Bollywood to do a better job done by makers from regional cinema. Or it could be that since there are more Hindi speaking audience. But the truth is that if one has already seen something, the copy is never better. The original *Dev Das* was much better or should one say closer to what was in the book by Sarat Chandra. So *Durgamati...* directed by G Ashok, is not an exception to the case in point for those who have seen the Tamil-Telugu version... *Bhaagamathie* directed by him. This is a tad strange why a director who gave a better version in the original version would fail to evoke the same enthusiasm and not better his fare; that is the whole point of a remake — to make the next one better. More so since it is the Hindi version. The problem here is not that Bhumi Pednekar has failed to give her best, she has done a great job. The problem here is that there is very little when it comes to the scare quotient. Those that are there don't manage to give you goosebumps. A haunted house, a witch and a folklore seeped in history, all fall flat due to cliches. Then there is the whole how a politician can never be honest; but here he can't do anything wrong. We have seen enough Bollywood movies that what one sees is not the truth. Hence what happens at the climax is not a surprise. Not good for a crime thriller. Still all is not lost here if one has not seen the original version. For them, *Durgamati...* is a welcome change. But if one is watching it for horror one will be disappointed.

— Shalini Saksena



TELLY TALE

FACE THE ELEPHANT'S WRATH



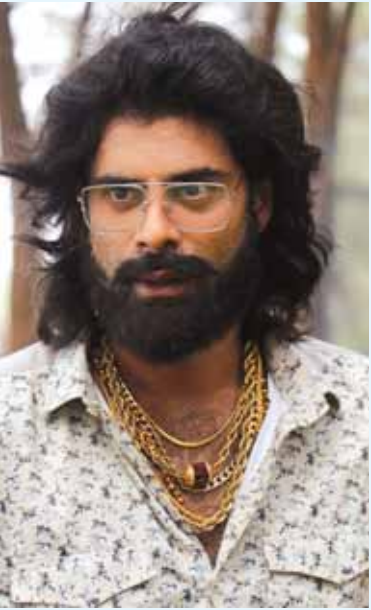
Sony SAB's fantasy show *Baalveer Returns* is set to take an astonishing twist as the upcoming episodes guarantee thrill with each scene. After failing to lure Vivaan (Vansh Sayani) into his trap, Ray is planning an attack on Baalveer (Dev Joshi) and Vivaan's society with the help of a Siberian elephant. The forthcoming episodes are ready to take the viewers on an adventurous ride as Vivaan's mother Karuna (Jaya Binju) becomes a victim to a mother elephant's wrath. After a grand comeback, Baalveer returns to Veer Lok with his original powers. Frustrated with his failed attempt of keeping Baalveer dead, Ray (Shoaib Ali) schemes his next havoc on earth with the help of a Siberian elephant. Ray transforms himself into Vivaan and takes away the baby elephant from its mother. An agitated and furious mother elephant marches to the society in search of Vivaan and destroys everything on her way. Baalveer tries to stop the elephant, but his powers fall short, and he soon realises the situation is out of his control. The elephant marches towards Vivaan to kill him, but Karuna instantly stands in front of Vivaan to protect him. The elephant instead takes away Karuna along with her. How will Debu and Vivaan save Karuna and find the baby elephant? Dev Joshi, essaying the role of Baalveer said, "It was exciting to make a comeback as Baalveer. Playing the ghost was an entirely new experience in itself but I certainly missed wearing my Baalveer costume. The upcoming episodes are exciting and a visual delight in itself. Debu and Vivaan will be in a fix as Karuna has been taken away by an angry Elephant and now their biggest task is to find the baby Elephant to bring Karuna back. But the real struggle is the fact that both Vivaan and Debu have no idea of the baby elephant's whereabouts. It will be interesting to watch how they try to find the baby elephant and if they'll be able to save Karuna on time."

SIKANDAR FINE WITH AUDITIONS

ALTBalaji & ZEE5's recently released *Mum Bhai* has been the talk of the tinsel town ever since the series has been dropped on the leading OTT platforms. Apart from the stylish setting of the '90s, the one factor that has won the hearts of the fans is the enthralling characters of the show. Needless to say, audiences are loving the look of Sikandar Kher, who plays Rama Shetty, a

criminal and on-screen best friend of the protagonist, Angad Bedi, a cop. Depicting the underworld era, the narrative of the show revolves around the friendship between a cop and a criminal, and has become an instant success! But did you know that Sikandar Kher was almost not cast for the role of Rama Shetty?. Kher recently revealed that the makers of the show had almost selected someone else for the show. "I gave the audition for the show and did not receive any confirmation for a long time. Much later, Apoorva Lakhia, a dear friend and one of the creators of the show, called to ask why I did not inform him about the audition. I didn't want anyone to refer me for the role or call people to zero down on me for the role. They had almost selected someone else for the role, but later chose me for Rama."

Speaking about giving auditions for shows, Sikandar said, "I am an actor, and it is a part of my job to give auditions. Much bigger actors in Hollywood are called for auditions, and they do it graciously. The



same goes with me, if I get direct calls for the role and I like the role, I accept the offer, or else, I have no problem in auditioning for the same."

Streaming on ALTBalaji and ZEE5, *Mum Bhai* is a crime drama that dives into the Mumbai underworld. The narrative revolves around the friendship between a cop and a criminal, set in the milieu of Mumbai's underbelly from the late eighties to early 2000.

STUDENTS SPECIAL WEEK ON KBC

The upcoming week on *Kaun Banega Crorepati* (KBC) will welcome some of the brightest young minds from across the country, as they channelise their power of knowledge on the Hot Seat. It comes at a time when live online learning emerged as a key lever of knowledge in these unprecedented times and helped kids continue learning engagingly. This Students Special Week on KBC will see kids between the age group of 10-16 years take the Hot Seat by a storm! Will the audience get to witness a young crorepati? Facilitating this Students Special Week, Vedantu, a popular Live online learning



platform, conducted V Quiz — a live Host quiz on its platform. Students who participated in this quiz, played consistently and maintained top scores, qualified to be featured on *KBC*. With a high level of participation and engagement, Vedantu witnessed a two fold increase in its daily active users and nearly five times increase in daily V Quiz attendees. From amongst the ones who qualified, eight students will be seen contesting for the Hot Seat. *KBC* has gone beyond its capacity as a show year after year, putting the common man at the forefront and celebrating human virtues of self-belief, patience, perseverance, courage, confidence, optimism and intelligence. This season has been no different with people from various walks of life who considered setbacks as a stepping stone for a greater comeback and won Big! In this season, *KBC* has witnessed three crorepatris already.

EXPLORING LOCALES OF PATIALA

Star Plus has announced the launch of its new serial, *Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahaani*, which will go on air in December. It is the story of Anokhi Bhalla (played by Debattama Saha) an ordinary, young girl from small-town Punjab who has very ordinary dreams like having a career and becoming independent. However, she faces numerous challenges from the deeply patriarchal and chauvinistic society. Karanvir Sharma (Shaurya Sabharwal) and Debattama Saha (Anokhi) who will soon be seen essaying lead roles in the show have recently spent a few days shooting the opening episodes in Patiala which is Punjab. The entire shoot in Patiala was conducted with utmost precaution ensuring the safety of the cast and crew members. Talented actor Karanvir Sharma who shoots for his first outdoor sequence amid the pandemic shares his experience and much more. "We began shooting for the show a few days back in Mumbai although few scenes from the opening sequence were balanced as they were required to be shot in a real location to give viewers an authentic feel. Also since the show depicts a Punjabi background, an outdoor shoot was decided to be held especially in Patiala. My co-star, Debattama, and I along with a small cast and crew traveled to Patiala. We shot for a few days and returned to Mumbai safely. It was indeed a memorable experience."

‘It was fun to be part of a teleplay’

From Dev Malik in Des Mein Nikla Hoga Chand to Ambar Sharma in Mere Dad Ki Dulhan, it is always a pleasure for the viewers to see VARUN BADOLA on screen. MUSBA HASHMI chats up the actor for his teleplay Wrong Turn

■ What is your role in Zee Theatre's teleplay Wrong Turn?

I play a man who is caught in a wrong situation. He gets stuck in a snowstorm and decides to take refuge in a bungalow where four friends, who are retired lawyers, play a mock trial with everyone who visits that bungalow. They tell my character that you won't be able to move out from this place till morning because of the snowstorm, so why don't you join us in the game. They do a mock trial and find my character guilty of the murder and try to prosecute me. This is what the whole story is and how the story pans out is interesting to watch. It is actually the adaptation of a German play, *Breakdown*.

■ How interesting was to be a part of such a story?

It was fun. The interest quotient lies in the way the story progresses. The process of making that character and evolving it over time was also thrilling. We rehearsed for it for 20 odd days. That was extremely fun because it was something we don't get to do in TV or films. That part was interesting.

■ What made you take up a teleplay?

The reason was that I wanted to explore this genre as well. It's been a long time since I have been on stage and have performed in continuity. It is different feel to shoot something in one go. That was something that attracted me towards this teleplay. And Thank God that I said to it because it was a fantastic experience.

■ You don several hats, that of a writer, director and an actor. Where do you find yourself most comfortable in?

There is no comfort zone as such. Every field demands a different amount of dedication. When you are acting, you have to justify your character. Only if you will justify the character, you will justify the story. As a writer, you have to create all the characters, so that the actors can justify them on screen. And as a director you have too see everything.

■ Is there a conflict between the writer, director and actor in you?

There is no internal conflict between a writer and an actor in me. Because ultimately there is one brain



which is driving both of them. So while donning these two hats, one has to be completely bipolar to negate yourself. But yes, the writer in me does help the actor in a lot of ways. At times, while doing TV, one tend to gets stuck. The idea here is not to get technical but find solutions to the problems. Here the writer does help you get out of tricky situations a lot of times.

As for the writer-director, it goes on a different tangent. When you are directing something that you have written, there is always a scope

for improvisations. ■ How do you define acting? It is a simple thing. Read what is written, understand it and just do it on camera. That is all. Then comes the interest quotient of course. It is like you have to write ABC only, but it is up to you how fancy you want it to be. It is your choice to play with the fonts and beautifying it. The best thing about acting is that there can be hundreds of interpretations of a single situation. One can cry in a lot of ways and laugh in a lot of different ways and each

There is no internal conflict between a writer and an actor in me. Because ultimately there is one brain which is driving both of them. But yes, the writer in me does help the actor in a lot of ways

way will portray a different meaning. ■ In all these years of your career, is there a change that you have seen in the TV industry? Yes. There were times when TV got better, than it saw a downfall and vice versa. It has seen both ups and downs. Many things have been improved now. But if I talk about the time, when I used to watch TV and DD was the only channel, I feel probably we had better stories to tell back then. Then came a time when everything became content-driven and we shifted to commercialisation. A lot of things got ruined during this shift. Now, we are going towards resurrection, though at a small level. ■ Do we need entertainment for seven days a week? Why not take inspiration from international series and make them time bound? Like I mentioned before, when we will shift from being content-driven to commercially-driven we will see this happening. The reason is the priority now is not to show good content, but to not let go the huge chunk of audience that you have received, even at the cost of compromising on the quality. This mindset needed a change yesterday or even day before yesterday, but we don't let it happen.





# MAKING STUBBLE CHANGES

Every year, between October and November, Delhi gets choked due to stubble burning in States of Punjab and Haryana and citizens struggle with breathing. Stakeholders tell SHALINI SAKSENA that there are several alternatives available for the farmers if only they would change their mindset

It was a bumper harvest in Punjab and Haryana this year, which meant that there was so much more residue to burn. Stubble burning is not a new problem. Each year, Delhiites struggle to breathe during the months of October and November. Each year, there is a hue and cry on how one can prevent these fires but to no avail.

According to data released by the Punjab Remote Sensing Centre, the State recorded 73,883 incidents of stubble burning between September 21 and November 14, 2020 which is the highest since 2016.

Punjab reported 51,048 cases of stubble burning in the corresponding period last year and 46,559 such incidents in 2018. The number of farm fires was 43,149 in the State during the same period in 2017.

According to the Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality monitor, SAFAR, the share of stubble burning in NCR pollution peaked to 42 per cent on November 5, when 4,135 farm fires were recorded in the region.

What if there was an alternative for the farmers? What if they had an option to not burn the stubble? What if instead of burning, one could use it to make manure, or even make idols or disposable crockery or even the much needed silica fertiliser? Believe it or not, there are many stakeholders in this sector who are doing their bit to ensure that farmers don't resort to paddy straw burning.

Suvrat Khanna, CEO-Co-founder, Verve Renewables tells you that every year over 30 million tonnes of paddy stubble are burnt in Punjab and Haryana alone. "The idea of pledging to collect 1.5 lakh metric tonne of agricultural waste for power generation in Haryana was initiated with the sole intention of finding a problem of stubble burning which is a serious issue across Northern India," Khanna says.

Using agricultural waste as a source for energy production benefits farmers, bio-energy producers and the environment. Their aim is to collect one million tonnes of agro stubble by 2024 to generate approximately 2,50,000 MW of power.

Studies by Indian Agricultural Research Institute show that crop residue (mainly paddy straw) burning released 149.24 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>; over nine million tonnes of carbon monoxide (CO), 0.25 million tonnes of oxides of SO<sub>x</sub>, 1.28 million tonnes of particulate matter and 0.07 million tonnes of black carbon. All of these contributed to hazardous levels of air pollution in Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, and UP.

He tells you that an average paddy field generates two tonnes of paddy straw each season. Khanna, who is in his second year of operations, uses a three-pronged approach.

He looks at compensating farmers to dispose of agricultural waste like paddy straw in a sustainable manner; collects and delivers boiler ready biomass resources that could be used for generation of power by co-generation power plants attached to



**THE CENTRE HAS GIVEN A GO AHEAD TO PROMOTE 5,000 BIOGAS PLANTS IN PUNJAB, HARYANA AND UTTAR PRADESH AND PURCHASING THE GAS AT ₹46 PER KG. THIS IS A HUGE SUPPORT. WE TOO ARE SUPPLYING TO THE POWER GRID. IF OPERATIONAL AT FULL CAPACITY, I WOULD BE ABLE TO SUPPLY 1MW WHICH CAN ELECTRIFY FOUR-FIVE VILLAGES**

— **SANJEEV NAGPAL, SAMPURN AGRI VENTURES PVT LTD**



sugar mills and with this looks at alternative uses of stubble for energy production providing an ecological solution to air pollution.

"When we started in 2018, we wanted to tackle the issue of stubble burning, but at that time, didn't know how to go about it. Fortunately, we came across a sugar mill which was willing. We knew that electricity could be generated from paddy straw. We requested if we could provide them with it as an alternative. They agreed. They were extremely forthcoming and made changes to their boiler," Khanna tells you who decided to pursue this since he is from Amritsar and stubble burning is an yearly issue and from a business point of view, it all starts from finding a solution.

"We saw a problem and decided to solve it. We are a bridge between the farmer and the mills. We go into villages and tell them that they don't have to burn, instead once they harvest, we will come and collect residue. We try to involve entire villages since it increases bale collection by the machine," Khanna tells you.

The onus of making the bales rest with the farmers. They are encouraged to buy machines or an entrepreneur steps in. There are two kinds of balers; one that costs between ₹20-₹25 lakh. This makes bales of 20-25 kg. The bigger one that makes bales of 250-300 kg and is priced at ₹35-₹40 lakh upwards. The small machine can work in 20 acres of land a day and the big one 40 acres a day.

"For now, the farmers are not being paid, but there are plans for the same once the system becomes cost-effective. They don't pay us, we don't pay them. But we bear the cost of picking bales up; a win-win for all concerned. Convincing the farmer is not very tough since an individual farmer gets a 40 per cent subsidy to buy this machine; for custom hiring companies, there is a subsidy of up to 80 per cent. We assure the farmer with long-term association. This instills confidence in them," Khanna tells

you.

Sanjeev Nagpal, founder, Sampurn Agri Ventures Pvt Ltd, a Punjab-based company, has gone a step forward. Besides setting up a biogas plant utilising only paddy straw as the sole feed, he is converting the same into fertiliser. Unfortunately, his endeavours to mass market paddy fertilisers have run into roadblocks — agriculture policies — he tells you, for now doesn't allow sale of silica fertiliser, a first of its kind. But he tells you that this silica is extremely important for plants. For now, individuals can buy the same for their kitchen garden and that he uses the same in his 300 acres of farmland.

"We are in the process of creating a farmers' group and using this fertiliser, grow high quality foods and market it," Nagpal says.

To develop the technology to convert paddy straw, Nagpal has collaborated with IIT Delhi. "We have developed this technology to process paddy straw, in collaboration with IIT Delhi. We are fermenting paddy straw to produce biogas and manure. We started this project back in 2015. We then had to get approval from Agriculture University for agriculture use in 2017. This is a silica fertiliser and agriculture policies framed in the 1960s, at the time of Green Revolution, doesn't recognise this as a fertiliser. The Food Agriculture Organization has accepted that silica fertiliser is required by plants for sustainable agriculture. Major diseases like cancer, Diabetes are all linked to absence of silica in the human body since they are absent in the food chain," Nagpal tells you.

In fact, this entrepreneur-farmer has already grown *kinnow* using this fertiliser. "The pre-booking response to this has been phenomenal. For now, we will only be supplying to nearby areas like Chandigarh but next year, we plan to increase our reach and try and supply to the rest of the country. We just need to have the logistics in place," Nagpal explains.



He tells you that instead of creating roadblocks and looking at paddy straw as a burden; to look at it as an asset, if utilised properly. India can develop huge agri-exports if it recognises this.

"One can look at exports. But why not use the same for ourselves to produce high quality food and export the same? For now, I have used 50,000 tonnes of paddy straw over the period of five years. But I am utilising my plant at minimum capacity due to the hassles involved. At full capacity, I will require 12,000 tonnes of paddy straw per year," Nagpal says.

He tells you that the Government has given a go ahead to promote 5,000 biogas plants in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh and purchase the gas at ₹46 per kg. "This is a huge support by the Centre. We too are supplying to the grid. If operational at full capacity I would be able to supply 1MW — supplying electricity to four-five villages. For now, I am supplying 3,000 units a day," he says.

Setting up one huge biogas plant is not logistically possible. What is needed is a smaller one per five-six villages. "This will open up employment opportunities as well," Nagpal explains.

Elsewhere in Andhra Pradesh, Singuru Rajesh, assistant Professor Raghu

Engineering College, Visakhapatnam and head of Green Gears, is busy collecting paddy straw as well preventing the farmers in his area to burn the same.

It all started because Singuru has breathing problems. "I have asthma; I knew that I had to look for alternatives, at least in my area. I was inspired from the ageold practices of utilising tamarind and paper to make plates. The farmers in my area are extremely cooperative. We not only use paddy straw, we also use every kind of agriculture waste to make idols, crockery and even panel insulation. The good part is that once the crockery is used one can put it into the soil it turns into manure for plants," Rajesh tells you.

The residue is taken and cooked, pulp is extracted and the same can be used to make a variety of things depending on the mould available. For now, Rajesh is testing the products by giving it to family and friends to use it. But the COVID-19 put on hold his efforts to go for production and supply.

"It will take us a couple of years, before we can supply it across the country. I started this project in 2018. In 2019, I got Nav Bharat Nirman Award and Young Scientist Conference-2018 Award for this work. Once we have commercial viability, we will start paying the farmer as well for the residue. At full capacity, we will end up using a tonne of agriculture waste," Rajesh says.

The problem of stubble stems from the fact that farms use machines which cuts the length leaving a portion in the land. Pulling it by hand is next to impossible. "Traditionally, the field would be ploughed mixing the stubble in the ground adding the nutrients in the soil. But because of the harvester and thresher now being used which leaves stubble and the urgency to sow another crop, the easiest option it to burn the same. But we are now telling farmers there are other options; you can give it to us," Rajesh says.

## 'Need to completely change agriculture practices'

Living in the Capital comes with many riders — some good some bad. Delhiites know that come October-November and they will find it difficult to breathe — it is time when the farmers in Punjab and Haryana get to burning stubble and get their fields ready for the next cropping cycle. Paddy straw burning is not new.

For the last 60 years, since the push to make the country self-sufficient in food grains, farmers in Punjab and Haryana have been growing paddy. With only 1.5 per cent land, Punjab is producing 50 per cent food-grain for the country. More strange, that the State grows paddy when it is a wheat-eating State.

Umendra Dutt, founder-member and executive director of Kheti Virasat Mission, Punjab paints a dismal picture and tells you that in order to prevent stubble burning there is need to do two things.

The first is to completely change the agriculture system; not overhauling. Overhauling would mean that one has made a few changes here and there. what we need is a completely new model of cropping pattern. In a bid to make India sufficient in food grains, what we have done is totally changed the cropping pattern in the region. This means that the region known for wheat is now growing rice. Can you mean the

damage that this has done here? It is something that can't be changed overnight. While in the last few years, there are people who are coming out with alternatives to stubble burning, there are many roadblocks to these solutions," Dutt says.

He tells you that what is needed is instead of linking cropping patterns with sustainability, what has been done is to link it with production.

"You have pushed the farmer towards mono-culture. Stubble burning is a fall-out of it. The cropping followed today, doesn't suit the eco-system. We followed it for 50 years, but it is not possible to do so anymore. The crop cycle



followed earlier used to provide the much needed nutrients. But then you changed the pattern. You pushed him to produce more; he had to shift to using fertilisers so much so that nobody looked at the long-term issues. Stubble burning is one of the side effects of changing the cropping pattern. There is no holistic approach to farming today. Farmers only saw money and not the fallout," Dutt says.

One is told that because the farmer is in a hurry to sow the next crop — wheat — the easiest thing for him is to burn the stubble in the field. "It also means that the farmer is burning the much needed micro-nutrients in the soil

increasing his dependence on fertilisers. It has become a vicious cycle," Dutt explains.

Paddy straw is a product of mechanised agriculture. Shortage of labour and lack of time means that rice is harvested by a harvester and thresher. This leaves behind stubble. This prevents other machines from sowing wheat. With only a couple of weeks between the rice-harvesting season and the wheat-sowing, farmers burn the stubble.

"The only people who are not burning stubble are those who think that a holistic approach is the key to sustainability, those who are not dependent on subsidy or are into organic farming," Dutt says.

The solution lies in mulching. The Government instead of spending crores on giving machines, should spend money to change the mindset of the farmers.

"Farmers should be encouraged to follow organic farming. He should be shown alternatives. It's not an issue of technology, it is about human psychology, attitude, behaviour and environment. If you change farmer's attitude and are associated with him long-term, he will not burn stubble. Instead of technology intervention, show the farmer environmental psychology intervention. Show him that soil has life as well and it will take care of stubble burning," Dutt says.



# India in the pink

Explosive Pant, composed Hanuma and stylish Gill stake claim as Indian batters dominate in their final tune-up innings before Test series

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Rishabh Pant and Hanuma Vihari put themselves in the reckoning for next week's first Test with contrasting hundreds as India thoroughly dominated Australia A in the pink ball warm-up match here at Sydney Cricket Ground on Saturday.

Needing 19 runs to reach his century when Jack Wildermuth commenced the second evening's final over, Pant clobbered him for 4, 4, 6, 4, 4, to remain unbeaten on a blistering 103 off only 73 balls. Overall, he hit nine fours and six sixes.

At the other end, Vihari laboured his way to a fine 104-run knock off 194 balls.

Also staking a claim for selection is young Shubman Gill, with an elegant 65 off 78 balls and 10 sweetly-timed boundaries.

In the final session of play, Pant's aggressive approach paid dividends as he smashed the Australia A bowlers to all corners of the SCG, the southpaw making a strong case for himself for the wicketkeeper's job in Adelaide ahead of Test specialist Wriddhiman Saha.

To cite an example of his power-hitting, Pant swept one over the cow corner for a six, leaving Nic Maddinson to search for the ball among the rows of chairs at the SCG.

At the close of play, India

Australia A vs India  
Live from 9:00am IST  
SONY SIX NETWORK

were strongly placed at 386 for four for an overall lead by 472 runs, having bundled out the home team out for a paltry 108 in their first innings on Friday.

In their first innings, India were all out for 194, which would have been far less if not for pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah's maiden first-class fifty, but the visitors staged a strong comeback with both bat and ball.

While Gill may have booked himself one of the opening slots with his dazzling strokes, Hanuma's effort might force the Indian team to play an additional batsman in the series opener.

Coming out to bat again in the beginning of the day's play, India lost Prithvi Shaw in the second over as the young right-hander drove the ball at cover-point without any great foot movement. It was a bit of a soft dismissal.

If Shaw missed out on an opportunity to make a big score in good batting conditions, his contemporary Gill grabbed it with both hands on the way to reaching his half-century off 49 balls.

During his stay in the middle, Gill played some elegant drives and looked assured while going on to the backfoot, which seems to be



Indian wicketkeeper batsman Rishabh Pant raises his bat after completing his hundred against Australia A

BCCI/Twitter

Call on playing last 2 Tests against Oz after reassessment: BCCI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The BCCI on Saturday declared senior batsman Rohit Sharma "clinically fit" to join the Indian team in Australia but said a call on his participation in the last two matches of the Test series there will be taken after a reassessment by the squad's medical

## Rohit fit to join team India

team.

"He has been given a detailed programme to follow for the duration of the two weeks he will be quarantined for. He will be reassessed by the Team India medical team post his quarantine to establish his fitness status and a call on his participation in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy will be taken accordingly," the BCCI said in

a statement.

Rohit on Friday cleared an eagerly-watched fitness test at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru and will leave for Australia on December 14, three days before the start of the marquee Test series.

"...Rohit Sharma has completed his rehabilitation process at the NCA in Bengaluru and is now clinically fit," the state-

ment said.

The BCCI said the NCA medical team is satisfied with Rohit's fitness but added that he will need to work on his endurance. "The NCA medical Team was satisfied with the physical fitness of Mr Sharma after assessing him on different metrics, however, he will be required to continue work on his endurance," the BCCI said.

## Jamieson swings Kiwis to top

New Zealand vs Windies  
Live from 3:30am IST  
FANCODE APP

AFP ■ WELLINGTON

Kyle Jamieson bagged five wickets in a masterclass of swing bowling as New Zealand struck hard and fast to have the West Indies on the ropes on day two of the second Test in Wellington on Saturday.

The tourists ended the day on the brink of another follow on as they struggled to 124/8, still 336 behind New Zealand's 460.

Only Jermaine Blackwood provided any serious resistance but he fell late in the day for 69 as Jamieson and Tim Southee wreaked havoc.

Jamieson, the rising star in the Black Caps, got 5/34 for his second five-wicket haul in only his fourth Test.

The Basin Reserve strip continued to provide all the ingredients on a fast bowler's wish list — pace, bounce and movement — and New Zealand exploited this perfectly.

"The way the ball's moving we knew if we got it in good enough areas then things would happen," said the 2.08 metre Jamieson.

"It was just a matter of doing it for long enough and if you do that you tend to get rewarded."

Unlike the West Indies batsmen, Nicholls and Neil Wagner were able to plunder runs when the New Zealand innings resumed on Saturday morning.

Both scored personal bests, untroubled whether the West Indies bowled full or short, as Nicholls advanced from his overnight 117 to 174 while Wagner finished unbeaten on 66.

The New Zealand pace quartet — Southee, Trent Boult, Neil Wagner and Jamieson — immediately extracted life from the wicket.

They moved the ball in and away and it took the tourists four overs to get their first runs on the board, by which stage Southee had already dismissed Kraigg Brathwaite caught at first slip by Ross Taylor.

After Southee caught and bowled Darren Bravo for seven, Jamieson stepped up with the back-to-back wickets of John Campbell 14 and Roston Chase to have the West Indies at 29/4. It was familiar territory for



Kiwi pacer Kyle Jamieson prepares to bowl during day 2 of 2nd Test against Windies

AP

## Taylor dropped for Pak T20s

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

Veteran batsman Ross Taylor was on Saturday dropped from an 18-man New Zealand squad named for the T20I series against Pakistan while Kane Williamson will return from his paternity leave to lead the side in the second and third matches.

Besides the 36-year-old Taylor's absence, fast bowler Lockie Ferguson, who suffered a bone stress injury in his back, was also left out from the squad for the three-match series starting next Friday in Auckland.

Trent Boult, who was rested for the T20Is against the West Indies, will also be available only for the second and third games

of the series along with Tim Southee, Kyle Jamieson and Daryl Mitchell.

Seamer Blair Tickner, batsman Mark Chapman and all-rounder Doug Bracewell will only be part of the first T20I.

According to selector Gavin Larsen, Taylor, who made 38 and nine against the West Indies in his last T20Is, missed out because of the "quality and form" of the rest of the squad. Taylor has scored 1909 runs from 102 matches at an average of 26.15.

Mitchell Santner will once again lead the T20I side in the series opener at Eden Park, having done so in the rain-hit third T20I against West Indies in Williamson's absence.

Blackwood whose century in the second innings of the first Test started with Windies at 27/4.

He survived Jamieson's hat-trick ball, and the one after, which both slammed into the pads but vociferous appeals were turned down and replays showed the deliveries swinging away down the leg side.

Southee tied up Shamarh Brooks at the other end and the West Indies faced 27 dot balls before Blackwood broke the drought with a single.

The pair put on 68 for the

fifth wicket before falling in quick succession.

Brooks faced 92 deliveries for a stubborn 14 before he shouldered arms to a good length Jamieson ball that jagged back into the stumps.

Southee then accounted for Blackwood with a sharply rising delivery that was fended to Latham in the slips. Jamieson closed the day with the wickets of Jason Holder for nine and Alzarri Joseph without scoring.

Along with Jamieson's five, Southee has taken 3/29.

## Harris added to Aus squad, Pucovski out

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Victoria's Marcus Harris was on Saturday added to an injury-plagued Australia squad for next week's first Test against India after Will Pucovski was ruled out of the series opener alongside David Warner.

The four-match series begins with the day-night Test at Adelaide from December 17.

Harris was drafted into the squad for the seasoned Warner, who suffered a groin injury during the second one-day international against India, while Pucovski sustained a concussion while batting for Australia A in a tour match against the visitors at Drummoyne Oval in Sydney.

Cricket Australia said both batsmen will target a return ahead of the Boxing Day Test, scheduled to be held in Melbourne from December 26-30.

"Given the spate of injuries in recent weeks, we're fortunate to be able to bring a player of Marcus' calibre into the Test squad," Australia's national selector Trevor Hohns was quoted as saying by



# Humiliation at home

Dortmund concede five against Stuttgart in shock defeat

AFF ■ GERMANY

Borussia Dortmund coach Lucien Favre admitted his side suffered a "disaster" in the Bundesliga title race on Saturday after being routed 5-1 by VfB Stuttgart to suffer their heaviest home defeat in over a decade.

Stuttgart's Congo winger Silas Wamangituka netted twice in the romp which piled the pressure on Favre with fifth-placed Dortmund now five points behind leaders RB Leipzig.

"Things went mercilessly wrong," admitted Dortmund defender Mats Hummels.

"We shot ourselves in the foot every few minutes."

Dortmund have taken just a point in their two league games since star striker Erling Braut Haaland was ruled out until January with a hip injury.

Stuttgart's relentless pressing and sloppy Dortmund defending resulted in the visitors scoring four unanswered second-half goals.

"We are not a team that can defend well, that has to be said quite clearly," fumed Dortmund captain Marco Reus, while Favre admitted it was "a disaster".

Wamangituka converted a penalty midway through the first half after Dortmund's Emre Can brought down Mateo Klimowicz.

Dortmund equalised just before the break when a superb



Raphael Guerreiro long ball picked out Giovanni Reyna, who deftly chipped home.

It was 1-1 at the break, but the floodgates opened in the second period as nearly every

Dortmund mistake was punished

with a Stuttgart goal.

Guerreiro lost control of the ball on the edge of his penalty area and Wamangituka claimed his second goal eight minutes after the

break. Midfielder Philip Foerster,

in for suspended Stuttgart captain Gonzalo Castro, scored with a perfectly timed run into the area with an hour played.

Jude Bellingham's stray pass was then snapped up by Wamangituka and moved to striker Tanguy Coulibaly, who fired home on 63 minutes.



The VAR ruled out a second Reyna goal late on before a mistake by Dortmund's Nico Schulz saw Nicolas Gonzalez claim Stuttgart's fifth goal.

The debacle is Dortmund's heaviest home defeat since being humbled 5-1 at home to Bayern Munich in 2009.

## LEIPZIG GO TOP

Fresh from knocking Manchester United out of the Champions League in midweek, RB Leipzig saw off Werder Bremen 2-0 to leapfrog Bayern into top spot in the table.

Leipzig captain Marcel Sabitzer converted a penalty and Dani Olmo, who shone in the attacking midfield role, grabbed a first-half goal for the hosts.

The victory left Leipzig a point clear of defending champions Bayern, who can regain first place at FC Union later in Berlin.

The home win capped a good week for Leipzig, who knocked United out of Europe on Tuesday with a 3-2 victory to reach the last 16 of the Champions League.

Arsenal loanee Matteo Guendouzi scored his first goal for Hertha Berlin in their 1-1 draw at Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Guendouzi scored just after the break when Gladbach's Denis Zakaria lost possession on the edge of his area.

Gladbach, who also reached the last 16 of the Champions League in midweek, fought their way back and equalised through Breel Embolo on 70 minutes.

Freiburg ended their nine-match winless run with a 2-0 win over Arminia Bielefeld.

Nils Petersen hit the woodwork twice before Vincenzo Grifo converted a late penalty.

Then South Korean midfielder Jeong Woo-yeong, on loan from Bayern Munich, scored in added time.

Cologne stay just above the relegation places after their 1-0 win at second-from-bottom Mainz.

Leipzig moved top on 24 points with Bayern, who play Union Berlin later on Saturday.

**We have achieved our primary target of improving fitness level: Marijne**

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Indian women's hockey head coach Sjoerd Marijne on Saturday said that the team has achieved its primary target of improving fitness level of the players as they were left with practically no competition this season due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The team did not play any competition since February when it had travelled to New Zealand. Since then it has been camping at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) Centre here. The camp ends on Saturday.

"One of our goals was improving fitness and that worked out very well. In the past few weeks, we also worked with the junior men's team in a few sessions to test our speed and handling skills and I am happy with the progress we have made as a group," Marijne said.

He believes the core group had worked hard towards a good build-up to the Olympic Games next year.

"We have done well so far in utilising this time and our primary focus is the Olympics."

"We are hopeful of playing good matches early next year that will show where we stand and we can plan the months leading up to the Games keeping in mind the areas that require improvement basis our performance in these tours," the head coach explained.

Marijne said the break the players are getting will help them recover from the mental fatigue.

"The players have worked hard these past four and half months and they have done it without complaining about anything — be it living in a bio bubble with zero outside interaction or living away from their families for so long."

"I am extremely happy with the attitude they have showed these past four months and I understand that the training camp was physically and mentally quite challenging. This break will be especially good to recover from the mental fatigue."

## Verstappen puts Red Bull on pole

AFF ■ YAS MARINA

Red Bull driver Max Verstappen produced a stunning last lap and beat both Mercedes cars to take pole position for the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix on Saturday.

He was .025 seconds ahead of Valtteri Bottas and .086 clear of world champion Lewis Hamilton for his first pole of the season and third of his career.

"Mega, mega lap!" Red Bull's team principal Christian Horner yelled over the radio when Verstappen crossed the line under floodlights at the Yas Marina circuit.

"It's a long season for everyone and this was a great final qualifying for the whole team," Verstappen said. "We are all very happy and it's great to finally get there after being close many times in 2020."

Bottas led Verstappen and Hamilton after their first attempts in Q3, the final section



Abu Dhabi Grand Prix  
Live from 6:40 pm IST  
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2

of qualifying, and Hamilton then appeared on course for a record-extending 99th career pole as he led the split times on their second and final attempts.

But Verstappen showed why he is touted as a future world champion, and Bottas found some extra speed to score a rare victory over his illustrious teammate.

Hamilton went well wide in Q1 and went over the curb, while Verstappen complained over the radio that his hand had got stuck inside the cockpit.

## Wolves pay big price for late penalty

AFF ■ WOLVERHAMPTON

Anwar El Ghazi's last-gasp penalty fired 10-man Aston Villa to a dramatic 1-0 win against Wolves on Saturday.

In the first of the day's Premier League games, Dutch winger El Ghazi struck from the spot in stoppage-time to lift Villa into eighth place.

Villa had Douglas Luiz sent off in the final minutes for two bookings after the Brazilian midfielder caught Daniel Podence with an elbow.

But Nelson Semedo's foul on John McGinn triggered El Ghazi's penalty before Wolves midfielder Joao Moutinho was dismissed for a second yellow card just moments from full-time in a fractious local derby.

After two successive defeats, Villa will hope they are back on track with just their second win in six games.

Villa have won four of their five away league matches this season, while mid-table Wolves have only one win in their last five games.



With Raul Jimenez out after surgery on the fractured skull he suffered against Arsenal, Wolves handed a first Premier League

start to 18-year-old striker Fabio Silva — a club record £35 million (\$46 million) signing from Porto in the close-season.

It was two weeks since Villa last played after the Newcastle match was postponed due to their opponents' coronavirus

outbreak and they took a while to get going as a result.

Villa appealed for a penalty when the ball glanced off Romain Saiss' shoulder as he stooped to head clear, but VAR ignored their protests.

## UNITED DECLINE

Wolves finished the first half strongly, with Daniel Podence forcing Emiliano Martinez to save his low drive.

Martinez kept out Leander Dendoncker's stinging strike and Silva nearly broke the deadlock when his glancing header drifted narrowly wide.

Silva was inches away from a first Premier League goal when he took Podence's pass and rifled his first-time shot past Martinez, only to see the ball cannon back off the post.

Luiz's stray elbow earned him a red card from Mike Dean in the 85th minute, but El Ghazi won it from the penalty spot after McGinn's burst was halted by Semedo.

On Friday night at Ellan Road stadium, West Ham boss David Moyes labelled the use of VAR as "rubbish" after his side had to come from behind to beat Leeds 2-1 and move up to fifth.

The Hammers could not have had a worse start as Mateusz Klich opened the scoring at the second attempt from the penalty spot after Lukasz Fabianski was penalised for coming off his line in saving his Polish international teammate's first spot-kick.

Moyes was left exasperated with the decision based on the smallest of margins, while the retake was allowed to stand despite encroaching by Leeds players.

"Until we get the VAR sorted I don't think I'll be happy," said Moyes.

"It's a really good result but we had another setback after 30 seconds. There are some terrible decisions that are happening at the moment."

## Angulo's strike win for Goa



PTI ■ BAMBOLIM

Igor Angulo struck at the injury time of the first half to hand FC Goa a 1-0 win over Odisha FC, their second successive win in the Hero Indian Super League here on Saturday.

The win propelled FC Goa to the fourth spot in the standings.

Angulo (45+1st minute) netted the winner to help Juan Ferrando's side register another victory.

Arshdeep Singh shone for

Odisha but their inefficiency upfront meant Stuart Baxter's side remained winless in the competition.

Vinit Rai was handed his first start of the season as Odisha made four changes to their line-up. Ferrando rang in just one change as Alberto Noguera replaced Edu Bedia.

Goa outplayed their opponents in the first half and headed into the break with a one-goal lead.

The Gaurs dominated pro-

ceedings from the start while Odisha decided to stay compact and absorb the pressure.

Jorge Ortiz Mendoza, a constant threat on the left flank, had an opportunity to give Goa the lead during the 16th minute. Brandon Fernandes won the ball and laid down a pass for Ortiz on the left. The forward cut inside into acres of space but dragged his shot wide.

However, despite dominating possession, the Gaurs failed to penetrate the Odisha defence, who kept things tight at the back.

Odisha, too applied pressure on Goa's backline towards the end of the first half, mainly through Diego Mauricio but the home team's backline did well to thwart the dangers.

Goa's perseverance finally paid off towards the end of the first half with Angulo getting himself on the scoresheet again. Romario beat his marker on the left and found the Spaniard in the box, who created space to fool Jacob Tratt before drilling his shot into the bottom left-handed corner.

The second half got off to an interesting start with both sides showing intent.

Odisha pushed hard for an equaliser and nearly came close just before the hour mark. After a counter-attack, the ball fell to Cole Alexander at the edge of the box, but midfielder fired his shot wide.

The Gaurs dominated pro-

ceededings from the start while Odisha decided to stay compact and absorb the pressure.

## Chennaiyin brace up for NEUFC challenge

PTI ■ VASCO

Former champions Chennaiyin FC face a tough task when they take on NorthEast United FC in an Indian Super League match here on Sunday.

CFC are up against one of three unbeaten sides so far this season, and need to raise the level of play to secure a positive result.

Despite not getting the results and points their performances have merited, CFC have been arguably one of the most attractive sides to watch, creating a flurry of chances in every game they have played so far.

They had the advantage against Mumbai City FC in their previous encounter but succumbed to a 1-2 defeat as a result of some questionable refereeing decisions and indecisive defending from set-pieces.

CFC head coach Csaba Laszlo will be hopeful his side's intent and vigour will translate into goals and wins, following two disheartening losses to Bengaluru FC and MCFC.

Prior to that, Chennaiyin drew 0-0 against Kerala Blasters, having won their opening encounter 2-1 against

Jamshedpur FC.

A return to the Tilak Maidan may be a good omen for Laszlo's men as it was at this ground they beat JFC.



NEUFC vs Chennaiyin  
Live from 5:00 pm IST  
STAR SPORTS 2, 3 & 1 HINDI

Laszlo said the trio of mid-

fielder Anirudh Thapa, defender Enes Sipovic and attacker Isma Goncalves are expected to return to action much sooner than he had earlier expected.

Chennaiyin were unbeaten against NEUFC last season enroute the ISL final, beating them 2-0 at home followed by a 2-2 draw in Guwahati.

The Gaurs fashioned two clear-cut opportunities during the 64th minute but Arshdeep produced stunning double save to keep his side in the game.

The Odisha custodian first blocked a shot from Angulo with his leg. The ball was eventually cleared and fell to Princeton Rebello. The substitute found Mendoza outside the box but the latter was denied as

Like CFC, NorthEast are also a different outfit from last season, now under a young head coach in the form of Spaniard Gerard Nus.

They will be aiming to extend their unbeaten streak. The Highlanders, placed third in the standings with nine points, have been among the early pacesetters this season, with two wins and three draws.

NorthEast United are the joint-highest scorers so far this season with Mumbai City FC (with 8 goals each) and in defence, they have also made it difficult for opponents to break them down, keeping two clean sheets.

Arshdeep dived full stretch.

The Odisha FC keeper produced another double save during the dying minutes of the game, denying both Mendoza and Len Dounghel.



## Kerala look to arrest slide against BFC

PTI ■ MARGAO

BFC vs Kerala  
Live from 7:30 pm IST  
STAR SPORTS 2, 3 & 1 HINDI

Former champions Bengaluru FC would look to shrug off an unexpected struggling start to the Indian Super League and notch up a win against Kerala Blasters here on Sunday.

It has not been an ideal start for Bengaluru with three draws and just one win in four matches. But, head coach Carles Cuadrat is aiming to get his side back on track and is eyeing full points against Kerala Blasters at the Fatorda Stadium.

Bengaluru have a great track record against Kerala. In six games, they have prevailed on four occasions and lost just once. But that is the past and Cuadrat's side aren't in the best of form. Their last game against NorthEast United ended in a 2-2 draw. Bengaluru started the

campaign with a 3-4-3 formation, which wasn't conducive to

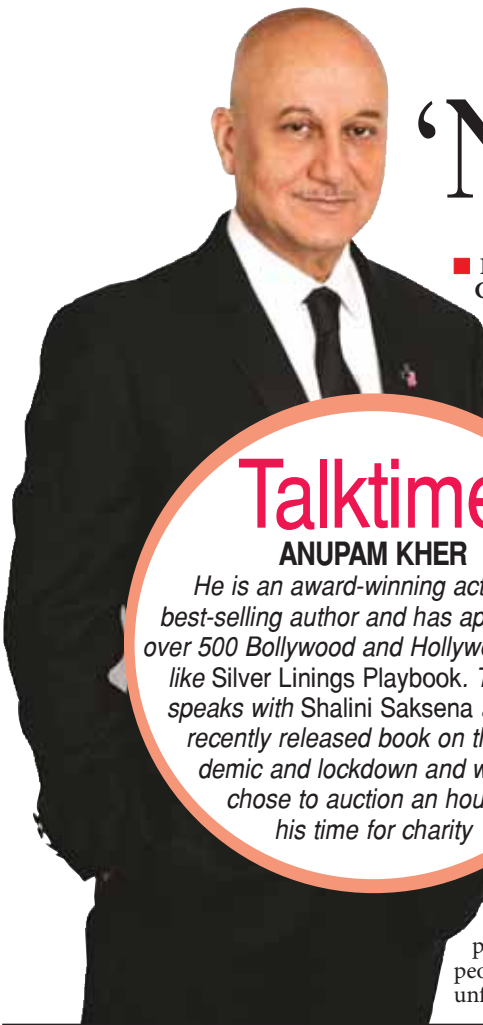
their style, forcing Cuadrat to deploy a four-man defence. The change in plan has helped Bengaluru bring out best from Dimas Delgado and Udanta Singh, making them look more threatening.

The former ISL champions have netted 80 per cent of their goals (4) from set-pieces this season and this could pose a threat to Kerala whose defence has been the most vulnerable in the league.

They are yet to keep a clean sheet against BFC.

This season, Kerala Blasters have conceded six goals (second-most), despite facing just 13 shots on target. Coach Kibu Vicuna addressed that concern.





## Talktime

ANUPAM KHER

He is an award-winning actor and best-selling author and has appeared in over 500 Bollywood and Hollywood movies like Silver Linings Playbook. The actor speaks with Shalini Saxena about his recently released book on the pandemic and lockdown and why he chose to auction an hour of his time for charity

■ **How did you partner with CharityBuzz.com to raise funds for Magic Bus India Foundation?**

I am very happy that we can leverage a huge platform like this for a great organisation like Magic Bus. I am proud to be doing this for an organisation that has transformed the lives of one million children and young people and has ensured that children on their programme to complete secondary education, have delayed their marriage and go on to get jobs in the organised sector. I urge my fans and supporters to join us in this great cause and make a bid.

■ **What made you auction an hour of your time?**

No one could have imagined an event of this magnitude. The country as a whole has been affected, people without jobs, there is scarcity of food, people migrating to their villages and unfortunately children and young people

have faced the consequences too with an interruption in their education and halt in their hunt for jobs. Thankfully organisations like Magic Bus are doing some tremendous work in helping affected families and it is our duty too help in whatever way we can. This organisation is doing great work with its COVID-19 recovery plan to revive incomes and get back on their feet by connecting them to employment opportunities. As an actor if my interaction can ensure that no children drops out from school, I am happy to give my time.

■ **Most Indians don't do much for charity. How important is it for us to give back to society in some form or the other?**

First of all, I don't agree that Indians don't do charity. Not everyone wants to publicise what they do. Many people do the same quietly. I think people in India, over the last few years have become more conscious about giving back and it has become stronger after COVID-19. They are making a difference and contributing and changing the landscape of giving in India. If we all contribute, we will be able to send at least one more child to school, give one more young person a stable job and bring one more family out of poverty. The task

**If we all contribute, we will be able to send at least one more child to school, give one more young person a stable job and bring one more family out of poverty. The task seems mammoth, but if we will work together, we can see that change coming**

seems mammoth, but if we work together, we can see that change coming.

■ **Would you agree that films are a medium that can change the mindset of the society?**

Films are a reflection of our society so they can change. But the message can't be that obvious so it is important for people to take out that message. Otherwise, films are there to entertain and out of entertainment there lies a message, people are smart enough to take it.

■ **A lesson that life has taught you thus far?**

That there is no alternative to hard work and honesty.

■ **You are a public figure and what you say carries weight. Does it bother you when it gets misconstrued or people troll what you have said?**

As long as I am honest with what I have said and am truthful it doesn't bother me because my grandfather used to say that when you are telling the truth you don't have to remember it so stick to it. I don't really get bothered by trolls, sometimes you give them attention, sometimes you ignore them.

■ **You have been part of Bollywood and Hollywood. Are they different?**

They are different from a language point of view; they are different from a professional point of view. But both the industries are of story-tellers. Sometimes you tell great stories, sometimes you tell stories that don't connect with people.

■ **From an actor to an author to a teacher to a motivational speaker. What role do you love the most?**

It is difficult to choose. Sometimes when I am acting, I am very happy, when I am writing a book, it is the author, when I am at public functions and speaking, I love the role of a motivational speaker. I love to make a difference in people's lives, I am a people's person and love connecting with them and if my conversation and eternal optimism can help, I am a happy man.

■ **What are your upcoming projects?**

I have already completed a film — *The Last Show* with Satish Kaushik. I am also the producer here. Then there is my podcast *Anupam Cares* on iHeartRadio on Spotify and Apple. Then there is my book *Your Best Day Is Today*, it is about my experiences of the pandemic and lockdown.

# FOR THOSE PRIVATE LETTERS

SHALINI SAKSENA chats up 26-year-old IIT Guwahati student, SUNIT NANDI, the man behind Letter, an email hosting provider, about how the idea hit him, the safety and privacy that it has to offer and the subscription plans available

It goes without saying that there is no bound to our young talent. A case in point is the 26-year-old IIT Guwahati student Sunit Nandi, who realised the need for a secure work email provider. He merge his expertise and experience to launch Letter, a powerful email hosting provider packed with an array of advanced features.

It offers an intuitive user interface, impressive performance and global standard security which boasts on sharing strongest data privacy and encrypted storage for emails.

"I have often suffered due to the lack of business email solutions that properly implements the basics such as email deliverability, contact sync, calendars, search and also respects user privacy and right to their data," Nandi says.

Devising a solution to these issues, Nandi self-hosted his work emails for several years before finally launching Letter. "I was so frustrated with the state of email hosting that I self-hosted my own work emails for several years, and spent countless days improving the security and optimising email deliverability. I spent almost three years on the infrastructure. I was optimising on three things security, usability and availability. As for security, whatever data and conversations you have stays on the server in an encrypted form. It is not accessible by anyone outside of the server. It is safe from any cyber attacks as well," Nandi, who is also a serial entrepreneur and started when he was 18, explains.

He adds that the email hosting provider doesn't restrict the usage to any particular client. "One can use it with his choice of clients. Take for example BlueMail or even KMail," he says.

If one wants to try this Made In



India email provider, all one has to do is to visit Letter.is and choose the preferred plan and check out. "We will then call the customer to give him an administrative account. You can add your domains to it and then add your mail boxes to it. It works just like any of the regular email providers," he tells you.

The most basic plan that is on offer right now is a 4GB yearly one for ₹1,320. This 4GB storage can be split into four different domains and one can add as many different emails in each of them.

"The highest plan that we have right now is ₹3,520 plan which offer 50GB of storage. It follows the same

strategy as the basic plan and one can split it into 50 different domains. We also offer customised big plans for organisations," he tells you.

Given the rise in cyber crimes and how technology is misused worldwide, Nandi says, anything can be misused and that his product is not an exception. "When you think

about weakening privacy, you need to take some data out of the user. If any privacy solution has a back door, it does not remain private anymore. But with that being said, if a few people are trying to misuse something it doesn't mean that the rest of the world shouldn't benefit from it. One either have bullet proof security or nothing at all," he says.

Before launching it commercially a month ago, the service saw at least 20 people who practiced during the private beta version. "After the launch, we have about 46 customers using this service," Nandi, who have been operating the beta phase since October, says.

The service, he says, is witnessing a couple of new signups every day. "I hope in the coming few years we will become a significant player in this market," he opines. He adds that the service has at least 15 international users.

To make sure the server meets the growing demands, he says, that they have their inbuilt cloud where all the data gets backed up and will also make sure the servers never get down. "The data is backed up at least four times a day on our system. But this doesn't mean the data can leak out of the system. Your password is the key and as long as we don't know your password we don't know how to access your mails or data. Also, when the data is updated on our system, it gets converted into a gibberish form and only when the third party logs in with the password, the data gets converted into its original form. So if by any chance the data gets leaked then also it will require a lot of efforts to get it in the form of plain text," Nandi, who for the next one year wants to solely focus on Letter before opting for a new venture, tells you.



A still of Sahil Vaid in a driver's costume from *Coolie No 1* which is slated to release on Amazon Prime Video on December 25

## 'I was starstruck at the sets'

SAHIL VAID, who is currently busy shooting for *Satyameva Jayate 2* in Lucknow, tells MUSBA HASHMI about his role in *Coolie No 1*, which is all set to release on Amazon Prime Video, and how he is not at all a nervous actor

■ **What is your role in Coolie No 1?**

Without revealing a lot, I am playing Deepak, Varun's friend again. This time I play a very different kind of friend. I go through a lot to help him get the girl. As a prize, in this film, for a change I get a girl as well. That's the difference between the other friends' roles that I have done with Varun and this one. This also marks a performance where I get to play a different type of role. There's a lot of lying happening in the film. Sometimes I become his driver, sometime a mechanic and what not.

■ **With every character that you play, there's always a lesson that you learn. What was it here?**

With every film I do and every character that I play, I always learn something. One thing that I took back home from the sets of this film was something that I have learnt from my father years ago. He used to tell me *jhoot ke paer nahin hote hain*. You tell a lie and then cover it up with another one and the cycle goes on. The other amazing thing I learnt one was that in our country specifically there's a lot of pressure on the boy to be successful and rich. There's a lot of expectations from him and many people believe if the boy is well off, their daughter will live a happy life. I want to tell it to everyone that women now are capable of anything and everything. The time is different, hence one should leave it to the boy and girl to make their own choice. This is something that Jeffery Rozario (played by Paresh Rawal) who is Sara and Shikha Talsania's father in the film, learns the hard way. He looks for rich guys, but ends up getting poor ones for his daughters, who are good actually. This is something that I will remember for a lifetime.

■ **How was the experience to share sets with such a varied cast?**

We were shooting in Bangkok and there was a frame where we had Mr Jaaved Jaaferi, Rajpal Yadav, Paresh Rawal and Bharatiiji. I was standing around and looked at everyone and thought what did I do to deserve this where I am standing with such amazing actors. This is nothing less than an award. There's Johnny Lever too. I have grown up watching him. It felt so surreal. My teacher Naseeruddin Shah always says that Johnny Lever is by far the best actor in the industry. One, I was overwhelmed. Two, I was starstruck. Then, there was David Dhawan directing. I was like 'Sahil Vaid, what have you done to deserve this'. It was a beautiful experience. There was something always happening on the set. It was very old school yet a modern one because there was both of Varun and David Dhawan to bring you an experience of yesterday and today.

■ **Did the surreal experience, as you call it, made you nervous?**

If you end up doing theatre with Naseeruddin Shah, you don't get nervous while acting. I am still nervous when I go and rehearse for a new play with him. He is blatantly honest. He would tell it to your face how bad you were. With David Dhawan it is different. His favourite line to me during shooting was, 'Sahil maza nahin aa raha'. And when someone says that to you as an actor you are blank. He then explained to me how he want a scene to go. Also it was surprising for me to know that David Dhawan and Naseeruddin Shah are close friends. They both respect each other. I remember David sir telling me once, 'Kya ho gaya, hero wali acting kar na. Naseer ne sikhaya nahin tujhey'. It is difficult to put these feelings into words.

■ **You once said that to act just means to do. Has the definition changed for you now?**

It will never. That's my basic. Even here at the sets of *Satyameva Jayate 2*, that I am shooting for right now in Lucknow, I follow this rule. Naseer sir told me that you will get all kinds of roles and genres Sahil and an actor's job is never to say I don't think my character would do this. If a director has a vision, you just do it.

■ **What is there in the pipeline?**

There's a film *Silence* with Manoj Bajpai, Prachi Desai and Vaqar Sheikh, that I just started shooting for. I play a police officer in it. Then there's *Swagatam Khushamdeed* that I am shooting later this month that have Pulkit Samrat and Isabelle Kaif.

# 'Rap has so much more to offer'

Rapper-lyricist Ankit Singh Patyal aka IKKA, who made his Bollywood debut with In Da Club, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about his latest track, collaborating with Divine and how he became a rapper



■ **What is your new debut album 'I' about?**

The album is titled 'I' because this is my story — all about my journey. There are nine tracks here and all of them are about my life, my experiences and journey till now. Some of the tracks are dark and some are about what I have achieved. Those who want to know about me, should definitely listen to this.

■ **How did you get your name Ikka?**

Actually, my name is Ankit. I told my father when I was young why he had to keep a name that is so common; when I was in school there were six kids in my class by the same name. I told my father why not Shah Rukh or Hrithik? He told me that this was the name I would have to live with in this life, at least. But he shortened it to Akki and from there, when you look at it, backwards, it reads Ikka.

■ **You have also released a new track Angaar. Tell us about that?**

The track is about how we have struggled so much and there is so much talent in us — that we have achieved things ad we have grown and improved as artists. The uniqueness is that it features Raftaar and music given by Sez on *The Beat*. Raftaar and I have known each other for sometime but we lost touch due to a misunderstanding but that got cleared and 10 years later, now, did this track.

■ **How did you end up collaborating with Divine?**

It was during the lockdown. And Divine and I would keep with each other regularly over Insta. Over one such chat, he asked me to share a vibe if I had any and why not do it together. I was doing an album at that time and agreed. I had two-three songs ready and told him to choose whichever one he liked and get back. He loved *Level Up* and he sent his verse in five days and the song was ready.

■ **How did you get interested in music?**

I had no interest in music; I was more interested in playing video games and reading comics. I loved to draw and was creative. One day, a friend got a cassette of Eminem — *Lose Yourself*. While I didn't understand most of it, I loved it. The song has a vibe to it. I explored hip-hop and listened to many artists and loved this style, dress sense and music. I was totally enamoured with it and my love for music took root.

■ **How did you end up being a rapper?**

I just fell into it. I started with listening to hip-hop and just went with the flow. My friends were those who rapped. It became my life as well. I watched documentaries about the history of rap and lives of rappers all over the world. It felt so real to me and I get influenced by things that are real. Hip-hop was so different for me.

■ **You are a singer-songwriter, rapper, lyricist, composer and producer. How do you do all this?**

I have had the opportunity to work with some of the best artists — Guru Randhawa, Diljit Dosanjh, Yo Yo Honey Singh — right at the beginning of my career. These people are the best in what they do. Some gave me a sense of music, another taught me production, yet another taught me how to write. I like to observe things and learn and things fell into place.

■ **Has the rap scene saturated in India?**

Not at all. People have just started to listen to rap. Labels have started promoting it now. More and more people are drawn to hip-hop. I see great things for this genre since there is still better things to come.

■ **What next?**

I am working on my next album. I have a few collaborations and Bollywood projects as well.



# the pioneer agenda

Why is it so difficult to have films seeing the world from women's perspective like 'Thelma and Louise?'  
— Son Ye-jin



FROM THE INSIDE

## The last mile

The country needs to ensure that the choice & the correct information for the Covid-19 vaccine reaches the most disadvantaged

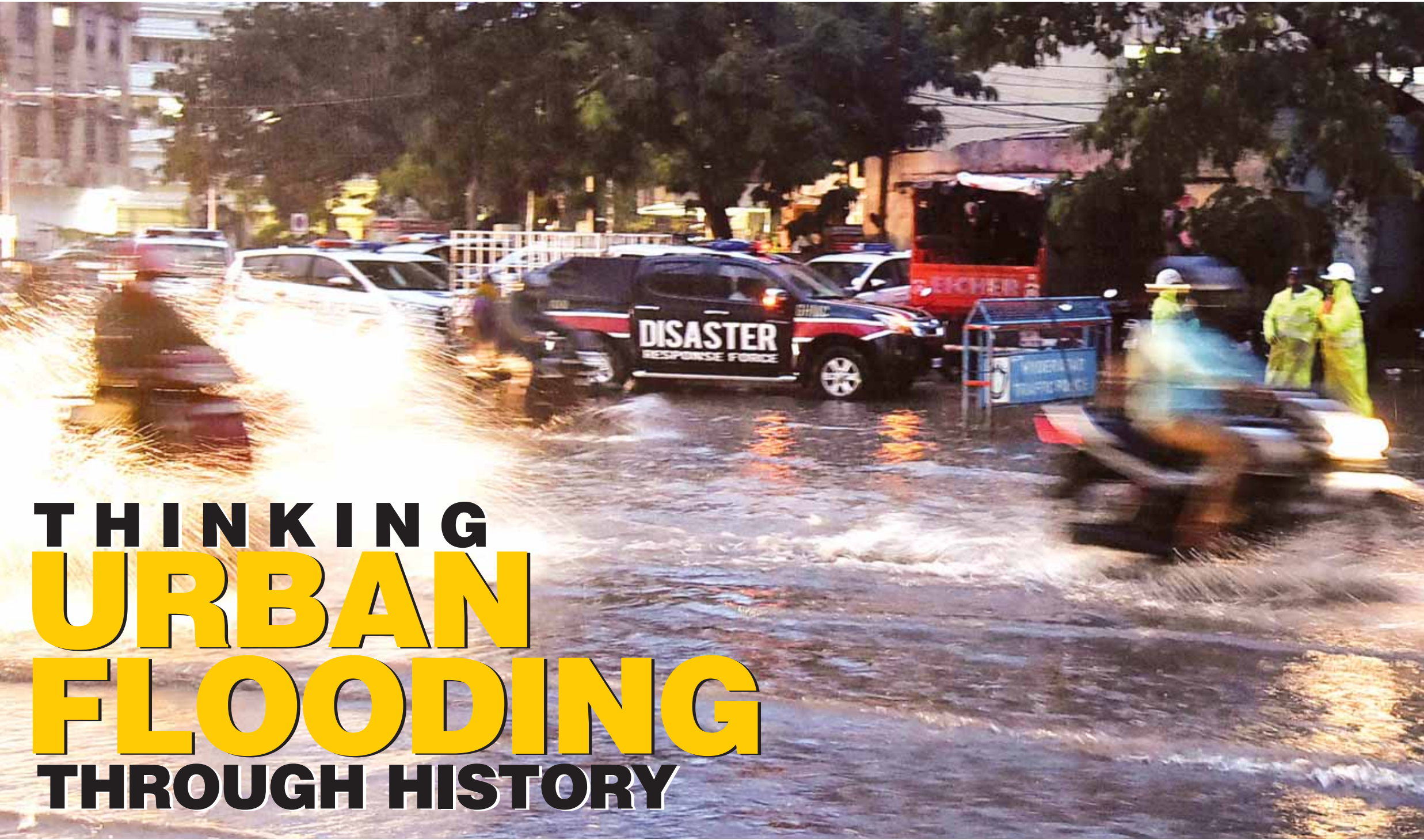
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4

## Fix your habits early in life

The root of inherent habit tendencies lie in the thought seeds that are firmly embedded in the inner realms of the mind



# THINKING URBAN FLOODING THROUGH HISTORY

Indian cities' inability in solving drainage-related problems have economic rather than engineering roots, writes VISWANATHAN VENKATARAMAN as he shares the historical dimensions of this issue

The recent episodes of destructive flooding in cities such as Hyderabad and Bengaluru have once again turned the spotlight on the drainage problems facing urban India. According to a recent report by the New Delhi based Centre for Science and Environment titled *Why Urban India Floods*, flooding is one of the most predominant hazards facing urban India at present. Experts and commentators who have studied this issue have identified a number of vital causal dimensions to this problem ranging from unplanned urban development, which has led to the encroachment of the natural drainage channels of urban water bodies, to shortcomings in drainage infrastructures which have led to the intensification of the problem. Missing in much of these discussions, however, are the historical dimensions of this issue. A perusal of these dimensions indicates two things: firstly, urban flooding and the inability of Indian cities to upgrade drainage infrastructures were, in a similar vein to contemporary times, features of urban life even in the British period; secondly, Indian cities' inability in solving these problems in this period had economic rather than engineering roots. Even when comprehensive engineering solutions to these problems were available, at that time they were only haltingly implemented due to the inability of local municipal governments to finance such elaborate schemes on their own. Given that this weakness and institutional structure continues to largely endure in Indian cities, there is a need to provide secure financial backing to local governments for building robust urban infrastructure in the future.

**THE INTRODUCTION OF MODERN URBAN DRAINAGE SYSTEMS IN BRITISH INDIA**

Modern drainage systems were introduced in the major cities of the world from around 1850 onward as a response to emergent epidemic diseases such as Cholera. Indian cities were no exceptions to this trend as Calcutta, Bombay and Madras city (now Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai) — the three biggest cities in British India — were among the first to introduce these systems there. Kolkata (then Calcutta) introduced its system in 1858, while Mumbai (then Bombay) and Chennai (then Madras) introduced their systems in the late 1870s with the key responsibilities for financing, building, operating and maintaining

these systems lay with the local municipal bodies. The precise engineering arrangements for draining the cities varied from case to case and was shaped largely by local conditions. Design choice in this period revolved around two modes of drainage — the 'combined' and the 'separate' system of drainage. The 'combined' system transported both stormwater (surface run-off of rainwater) and sewage in a single underground sewer, while the 'separate' system collected and disposed storm water and sewage separately via separate pipes. While Kolkata opted for a 'combined' system due to its topography, Mumbai and Chennai city opted for the 'separate' system guided by the annual rainfall patterns in the city. Since rainfall in the latter two cities were restricted only to a few months in a year, it was felt that stormwater can be separately managed more efficiently. On a similar note, while Kolkata opted to drain its stormwater into a nearby tidal creek by the name *Bidhyadhari*, Chennai and Mumbai opted to drain their stormwater into the sea via open drains and channels. Following their introduction, these drainage systems certainly did not have a smooth career and began to develop a number of problems not so different from the drainage problems afflicting contemporary Indian cities. The nature of the problems in each case was strongly conditioned by its design choices. For instance, the cities that adopted the 'separate' system developed practical difficulties in keeping sewage from entering storm water drains and vice versa. This manifested in Mumbai in 1901 when parts of the city's storm water drains had become a public health hazard when a slower uptake of household sewer connections led to the dumping of sewage into these drains. In Chennai city, in the late 1920s, the reverse was the problem as storm water found its way into sewage pipes thereby stretching the sewage disposal arrangements of the system. While Kolkata's 'combined' system could steer clear of the aforementioned difficulties, it still had to search for new disposal arrangements for its storm water due to the silting up and rise in the bed level of the *Bidhyadhari* river by the mid-1910s thereby causing stagnation within the drains. Furthermore, the carrying capacity of the stormwater drains in all of these cities were

“WHILE IT IS DIFFICULT TO COME UP WITH A CLEAR RECIPE ON HOW TO IMPROVE URBAN LIVING CONDITIONS IN INDIA NOT THE LEAST ON THE BASIS OF HISTORICAL WORK, ONE STARTING POINT CERTAINLY COULD BE ENSURING GREATER INTERVENTION OF CENTRAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS IN PROVIDING SECURE FINANCIAL BACKING FOR THESE LOCAL BODIES TO BUILD VITAL PUBLIC SERVICES IN OUR CITIES”

beginning to be overwhelmed resulting in monsoon floods through the 1920s and 1930s. For instance, a national newspaper report from August 1923 complained about Kolkata (then Calcutta) that 'Floods are of daily occurrence, and it is doubtful if this will ever be a thing of the past', while a report on flooding in Mumbai in 1937 noted that 'Flooded Bombay (now Mumbai) streets, are a common sight...' during monsoons. In both these cases, the inadequate capacity of its drainage infrastructure to respond to the rainfall patterns in the city were identified as the most important cause, thus providing us interesting parallels from the past on monsoon flooding in urban India. **HALTING SOLUTIONS** The city governments of that era were certainly not silent spectators as these problems started unraveling from of them. They were, as a matter of fact, quite alive to the need to upgrade their respective drainage systems. For instance, Mumbai city's corporation had planned for a project costing nearly ₹1.36 crore to give a comprehensive overhaul of the city's storm water drainage system in 1924, while Kolkata had finalised a scheme to shift its outfall works from *Bidhyadhari* river to the river *Kulti* by 1930. But financial stringency facing the local governments in this period meant these schemes were either delayed or suspended or only partially implemented. While the implementation of Calcutta's (now Kolkata) scheme could eventually commence only in 1935, Bombay's (now Mumbai) scheme for stormwater drainage was not implemented even by 1933. Under the tight financial constraints, the municipal bodies could not go beyond tinkering with the existing system to prevent flooding. In Mumbai, the municipal corporation began to allow storm water to drain off through sewage pipes during periods of monsoon in a bid to reduce flooding of city streets in the 1930s. This position of financial weakness of municipal bodies is succinctly captured by the following quote from O.J.Wilkinson, who served as the drainage engineer of Kolkata in the mid 1920. He noted that: 'In Calcutta (now Kolkata) we have ... terrific rainstorms to contend with, a drainage problem of unparalleled complexity, a vast conservancy question..Yet the income per head of the population is but a fraction of London or other great European cities. Whereas in London, the rateable value is such that enormous schemes to

meet the growing needs of the community can be financed without much difficulty from municipal funds, in Calcutta (now Kolkata), it is quite impossible for obvious reasons. The drainage question alone is of such decisive importance and so great in extent that the cost of remedial measures may be quite beyond the means of the corporation.' If this was the case in Kolkata, one of the then richest municipal bodies in the country, then it would certainly not be difficult to fathom what the state of drainage systems in other poorer yet populous cities such as Lucknow and Banaras might have been. Indeed, as of 1937 only 3% of the 517 municipalities across the five provinces of Bengal, Mumbai, Chennai, UP and Punjab had modern sewage disposal systems installed even though the engineering practices behind them had become fairly well rooted in India. Thus, it was not for want of engineering solutions that drainage systems remained inadequate; it was mainly the dire economic conditions that these local bodies found themselves in that prevented the emergence of a functional and satisfactory system of urban drainage in India. It's now nearly 90 years since the aforementioned incidents took shape. While there are important qualitative differences between the challenges that contemporary urban India faces and what its colonial predecessor did, this article has alluded to some important enduring elements. Chief among this is the economic inability of India's local bodies to build robust public infrastructure for delivering vital services — be it water, sanitation or drainage. A recent report of the research organisation ICRIER titled *Finances of Municipal Corporation in Metropolitan India* alerts us that the dire financial position of these bodies continues to remain a major stumbling block for upgrading urban infrastructure. While it is difficult to come up with a clear recipe on how to improve urban living conditions in India not the least on the basis of historical work, one starting point certainly could be ensuring greater intervention of central and state governments in providing secure financial backing for these local bodies to build vital public services in our cities. The author is an engineer turned PhD student with the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine (CHoSTM) at King's College, London, researching the history of sanitary infrastructures in late colonial Madras city





WE MAKE THE FUTURE  
SUSTAINABLE WHEN WE INVEST  
IN THE POOR, NOT WHEN WE  
INSIST ON THEIR SUFFERING  
—BILL GATES

STILETTOS

MINIYA  
CHATTERJI



# THE LAST MILE

For this one time, the country needs to step up its game and ensure that the choice and the correct information for the Covid-19 vaccine reaches the most disadvantaged end of income groups in India

The year 2021 will be the year of the Covid-19 vaccine. It will be the topic of our greatest relief and utmost anxiety. Which vaccine? How to avail it? Will it work? What are the side effects? We will not know the answers to all these questions at once, not even at the time regulatory approval is given for each vaccine.

Choosing the vaccine to use in India's vaccination programme will therefore certainly not be easy as they will each be based on very different technologies, with differing degrees of efficacy and side effects that will likely be revealed with time. Many millions will be vaccinated every week, and perhaps an effective tracking system could help us identify problems with particular vaccines which were not caught in the pre-approval tests.

Procuring the vaccine would indeed be initially difficult but I don't anticipate it to be our greatest challenge in the long run either. India has a large vaccine production capacity. The Serum Institute of India is the largest vaccine manufacturer in the world and it is producing the AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine and will also produce the Novavax vaccine. It is expanding capacity to 1.2 billion doses per year, and half of this could be available for India. There are other Indian manufacturers engaged in clinical trials to produce a vaccine, such as Zydus Cadila, Bharat BioTech, Dr Reddy's Laboratories and Biological E. There will undoubtedly be difficulties in this unprecedented situation.

However, funding the programme will be a major challenge and a heavily debated one too. Should the vaccine be free for all beneficiaries or only for some? Will the government pay for vaccines for all? India has a vast spectrum of social and economic inequalities. We have some of the world's richest and the world's poorest, with health care distribution that also mirrors this enormous gap. Without free vaccines provided by the government at least to some extent, we can not ensure that the last mile in rural India are offered the vaccine. We can not ensure that the population left out in vaccinating 70% of India and hoping for herd immunity for the rest, are not the poorest.

We can anticipate two other major hurdles in vaccinating India for which,



I believe, the private sector must step in to help.

First, how will we distribute the vaccine to the last mile? Our existing systems for distributing medicines to the *anganwadis* and rural medical centres are fraught with pilferage. Already we see a black market for vaccines preparing to suck out the vaccines from the system to offer it to those with greater buying power who might want the vaccine at the soonest. How can we then ensure that the vaccine is offered to all individuals in an equitable manner? Some have suggested a lottery system for offering vaccines, but even then how can the lottery winners belonging to economically weaker segments be sure of receiving their vaccine?

Here, the network of the local *kirana* stores and freelance entrepreneurs in small towns and villages who are already

being mobilised by the government for distributing Covid testing kits and masks could be tapped upon. They are the government of India's best last mile connect. This network has been leveraged by the government already and so it can be leveraged for vaccine distribution as well, to be then picked up by the government healthcare workers in villages, slums, small towns. Large companies could include their supply chain and distributors within that network for vaccine delivery. The supply chain of large companies such as Hindustan Unilever Ltd. and others will thus bolster this existing network further — if a Lifebuoy can be delivered to the furthest hut in a village so can the Covid vaccine. Indeed thereafter, the government healthcare workers would be best suited for door-to-door vaccinating. In our experience of

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setting up 11 Covid hospitals and recovery facilities over six months, we leveraged public private partnerships to set up these hospitals and facilities in urban pockets that lacked healthcare facilities, bringing in government healthcare workers to operate them. A similar PPP model can be put in place for vaccine distribution and vaccine administration in rural India.

Second, how do we overcome India's biggest malaise — corruption — in this regard? The black market is picking up already, making '*bandobast*' to get the vaccines out to people with resources as soon as possible. There are even travel companies such as Gem Tours offering Mumbai-New York-Mumbai tickets, 3 night/4 day packages with breakfast and one vaccine dose. Further, even if the *kirana* stores in villages and slum zones

are looped in to distribute the vaccines, there might be cases where they instead sell off the vaccines at high prices. In the case of the latter, the government can not entirely check the corruption and the private sector might be silenced by the fear of losing the supply chain for their own products.

What are ways in which we can pre-empt this corruption? Communication might be key here. An intensive anti-corruption campaign for vaccine distribution can be planned in order to remind the public of being ethical during the worst global pandemic in history that has ravaged the lives of millions. The public involved in vaccine distribution can be encouraged and named as 'heroes', much as the frontline warriors were referred to as 'Covid Warriors'. The communication on vaccines must cover factual information about the various vaccines, removing rumours and baseless fears. The vaccine cannot be made mandatory, which makes the dispersion of effective and accurate communication all the more important.

In India, since the past three months or so the private sector has already stepped in to assist the government in articulating and dispersing the message around Covid precautions. At times the government pays companies for spreading the message while in some cases companies and even some advertising agencies have stepped up to do so on a pro-bono basis. This trend can be further strengthened towards an anti-corruption campaign for vaccine distribution.

We can not afford to lose the battle to Covid, especially once an effective basket of vaccines arrive. The distribution of anything to the last mile in India is a challenge. This is at least once when the country needs to step up its game and ensure that the choice and the correct information for the Covid vaccine reaches the most disadvantaged end of income groups in India. They can not be left to gain 'herd immunity' while the top 1% get their choice of vaccines. This is the challenge that the government, private sector, me and you need to win in 2021.

*The writer is CEO of Sustain Labs and Adjunct Professor at SciencesPo Paris. She is also a columnist and author of the 2019 bestseller Indian Instincts — essays on freedom and equality in India*

# Unpacking climate geoengineering

If it works well, it might be able to protect climate-vulnerable regions by keeping temperatures below 1.5 C while the world is decarbonising, write VINAYAK NAMBIAR, SIJO ABRAHAM & MOHAMMED MOFIZUR RAHMAN

Climate change, or more aptly, climate chaos, is arguably one of the major challenges of the 21st century, and is often considered an existential threat to humanity. It leaves no aspect of life untouched, including the economy, environment, health and livelihoods, regardless of which part of the world you reside. The global community has awoken to the risks involved, and there has been a ramp-up of efforts to mitigate the release of greenhouse gases, including the main culprit carbon dioxide, through a plethora of initiatives such as focusing on renewable energy, creating a circular economy, and even re-inventing what would drive future growth, with 'green' deals being considered by various influential governments worldwide.

However, recent research suggests that no matter how ambitious our efforts are, current emission trends indicate that it is unlikely we will be able to limit the temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. This is the warming limit that is supported by the world's most climate-vulnerable countries, with warming above this point leaving us open to more extreme weather events, biodiversity loss on a scale previously unimaginable, agricultural depletion and unprecedented forced migration. The Global South, including the Indian subcontinent, will be particularly hard hit. Climate geoengineering is increasingly touted as a promising solution for this, a blanket term that contains quite a few radical, often controversial and potentially challenging to implement proposals.

Before we continue, we would like to point out that we are neither advocates nor opponents of geoengineering. We believe it is important to have a broader public discussion on a wider spectrum of possible climate options, and our goal in this article is to shed some light on one often-neglected outside scientific circles, and lay out the unknowns, opportunities and obstacles involved, especially from a South Asian perspective. That being said, let's start with a few definitions.

Under climate geoengineering, there are two major groups of proposed approaches: Solar Radiation Management (SRM) and Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR). SRM proposals aim to limit or reverse the temperature rise produced by higher greenhouse gas concentrations, by reflecting inbound sunlight back into space. The approach that has received most research attention would involve spraying tiny reflective particles into the upper atmosphere to reflect away some sunlight. The effects of SRM would be experienced rapidly, in the order of months after implementation, and this is why it is being researched — it's the only known way to quickly stop or reverse the rise in global temperatures.

However, it is important to note that these effects would last only as long as the programme is maintained. SRM does not reduce the concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and there is the potential for disastrously abrupt warming of the global climate with sudden and permanent cessation of a high level of SRM cooling. As it is largely based on computer simulations, there is also significant

uncertainty on what the actual impacts may be, including predicting the change in rainfall patterns and growth of plant life.

CDR on the other hand, involves removing carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from the atmosphere by various means, ranging from reforestation/afforestation, restoration of wetlands, burning biomass to capture carbon and permanently storing it, fertilizing oceans to absorb more CO<sub>2</sub> or even direct capture of CO<sub>2</sub> from ambient air. Generally, CDR techniques are comparatively slow-acting and expensive to implement, but are less contentious and have been included in many models for achieving effective climate change mitigation.

What we find worrying is that climate geoengineering research as a whole has predominantly been conducted by Western academia, and in reality, countries in the Global South are often poorly represented in debates about these approaches, even though in many of the cases, those are the same countries that would be the most impacted.

This question of moral hazard surrounding geoengineering has been intensely argued, though again mostly in developed economies. A range of people, from policy makers to activists, have expressed concerns that CDR and SRM might be seen as "get out of jail" free cards that reduce the incentives for countries to move towards a net-zero carbon pathway. This becomes all the more serious when coupled with what is essentially limited research about the benefits and drawbacks of these methods.



Encouraging SRM or CDR may significantly reduce allocation of resources to inclusive and reliable climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, or even lead to total near-term disregard for them, leaving developing countries to suffer the consequences. For example, Global South countries have expressed their concern regarding the uncertainty of Bio-

Energy and Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS) methods, which is a CDR technique. These projects may require large land areas, thereby competing with agricultural lands. Additionally, as previously stated, research has shown that SRM would involve tinkering with a complex system and it might have nasty side effects, with countries like India bearing the

brunt if it goes wrong. It may in fact not be in the best interests of northern, developed countries like Norway or Canada too, who may prefer increased temperatures for agricultural productivity and other land uses.

Another cause for apprehension is the lack of an international agreement overseeing climate geoengineering. Currently these

methods can be rolled out by any country independently, especially economically strong ones. This would certainly cause an imbalance of power in global politics, as such a country would potentially have control over the global thermostat, with negative repercussions in certain parts of the world. We first have to understand exactly what the effects of various geoengineering measures would be on a regional basis, and ensure that the needs of all nations are met when and if they are executed. This is an issue with global ramifications, and cannot be treated locally. It is therefore absolutely vital that there is a cohesive strategy that is transnational in nature, with defining principles for governance, research, development and possible implementation of these novel technologies. We urge India and other developing nations to take the lead to ensure justice, and ascertain that any and all measures need to consider the wishes of all stakeholders within these vulnerable regions.

As it stands, climate geoengineering could prove to be a complement to other climate solutions and not a silver bullet. If it works well, it might be able to protect climate-vulnerable regions by keeping temperatures below 1.5°C while the world is decarbonising. But the uncertainty and unpredictability around these techniques may have counterproductive implications worldwide, especially in the Global South. The global nature of these methods mandate a strong need for transparency within all the dimensions of these techniques, safeguarding equity as the central theme. However, it is absolutely clear that climate geoengineering is not a substitute for reducing carbon emissions and our focus must continue to be on weaning our economies off carbon, advocating sustainable behavioural practices and building strong resilience to climate change. By prioritising these pathways, we will hopefully never be pressed to use climate geoengineering to protect our planet.

*Vinayak Nambiar is Anant Fellow for Climate Action; Sijo Abraham is Anant Fellow for Climate Action; and Mohammed Mofizur Rahman is Instructor, Anant Fellowship for Climate Action*



# Rohingyas’ repatriation amid hope & despair

Today the Rohingya Muslims are nowhere. More than one million of them left their homeland of Rakhine Province, Myanmar, in 2017 after their ethnic cleansing at the hands of Myanmar Army. Most of them descended in the neighbouring Bangladesh and stayed in makeshift camps in the Cox Bazar, a coastal town located near the Bangladesh-Myanmar border area of the country all these years. Many of them have crossed the turbulent sea to get into other South East Asian nations such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. Their future hangs on international intervention from nations concerned and human rights agencies. Despite an urgent urge from the UN and the case being heard in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague (Netherlands), they continue to languish in the ill-managed refugee camps in Bangladesh. But recently Dhaka took a decision to shift a large number of the Rohingya refugees to an island named Bhasan Char, in a phased manner. However, the spread of the news in the beginning of this month among the distraught Rohingyas evoked mixed feelings — many of them are quite excited to go to their new abode, thinking this could be a better place, while others are worried about their permanent dislocation from the current camps.

To unearth the root cause of the Rohingya exodus in 2017 from Rakhine to Bangladesh, we need to focus on the recent political happenings in Myanmar. The UN says the Myanmar Army demonstrated “genocidal intent” while conducting operations against the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) in 2017. According to the authorities, this operation targeted to flush out the Islamists and to bring back law and order in the Rakhine Province. But the central issue is that Myanmar does not want to recognise the Rohingyas as citizens and it sees them as illegal migrants from Bangladesh. That is why the Burmans, the major ethnic group of the country, consisting of the Army, the rest of administrative ranks and the leadership, simply do not want the Rohingyas to stay in the country. Much before 2017, the



Rohingya Muslims, who fled Myanmar into Bangladesh, wait in queues to receive aid at Kutupalong refugee camp in Ukhiya, Bangladesh on November 15, 2017

AP/File

clashes used to break out between the majority Burmans and the local Rohingyas. But in that year, the ARSA killed nearly 20 police officers and security forces of the Myanmar Army. And on August 25, the ARSA, previously known as the Harakah al-Yakin, immediately provoked a counter-insurgency operation from the federal Army of Myanmar in Rakhine Province. The Government says the ARSA is a terrorist organisation. Its leader Ata Ullah was born in Pakistan and raised mostly in Saudi Arabia. The group also released a report in 2016 according to which it is led by Rohingyas living in Saudi Arabia. However, the concern is that striking at the ARSA is not going to solve the core issue i.e. denying citizenship to the Rohingyas. For decades, the Rohingyas have been residing

in Arakan known as the Rakhine Province. Interestingly, earlier, they were given the right to vote. But with the coming of the Tatmadaw to power, gradually the basic political rights and freedoms of the Rohingyas were curtailed. Thus, the Rohingya anger has grown against the Myanmarese State fully controlled by the majority Burmans. Many security experts opine that the ARSA may have received backing from jihadists who have fought in battle-grounds of Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, etc. The main purpose of the ARSA is to defend, salvage and protect the Rohingyas from the State repression in the line with the principle of self-defence. But the official view from Naypyidaw is that the Army operation in the province was against the terrorists, and to restore law and order in that area. Even the locals and vari-

ous newspapers in the regions emphasise more on the terror attacks and the plight of the others who had to flee the area because of the clash between the Army and the Rohingyas. It is very clear that the majority Burmans have a long-held prejudice against the Rohingya Muslims, who are not regarded as the citizens of the country. These Rohingyas are called as “Bengalis”. And most of the nationalist groups view them as a threat to their country. This is the background of the harrowing conditions of the Rohingyas that has sparked a bitter debate between Bangladesh and Myanmar, but without any credible outcome. And anytime in future, the global jihadi groups such as the Islamic State and al-Qaeda might plant their agents to sponsor full-time Islamic terror movements in Myanmar. The

Tatmadaw must be ready to face such an onslaught from these global monsters and accordingly should keep a close watch on the activities of the ARSA in the region. The root of the plight behind the current Rohingya crisis lies in Myanmar itself. It can well be regarded as a systematic and forced migration of these people from their home province. And it is the Tatmadaw i.e. the Myanmar Army that has led a vicious and brutal campaign against the hapless Rohingyas over the years. It all started in 1978 when then Burmese Army carried out an operation called “Operation Ngamin” to drive out the Rohingyas from Rakhine. Again, in 1982, a new law was passed by Myanmar to deny citizenship right to the Rohingyas Muslims. And finally, they were excluded from the

list of the country’s 135 ethnic groups. For years, Myanmar has pursued institutionalised discrimination policies like these and cornered the poor and minority Muslim Rohingyas to a point of no return to the mainstream of country. The role of Nobel laureate and the present State Counsellor of Myanmar is highly questionable on the question of the repatriation of the Rohingyas. The suffering of the Rohingya itself is a tragedy. But the way it was carried out by the Tatmadaw had crossed all civilisational limits. Suu Kyi does not control the military and even if she wants she can’t do so. Also the military does not trust her at all. It’s very simple because all her life she has fought against the repressive military and demanded to restore basic freedoms in the country. But today

she has almost forgotten the very core of the basic freedoms for which she once bravely fought. It’s painful and sad. This time her party National League for Democracy won more seats than what they had won in the elections of 2015. But even if she could have condemned the actions of the Tatmadaw, it would not have gone to this extent. The world knows very well what Suu Kyi said in the International Court of Justice at the Hague in December 2019. She bravely defended her country’s military against the allegations of genocide. These all have rightly signalled that she is a true politician and no more a votary of democratic rights. The recently concluded parliamentary election has once again excluded the Rohingyas from the much awaited political process in the country. Further, because of the fighting between the Tatmadaw and the Arakan Army, the November Parliamentary Election had to be cancelled in the Rakhine Province. The saddest part of the Rohingya crisis is that no one is focusing on the repatriation of the Rohingyas to Myanmar. Why the whole world is mum over this matter? Why are we all putting pressure on Bangladesh to resettle these refugees in an unsafe and vulnerable island? It seems Bangladesh has accepted the responsibility of relocating the Rohingyas and looking for their future settlement. Precisely, they all must be sent back to Myanmar i.e. Rakhine Province, as early as possible. The UN, the UNHRC and various other global humanitarian agencies must build up enough pressure on Naypyidaw to take back all the Rohingyas. Now a new Joe Biden administration must devise a strategy to convince the Tatmadaw for the same. Else, the Generals back home in Myanmar will take it for granted that such heinous crimes could easily avoid international attention. Though Bangladesh is assuring the repatriation of the Rohingyas in the Bhasan Char, the international community must be aware that it is a very vulnerable area to shift millions of these refugees in the days to come.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)

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MAKHAN SAIKIA

## PERSPECTIVE

# New challenges to education during pandemic

Besides debate on whether online teaching can make up for the loss of classroom teaching, the major challenge is how to develop mechanism to overcome the rigmarole of regulations to take effective decisions



SUDHIR HINDWAN

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic the education system in India has been witnessing challenges with significant impact on higher education. To deal with the situation, experts have talked about what should be the course of direction with regard to the pattern of completion of course work, methodology of teaching and examination. The Higher Education Information System’s recent attempt to ensure high level of partnership among institutions through equity and access to all shows the level of insight in empowering and motivating students and faculty members. Besides, the pursuit of the National Education Policy (NEP) to cover school, adult, higher education and efforts towards promotion of Indian languages and online education exhibit tremendous effort towards enhancement of overall educational scenario. Indian universities are being encouraged to improve their performances by making a push towards a more merit based peer reviewed research and the chimera of fulfilling the aim of 6 per cent of GDP expenditure on education. A few experts are of the views that we have at least got an opportunity to analyse and address the multidimensional issues in the education sector.

Whereas for some it is a welcome sign that we would draw a framework for key demands of the higher education while maintaining a synergy between various actors and stakeholders, there has been a section which strongly feels that the idea of online teaching can never replace the existing system of classrooms teaching. For many others, it is not clear that segregation of the practical and theory papers, particularly for MBA courses, can be a feasible option if the future trends compel us to follow the undesirable. Ensuring proper monitoring of education sector on day to day basis as done by the authorities can ensure growth in changing circumstances. In the midst of argumentation and generation of dis-course it is imperative to look at the process from neutral stand. But at times different point of views creates insights about the way in which the ideas and emotions get translated into effective decision-making process. The Union Ministry of Education has opened up conceptual and scholastic discussions which may result in the creation of exquisite thoughts and a new vision for the growth of a stupendous education system even during the crisis of unprecedented magnitude. It is



high time we realised the gravity of challenges encountered by the higher education. The importance of education for the physical, intellectual and moral will always be on high pedestal because education frees a person from the clutches of darkness and bigotry. But many a times the questions and desires of competition, comparison and person-

al greed leads to the problem of manipulation and taking recourse in shortcuts. The Right to Freedom of Expression in democratic societies has been debated many times. Recent developments in academic world have posed new challenges about the changing nature of problem and the huge competition quagmire that still lurks.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has shown serious concern over the increasing number of predatory, cloned and substandard publications and emergence of a number of web opinion sites coupled with arrangement of predatory conferences. In a highly proactive step, the UGC has issued strict directions and created high quality list of jour-

nals to be considered the only valid publication category. As a result of the long quest for excellence the UGC established Consortium for Academic Research and Ethics (CARE) to ensure and promote pious academic integrity and quality research and teaching. This would help in broadening the ethical horizon and enhancing the decision making

capabilities but also letting new generation know what is ethically and morally correct. When it comes to ethics it means going beyond the set clichés and moving from paradigm to paradigm shift. We ought to try our level best to kindle the flame by ensuring the sensitisation of students and faculty members in this direction. It is difficult to change the direction of the wind, but we can do our bit in adjusting ethical sail towards the path of development of ethos. The major challenge will be its dealing with professional institutes. How to develop mechanism to sensitise the stakeholders of these institutes to overcome the rigmarole of regulations, and take decision. It is daunting task to deal with the emerging challenges due to mushrooming of a number of private educational institutes. There is a strong need to identify new ways to judge the qualitative competence of candidates by laying a lot of importance on improving analytical and observatory qualities of the candidates through cognitive discourse and seeking multiple options and viewpoints in order to help in forming an integrated texts and questionnaire. (The author is a professor and expert on strategic affairs)





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